



National Vocations Awareness Week

The Blood on the Street

Tom's (not his real name) Mum was dying, thousands of kilometers away, and he didn't know what to do. Tom was not religious but he did know someone who was. Peter Presdee, a Catholic Deacon and Chaplain, had passed him in the prison where he worked as an officer. Peter would say hello and have a yarn. And he was a fellow Aboriginal man in uniform. Perhaps Tom could try the chaplain? After hearing the story, Peter and Robyn, his wife, came at the right time. With Tom, Tom's wife and his comatose mother, they celebrated an unforgettable, inter-racial liturgy. Peter described it as "marvellous... you could feel them letting her go."

Another time it was Jody and Annette (not their real name), a couple who were also prison officers. Jody rang Deacon Peter from Shoalhaven Hospital, where their little baby was seriously ill with pneumonia. Could he come and pray over their child? So Peter went. They gathered around the cot with a couple of nurses and he explained the Our Father and the Hail Mary. Then he blessed them all. Thankfully, the child improved and the family could return home. It was not only the child who changed that day, but everyone, especially Peter. A week later, Jody came up to Peter in the prison. She described the state that she had been in that day. She had just wanted to help her child and didn't know what to do. And she didn't think that anyone in the church would have anything to do with a lesbian. But she remembered that Peter had been telling her that God looks after all of us, including herself. So she had made the call.

These two examples epitomise Peter's ministry to the margins, both to residents of the prison and the officers who serve them. His pathway began with a stint in the seminary in the 1960s, and led through a wavering relationship with the Catholic Church. He married Robyn, and they were led from another denomination to return/be received into the church of his origins in the early 2000s. Peter felt a calling inside to the permanent diaconate, but was initially told to "study and pray", as his diocese did not have any in that ordained state. So, Peter studied and prayed with gusto, until he had more qualifications than many priests. A Catholic prison chaplaincy position was opening up and Peter agreed to take it up if he was ordained. It didn't happen straight away, but Peter gave up his job of 30 years to work in a family care centre helping the homeless and victims of violence and addiction. Five years later, he was ordained for the Wollongong Diocese and became a prison Chaplain.

Peter believes that the deacon's role is to be the "face of Christ in the street". He is an "extension of the bishop" and goes out on his behalf. Peter is inspired by the story in Acts 6, of people who were on the outskirts of the community for three reasons: being women, Greek and widows. It is hard to be involved in God's family if you are hungry. So the deacon's role is to 'feed' and 'give sustenance' the whole person, so they can truly participate. It is about service and about the essence of the Church – its people. He finds Jesus in those he meets, especially where there is no church structure. And in reaching out to the world 'outside the temple' he both nourishes and is nourished by them in turn.

Story from Deacon Peter Presdee, RIP
(First Permanent Deacon for the Diocese of Wollongong)

10 August 2025
Eighteenth Sunday
Year C

Entrance Antiphon

Look to your covenant, O Lord, and forget not the life of your poor ones for ever. Arise, O God, and defend your cause, and forget not the cries of those who seek you.

First reading from the book of Wisdom 18: 6-9

Responsorial Psalm Ps 32:1. 12. 18-20. 22. R. v.12

Response:

Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.

Second reading from the letter to the Hebrews 11: 1-2, 8-19

Gospel Acclamation Alleluia, alleluia!

Be watchful and ready:
You know not when the Son of Man is coming.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel according to Luke 12: 32-48

Communion Antiphon

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord, who gives you your fill of finest wheat.

Next week

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C

First Reading:

Jeremiah 38:4-6. 8-10

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 39:2-4. 18. R. v.14

Second Reading:

Hebrews 12:1-4

Gospel: Luke 12:49-53

Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil: 6pm

Sunday: 9.30am & 5pm

Samoan Mass: 1st Sunday of August at 12noon

Maori Mass: 1st Sunday of each month at 2pm

Filipino Mass: 3rd Sunday of each month at 11.15am

Children's Mass: 5th Sunday of the month at 9.30am

Weekday Mass

- 9am each day except Thursday;
- Thursday at 7.30pm
- Healing Mass on the 1st Saturday of each month at 9am.

Devotions & Prayer groups

- Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday at 9.30am
- Alliance of the 2 hearts Mass & devotion: 1st Friday of each month at 7.30pm
- Divine Mercy Devotion: 3rd Sunday of each month at 3pm
- Reconciliation every Saturday at 11am.
- Faith Circles: every Monday at 2pm & 7pm via zoom
- Holy Family Fellowship: every 4th Saturday at 7pm.
- Book Club meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 10am.
- Friendship Group is on the 1st Tuesday of the Month
- Bible Study & Reflection group meets Monday at 10am.
- Children's Ministry Gathering will meet on the 4th Sunday from 3– 5 pm
- Ascent Youth Ministry meets on the 2nd & 4th Friday from 6.30p.

