

10 December 2023
2nd Sunday of Advent Year B



Entrance Antiphon

O people of Sion, behold,
the Lord will come to save
the nations, and the Lord will
make the glory of his voice
heard in the joy of your
heart.

First Reading from the
prophet Isaiah
40:1-5. 9-11

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 84:9-14. R. v.8

Response: Lord, let us see
your kindness, and grant us
your salvation.

Second Reading from second
letter of St Peter 3:8-14

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths:
all people shall see the
salvation of God.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel according to
Mark 1:1-8

Communion Antiphon
Jerusalem, arise and stand
upon the heights,
and behold the joy which
comes to you from God.

Next Week
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
YEAR B

First: Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

Resp: Is 61:10

Second: 1 Thess 5:16-24

Gospel: John 1:6-8. 19-28

*We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand,
the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.*



SUPPORT FAMILIES STRUGGLING WITH THE ESCALATING COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS THIS CHRISTMAS.

Over the last year, the cost-of-living crisis has become increasingly dire as prices continue to soar and inflation is at some of the highest levels we've seen since the early 1990's. It's hitting families and other vulnerable members of our community incredibly hard. Many are experiencing poverty and struggling to keep a roof over their heads. As the crisis deepens, so does their desperation.

More and more people are so desperate to survive, they just don't have the resources to think about Christmas. How can they begin to dream of buying the little extras that make Christmas so special when they can't even afford to pay the bills?

The Vinnies Christmas appeal is providing hampers and gifts for 18 local families. The Christmas tree is in the foyer and if you haven't yet taken a tag please take one this weekend and return the item listed as soon as possible.

The Piety Store in the foyer is managed by our Vinnies group. All the proceeds from the piety store support the good works of Vinnies. 2024 Columban Calendars are available plus a great range of Christmas cards and religious gifts.

This weekend we will have a leaving collection to support the work of Vinnies in our local area.

Christmas Mass & Reconciliation times



Parish Reconciliation Service: Friday 22 Dec at 7.30pm
Reconciliation is available every Saturday at 11am.

Sunday 24 December is the 4th Sunday of Advent;
Mass will be at 6pm vigil on Saturday and
9.30am on Sunday morning.
There will not be a 5pm Sunday Mass this day.

Christmas Pageant and Christmas Vigil Mass
As Sunday 24 December is also Christmas Eve the
Christmas Pageant will start at 6pm and the
Christmas Vigil Mass will start at 7pm.

Christmas midnight Mass

Christmas morning Mass will commence at 9am.
There will be no evening Mass on Christmas Day.

Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am and 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri and Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: First Friday of each month from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of December at 12 noon	Healing Mass on the first Saturday of each month at 9am	
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm		Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am—12

Contact us

Office Hours: **Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-12.30pm**

Phone: **9603 7373 / 0434 705 176**

Email: **varroville@dow.org.au**

Website: **varroville.dow.org.au**

Parish Priest:
Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD

Parish Associate:
Sr “Jill” Girlie Sudario, CM

Prayer intentions

For the sick and homebound: Baby Matthew , Terry Maroun, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda and John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie and Barry Atkins, Carol and Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys..
May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain and affliction.

For our recently dearly departed: Fr John Landy, Sennie Masian, Jose Useche, Rufino Boying Yanga. Michael Camilleri

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Lily Pereira, Mary Bergstedt, Giuseppe Cuomo,
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.



Our Community: Rosters

17 December	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Glen & Arlene	Sarah, Violetti & Martin	Beatrix & Stuart
Altar Servers	Maria, Cassandra & Abigail	Orly, Fisiilose & Claire	Robert
Readers	Suzanne & Russell	Gabriel & Volunteer	Sheenalyn & Leah
Refreshments	Estela & Margaret	Nelia, Anita & Tina	
CLOTW		Josephine & Asinate	
Flowers	Patricia & Asinate	Church Vacuuming	Loretta & Gerard
Counters	Christine & Cira	Foyer Cleaning	Wicks family

Our Community Notices: Upcoming Events

The new rosters have been sent out via email: Thank you to everyone who has committed to the next 6 months. Please note there are quite a few spaces available for anyone wishing to join a ministry and commit to serving our parish in ministry.

