



**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISH**  
BULLA CLARKEFIELD DIGGERS REST SUNBURY WILDWOOD  
ON WURUNDJERI COUNTRY



**Parish Office:** 101 Riddell Road Sunbury 3429 **T:** 9744 1060 **Office Hours:** Mon - Thur 9am - 1pm Fri 9am - 5pm  
**E:** sunbury@cam.org.au **W:** olmcsunbury.com  
**\*\*In case of emergency after hours—Presbytery 9740 6503\*\***

Newsletters are available on the parish website  
olmcsunbury.com

Our parish is committed to the Safety, Wellbeing and Dignity of all, including children and vulnerable adults.

**LITURGY TIMES: AT ST ANNE'S CHURCH**

**Saturday** 5.30pm - Sunday Mass  
**Sunday** 8.30am  
**Sunday** 10.30am  
11.45am - Baptisms  
**Tuesday** 10.00am - Funeral Mass -  
Steve CRNAC  
**Wednesday** 9.30am - Mass  
**Thursday** 9.30am - Mass  
**Friday** 9.30am - Mass

**RECONCILIATION**

**Saturday 10am - 10.30am St Anne's Church**

**Parish Priest:** Rev Denis Stanley  
**Assistant Priest:** Rev Jossy  
Kizhakkethalackal  
**Deacon:** Rev Stephen Fernandes  
**Pastoral Assoc:** Sr Jose Noy RSJ  
**Pastoral Co-ord:** Lyn Plummer  
**St Anne's School:** 8746 6800  
**Principal:** Noelene Hussey  
**Our Lady of Mount Carmel School:** 9740 7344  
**Principal:** Julie Freeman  
**Holy Trinity School:** 8746 6464  
**Principal:** Krystine Hocking

**17 December 2023**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**First Reading:** Is 61:1-2, 10-11  
**Psalm Response:** Lk 1:46-50, 53-54  
**Second Reading:** 1Thess 5:16-24  
**Gospel Acclamation:** Is 61:1

**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

**LET US PRAY FOR**

**Sick:** Kerry BAILEY, Jalila DAWOOD, Joshua  
LEE, Diana MASTRAMICO, John MCGOVERN,  
David SIMPSON

**Recently Deceased:** Steve CRNAC

**Anniversaries:** Patrick REDDAN

**SPECIAL COLLECTION -**

**VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL -**

**AT ALL MASSES - 23, 24, 25 DECEMBER**

**Parish Vision:** Christlike relationships of friendship and faith, valuing one another and sharing our gifts for the good of all.

**THE STORY OF THE CHRISTMAS CRIB**

This year, 2023, celebrates the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Christmas Crib set up by St Francis of Assisi in 1223 in a cave in Greccio, Italy. The crib in St Peter's Square in Rome this Christmas will celebrate the anniversary with a significant manger scene recalling the inspiration of St Francis.

This tradition started by St Francis has taken shape in our parish church with the crib now in place, missing for the moment the Christmas characters who will slowly appear, culminating in the arrival of the images of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, followed by the Magi for the Epiphany.

Do you have a crib scene in your home? Even the simplest, homemade one will be a focus and celebrate the mystery of Christmas like nothing else. A Christmas tree won't do it. What is the meaning of a Christmas tree anyway? If you don't have a crib in your house, I can safely say something is missing.

In 2019 Pope Francis wrote a brief letter on the meaning and importance of the nativity scene. He explains a little of its history and meaning. Here are a few quotes from his delightful letter.

*The enchanting image of the Christmas crèche, so dear to the Christian people, never ceases to arouse amazement and wonder. The depiction of Jesus' birth is itself a simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God. The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture. As we contemplate the Christmas story, we are invited to set out on a spiritual journey, drawn by the humility of the God who became man in order to encounter every man and woman. We come to realise that so great is his love for us that he became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with him...*

*Fifteen days before Christmas, Francis asked a local man named John to help him realise his desire "to bring to life the memory of that babe born in Bethlehem, to see as much as possible with my own bodily eyes the discomfort of his infant needs, how he lay in a manger, and how, with an ox and an ass standing by, he was laid upon a bed of hay". At this, his faithful friend went immediately to prepare all that the Saint had asked. On 25 December, friars came to Greccio from various parts, together with people from the farmsteads in the area, who brought flowers and torches to light up that holy night. When Francis arrived, he found a manger full of hay, an ox and a donkey. All those present experienced a new and indescribable joy in the presence of the Christmas scene...*

*Standing before the Christmas crèche, we are reminded of the time when we were children, eagerly waiting to set it up. These memories make us all the more conscious of the precious gift received from those who passed on the faith to us. At the same time, they remind us of our duty to share this same experience with our children and our grandchildren. It does not matter how the nativity scene is arranged: it can always be the same or it can change from year to year. What matters is that it speaks to our lives. Wherever it is, and whatever form it takes, the Christmas crèche speaks to us of the love of God, the God who became a child in order to make us know how close he is to every man, woman and child, regardless of their condition.*

**Fr Denis Stanley PP with some help from Pope Francis**

## Season of ADVENT

Commences on the weekend of December 2/3<sup>rd</sup>. Advent is a time for us to anticipate and prepare for the celebration of Christmas when Jesus Christ is reborn in our hearts and reminds us that he walks with us each day. We will celebrate each Sunday with the lighting of the Advent candles in prayer and song.

