

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.

**8 December 2024  
Second Sunday in Advent  
Year C**



**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  
Baruch 5: 1-9

**Responsorial Psalm**

Ps 125. R. v.3

**Response:**

The Lord has done great things  
for us; we are filled with joy.

**Second Reading**

from the letter of St Paul to the  
Philippians 1: 3-6, 8-11

**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

Luke 3: 1-6

**Communion Antiphon**

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

**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



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

First: Zephaniah 3:14-18

Resp Ps: Is 12:2-6 R. v.6

Second: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:10-18

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..."

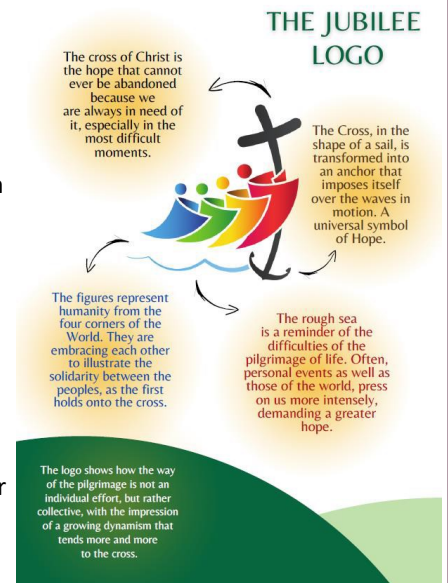
The Jubilee Year will offer the faithful opportunities to participate in various jubilee events at the Vatican and in their own Dioceses. The great tradition of opening the Holy Door will begin when Pope Francis opens the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica on December 24, 2024. Other holy doors will be 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>	Suzanne, Russell, Berna	Gabriel, Bianca, Antony	Geoff & Margaret, Danni
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Maria, Casandra, Abigail, Austin	Orly	Vu & Nathan
<b>Readers</b>	Suzanne & Margaret	Tess & Laurie	Gloria & Effie
<b>Altar Linen</b>	Nellie	<b>CLOTW:</b>	
<b>Counters</b>	Ruby, Cynthia & Bing	<b>Church Vacuuming</b>	Susan R

## Meetings and Gatherings

**Celebrate the Babe, a Joyous Christmas Celebration; Join us for a magical evening filled with Christmas Cheer on Saturday 14 December at 7pm in the parish hall.** Enjoy beautiful carols performed by our talented parish choirs, a candlelit ambience, and fun activities for all ages. Please bring a plate of finger food to share and your picnic blanket (if you wish to sit on the floor) chairs will be provided.



### Celebrate the Babe Christmas Carols

**Saturday, December 14th, starting at 7 pm!**



**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Hall**  
**193 St Andrews Rd Varroville**



**Bring a plate for supper**      **Free entry**

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

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

**On The Journey This Week:** Fr Joshua Whicker MGL says the Gospel calls us to remove obstacles and open our hearts to Jesus. Mother Hilda says that no matter how disfigured someone's earthly identity may seem, they are known and cherished by the Father. Plus, Fr Tony Percy, and two Light Advent Series reflections.

The Journey podcast available at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au).

\*\*\*\*\*

**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.

\*\*\*\*\*

**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. Bookings: [summerschool.org.au](http://summerschool.org.au)  
 More info: [contact@summerschool.org.au](mailto:contact@summerschool.org.au).

\*\*\*\*\*

**Go Deeper in your Faith with popular FREE Catholic Podcasts**

• **Bible in a Year**

Ascension Press will again run the Catholic Bible in a Year Podcast featuring Fr Mike Schmitz and Jeff Cavins in 2024. It remains one of the world's leading podcasts with over 400 million downloads. While a new podcast is released daily, you can do it at your own pace signing up at [www.ascensionpress.com/biy](http://www.ascensionpress.com/biy) and it's not too late to catch up or simply work through at your own pace.

• **Catechism in a Year**

This year, Ascension Press will also again run the Catechism in a Year podcast which will slowly and prayerfully read through and break open the Catechism over 365 days. It's not too late to catch up, and the daily podcasts can be listened to at your own pace. It is available at [www.ascensionpress.com/ciy](http://www.ascensionpress.com/ciy)

**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/weekly](http://dow.sh/weekly) bulletin to see a full list of notices sent to Parishes.

## Holy Gospel according to Luke 3: 1-6

All people shall see the salvation of God.

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;  
Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
Every valley will be filled in,  
every mountain and hill be laid low,  
winding ways will be straightened  
and rough roads made smooth.  
And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.  
The Gospel of the Lord!



## Gospel Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

Two movements appear in this dramatic depiction of reversal of fortune. The grieving city of Jerusalem is told to replace its mourning garb with garments that bespeak splendour and rejoicing. The city whose name means 'foundation of peace', is given a new name: 'the peace of justice, the glory of God's worship'. Jerusalem is also told to stand on the heights and watch the resplendent return of its previously captured citizens. No reason is given for God's remarkable magnanimity. It is simply extended to Jerusalem and to its children. It is God's mercy that prompted the reversals, and the reversals witness this mercy to the rest of the world.

Believers trust that God will surely act on their behalf, because God has done so before. The great blessing of Israel's past was the return from exile. The response of the returnees was amazement. The graciousness of God, seen in this deliverance, speaks volumes to the other nations. It throws into bold relief God's saving power. This is a God who shows preference for those who are poor and marginalised in society, the homeless and the foreigner, the displaced and the refugee. The prayer for deliverance is straightforward: Restore us now as you restored us in the past. The people are confident that they will be heard.

Paul's affection for the Philippians is evident. It is more than merely human sentiment, as noble as that might be. It is identified with the affection that Christ has toward them. It is really the love of Christ expressing itself through him. Paul acknowledges that the spread and fruition of the word is really God's doing. Paul is merely the instrument that God has used to plant the seed. The eschatological character of this passage becomes clear when Paul identifies the time of full flowering as the day of Christ Jesus. Paul prays that their love for each will increase; and that they will be pure and blameless for the coming day of Christ.

The account of the ministry of John the Baptist is steeped in imagery that suggests new life. Some form of baptism was one of three requirements for becoming a Jew (along with circumcision and sacrifice). It was an ascetic act that at times signified turning away from evil, and at other times represented cleansing from sin, which was the divine answer to repentance. In either case, it carried an eschatological importance, marking the entrance into a new form of living. The baptism of John called for repentance (*metánoia*), a conversion or change of heart. This conversion was for the forgiveness of sin. Clearly the eschatological significance of John's baptism was salvation, not judgment. John is the herald of the coming of the Lord. Just as the exodus and return from exile involved a desert crossing, so the eschatological renewal proclaimed by John begins in the desert.

### Christmas Mass Times

Parish Reconciliation Service: 7.30pm on Friday 20 December



- ◆ Christmas Pageant: 6pm on Christmas Eve
- ◆ Vigil Mass at 7pm on Christmas Eve
- ◆ Christmas Midnight Mass
- ◆ Christmas Morning Mass at 9.30am

