

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.

**25 AUGUST 2024**  
**TWENTY FIRST SUNDAY IN**  
**ORDINARY TIME YEAR B**



**Entrance Antiphon**

Turn your ear, O Lord, and answer me; save the servant who trusts in you, my God.

Have mercy on me,  
O Lord, for I cry to you  
all the day long.

**First Reading** from the book  
of Joshua 24:1-2. 15-18

**Responsorial Psalm**

Ps 33:2-3. 16-23. R. v.9  
(R.) Taste and see the  
goodness of the Lord.

**Second Reading** from the  
letter of St Paul to  
the Ephesians 5:21-32

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your words, Lord, are spirit  
and life: you have the words  
of everlasting life. Alleluia!

**Holy Gospel** according to  
John 6:60-69

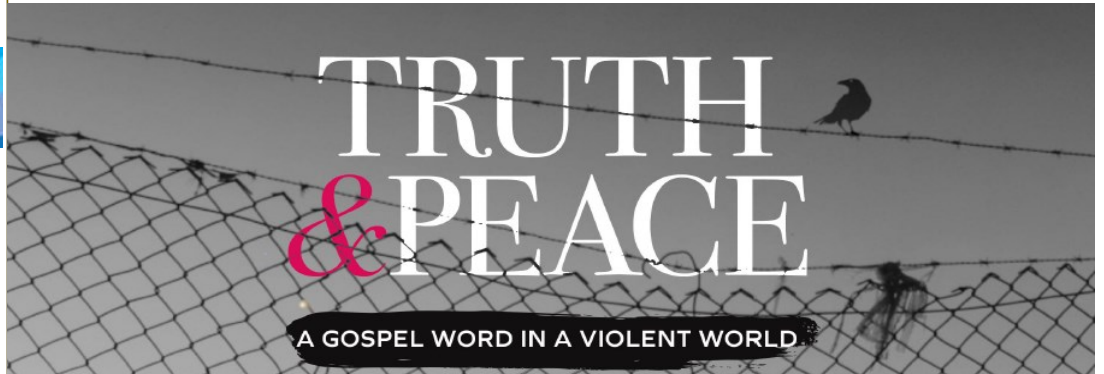
**Communion Antiphon**

The earth is replete with  
the fruits of your work,  
O Lord; you bring forth  
bread from the earth and  
wine to cheer the heart.

**1 September 2024**

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN  
ORDINARY TIME YEAR B  
First: Joshua 24:1-2. 15-18  
Resp Ps: Ps 33:2-3. 16-23.  
R. v.9  
Second: Ephesians 5:21-32  
Gospel: John 6:60-69

## Social Justice Sunday



Reflect on what we, as Christians, are called to do in a world wracked by war and violence. Truth is often the first casualty in war. The Gospel calls us to embrace the fundamental truth that every person on earth has a God-given dignity which cannot be taken away or ignored. From this truth flows the realisation that there is no 'us' or 'them'. Everyone on earth, whatever our race or creed or status, is a sister, a brother. We are all children of God. Keeping this truth before us is the key to overcoming violence and conflict. Armed not with guns and missiles, but with love for our sisters and brothers, we are invited to speak of peace and to take action to promote peace in a violent world.

On this Social Justice Sunday, let us re-commit ourselves to cultivating a culture of peace by following Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life and the Prince of Peace.- Truth and Peace: A Gospel Word in a Violent World - Australian Catholic Bishop's Social Justice Statement 2024; <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2024/07/25/social-justice-statement-2024-25/>

### ACTION FOR EVERYONE

Faced with the great challenge of making peace in the world, we can feel powerless. We can think that peace-making belongs only to the great political decision-makers of the world. But that is not true. Peace is the work of everyone, and we can all do something to be peace-makers. Indeed it is a duty imposed on us by the Gospel. Peace is to be made on both the macro and the micro level. We need to act small but think big, to act locally but think globally.

The truth is something not just spoken: it is also done. This is why St Paul speaks of the need to "do the truth in love" (Eph 4:15). In that sense, truth is a verb rather than a noun. Like love, it presumes action; and it is to action that we commit ourselves if we are people of truth and peace. Pope John Paul II entitled his Message for the World Day of Peace (1980) "Truth: the power of peace". When truth is not just spoken but done, it becomes power – power enough to turn "swords into ploughshares, spears into pruning-hooks" (Isa 2:4), power to set us free (cf. John 8:32).