Parish Notices

Masses for The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Friday 15 August 25 will be held at 9am & 7.30pm

Confirmation preparation classes commence on Saturday 16 August at 4pm. Registrations are being accepted at the parish office or online at [www.https://varroville.dow.org.au/confirmation/](https://varroville.dow.org.au/confirmation/). Confirmation will be celebrated on 13 September at 9.30am Mass

Invitation by Darren McDowell Ordination to his Diaconate it is with great pleasure and gratitude that I invite you to attend my ordination to the Diaconate occurring on **Saturday 23rd August, 10am at St Francis Xavier Cathedral Wollongong**. This will be a wonderful celebration for myself and for our Diocese. Please RSVP at <https://www.sjec.org.au/darren> so that we can

Compass: "Bush" family camping weekend Friday 5 – Sunday 7 September at Guntawang – Wooglemai Catholic Camping Facility

We are excited to be returning for the second of our 2025 Catholic family camping weekends at Guntawang Catholic Youth Centre. This weekend is designed to bring together families of all ages, including couples with or without children, single parents with their children, and grandparents, to celebrate the incredible gift of family life. Mark your calendars for a wonderful opportunity to connect with families from across the diocese in a laid-back setting. Enjoy shared meals, games, music, prayer, and Mass together. To secure your spot, register now. dow.org.au/events/compass-bush-family-camping-weekend Cost: \$50 per adult or \$100 per family. RSVP: Fri 29 Aug.

2025 Significant Marriage Anniversaries Mass If you are celebrating 25, 30, 40, 50, 60 or over 60 years of marriage this year, we invite you to the celebration of Significant Marriage Anniversaries, to be celebrated with Bishop Brian Mascord on Sunday 24 August at 2pm at the St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong. Mass will be followed by light refreshments in the Xavier Centre Conference Room. Please register online at <https://dow.sh/MA2025> by no later than Monday, 11 August. Any enquiries please email Helen Bennett helen.bennett@dow.org.au

Hear from Pope Leo XIV Sunday Echo is a limited-release resource the Diocese has developed that contains, using the Holy Father's most recent homily or reflection and accompanying discussion questions. Each issue will be released the day after Pope Leo XIV gives a homily or reflection on the most recent Sunday Gospel readings go to <https://www.dow.org.au/media-resources/faith-circles/> to access or sign up to have sent straight to you.

Strengthening Relationships Courses – Enrol Now Strengthen your family relationships and navigate life's changes with confidence. Catholic-Care's courses support families, children, and individuals, especially during times of change. Call 4227 1122 or go to: www.catholiccare.dow.org.au

Committee for Older People The Diocesan Committee for Older People meets monthly in both Campbelltown and Wollongong and are on the look out for new members. The Committee partners with and promotes the activities of parishes, service providers and advocacy groups to assist older parishioners. We are on the look out for committee members so if you know of anyone that might be interested please reach out to Jane Hollier.

UOW Catholic Society invites all UOW students, staff, and friends to our start of semester BBQ! This is a great way to connect with other Catholics on campus and become involved with the many activities CathSoc hosts. Follow @uowcathsoc on Instagram for more details.

Date: 12.30pm Sat 23 August; Location: Stuart Park; Cost: Free! Register now: <http://tiny.cc/CathSocBBQ>

Parish Notices

Newman Lecture 2025 Hosted by the Bulli Branch of the Knights of the Southern Cross (KSC) presents "THE LEGACY OF POPE FRANCIS"; Guest Speaker: Bishop Brian Mascord; Date: Saturday, 6 Sept at 2:00pm; Venue: Xavier Centre, Wollongong; Will be Live-streamed nationally; Open invitation to all parishioners and friends across the Wollongong Diocese; Live-stream link to be advised closer to the lecture; For bookings, use: <https://www.trybooking.com/DDQBT>; For further information, contact: Denis Bristow 0412699929

The Interdiocesan Tribunal of Sydney In 2015, Pope Francis wrote that "charity and mercy demand that the Church, like a good mother, be near her children who feel themselves estranged from her." The Interdiocesan Tribunal of Sydney, which has an Office in the Diocese of Wollongong, is a service of the Church to assist with the pastoral care of Catholics and non-Catholics who are civilly divorced, and who are seeking to remarry or who want clarification of their standing in the Church. The Tribunal also assists remarried persons seeking to have their current marriage recognised in the Church, and remarried persons wishing to be baptised or received into the Church. Any divorced person, or a divorced and remarried person is welcome to contact the Wollongong Office of the Tribunal to obtain further information, or to have their status within the Church clarified. The Wollongong Office of the Tribunal is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. You are welcome to contact the Tribunal on 4222 2409 or tribunal@dow.org.au or visit www.tribunal.dow.org.au

Catholic Business Connections (CBC) September Luncheon Thurs 23 Sept at Rydges Campbelltown 11.45 - 2.00pm; Topic: The Power of Intergenerational Learning The guest speakers will be Jane Hollier and David Gearin, from CatholicCare who will be speaking about The Power of Intergenerational Learning, part of the Cross+Gen digital literacy initiative which is being promoted throughout the diocese. RSVP: 15 September Link to buy guest tickets: Guest Tickets

Want your community to grow? Try Faith Circles Faith Circles is a weekly resource to help individuals but mainly small groups to come together in Parishes. In doing so it assists in the development of faith and community, a strong desire expressed in our Diocesan feedback from the National Church Life Survey. The weekly Faith Circles resource is available for free to download. It is easy to use with simple questions and prayer points. It is available to download at www.dow.org.au/media-resources/faith-circles/ or have it sent to you each month via email subscription.

