



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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Principal:

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
Leonard Delgado
Patricia Stack
Raul Cabrera
Ruth Wilson
Raymond Hudson
Fr Jim Duggan
Pat Allport
Cardo, Zennie, Ian, Pat
Christina

Recently Deceased

Margaret Hassett

Death Anniversary

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

Fr Ned Hassett
Henry & Tina and my family
Leah Tillam

"A light that shines in the dark; a light that darkness could not overpower"

We are so used to turning on a switch that suddenly fills a dark room with light that we miss the point of John's image in the Prologue to his Gospel that is read on Christmas Day: "a light that shines in the darkness; a light that darkness could not overpower." In Jesus' time, light would be provided by small lamps filled with olive oil like the one pictured here. The light that these lamps provided would indeed have shone in the darkness but, the further one moved away from this light, the dimmer this light would be, so that the edge of the room would have been in semi darkness.



The story of Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus in humble surroundings is a very human story that is not hard for us to relate to. By comparison, the Prologue that is read on Christmas Day seems somewhat abstract and remote from 'the real story'. This is an unfortunate comparison because the purpose of the Prologue to John's Gospel is not to tell a story but to outline the depth and meaning of the story, the story of God's relationship with us all through Christ and how "from this fullness we have, all of us, received". The rest of the Gospel then goes on to show how all this was achieved through the story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

Jesus is described as "the Word, the true light that enlightens all men." This connects Jesus with the creative power of God and takes us back to the very beginning of creation where, in the book of Genesis, we read how, "in the beginning, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep" until God said "let there be light." God's creative power was able to bring light and life out of darkness and lifelessness. John shows how Jesus was able to bring light and life through his teachings, his miracles of healing (including raising the dead to life) and finally through his own resurrection from the dead.

"The Word that was with God and was God" is identified as "the light" that lights up our lives. John the Baptist, the last and greatest of the prophets, is mentioned. He represents all those men and women in the entire story of the Old Testament who "listened to the Lord and kept his ways, for, whoever listens to him finds life" (Proverbs 8:32). But, like them, John the Baptist is only "a witness to speak for the light." Through the way he presents Jesus in his Gospel, John shows us how and why it is only Jesus "who is nearest to the Father's heart and makes him known." This "light" and "Word" that we receive through Christ enables us, as John says, "to become children of God".

The humble way in which "this Word became flesh" in Jesus reminds us how faint this light must have seemed when he was born. How could the cries of this tiny baby compare with the words of a great emperor, words that commanded universal attention and obedience? Later, when many, including some of his closest followers, "did not accept him", it would seem as if this light had gone out and that darkness would have finally taken over.

But it didn't and the story continues up to our own time, beginning with the resurrection of Jesus and the bringing of "the Word, the true light that enlightens all men" to the ends of the earth. Many people who celebrate Christmas are aware of the story of Jesus' birth but are either unaware of or deny the reality of the great story of God's love for us that it expresses. At Christmas we celebrate the miracle of God coming to share our life with us, to live among us so that we can come to share in his own life. This is the gift that God gives through Christ "to all who accept him: the power to become children of God." It is the gift of his life, his light and his Word that he wanted us to have "in the Beginning".

"Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to all who enjoy God's favour."

Deacon Louis

Aid to the Church in Need is asking for support to aid our brothers and sisters who are suffering so deeply in Syria and Lebanon through our Christmas appeal *Sharing Hope with Christians in Syria and Lebanon this Christmas*. The support we are pledging to them is very much emergency relief to sustain the Christian population in hope. The projects we are supporting are projects such as medical aid, community help and gifts for children in Lebanon, as well as support for lay faithful and accommodation for families in Syria. It is only with your help that ACN can support Christians in Lebanon and Syria this Christmas! To watch videos and read stories of the projects we are supporting visit www.aidtochurch.org/christmas2022 or scan the QR code.



Support Caritas Ukraine Appeal

As millions of people are likely to be displaced due to Russia's invasion, your support is more important than ever for the people of Ukraine.

Donate generously to the Caritas Ukraine Appeal:

<https://www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/ukraine/>

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Christmas Mass Times

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

Feast/Solemnity/Memorial/Saint of the Week

(26 - 31 Dec 2022)

Mon 26/12 St Stephen, the first martyr
Tue 27/12 St John, apostle, evangelist
Wed 28/12 The Holy Innocents, martyrs
Thu 29/12 St Thomas Becket, bishop, martyr
Fri 30/12 The HOLY FAMILY of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Sat 31/12 St Sylvester I, pope

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

This feast is offered as a model for Christian family life today. **Sirach 3:2-6. 12-14**

Children, listen to me; I am your father. Do what I tell you and you will be safe, for the Lord has given fathers authority over their children and given children the obligation to obey their mothers. If you respect your father, you can make up for your sins, and if you honor your mother, you are earning great wealth. If you respect



your father, one day your own children will make you happy; the Lord will hear your prayers. If you obey the Lord by honoring your father and making your mother happy, you will live a long life. Obey your parents as if you were their slave. Honor your father in everything you do and say, so that you may receive his blessing. When parents give their blessing, they give strength to their children's homes, but when they curse their children, they destroy the very foundations.

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

31 Dec - 1 January 2023

Readers: 5:30pm R Lazarus
P Allport
8:00am J Peters
G Turnbull
10:00am B Yammine
C Alam

Acolytes: Special Roster

Choir Notice

After Christmas Masses the choir will be on holiday till the end of January.

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

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



Palms Australia

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

