

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.

**1 December 2024  
First Sunday in Advent  
Year C**



**Entrance Antiphon**

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

**First Reading** from the prophet Jeremiah 33:14-16

**Responsorial Psalm**

Ps 24:4-5. 8-9. 10. 14. R. v.1  
**Response:** To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

**Second Reading** from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 3:12 – 4:2

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

**Holy Gospel** according to Luke 21:25-28. 34-36

**Communion Antiphon**

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

**Next week  
Second Sunday of Advent  
Year C**

First: Baruch 5:1-9  
Resp Ps: Ps 125. R. v.3  
Second: Philippians 1:3-6. 8-11  
Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

**2025 Holy Year of Jubilee, Pilgrims of Hope**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Pope Francis has proclaimed that 2025 will be a Holy Year of Jubilee, a special year of grace and conversion, involving prayer, pilgrimage and sacramental repentance, ordinarily held every 25 years. The goal of a Jubilee year is to inspire and encourage holiness of life among the faithful and therefore to strengthen the Church's witness to God's loving mercy in and for the world.

The spiritual theme for the 2025 Holy Year of Jubilee is 'Pilgrims of Hope'. The Jubilee year will commence with the Opening of the Holy Door of Saint Peter's Basilica on December 24. As will be the case in Dioceses around the world, I will open the Holy Year in the Diocese of Wollongong on Sunday the 29th of December at the celebration of 10.30am Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong. The Jubilee will conclude on Sunday 28th December 2025.

In choosing the motto 'Pilgrims of Hope' for the Jubilee, Pope Francis noted that 'We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so greatly desire'.

It is just on twelve months ago that I promulgated Come and See, Go and Make – A vision for Parishes. In rearticulating the mission of our Diocese and painting a picture of the parish I see, I extoll the faithful to embrace this vision, its key principles and foundations, noting the need for all of us to be 'overwhelmed not by fear, but by hope!'

I regard it as most providential, that having commenced this journey of renewal in the Church of Wollongong, that we are being invited by Pope Francis to embrace renewed hope, and to continue to progress the elements of this diocesan vision for parishes under the great graces that will come from this Jubilee Year.

In response to Pope Francis' encouragement to embrace the historic tradition of pilgrimage, I have designated the following places within the Diocese of Wollongong as Jubilee Pilgrimage sites for the Holy Year:

1. St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong
2. Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Unanderra
3. Our Lady Help of Christians Parish Church, Rosemeadow
4. St Mary Star of the Sea Parish Church, Milton
5. St Joseph's Catholic Church, Kangaroo Valley
6. Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy, Penrose Park

According to the Apostolic Penitentiary Decree, the faithful who are "truly repentant and free from any affection for sin, moved by a spirit of charity and who, during the Holy Year, purified through the sacrament of penance and refreshed by Holy Communion, and praying for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff" can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence. Pope Francis explained that the indulgence is a way of "discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy".

A plenary indulgence with remission and forgiveness of all their sins, the Jubilee



Indulgence also requires “devoutly visiting any Jubilee site and there, for a suitable period of time, engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation, concluding with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any legitimate form, and invocations to Mary, the Mother of God.” It is also recommended that pilgrims, either personally or communally, recite the Holy Year Pilgrim’s Prayer.

Each Jubilee Pilgrimage Church site will host opportunities at advertised times during the Holy Year. I encourage you as individuals, families, and as communities to visit these sites of pilgrimage throughout the course of the year. During the Holy Year, I will visit each of the Jubilee Pilgrimage Churches to preside at a sacred liturgical celebration or devotion and, on that occasion, “impart the Papal Blessing with the ascribed plenary indulgence, obtainable by all the faithful who receive this Blessing under the usual conditions.” These visits will be advertised in due course on the Diocesan website and via the weekly communications notices.

The Diocesan Website will in due course provide a variety of pertinent information about the Jubilee year, including a list of key events in these places of pilgrimage.

As we enter this Advent season of hope and expectation, preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the hope of the world, I ask that we as a community, pray together the Jubilee Year Prayer, so that each one of us is inspired as believers to spread hope through our actions and words, encouraging others to trust in God's promises and love.

Fraternally,

Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD

Bishop of Wollongong

**Jubilee 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope**

The Universal Church is looking eagerly toward the Jubilee Year 2025. Pope Francis stated in his February 2022 letter announcing the Jubilee 2025: "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire..."