Prayer intentions



For the sick and homebound:

Pat Cullen, Mary Ponnalam, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Barry Atkins, Carol and Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdryns, Pat Stewart, Allan Marquinez, Richard Scolyer, Angela Perosh Pavlovic, *May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain and affliction.*

For our recently departed:

John Rogan. Marie Atkins

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Anne La Spina, Jeff Randal

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.

Please contact the parish office to add names for prayer intentions

Our Rosters

17 August	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Richard & Tracey	Siska, Bianca & Antony	Maryann, Jackie & Danni
Altar Servers	Maria, Cassandra, Abigail & Austin	Vu	Michael & Nathan
Readers	Loretta & Gerard	Andy & Caroline	Madonna & Tim
Altar Linen	Berna	CLOTW:	Lee & Sarah
Counters	Vilma, Jeanette & Irene	Church Vacuuming	Feiloakitohi Family



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
Address: 193 St Andrews Rd, Varroville
Email: varroville@dow.org.au

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.

Holy Gospel according to Luke 12: 32-48

See that you are prepared.

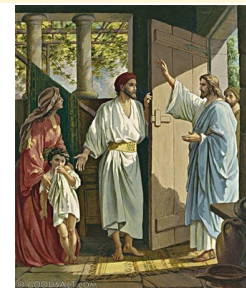
Jesus said to his disciples: "There is no need to be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom. "Sell your possessions and give alms. Get yourselves purses that do not wear out, treasure that will not fail you, in heaven where no thief can reach it and no moth destroy it. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

"See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Happy those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what hour the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Peter said, "Lord, do you mean this parable for us, or for everyone?" The Lord replied, "What sort of steward, then, is faithful and wise enough for the master to place him over his household to give them their allowance of food at the proper time? Happy that servant if his master's arrival finds him at this employment. I tell you truly, he will place him over everything he owns. But as for the servant who says to himself, "My master is taking his time coming", and sets about beating the menservants and the maids, and eating and drinking and getting drunk, his master will come on a day he does not expect and at an hour he does not know. The master will cut him off and send him to the same fate as the unfaithful.

"The servant who knows what his master wants, but has not even started to carry out those wishes, will receive very many strokes of the lash. The one who did not know, but deserves to be beaten for what he has done, will receive fewer strokes. When a man has had a great deal given him, a great deal will be demanded of him; when a man has had a great deal given him on trust, even more will be expected of him."

The Gospel of the Lord.



SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY by Greg Sunter

This week's gospel passage carries with it the expectation of the late 1st Century as the early Christians awaited the triumphant return of the Christ (sometimes called the Second Coming or the *Parousia*). This is a familiar theme through the gospels and, in fact, across the gospels we can see that the communities were beginning to face the realisation that the promised return was taking longer than they had expected. In the gospel of Mark, it is clear that the community expects the Parousia at any moment, while by the time of the writing of the gospel of Luke, 10 or 15 years later, we can see that the language has taken on an aspect of uncertainty about the timing – it could be sooner or it could be later ("It may be in the second watch he comes, or in the third...").

What began to emerge was an attitude that if we don't know when the Parousia will come, then we need to live 'in anticipation' of it. We need to live as *if* the Parousia were imminent. So, rather than waiting for the kingdom of God to be delivered, we must live our lives in such a way as to bring about the kingdom; to draw the kingdom into the present. Jesus often spoke of the kingdom as both near and not yet. If we all live the values of the kingdom, by our very actions we bring the kingdom into being. This gives an incredible significance to the way we choose to live our lives. If we 'invest' in the kingdom by living out the values of the kingdom and living in expectation of the Parousia, then that 'investment' is its own reward.

There's a seat for you and You're Invited

Alpha is a safe space where you can ask questions about life, faith & meaning.

Right now, a seat at the table has been prepared for you.

Starting in our Parish on Tuesday 12 August at 7pm for dinner.

Or Friday 15 August at 5:30pm for dinner (children catered for).

Invite family, friends, work colleagues & neighbours. For those that have already been to an Alpha come again and share your experience in a safe welcoming environment.

The Alpha talks are designed to engage people from all walks of life and inspire conversation. They explore the big issues of life and faith and unpack the basics of Christian belief, addressing questions like "Who is Jesus?", "Why and how do I pray?" and "How does God guide us?"

One of the most important parts of any Alpha: the chance to share thoughts and ideas on the topic, and discuss in a small group. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing you can't say (seriously). It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest, friendly and open environment.

For more details: Tuesday Alpha contact Paul & Lorian 0412216589; Friday Alpha contact Diane 0403322098

