



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



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Ms Frances Stewart
REC: Ms Christine Brais
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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, Jennie, Ian, Pat
- Christina

Recently Deceased

Death Anniversary

Giuseppe Pino Freeza

For the Souls

- Leonardo Chiarella
- Umberto Chiarella
- Angela Chiarella
- Maria Da Silva
- Luis Da Silva
- Richard Paquim
- Nadim Sara
- Mike & Nazira Sara
- Fr Anthony Sara
- Elias, Youssif, Hanna, (and wives) Sara

All forgotten Souls and Holy Souls in Purgatory

Special Intention

- Marlena Pillon
- Ric Rita, Noah
- Chris & Joseph
- Henry & Tina and my family
- Leah Tillam

He did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do”



Matthew’s Gospel describes three dreams that Joseph had. Each of these dreams is presented as a revelation from God to Joseph, revelations that involved significant decisions on his part. This painting by the nineteenth century artist James Tissot is dominated by the representation of the angel delivering the message to Joseph as described in this Sunday’s Gospel. Joseph shields his face, overwhelmed by the appearance of God’s messenger and the message he came to bring.

In contrast to Luke, Matthew presents the story of the Annunciation exclusively from Joseph’s perspective. Since he is a descendant of David, he represents the link between Jesus and the promise God had made to King David. The ‘family tree’ of Jesus at the beginning of Matthew’s Gospel does this by tracing Jesus’ ancestry back to Abraham, Israel’s “father in faith”. Though Joseph isn’t the father of Mary’s child, his marriage to Mary would make the child Jesus “part of David’s house and line”.

We are not told how Joseph came to know that Mary was pregnant “before they came to live together” but the angel’s first words to him give us a hint of his troubled state of mind: “do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife.” Mary had also been told by the angel Gabriel to not be afraid and to trust in God when, in response to the invitation to be the mother of “the Son of the Most High”, she had asked how this could come about since she was a virgin. Like Mary before him, Joseph was being given an invitation to participate in something that was beyond his understanding and that would put him personally in a very difficult position in his society. By marrying Mary he would, according to the conventions of Jewish society at the time, share in her shame and himself become ‘unclean’.

The way in which Joseph responded to the news of Mary’s pregnancy gives us an image of Joseph as “a just man”. The ‘just man’ is someone close to God, “whose delight is the law of the Lord and who meditates on his law day and night” (psalm 1). He had a public choice to make, in addition to his personal feelings of disappointment and bewilderment at the situation he found himself in-to bring her before a court to explain her surprise pregnancy (and most likely then be humiliated and punished) or to divorce her quietly. He chose “not to put her to shame” (1:10) and, in doing so, remained faithful to the purpose of the law of Israel as the law of God.

For him the “law of the Lord” is simply Gospel, good news, because he reads and understands it with a personal, loving openness to God and in this way learns to understand it and to live it from deep within. Joseph interprets the law of God with love. He does not want to give Mary up to public shame. (Jesus of Nazareth: the Nativity narratives)

Joseph’s listening to God is shown through the way he understands his ‘dreams’ (to take Mary as his wife, to go to and then return from Egypt). This is the way God often spoke to people in the Old Testament.

Only someone with a real sensitivity for God and his ways can receive God’s message in this way. An ability to discern (ie to listen, understand and decide) was necessary in order to know whether it was simply a dream or whether God’s messenger had truly appeared to him and addressed him. (Jesus of Nazareth)

Unlike Mary who responded to God’s invitation by saying, “be it done unto me according to your word,” Joseph is not recorded as saying anything in response to the angel’s words, “take Mary home as your wife.” He simply “did what the angel asked him to do.” A profound trust in God gave him the courage to overcome his own doubts, fears and disappointment and enabled him to become, in his own way, a ‘sign’ of God living among us. His response to God helps us to see the way in which we can remain faithful to God and, in our own way, become signs of God living among us.