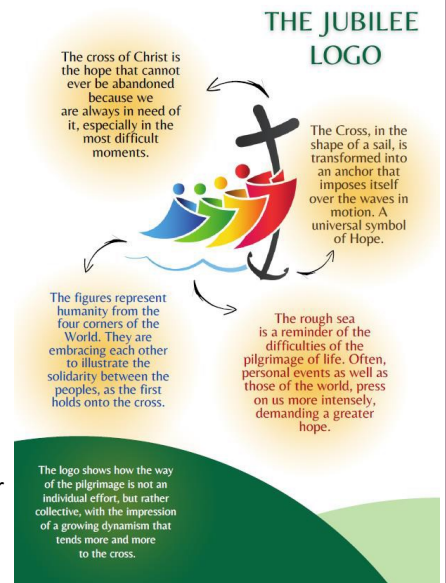
The Jubilee Year will offer the faithful opportunities to participate in various jubilee events at the Vatican and in their own Dioceses. The great tradition of opening the Holy Door will begin when Pope Francis opens the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica on December 24, 2024. Other holy doors will be opened at the Rome basilicas and of St John Lateran, St Mary Major and St Paul Outside the Walls and in Dioceses around the world on December 29, 2024 – the feast of the Holy Family.

For pilgrims who cannot travel to Rome, Bishop Mascord has designated the Cathedral and other sites, as Special Places of Pilgrimage, and outline associated opportunities for prayer, reconciliation, formation, celebration and how to embrace the merciful indulgences intended to strengthen and revive faith, and bring hope in the Church and the world.

Bishop Mascord will finalise and announce how we can together as a community of faith, celebrate Jubilee 2025 and be pilgrims of hope. While key events are being finalised for the Diocese, parishes are also encouraged to plan parish celebrations of the Jubilee of Hope.

**Preparing for the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope – Prayer Cards**

As a way of preparing our communities to journey together in faith and expectation, prayer cards have been produced that feature Pope Francis' Jubilee Prayer. Bishop Mascord encourages you to integrate this prayer into Sunday Masses, beginning with the first Sunday of Advent and continuing until the opening of the Holy Pilgrimage sites on the Feast of the Holy Family December 29, 2024.



**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: 3rd Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri and Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass & 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  
Website: varroville.dow.org.au

## Prayer intentions

**For the sick and homebound:** Fr David Catterall, Reg Bucknell, Mary Ponnappalam, 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, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys, Pat Stewart.  
*May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain and affliction.*

**For our recently dearly departed:** Arthur John Woods, Alfredo Cortez, Mara Srebenovic, Marija Radja, Monique Serret, Joe Spinnato, Stanley Gomez,

**Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** Betty Dodd  
*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



## Our Community: Rosters

8 December 2024	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
<b>Welcomers</b>	Gabriel & Volunteer	Martin, Violeti, Paul	Patricia & Maryanne
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Ryan, Amana, Elijah, Eliarna	Orly	Michael & Nathan
<b>Readers</b>	Loretta & Gerard	Allan & Aida	
<b>Altar Linen</b>	Maria	<b>CLOTW:</b> Josephine & Nellie	
<b>Counters</b>	George & Tess	<b>Church Vacuuming</b>	Feiloakitohi family

## Meetings and Gatherings

**Friendship Group Christmas Party is on Tuesday 3 December** at the home of the Carmelite Missionary Sisters (call the parish for the address). Commencing at 10am with Mass followed by anointing. Then the party will start. The day will include brunch and Christmas festivities. Please bring a plate to share and a gift (max \$10) for the Kris Kringle game. Please come along and bring a friend.

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**Celebrate the Babe, Christmas Carols will be held on Saturday 14 December at 7pm in the parish hall.** Save the date and bring your family for a night of caroling. Singers are welcome to join. Please contact the parish office to register your interest if you wish to perform



**Vinnies Christmas Appeal:** See the tree in the back of the church; take a tag and return the item next week.

**New rosters have been put on the website.** Please contact the parish if you have any concerns.

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

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

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

**Advent Reflection Groups** will commence on this week Every Tuesday at 7.30pm in the parish meeting room. Every Sunday at 6pm for Young adults. All welcome to attend.

**Advent reflection booklets**, The Light, are available to purchase this weekend for \$5 per booklet.

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**Summer School of Evangelisation (Sydney): 7-14 January 2025 Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville** Summer School is a week-long, live-in, life-changing retreat featuring praise and worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill & learn and more in the midst of a community of New members are welcome to join our ministry 150+ young people aged 16-35. Registrations open 31st October. Register by 30th November to receive early bird rates. More info: [contact@summerschool.org.au](mailto:contact@summerschool.org.au). Bookings: [summerschool.org.au](http://summerschool.org.au)

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**Annual General Reunion:** The legion of Mary—Our Lady Queen of Peace Campbelltown Curia is celebrating The immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 6th December 2024 at St John the Evangelist Catholic Church at 6pm; Legion Prayers and 6.30pm Holy Mass. Refreshments provided at the end Mass in Hall. All Welcome!!!