RCIA helpers needed: Appeal for parishioners willing to assist in supporting adults and children new to the Catholic faith in our parish. There are many small ways that you can make a

difference. To have a conversation about this contact Diane Redmayne RCIA coordinator via the parish office or leave your contact details with Sr Jill.

Christmas Pageant preparation; Please check on the parish calendar on our website for pageant preparation times during December or call the parish office for more information about how to join in.



Bulletin Notices

This summer the Children Ministry Team will hold a Bible Camp on 19 – 20 January 2024 here in the Parish grounds. Children aged from 8 to 14 years old are invited to participate. Adult support is also encouraged for facilitators and helpers. For more details contact: Sr. Jill Sudario: 0481 373 124

Christmas Carols at Carmel House (345 St Andrews Rd, Varroville) on Thursday 21 December at 6pm. Join the MGL Sisters for a picnic dinner and carols and praise. Bring your picnic and a picnic blanket or chair.

Church Renovations: Construction of alterations and additions to our church building have been approved and construction will commence early in 2024. Watch this space for updates.

Thank you from fundraising Committee. Throughout the year we have had quite a few events, the raffle and 3 bunnings BBQ. There is another bunnings BBQ on 17 December.

Helpers are invited to join in. Our fundraising committee welcomes new members and fresh ideas for next year.

Holy Family Fellowship Prayer Group We gather at, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Varroville, on the 4th Saturday every month after the Vigil Mass. We have a short time of Praise and Worship followed by a time of fellowship and sharing of a light meal. Contact : Ryan - Mob:0430 404 575.

Summer School of Evangelisation (Sydney): 7-14 January
Mount Carmel Retreat Centre: Summer School is a week-long, live-in, life-changing retreat featuring praise and worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill and learn and more in the midst of a community of 150+ young people aged 16-35. Registrations open 31st October. Register and more info: contact@summerschool.org.au. Bookings: summerschool.org.au

Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader - Catholic Diocese of Wollongong: Suitably experienced and qualified persons are encouraged to apply for the role of Youth Ministry Leader in the Diocese of Wollongong. Applications close on Tuesday, 12 December 2023. For more information and a detailed role description, please go to: dow.org.au/position-vacant-diocesan-youth-ministry-leader/ or for enquiries contact helen.bennett@dow.org.au

A New Vision for Parishes: Bishop Mascord has supplied multiple copies of Come and See Go and Make - A vision for Parishes in the Diocese of Wollongong for distribution amongst the faithful. Further to this, • A short introductory video message from Bishop Mascord may be viewed/ downloaded at <http://dow.sh/CSGMvision>
Come & See, Go & Make: A Vision for Parishes resources may be found at [h.tlw dow.sh/CSGMresources](http://dow.sh/CSGMresources)

CatholicCare are currently looking for Community Support Workers. Becoming a CatholicCare Community Support Worker will give you a career that you love, whilst providing a valuable connection to people living with a disability or the aged in our Diocese. If you want to find out more about becoming a Community Support Worker go to catholiccare.dow.org.au/get-involved/careers/or call

4227 1122.

On The Journey This Week: Fr Chris Sarkis says only prayer, sacrifice, and graced personal holiness of life can straighten what has become twisted and buried in the moral and human turmoil. Mother Hilda says God is like the freezer repair man, checking the gas of grace that keeps us ticking over. Plus, Fr Tony Percy, Fr John Nguyen, and more Advent reflections. The Journey podcast available at www.jcr.org.au.

Caritas Australia's Gaza Crisis Appeal Please donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Crisis Appeal. You can donate online www.caritas.org.au/gaza or phone 1800 024 413. An estimated 1 million people have been displaced in Gaza with immediate food, shelter, health, and psychosocial needs. 'This is a period of incredible turmoil and sadness. The escalation of violence has only exacerbated needs for the people in Gaza and West Bank, who already live in dire conditions. We are working with our partners on the ground to provide comprehensive and critical support to over 17,000 families affected by this devastating conflict.' With your support, we will be able to help our partners on the ground to assist people displaced and affected by the current conflict.

