

OUR LADY OF THE WAY PARISH, EMU PLAINS

*What does the Lord require of you
but to act justly, to love tenderly,
and to walk humbly with your
God.” Micah 6:8*



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Sunday, 18th December 2022 4th Sunday of Advent– Year A

Welcome to the celebration of the mass.

Entrance Antiphon. Cf. Is 45:8

Drop down dew from above, you heavens,
and let the clouds rain down the Just One;
let the earth be opened and bring forth a Saviour.

First Reading Is 7:10-14

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The virgin will conceive.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, ‘Ask
the Lord your God for a sign for yourself
coming either from the depths
of Sheol or from the heights above.’
‘No’, Ahaz answered ‘I will not put the
Lord to the test.’

Then Isaiah said: ‘Listen now, House of
David: are you not satisfied with trying
the patience of men without trying the
patience of my God, too?’

The Lord himself, therefore, will give
you a sign. It is this: the maiden is with
child and will soon give birth to a son
whom she will call Immanuel, a name
which means “God-is-with-us”.’

Responsorial Psalm. Ps 23:1-6. R. see vv 7, 10

**(R.) Let the Lord enter;
He is King of glory.**

1. The Lord’s is the earth and its fullness,
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the waters he made it firm. (R.)

2. Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,
who desires not worthless things. (R.)

3. He shall receive blessings from the Lord
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,
seek the face of the God of Jacob. (R.)

Second Reading Rom 1:1-7

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.

From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus who
has been called to be an apostle, and
specially chosen to preach the Good News
that God promised long ago through his
prophets in the scriptures.

This news is about the Son of God, who,
according to the human nature he took,
was a descendant of David: it is about
Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of
the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in
him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his
power through his resurrection from the
dead. Through him we received grace and
our apostolic mission to preach the
obedience of faith to all pagan nations in
honour of his name. You are one of these
nations, and by his call belong to Jesus
Christ. To you all, then, who are God’s
beloved in Rome, called to be saints, may
God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
send grace and peace.

Gospel Acclamation [Mt 1:23](#)

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a Son;
His name will be Emmanuel:
God is with us.

Alleluia!

Gospel [Mt 1:18-24](#)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus was born of Mary, the betrothed of Joseph, a son of David.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

Communion Antiphon [Is 7:14](#)

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name will be called Emmanuel.

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“The story of [the Christmas Truce](#) during World War One where the British and German soldiers sang songs, played football, and showed off photographs of their family, is well known. Less well known is the fact that they agreed always to stay a yard or two away from each other’s trenches, preferring to meet in the middle ground. Captain Armes, who was a part of that extraordinary event, wrote to his wife “It did feel funny walking alone towards the enemy trenches to meet someone halfway, and then to arrange a Christmas peace. It will be a thing to remember all one’s life” And, of course the world has remembered it ever since. He didn’t go all the way. He went halfway. His enemy met him there and for a while became his friend. In honour of their bravery and the spirit of Christmas we might take a little walk towards someone we would rather be friends with. We need only go halfway. I am sure they will meet us there. So, as we lit the candle of JOY this past weekend let us reflect on the meaning of Advent – a period of preparation for the birth of Christ. Just as the soldiers prepared to meet their enemies on common ground bound by a common cause we too, together, are preparing for the birth of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in our little church on Troy Street called Our Lady of the Way. (Stevenie Harman.)



Let us pray: We pray for recently deceased Alex Haddad and Monica Heidtmann, and for Patrick and Tom Joyce whose anniversaries are at this time. We pray that their families find comfort in the fact that they are safely in the arms of their loving Lord. We also pray for all our brothers and sisters in our community who are unwell, especially, Henry O’Malley, Elisabeth Robens, Marion Betker, Andrew Keenan, and Catherine Allabyrne. If you know someone who needs prayers, please contact the parish office on 4735 1041 and we will add them to our prayer list.

PARISHIONER OF THE WEEK: Cecilia Calder

Cecilia was born in Dublin, Ireland and came to Australia in 1964 when she was 23 years old. She and her husband Alan have been at OLOW since it started in 1970. Cecilia used to read at mass in Melrose Hall, and her mum Alice Massey was involved in the bingo and "all that" since the beginning. Her favourite colour is green, and her favourite hymn is "Our Lady of the Way". And as a true Irish woman, her favourite saint is St Patrick. An interesting fact is that Cecilia and her husband have three sponsored children through World Vision. She used to line dance in Australia and did Irish dancing as a child. Cecilia was asked where she would like to go if she could go anywhere in the world and she answered 'Dublin'.



Parish Notices:

Christmas Reconciliation: There will be additional times for the sacrament of reconciliation in the week prior to Christmas.

Tuesday 20 th Dec.	5:00 pm – 5:45 pm
Wednesday 21 st Dec.	9:30 am – 10:00 am
Thursday 22 nd Dec.	9:30 am – 10:00 am
Friday 23 rd Dec.	9:30 am – 10:00 am

Christmas Mass Times:

Christmas Vigil- Children's Mass	6.00pm
Christmas Vigil- Family Mass	8.00pm
Christmas Day Mass	9.30am

Christmas Choir rehearsals: If you would like to be part of the choir for the 6pm Christmas vigil mass, please join us for rehearsals on Tuesday evenings, 7.30pm.