Start with yourself. Invite God to nurture peace in your heart. Examining the things that happened over the course of your day when you pray before bedtime is a good practice. Ask yourself how you responded to conflicts.



## 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 at 12 noon	Healing Mass on the first Saturday of each month at 9am	Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am—12



### Contact us

Parish Priest:  
**Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD**

Parish Associate:  
**Sr “Jill” Girlie Sudario, CM**

### Office Hours

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

Phone: 9603 7373 / 0434 705 176

Email: [varroville@dow.org.au](mailto:varroville@dow.org.au)

Website: [varroville.dow.org.au](http://varroville.dow.org.au)

## Prayer intentions

**For the sick and homebound:** Peter Presdee, Matthew Johnson, 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, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys, Pat Stewart. Catherine, Elizabeth & Monika  
*May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain and affliction.*

**For our recently dearly departed:** Agnes Spooner, Neil Goodhew

**Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** William Parsons, Shirley Chitty, Gladys Bergicourt,  
*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



## Our Community: Rosters

1 September 2024	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
<b>Welcomers</b>	Glen C& Arlene	Martin , Violeti & Paul	Patricia & Maryanne
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Berna, Christian, Elijah & Austin	Orly	Robert & Nathan
<b>Readers</b>	Ryan & Michael	Irene & Volunteer	Margaret & Evangeline
<b>Refreshments</b>	Estela & Myra	Steve , Sarah & Tereza	Fev & Maree
<b>Altar Linen</b>		CLOTW: Lee & Asinate	
<b>Flowers</b>	Jeanne & Jessica	<b>Church Vacuuming</b>	Gerard & Maritas
<b>Counters</b>	George & Jackie	<b>Foyer Cleaning</b>	Estela & Maritas

## Meetings and Gatherings

**Friendship Group** meets on the first Tuesday of each month after the 9am Mass for morning tea. All are welcome and bring a friend.

**Readers Ministry Meeting** meets on the last Tuesday of every 2 months at 7.30pm via zoom.

**Holy Family Fellowship** meets on the 4th Saturday at 7pm.

**Book Club** meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 10am.

**Children’s Mass** is on the 5th Sunday of the month:

**Wrap with Love Knitting group** meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 11am

**Faith Circles** meets every Monday via zoom at 2pm & 7.30pm.

**Bible Reflection** group meets every Monday at 10am.

**Children’s Choir** will meet on 3rd Friday at 7.30pm.

**Children’s Ministry Gathering** will meet on the 4th Sunday from 3– 5 pm.

**“Ascent” Youth Ministry** All 13-17 years old are invited to join every fortnight on the 2nd & 4th Friday at 6:30 pm.

**Pastoral Care Team** meets on 23 August at 9.30am.

**ALPHA** meets every Tuesday at 7pm and Friday at 5pm.

## Our Parish Notices:

## Community Notices

**Major Cash Raffle is still going.** If you haven't already taken home a book of tickets please take one today. The draw will be held on Sunday 13 October.

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**Safeguarding workshop will be held on Wednesday 28 August at 6pm for everyone ministering with children in our parish** Working with Children Checks (WWCC) are required for the following child related roles: Acolytes, Adult Altar Servers, Catechists, Children' Liturgy Leaders, Choir Director (where there are children in the choir), Religious Persons delivering services to children, Sacramental Programme Coordinators, Sacramental Programme Team Members, Youth Group Leaders, and Youth Ministry Coordinator and Team Members.

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### **"COME & SEE, GO & MAKE" Formation Opportunity!**

Introduction to "Come & See, Go & Make" (CSGM) & Facilitating CSGM; Worksheet Activities (Double-event); Exploring the vision for parishes, why it matters, and how we can have hope for the future & understanding the parish approach to the Worksheet Activities.

Campbelltown – Monday 2 September, 7-9:30pm

Wollongong (& Zoom) – Wednesday 4 September, 7-9:30pm

REGISTER TO ATTEND: <http://dow.sh/sept2024>; All welcome!

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**The University of Notre Dame Australia Open Day Saturday, 31 August 10am-3pm;** Join us to discover what Notre Dame has to offer! Explore Sydney Campus, meet students, academic staff and graduates. Contact: [sydney@nd.edu.au](mailto:sydney@nd.edu.au) | 02 8204 4404 Register: [notredame.edu.au/openday](http://notredame.edu.au/openday).