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**An invitation to join electronic parish planned giving from your Parish Finance Council** An electronic regular gift provides many benefits. You will find it a secure, convenient and efficient way to regularly support your parish, while also reducing our administration costs. It will also help us to confidently forecast and plan, as we know that we can rely on your support. You can increase, decrease, discontinue or restart your monthly gift at any time. Please visit <https://www.dow.org.au/giving2/parishgiving/> to learn of the four simple ways you can support our parish electronically.

**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.

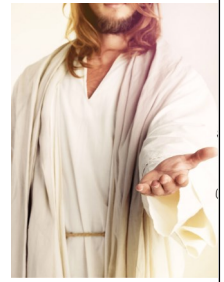
## Holy Gospel according to Luke 21:25-28. 34-36

*Your redemption is near at hand.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.

'Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.'

The Gospel of the Lord!



## Gospel Reflection by Mary Coloe PBVM

### YEAR C – Introducing Luke: 'Come to the Party'

The father in one of Jesus' parables offers this invitation to his older son, 'Come, celebrate my joy with me, my lost son has returned.' These words sum up one of the major themes of Luke's Gospel, which we read this year. Jesus begins his ministry with the announcement in Nazareth that the year of 'God's favour' has arrived, the year of jubilee, of liberation. Joy and celebration are characteristics of this Gospel. So often this year we will read of Jesus at meals, or talking about meals – it is as if Jesus is at one long party as he invites all to come and celebrate God's gracious love. The message is: all are welcome at his table. Of course, his behaviour and his teaching is scandalous to the religious authorities of his time, who had strict rules about who could come to the table or not, about who was sufficiently pure, or morally acceptable. Jesus welcomed all – but not all wanted to come. Jesus might have been acceptable, but his table companions definitely were not.

Similar issues face our communities today, just as they faced Luke's community towards the end of the first century. What conditions do we place on God? What rules do we make about who is acceptable and who not? Scholars think that Luke's community were mainly non-Jews, and in the early church this was a dilemma. All Jesus' original disciples were Jews and, at first, it seemed that Jesus' message was only for the children of Israel. It seemed that non-Jews (the Gentiles) would first need to join the Jewish covenant in order to become Christian. Guided by the Spirit, the early believers came to realise that they had no monopoly on God's Spirit and that God was inviting Gentiles also into a new community where barriers between Jew and Gentile were to be broken down. Luke is writing in the 80's when that issue had been resolved (although not completely) and so he emphasises that the reign\* of God is inclusive, and that those considered poor and outcast are particularly welcome.

Most translations use the word 'kingdom' to translate the Greek term *basileia*. This image is no longer helpful as there are very few 'kingdoms' in our world today, and even the idea of 'kingship' is not sufficient to describe what is meant by *basileia*. It comes closer to the Hebrew word 'shalom', peace, or wholeness. It is an image used to speak of a world as God desires it to be. I will use the word 'reign' of God, and sometimes leave the Greek term, *basileia*.

### First Sunday in Advent

Today we begin a new year in the great Christian drama of Salvation. The purple colours of the liturgy announce a mood of waiting and anticipation. Over the next four weeks, we will draw closer to the central mystery of our faith focussed on a small hillside village of Bethlehem. Once again, we will celebrate that God has come to us and joined with us in the common human experiences of birth, anxiety, travel and powerlessness.

Luke is particularly interested in history. You might remember that it is Luke who begins his Gospel by giving us the historical context: the events he records took place during the days of Herod the Great, while the Emperor was Caesar Augustus, and Quirinius was the Governor of that region. He understands that Jesus has inaugurated events that will bring this world's history, with all its struggles against evil powers, to an end, so that God's reign can begin. In the Jewish traditions about the final days, they thought that God would send someone from heaven who is called in the book of Daniel a 'Son of Man'.

'As I watched in the night visions,  
I saw one like a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven.  
And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him.  
To him was given dominion and glory and kingship,  
that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.  
His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away,  
and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed. (Daniel 7:13-14)

Jesus saw himself as a prophet of the End Times and all the Gospel record that he named himself 'The Son of Man'. This title gives us some insight into Jesus' self-perception of his mission – to announce the defeat of the powers of evil, and to inaugurate the reign of God.

Two thousand years later, do we sense in our hearts the urgency that Jesus and Paul felt, an urgent desire for God to come to us? This is what Advent time is for – a time for our hearts to awaken and to know our own personal need for God to come and share the journey of our lives.