New Year Week Masses:

Monday 2 nd	Mass 8.30am
Tuesday 3 rd	No Mass
Wednesday 4 th	Communion Service 9.00am
Thursday 5 th	Communion Service 9.00am
Friday 6 th	Anointing Mass 9.00am
Saturday 7 th	Mass 6.00pm

WHO IS JESUS in St Matthew's Gospel? You are invited to an **ENQUIRY SESSION** on **January 10** about fortnightly facilitated small groups starting February in Emu Plains, to explore this question. Please speak to Jim about a time that is suitable for you. Inquiries welcome: Jim Potts 0421 125 722

Columban Art Calendars are available in the church foyer for \$10 each.

Reader's Roster: Have your circumstances changed? Do you know someone who would like to join the roster? If you have been a reader in the past, but would like to be a Commentator, then we would also love to hear from you. If we don't hear from you, the current roster will continue. **New people welcome.** Please contact Marianne on 0431 966365.

Vinnies Donations: To donate, please purchase Woolworths Essentials Gift Cards in lots of \$20 and place them in an envelope on the Parish Collection Plates or the Poor Box in the church foyer.

Vinnies Christmas Cards are available in the church foyer. They are \$10 for a pack of 10. Please place money for these cards in the box labelled 'Christmas Card Money'. Many thanks for your support.

Sacramental news

Baptism for Primary School

Last weekend, 9 beautiful children from our local primary schools were baptised by Fr Michael. Praise God! We congratulate them and their families who have supported them. Thank you too for your prayers



as they prepared for this special day in their spiritual life.

Reconciliation 2023

The sacrament of Reconciliation will be held in Term 1 next year, for children who will be in Year 4 and above in 2023. If you would like your child to make this sacrament, please contact Cate on 47351041 or emuplains@parracatholic.org. Blessings, Cate.

Readers/Commentators roster:

Dates:	6.00pm	8.00am	9.30am
17/18 December	Stevenie Harman Michael Manton JS: Alex Tuballa C: Christie Wood R: Mary Balam	Mark Norbury Noeline Bangel JS: Evie Milroy C: Gabe Manouk R: Kay Walker	Lara Roser Connie Reid David Green Heather Barlow (Visit only) JS: N/A C: Trish Boyle R: Matthew Hamilton
24/25 December CHRISTMAS SERVICES	John Cowen Mathew Topp Pat Edwards Barbara Ryan JS: Evie Milroy JS: Matthew Hamilton C: Phillip Youngman R: Belinda Henderson	8.00pm Stevenie Harman JS: N/A C: TBA R: Trish Ryan	Mary Marsh Connie Reid Denise Robens JS: Jessica Topp C: Marianne Castor R: Trish Boyle

Parish Information

Parish office open Tuesday to Friday from 9:30am to 3pm. (ph: 4735 1041)

Parish priest: Fr Michael G. Gathuku
Parish Office Administrator: Michele Norbury
Sacramental Co-ordinator: Cate Kensey
Baptism Coordinator: Jo Hamilton

Our Lady of the Way principal:
Donna McFadzean (ph: 4777 7200)
Penola Catholic college principal:
Jim Fanning (ph: 4728 8100)
St Vincent de Paul Contact Centre:
For assistance call 1800 606 724.

Weekend mass times:

Saturday 6 pm, Sunday 8am, 9:30am

Weekday masses:

Tuesday 6pm;
Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 9am.
Adoration of Blessed Sacrament till 10am
Thursday after mass.
First Fridays of the month – healing mass.

Reconciliation: Saturday 5pm.

Sacraments: baptisms and weddings by appointment. Please contact the parish office (emuplains@parracatholic.org) for information on reconciliation, communion and confirmation.

Diocese of Parramatta Notices:

2022 Christmas Mass and Reconciliation Times: Christmas Mass and Reconciliation times from parishes across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains are available now on our Diocesan website (www.parracatholic.org), on Catholic Outlook (www.catholicoutlook.org) and on our Diocesan social media channels. Merry Christmas from the Diocese of Parramatta.

The Advent | Summer 2022 version of the **Catholic Outlook Magazine** is out now! This edition, discover how our multicultural families across the Diocese are celebrating Christmas, learn about using Christmas to deepen your marriage and read Bishop Vincent's Christmas message. Pick up your free copy from parishes and offices across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains today or read it online via catholicoutlook.org/magazine

Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses 2023: The Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence next year in February. This is formation for anyone interested in serving within the Liturgical Ministries either as Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, Communion to the Sick and Dying and Ministers at the Altar. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact the Office for Worship on 0460 037 795 or mary.gale@parracatholic.org or visit our website to download an enrolment form at <https://officeforworship.org.au/>. Application forms can also be picked up from the OLOW Parish Office.

Bishop's Christmas Appeal for Catholic Care's Assistance with Care and Housing Service No one should be homeless or without support. Your Christmas gift today will enable Catholic Care to give homeless people practical and emotional support, and a safe place to call home. Please give generously via the Bishop's Christmas Appeal envelopes, at yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal. Thank you.

Faith and formation session for Catholic Healthcare professionals: 11 February

You are invited to a faith and formation session for those who work and volunteer in the health care ministries of the Church on Saturday 11 February, from 9am to 10.30am at the All Saints of Africa Centre, 51-59 Allawah Street, Blacktown. Join us afterwards for the World Day of the Sick Mass at St Patrick's Church, Blacktown. Please RSVP for catering purposes by 6 February to met@parracatholic.org. For enquiries, please contact Michael.Tan@parracatholic.org

Saints of the week:

19th December – St Darius
20th December – St Dominic of Silos
21st December – St Peter Canisius, Doctor.
22nd December – St Demetrius
23rd December – St John of Kanty
24th December – St Emiliana of Rome

Parish bank details:

If you would like to support our priest and church financially through **online banking**:
Name: Emu Plains Catholic church
BSB: 067 950
Account Number: 00000289