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**Compass: Catholic Family Camping Weekend 13 – 15 Sept at Wooglemai Catholic Camping Facility, Oakdale:** Join with families of all ages and stages to celebrate the incredible gift of family life. Cost: \$30 per adult or \$70 per family (regardless of size). Camping & Bunk Room Options: You may like to pitch a tent, stay in a caravan, camper or swag. There are also male and female dormitory rooms with bunk beds. These will be allocated during registration on a first-come-first-served basis and will require strict supervision of children by parents/guardians. To register: <https://dow.sh/cfwsept24>

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**Catechist Retreat "Known and Loved":** Friday 20 September, 9:30am – 2:30pm: All who support the Catechist ministry, including SRE Teachers, Helpers, Prayer Partners, and Spouses are invited to attend what will be an excellent retreat. Facilitated by Katherine Stone MGL, the retreat will help us to gain a greater understanding of who Jesus is and who we are in the light of Jesus. The retreat will include Mass, reflections, prayer, and friendly discussion. Morning tea will be provided, but please BYO lunch. Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church, 80 Demetrius Rd, Rosemeadow; Registration is essential. Please register: [dow.sh/KnownLoved2024](http://dow.sh/KnownLoved2024).

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**Walk for Life Sydney, 2–4pm Saturday 21 September Hyde Park, Sydney (Near the Archibald Memorial Fountain)** Join the movement of Australians making abortion unthinkable in our country! All are welcome to this family-friendly gathering to be

a voice for the unborn and call for the protection of every life from the moment of conception. Further Information and Registration (for free): <https://www.lovesydney.org.au/>

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### **Ignite Conference 2024: Rise Up! (Sydney) 26-29 September**

A conference for everyone, from leaders to first-time believers. This is the Church gathered and alive on mission. This is God's people united with one heart. Ignite Conference is a gathering of Catholics for four days of real-world formation, renewal of faith, great people and powerful worship. Join with young people from our Diocese and over 2000 high schoolers, young adults, leaders, teachers, priests and religious taking part in a life changing encounter with God and His Church. For more info contact the parish office.

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**Weekend Retreat Jamberoo Abbey** invites all people to come and join in a face-to-face retreat at the Abbey titled "Encountering God in Lectio Divina". The retreat will be co-ordinated by local author Sr Antonia Curtis, who has put together an amazing weekend of prayer, learning and reflection. The retreat will make use of the new resource written by Sr Antonia. There is also the option of staying on at the Abbey for private reflection after the retreat ends on Sunday afternoon 28 September 2024. For more information, please visit [jamberooabbey.org.au](http://jamberooabbey.org.au)

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**Marriage Encounter Weekend:** We are offering an opportunity for you to learn to become the best version of yourselves together and live your best life in love! Come and join us on 25-27 October, 2024 at a Marriage Encounter Weekend in a Covid safe environment at Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville. Book online at [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au) or contact Christine & Terry Mahony on 0490 774 419 or [nswbookings@wwme.org.au](mailto:nswbookings@wwme.org.au). If you would like more information about Worldwide Marriage Encounter, please see the WWME website at [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au).

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**Growing Good Men Father and Teenage Son Weekend Experience** 25–27 October at the Cataract Activity Centre, Appin. One of the most important influences in the lives of men is the relationship they had with their father or significant father figure. The encouragement and affirmation that this relationship could, and should, provide, is a key ingredient for how young men view themselves and embrace their faith and gifts as they take their place in the world. Don't miss this life-changing father and son weekend! Spots are limited to just 25 fathers with their sons aged between 12 and 17 years. This is a unique opportunity for dads and their sons to embark on a quest of discovery with Robert Falzon and the team from menALIVE. Register online: <https://dow.sh/ggm24>

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**Pilgrims of Hope; 26 – 27 October Retreat weekend:** A retreat for men in preparation for the Jubilee Year of Hope at Mt Schoenstatt with Mass and Reconciliation. Facilitated by Fr Pawel OP. Email [mensbranch@schoenstatt.org.au](mailto:mensbranch@schoenstatt.org.au)

**Get Connected with what is on around the Diocese** Every week, there are many great opportunities to be part of special events, courses, free resources and to nurture and encourage you and your family in your faith. Stay informed by subscribing at [dow.sh/stayingconnected](http://dow.sh/stayingconnected) or visit [dow.sh/weeklybulletin](http://dow.sh/weeklybulletin) to see a full list of notices sent to Parishes.

