



CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS

Catholic Parish of Dulwich Hill, Archdiocese of Sydney, Established in 1907
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Bishop Richard Umbers DD VG (Bishop in Residence)
Fr. Andrew James (Parish Priest), (Deacon) Rev Louis Azzopardi



Third Sunday of Advent / A

11 December 2022

PRIMARY SCHOOL



Ph.: 9558 5308
Principal: Ms Frances Stewart
REC: Ms Christine Brais
Family Educ: Tania Chahoud
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With St Paul of the Cross we pray ...

For the sick

- Elmano Belo
- Patrick Crowley
- Sidney Luximon
- Allen Portell
- Leonor Delgado
- Patricia Stack
- Raul Cabrera
- Ruth Wilson
- Raymond Hudson
- Fr Jim Duggan
- Pat Allport
- Cardo, Zennie, Ian, Pat
- Christina

Recently Deceased

Death Anniversary

Giuseppe Pino Freeza

For the Souls

- Fr Basil Francis Rosen
- Danielle Cossu
- Antonia Luigi
- Antonio Luigi
- Baingia

All forgotten Souls and Holy Souls in Purgatory

Special Intention

- Marlena Pillon
- Ric Rita, Noah
- Chris & Joseph
- Genevieve Grace Rita Faggion (thanksgiving for the birth of a grandchild)
- Henry & Tina and my family
- Leah Tillam



“Let the wasteland rejoice and bloom”

Isaiah expressed his vision of a renewed Israel in an image that, as Australians, we can easily appreciate since we too live in ‘a land of droughts and flooding rains’: “*let the wasteland rejoice and bloom; let it bring forth flowers.*” He spoke to a conquered people forced to live in exile far from the land that God had given them and that they had lost as a result of their own sins and failures. Their towns and cities had been destroyed and farms turned into “wastelands”.

However, he dared to hope that God was coming to save them and that “*those the Lord has ransomed shall return.*”

Isaiah’s hope wasn’t an empty hope, a kind of optimism or wishful thinking, but was a hope based on their experience of God’s faithfulness to them despite their own lack of faith in God: “*it is the Lord who keeps faith forever...who sets prisoners free.*” God’s continuing faithfulness was like rain in the desert. At the right time it would restore life to what seemed to be a dead landscape and a dry and desolate place would “*rejoice and sing for joy*”.

The hope that is expressed in Isaiah’s vision is more than ‘an improvement’. It is a complete transformation. God’s coming and the renewal of Israel that would then follow, would mean that now “*the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unsealed.*” This would be a transformation of our lives that would be no less miraculous than the dry sands of the desert “*rejoicing and blooming*”.

This is the transformation that Jesus would bring about in his lifetime and beyond, down to our own times. He said to John the Baptist, now in prison and experiencing the rejection that Jesus himself would later experience, that “*the blind see again... the deaf hear and the dead are raised to life.*” We see here a transformation beyond even the one that Isaiah himself had hoped for. As we reflect on each of these signs in the context of Jesus’ life, we see a transformation that goes beyond simply physical healing and renewal. Jesus would enable all those who are blind and deaf to God to see him and hear him through his own life. He would himself rise from the dead thereby overcoming the natural limitations of human life.

Jesus asks John to see what was happening because he had come into the world. He is in every sense the fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy of “*God coming to save us*” only, this time, the whole of humanity is being addressed and not just Israel. John is now silenced, locked up in Herod’s prison and perhaps uncertainty and doubt have crept into his mind. Is Jesus “*the one who is to come or have we got to wait for someone else?*” Jesus’ reply, pointing out what was happening through him, has the same intention behind it as Isaiah’s words to the depressed and fearful Jewish exiles, “*Courage! Do not be afraid*”.

Our readings for this Sunday provide us with a message of hope and encouragement that we all need to take to heart. As we look at our place and our role as Christians in Australian society now, it is very tempting to feel as discouraged as the Jewish exiles were in Isaiah’s time and as John the Baptist in prison may have been. We can become “*weary*” in our efforts to respond to the increasingly successful attempts of those in our society who wish to silence the voice of Christ and his Church. We can develop “*faint hearts*” and “*trembling knees*” as we reflect on how our own failures, divisions and compromises have handicapped our efforts to show our society that “*the Lord will reign forever.*”

Jesus reminds us that “*happy are they who do not lose faith in me.*” Our faith is not in ourselves or in our own efforts, however successful or unsuccessful they may be. It is our faith in Christ’s presence among us as “*God who comes to save us.*” Our Gospel reading ends with Jesus’ praise of “*the least in the kingdom of Heaven*” and here we remember how often Jesus spoke of faith in relation to what seems small and insignificant especially seeds and little children. This faith, our day to day turning to God who has come to save us, may seem small and insignificant to us and to the rest of the world but it will, through God’s love and his faithfulness to us, make “*the wasteland rejoice and bloom*”.

