

# 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, 17th December 2023. Third Sunday of Advent, Year B.

Welcome to the celebration of the Mass.

### **Entrance Antiphon** [Philippians 4:4-5](#)

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.  
Indeed, the Lord is near.

### **First Reading** [Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11](#)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*I exult for joy in the Lord.*

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

‘I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels.

‘For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.’

### **Responsorial Psalm.** [Lk 1:46-50. 53-54. R. Is 61:10](#)

#### **(R.) My soul rejoices in my God.**

1. My soul glorifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.  
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;  
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. **(R.)**



2. The Almighty works marvels for me.  
Holy his name!  
His mercy is from age to age,  
on those who fear him. **(R.)**

3. He fills the starving with good things,  
sends the rich away empty.  
He protects Israel, his servant,  
remembering his mercy. **(R.)**

### **Second Reading** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-24](#)

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

*May you all be kept blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

### **Gospel Acclamation** [Isaiah 61:1 \(Lk 4:18\)](#)

#### **Alleluia, alleluia!**

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

#### **Alleluia!**

## **Gospel** [John 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

*There stands among you, unknown to you, the one who is coming after me.*

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light. This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:  
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?'

John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

## **Communion Antiphon.**

*Cf Isaiah 35:4*

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear. Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.

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**Let us pray:** We pray for recently deceased John Dowling, John Doyle and Lorraine Lindsay; and for Madeleine Oxley, Stephen Walker, Monica Pigott, Janice Lowe, Barry Hilder and Michael Joseph Flanagan whose death 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, Kai Weyman (1 yr old child),



Deacon George Bryan, Kaye Bryan, Laurie Doohan, Irene Donley, Desley Mulock, June Wilson, Kristina Majstorovic, Leo Bahlmann, Trish McGettigan, Pauline Balkin, Mary Goyed, Shirley Harman, Dot Gray, June Sultana, Stuart Cameron, Mary Rose, Maria Mercieca, Marta Mederos, Lucy Mikosic, Margaret Houlahan, Henry O'Malley, Elisabeth Robens, Marion Betker, and Andrew Keenan. If you know someone who needs prayers, please contact the parish office on 4735 1041 and we will add them to our prayer list.

## Parish Notices:

**Parish Jubilee:** The weekend of the 30<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> December marks the official 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Our Lady of the Way. Let us remember and pray for the members of OLOW Community, past and present. Particularly, let us pray for the founding members of our loving Parish.

**Christmas Choir** practice will be in the Church starting at 7.30 on Tuesday evening. All are welcome.

**Communion for the Sick** If you, a family member or anyone you know is sick or is no longer able to attend Mass and would like Communion in the home, please call the office on 4735 1041. We will arrange for one of our Ministers of Communion to make a home visit after Mass on Sunday.

**Cuppa and a Chat:** Please join us for a cuppa and a chat after the 8am Mass this weekend.

**Playgroup:** Playgroup will resume after the school holidays and will continue to run every second Tuesday at 10am in the Parish Hall. If you are interested in joining next year, or for more information, please contact the Parish Office on 4735 1041.

**Wrap with love knitters group** meets on Thursdays from 9am -12pm in the parish hall. This group will resume on the 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2024. For more information, please contact Judy Prendergast (0407101254) or Julia Hayes (0452 665 844).



## Readers/ Commentators roster:

Dates:	6.00pm	8.00am	9.30am
16/17 December	Deacon Batsirai John Cowen JS: Alex Tuballa & Josie Henderson C: Louise Goderie R: Marie McLennan	Mark Norbury Barbara Ryan JS: Evie Milroy C: Paul Ryan R: Jessica Topp	Lara Roser David Green Connie Reid Heather Barlow (Visit only) JS: Matthew Hamilton & Nicholas Hamilton C: Marianne Castor R: Denise Robens
23/24 December	Stevenie Harman Anne Deutscher JS: Josie Henderson C: Lynne Castellari	Matthew Topp Pat Edwards JS: Evie Milroy & Soraya Laurendet	Deacon Batsirai Mark Norbury Kay Walker (Visit)

## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

### Christmas Vigil

**6:00pm Children's Mass** (Children may like to come dressed as angels or shepherds)

**8:00pm Family Mass**

### Christmas Day

**9:30am Mass**

### Reconciliation times

**Tues 19<sup>th</sup> Dec: 5:00-5.45pm**

**Wed 20<sup>th</sup> Dec: 9:30-10:00am**

**Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> Dec: 9:30-10:00am**

**Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec: 9:30am-10:00am**

**Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec: 4:40pm-5.45pm**

### Catholic Care Emergency Food

**Drive 16th/17<sup>th</sup> Dec.** This weekend we are collecting grocery items for those in need. Catholic Care will provide Christmas Hampers, but there is still an urgent need for basic necessities. Please consider popping an extra pantry item or toiletry product (eg Cereal, tinned fish, deodorant, soap) in your weekly shopping basket to help those in need, then place it at rear of the church. Your assistance is greatly appreciated. **Thank you**