A booklet of daily reflections has been prepared by the Diocese of Wollongong and is available in the Piety Stall.

**Advent Reflection Gatherings**, with resources from the Archdiocese of Brisbane, will be held Tuesday evenings at 7pm on Dec 19<sup>th</sup> and repeated on Saturday mornings December 16 & 23 at 10.30am. Both sessions will be held in St Anne's church for approximately 1 hour. All are welcome.

**Advent Reconciliation** with individual confession will be celebrated on Monday December 18 at 7pm.

## Lessons and Carols

Our Parish will host the Ecumenical Service celebrating "Lessons and Carols" on Sunday evening, **December 17 at 7pm**. This is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the Advent season in preparation for the coming of the Christ child at Christmas with our Sunbury Christian Community. An evening of friendship and prayer. All are welcome. If possible could you please bring along a plate of supper to share with our friends.

## **\*\*\*Parish Bingo - Christmas Special\*\*\***

Our Parish bingo session - "Major Bingo" is holding a Christmas special evening **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December**.

Eyes down 7.30 pm at Sunbury Bowling Club. Guaranteed last game prize of \$2000, extra raffle prizes, Bingo Lingo and Joker raffle at over \$1000. Special guest caller and presents for all. Get a group of friends together and come along and join in the fun - you will be made most welcome. This will be our last session for 2023 and we will be back bigger and better than ever on **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024**.

Enquiries - Gary Plummer Mob: 0419 301 760

**Altar Servers**: Congratulations and welcome to Serafina the newest member of our team. New members always welcome ... enquires to Michael 0417332186.

## Farewell Cuppa

Angelo and Patricia Altair are re-locating to Gippsland in December. They are well known, particularly in the 5.30pm Mass community. Please come along and share a cuppa and say goodbye after Mass on **December 16**.

## Remembering our Loved Ones

The November Remembrance Book will be reverently placed in the Crib throughout Advent and Christmas Seasons. Cards are available at the table in the foyer for those family and friends who are not able to celebrate Christmas with us, due to distance or illness, but can be remembered in prayer. These, too, will be placed in the Crib

**Emmaus Charismatic Prayer Group** have broken up for the holidays and will resume meeting next year on Thursday February 1st. For further info/transport please contact Lambert & Elaine van der Weerden on 0418 322 596.

We joyfully welcome the following children to our Parish who will be baptised this weekend:

Sive FALZON, Fionn MURPHY, Sophie VASILADIS, Liam VERGARA



## **Masses and Christmas Masses**

Saturday December 23 - 5.30pm

Sunday December 24 - 8.30am & 10.30am

Sunday December 24 - Christmas Vigil Masses - 6pm & 9pm

Monday December 25 - Christmas Day Masses - 8.30 & 10.30am

## **Vinnie's Christmas Appeal**

During December the Christmas Vinnie's Appeal allows us to share our generosity with those who are less fortunate. A cash donation will assist Vinnie's in supporting families with vouchers to purchase food and gifts suitable for their needs.. The Appeal will be conducted on December 23, 24 & 25. Thank you to all our parishioners who generously support this collection every year.

## **AV Assistance**

Each of our liturgies are supported with the use of the Audio Visual equipment. We are in need of a couple of people, on a roster, to set up the computer and run the PowerPoint presentation particularly at 5.30pm Mass. If you are able to help please call the office. Training will be provided.

## **CHRISTMAS MINISTRY ROSTER:**

**\*Lectors, \*Special Ministers, \*Ushers \*AV**

*The Christmas roster has been placed in the foyer of the church.*

*We will need quite a few volunteers at every Mass to have them run smoothly. As this is the last weekend before Christmas, could our ever generous volunteers please fill in the form at your preferred Mass time, so our celebrations are welcoming and successful.*

## **Parish Office Hours**

The parish office will be closed from **Friday 22 December** until **Wednesday 3 January 2024**. Please note that in case of emergencies the presbytery can be contacted on 9740 6503.

## **From the PCT—DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING**

The PCT intends to have volunteers trained in first aid and resuscitation at every Mass. If you're interested in becoming trained for this work, no earlier than in March 2024, please leave your name, preferred Mass time and your email address at the parish office. We're particularly keen to hear from people who usually attend **10.30 Mass**.

The first meeting of the **Caring for Creation Parish** group was held recently. Goals and outcomes were discussed and some actions for 2024 considered. The next meeting will be in February at a date determined after the Parish Calendar is finalised for that month. Feel free to contact Pauline Sharma at [pisharma@bigpond.com](mailto:pisharma@bigpond.com) if you have any questions, suggestions, etc.