Deacon Louis

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

Christmas Mass Times

24th December Saturday Family Mass 5:30pm
Midnight Mass 12:00am
25th Dec Sunday Christmas Day 8:00am
10:00am

Reconciliation (Individual) each Saturday at 4:30pm

Parish Office

Maria - Mondays
Cecilia - Wed-Friday
9.30am - 2:30pm

Parish & Hall enquiries

9558 3257

Mass Times

Sat: 5:30pm (Vigil)
Sun: 8am & 10am
Mon to Fri: 9:00am
Sat: 9:30am

Family Mass with Children’s Liturgy

3rd Sunday of the Month 10am Mass

Morning Tea Sunday

3rd Sunday of the Month after 10:00am Mass

Filipino Mass

1st Sun 11:30am

Sacraments

Confession

Sat 8:30-9:20am, 4:45pm or any time by appointment

Baptism

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

Marriage

At least 6 months notice required

Anointing of the Sick

Any time on call

Devotions

Holy Hour & Rosary

Sunday - Friday before morning mass

Rosary & Benediction

Sat 8:30-9:30am

Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Wednesday 7pm

Feast/Solemnity/Memorial/Saint of the Week

12 - 17 Dec 2022)

Mon 12/12 Our Lady of Guadalupe
Tue 13/12 St Lucy, virgin, martyr
Wed 14/12 St John of the Cross, priest, doctor

Our Lady of Guadalupe

According to tradition, Mary appeared to Juan Diego, who was an Aztec convert to Christianity, on December 9 and again on December 12, 1531. During her first apparition she requested that a shrine to her be built on the spot where she appeared, Tepeyac Hill (now in a suburb of Mexico City).



The bishop demanded a sign before he would approve construction of a church, however. Mary then appeared a second time to Juan Diego and ordered him to collect roses. In a second audience with the bishop, Juan Diego opened his cloak, letting dozens of roses fall to the floor and revealing the image of Mary imprinted on the inside of the cloak—the image that is now venerated in the Basilica of Guadalupe

Advent Appeal for Ukraine

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference is supporting a special Advent appeal for the people of Ukraine, following a request from Bishop Mykola Bychok CSsR, Eparch of Sts Peter and Paul for the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia.

Collections in dioceses, eparchies and parishes on the Second and/or Third Sunday of Advent will support *Mudra Sprava* (Wise Action), a Patriarchal Charitable Foundation in Ukraine. The organisation has three focus areas: Evacuation of people from frontline territories; Food packages for people in need; Shelters for internally displaced persons. Find out more at: www.catholic.au

Parishes are invited to share [this prayer](#) (please see the bulletin board) for Ukraine from the ACBC.

PARISH WEEKEND MASS ROSTER 17 - 18 December 2022

Readers:	5:30pm	R Lazarus M Dos Santos
	8:00am	P Tan M El Khoury
	10:00am	P Marshall J Duru
Acolytes:	5:30pm	Tony & Morea
	8:00am	Andre
	10:00am	Philip

Christmas eve vigil Mass

It has been our practice for several years now to involve children in a simple ‘acting out’ of the Nativity story at the Mass on Christmas eve (5:30pm). We would like to continue doing this for the vigil Mass this year as well as many parents have told us how much they appreciate it. If you would like your children to take part in this, please speak to me or to Fr Andrew after Mass this weekend. I am also looking for someone to help organise the children on the day
Deacon Louis

Thank you from Catholic Mission

“On behalf of Catholic Mission, I would be grateful if you could please thank all the parishioners who contributed to the appeal. Their generosity has provided support to the families from disadvantaged backgrounds through programs like the Deberety Goat Rearing Centre in Ethiopia. This Centre will provide nutritious milk for families in most need, to help reverse and prevent health problems like malnutrition.”
Danielle
Total amount raised: \$225

‘Made for More’ events by Theology of the Body Institute

The Sydney Centre for Evangelisation is proud to host Dr Christopher West and his team for their Australian tour of ‘Made for More’ events in Sydney and Melbourne. Please join us on Friday, 20 January at St Mary’s Cathedral College Hall or on Saturday, 21 January at All Saints Liverpool Parish Hall. ‘Made for More’ weaves dynamic presentations with live music, media and sacred art bringing an evening of beauty and reflection on the meaning of life, love, and human destiny. An event not to be missed! **For tickets and more information, visit www.sydneycatholic.org/TOB**

Choir Notice

The next rehearsal will be on Monday 19th December 2022 at 7:00pm

“Break Open the Word” (the book for readers) now available in the Sacristy.