A sign attracts attention; the brighter it is, the more distinct it is, the more it stands out and the greater its impact. If I am not different in some way or am afraid to be different, no one will pay any attention to me. The Lord asks me to be a sign showing the Father in heaven to all people. Most of the time however, a sign is silent. Often it is enough to be present, to be there - constantly, obstinately, courageously present. (Prayers of Hope, Words of Courage Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan)

Reference: Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) **Jesus of Nazareth: the Infancy Narratives** Bloomsbury London 2012

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

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

Announcing the Damascus Spiritual Leaders Program! Part-time in Feb-Nov 2023 - either in person or online - through Heart of Life Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation. This program is designed for people in various positions of leadership, spiritual formation and parish or outreach ministries. It will equip individuals to lead with integrity, vulnerability and resilience, and will focus on the inner spiritual journey in order to create fully-formed leaders who listen, learn and accompany others with strength and sensitivity. 'Damascus' can be studied as a Graduate Certificate in Divinity through the University of Divinity (Yarra Theological Union/ Catholic Theological College), or as an audit student to receive a Certificate in Spiritual Leadership from Heart of Life. Attendance on Monday mornings and some Saturdays. Read more about the program on the Heart of Life website or contact us on (03) 9890 1101. Applications close on 6/1/23.

The Christian’s Final Journey: Catholic Cemetery and Crematoria and partner, the ACU Centre for Liturgy, are offering a one-day workshop on Catholic funerals on **9 February 2023**. It has been designed for Clergy, Funeral Directors, Bereavement Teams, Pastoral Associates, Parish Secretaries and Family Faith Educators, Teachers, APRE’s, School Staff and interested individuals. Catholic practices around burial and cremation will be investigated as well as preparation of a funeral (for future discussion with the funeral celebrant) and how to support the grieving. It will be held at the Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney. Time: 9am-5pm (registration from 8.30am). Registration is essential by 3 February. Cost: \$60 (includes lunch and a workbook) (\$120 for Funeral Directors who will receive certification for 5 years.) **Enquiries:** CentreforLiturgy@acu.edu.au or 02 9701 4751. For more information, and to register, go to www.acu.edu.au/centreforliturgy/pastoral-training

Feast/Solemnity/Memorial/Saint of the Week

(19 - 24 Dec 2022)

Wed 21/12 St Peter Canisius, priest, doctor
Fri 23/12 St John of Kanty, priest

St Peter Canisius SJ was a Dutch Jesuit Catholic priest. He became known for his strong support for the Catholic faith during the Protestant Reformation in Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Morava, Switzerland and British Isles. The restoration of the Catholic Church in Germany after the Protestant Reformation is largely attributed to the work there of the Society of Jesus, which he led. He is venerated in the Catholic Church as a saint and as a Doctor of the Church.



2 practising Catholic students from Albury are seeking accommodation in Sydney for the 2023 academic year.
Contact seanplee@bigpond.com M 0499 001 653

PARISH WEEKEND MASS ROSTER 24 - 25 December 2022 (Christmas)

Readers:	5:30pm	M Dos Santos P Allport
	8:00am	A Di Donato N Dudley
	10:00am	R Rita M Portell
Acolytes:	Special Roster	

Choir Notice

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

You’ve got a lot to give beyond Christmas gifts.

In January you can prepare for mission at home or abroad.

Palms Australia has trained Australians to live and work within cultures and communities overseas since 1961. Now four days of that training will be available for parishioners interested to assist harness the diverse gifts of our community and make it stronger.

At Home

Palms’ **Neighbours Without Borders** program (January 7-11) will “focus on building communities that are welcoming to all, with particular attention to those on the margins of society and the church” as urged by the recent Plenary Council.

Overseas

Completing a further four days (January 12-15) will prepare you to meet one of the many requests Palms has from communities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific who need educators; health professionals, administrators and others to assist build on the strengths of their people who otherwise have little opportunity for training.

Enquire about Palms Orientation for mission via www.palms.org.au or call 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567



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



Pop-up Books for Kids on sale outside the Church this Sunday 18 December.