A vocation view - 2nd Sunday of Advent: God calls us to proclaim the Good News. How do you share that Good News? Pray for the grace to be a faith-filled witness of God's love. (Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11). If you want to talk about your vocation, please contact the diocesan vocations director, Fr Duane Fernandez at vocations@dow.org.au

Social Justice Points; [The] challenge ... is "appealing", stimulating and achievable: to move away from the throwaway culture towards ways of living marked by a culture of respect and care; care of creation and care of our neighbours, whether they be near or far from us either geographically or through time. We are facing an educational journey for transforming our society, a conversion that is at the same time both personal and communal. -- *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Participants in the Green and Blue Festival, on the occasion of the 2023 World Environment Day, Monday, 5 June 2023*

Pilgrimage of Mercy 11 – 21 June 2024; Father Christopher Sarkis, Parish Priest of Rosemeadow, will be the Chaplain accompanying Harvest Journeys Eastern Europe Pilgrimage of Mercy in June 2024, visiting Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. It includes the Shrines of Divine Mercy, the Black Madonna of Czestochowa and the Infant of Prague. It visits places of importance to St John Paul II, St. Faustina and St. Maximillian Kolbe, among others. Enquiries: 4628 1385 or directly at harvestjourneys.com/tour/pilgrimage-of-mercy. Bookings only through Harvest Journeys.

St Patricks College Registrations are open now! Don't miss your opportunity to register today. We invite you to join us to celebrate our College Open Day on 24 February 2024. We look forward to sharing with the community our stunning College campus and why we are specialists in girls' education. Have you considered St Patrick's College for Girls for your daughter?

Holy Gospel according to Mark 1:1-8

Make straight the paths of the Lord.

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;
he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



REFLECTION BY POPE FRANCIS 10 December 2017

Last Sunday we began Advent with the call to be vigilant; today, the Second Sunday of this season of preparation for Christmas, the liturgy indicates to us its proper content: it is a time to recognize the shortcomings in our life, to smooth out the roughness of pride and to make room for Jesus who comes.

The Prophet Isaiah addresses the people, proclaiming the end of the Exile in Babylon and the return to Jerusalem. He prophesies: "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord... Every valley shall be lifted up'" (40:3-4). The valleys to be lifted up represent all the shortcomings of our behaviour before God, all our sins of omission. One shortcoming in our life could be the fact that we do not pray or that we pray little. Advent is thus a favourable time to pray with greater intensity, to reserve to the spiritual life the important place it deserves. Another shortcoming could be a lack of charity for our neighbour, above all toward people most in need of help, not only material, but also spiritual. We are called to be more attentive, closer, to the needs of others. Like John the Baptist, in this way we can open the ways of hope in the desert of the barren hearts of many people.

"Every mountain and hill shall be made low" (cf. v. 4), Isaiah again exhorts. The mountains and hills that must be made low are pride, arrogance, insolence. Where there is pride, where there is insolence, where there is arrogance, the Lord cannot enter because that heart is full of pride, of insolence, of arrogance. For this reason, we must allay this pride. We must take on attitudes of meekness and humility, without reproach, to listen, to speak with meekness and thus to prepare for the coming of our Saviour, He who is meek and humble of heart (cf. Mt 11:29). Then we are asked to eliminate all obstacles that we set against our union with the Lord: "the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed" — says Isaiah — "and all flesh shall see it together" (40:4-5). These actions, however, must be performed with joy, because they are designed in preparation for the coming of Jesus. At home, when we await the visit of a dear person, we prepare everything with care and gladness. In the same way, we want to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord: to await him each day attentively, so as to be filled by his grace when he comes.

The Saviour whom we await is able to transform our life with his grace, with the power of the Holy Spirit, with the power of love. The Holy Spirit, in fact, infuses our hearts with God's love, the inexhaustible source of purification, of new life and freedom. The Virgin Mary fully lived this reality, allowing herself to be 'baptized' by the Holy Spirit who inundated her with his power. May she, who prepared for the coming of Christ with the totality of her existence, help us to follow her example and may she guide our steps to the coming Lord. for us in all circumstances because we are the work of his hands: "You, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name" (63: 16). Our God is a father prepared to forgive repentant sinners and to welcome those who trust in his mercy (cf. Is 64: 4). We had drifted away from him because of sin, falling under the dominion of death, but he took pity on us and, on his own initiative, without any merit on our part, decided to meet our needs, sending his only Son as our Redeemer. As we face such a great mystery of love, our thanksgiving rises spontaneously and our invocation becomes more trusting: Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, today, in our time, in every part of the world, let us feel your presence and grant us your salvation (cf. Gospel acclamation).