## Holy Gospel according to John 6: 60-69

*Lord, whom shall we go to? You have the words of everlasting life.*

After hearing his doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?' Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?'

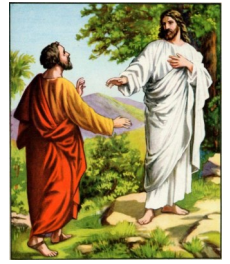
'It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer.

The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.' After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?' Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



## Reflection on the Reading

On this Social Justice Sunday, the readings put before us ask the question: What makes sense and what doesn't? This implies the question: Does a Christian commitment to social justice make sense?

In the Gospel, some of those who have heard the words of Jesus – that he is the Bread of Life and that his Body must be eaten, and his Blood must be drunk – decide that this makes no sense, and they take their leave. They no longer follow the rabbi who doesn't make sense. They go in search of another teaching which does make sense. In response to the Lord's question, Peter says that Jesus makes ultimate sense as the one who has the words of eternal life in a way that no-one else has; and he has these words because he alone is "the Holy One of God". Whatever Peter and the disciples don't know, they have come to know that.

In the reading from the Book of Joshua, the Chosen People are faced with a big decision as they leave the desert and enter the Promised Land. Their God was a desert God who had met them in the desert and led them through the desert for forty years. In a world where gods were tied to place, it made sense to leave this God in the desert as they entered an agricultural land where other gods held sway, the gods the Bible knows as the Baals. They were the gods of the fertile, farming land in which a desert god wasn't fit for purpose. So, it made perfect sense to think that the People should bid farewell to their desert God and embrace the Baals. But Joshua puts before them another logic which doesn't seem to make sense – that they remain faithful to their desert God and reject the Baals who are false gods, that they trust their God to be their protector not only in the desert but also in the Promised Land. To this the People say yes. This is a major theological shift, implying that the deity is not tied to place: the God of Israel is God in every place. A new kind of universalism is born.

In the Letter to the Ephesians, Paul puts before his community a vision which doesn't make sense in a world where a wife was regarded as part of a man's goods and chattels and where it was seriously counter-cultural to speak of the dignity of every human being and the rights attaching to this. But Paul offers a vision of radical mutuality in marriage which is based upon a sense of the equal dignity and rights of husband and wife; and he links this to the radical mutuality of love which unites Christ and the Church. In the culture of the time, Paul's vision didn't make sense; but it was a vision born of the encounter with the Risen Christ, the Bridegroom who has taken a Bride to himself. It is this encounter which overturns all the seemingly non-negotiable hierarchies of the world, the kind of hierarchies which reject mutuality and see some human beings as having a dignity, and rights denied to others.

In a world of such hierarchies, Social Justice Sunday doesn't make sense, because it too speaks of the equal dignity of every human being and the inalienable rights that flow from this. Human dignity comes from God who has created every person in the divine image, has made each one a daughter or son of God. This is why every human being has rights which come from God and not from governments; and just as governments don't confer these rights, they have no power to take them away, however much they may try.

This year's Social Justice Statement has as its theme, **TRUTH AND PEACE: A Gospel Word in a Violent World**. At a time when violence is everywhere we look, such a word, a word of truth, doesn't seem to make sense. It looks like weakness in a world where it seems only the strong can thrive. But the Gospel says that what looks like strength is weakness and what looks like weakness is strength. This is the upside-down logic of the Cross which never seems to make sense.

War may seem to be a show of strength, but it isn't. The rejection of truth upon which war depends may seem to make sense but it doesn't. The prime truth, a recognition of which is essential for peace, is the God-given dignity of the human being, which is violated whenever we have war. Connected to this is the further truth that every other human being is not my enemy but my sister, my brother, even my friend; and this truth too is rejected too whenever there is war. As St Paul says in Ephesians, there is only "one body"; but war denies that truth.

So, on this Social Justice Sunday and with the Social Justice Statement in our hand, we are God's People who speak that truth upon which peace depends. With Peter, we say to the Lord Jesus: "To whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we know that you are the Holy One of God". We are those who reply to Joshua: "We will serve the Lord, for he is our God", knowing that to serve the Lord isn't just a matter of religious formalities but requires a self-sacrificing commitment to the justice of God, a world of right relationship in which peace becomes possible, a world which makes sense.