### Sacramental news Reconciliation Term 1 2024

The preparation program for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will begin very early in Term 1 next year. If your child is in year 4 or above in 2024 and would like to receive this sacrament, please contact the parish office on 47351041 or [emuplains@parrcatholic.org](mailto:emuplains@parrcatholic.org)

### Epiphany Pilgrimage and Fiesta 2024

Commit the first fruits of your new year to Christ with the 2024 Epiphany Pilgrimage (2 - 9 Jan 2024).. Day 1 is a family-friendly day, with the option for a children's pilgrimage finishing with the Finnies Fiesta at St Finbar's Glenbrook. For more information and to register for all or part of the journey, visit [www.epiphanypilgrimage.org](http://www.epiphanypilgrimage.org).

*Prayer requests can be placed in the Epiphany Pilgrimage box located at the rear of the church.*

**Columban Calendars** are now available to purchase for \$10 each at the rear of the church.

**Vinnies Christmas Cards** are also available to purchase for \$10 per pack.

**Daily Mass Books 2024:** These books are available to purchase for \$26. Please contact the Parish Office on 4735 1041 or [emuplains@parracatholic.org](mailto:emuplains@parracatholic.org)

## **Parish Information**

**Parish office open Tuesday to Friday from 9:00am to 3:00pm. (ph: 4735 1041)**

Parish priest: Fr Michael G. Gathuku  
Deacon: Batsirai Maringehosi  
Parish Office Administrator: Michele Norbury  
Sacramental Co-ordinator: Cate Kensey  
Parish Administration Assistant: Joanne Hamilton  
Our Lady of the Way principal:  
Phillip Kapitanow (ph: 4777 7200)  
Penola Catholic college principal:  
Peta Sparkes (ph: 4728 8100)  
CathWest Innovation College principal:  
Paul Stenning (ph: 02 8886 9500)  
St Vincent de Paul Contact Centre:  
For assistance call 1800 606 724.

## **Weekend Mass times:**

Saturday 6 pm, Sunday 8am, 9:30am  
Filipino Mass, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month: 1pm

## **Weekday Masses:**

Tuesday 6pm;  
Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 9am.  
Adoration of Blessed Sacrament at 8.30am  
Thursday before Mass. Benediction last  
Thursday of the month.  
First Fridays of the month – healing Mass.

**Reconciliation:** Saturday 5pm.

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

## **Diocese of Parramatta Notices:**

**NEW Diocesan website:** The new [parracatholic.org](http://parracatholic.org) website is now here with exciting new features and functionality including a comprehensive 'Find a Mass' function which includes Daily and Weekend Masses, Reconciliation and Adoration times; a centralised event calendar; Daily Mass readings and different ways you can contribute to the Church in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Check it out today!

**2023 Diocese of Parramatta Christmas Mass 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](http://www.parracatholic.org)) and on Catholic Outlook ([www.catholicoutlook.org](http://www.catholicoutlook.org)). The Diocese of Parramatta wishes you, your families and faith communities a Merry Christmas.

**Advent and Christmas | Summer 2023 Catholic Outlook Magazine out now!** This edition features reflections on Mary's journey into the dark night, how our communities celebrate Christmas, our four new leaders in the Diocese, a handy Christmas Mass Times guide, plus so much more. 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](http://catholicoutlook.org/magazine)

**Be Part of Our Synod Journey: Diocesan Synod Report Now Available:** The Diocesan Synod Report is now available for download. It offers a summary of our first Diocesan Synod assembly, held from October 13-15, 2023, its preparatory stages, in-depth details of the proceedings, and insights from delegates. Download your copy from the Parramatta Synod website now:  
[www.parracatholic.org/synod/resources](http://www.parracatholic.org/synod/resources)

**Liturgical Ministry Course returns in 2024:** The Liturgical Ministry Formation Courses will recommence in February 2024. 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](mailto:mary.gale@parracatholic.org) or visit our website to enrol:  
[www.parracatholic.org/contribute/volunteer/liturgical-ministry](http://www.parracatholic.org/contribute/volunteer/liturgical-ministry)

## **Saints of the week:**

Dec 18th – St Peter Truat  
Dec 19th – St Thomas De & Companions  
Dec 20th – St. Julius  
Dec 21st – Saint Peter Canisius, priest and doctor  
Dec 22nd – St. Flavian  
Dec 23rd – Saint John of Kanty, priest

## **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