

LITURGY THIS WEEK

OLA Chapel, Cnr Barney & Jessie Sts, Armidale

PLEASE NOTE CHANGES: Friday 26 December - no 7am Mass & Saturday 27 December - no 8am Mass in OIA. No Vespers Sunday 28 December. Adoration in OLA ceases with Reposition on Wednesday, 24 December at 3pm and will resume with Exposition on Monday 9 February at 8am.

MONDAY 22 DEC – Monday of the 4th week of Advent

07:00 AM OLA Chapel TLM

07:00 AM Cathedral Mass

09:15 AM Cathedral Mass +Gervasio Miking

12:00 NN Cathedral Mass Private Intention

TUESDAY 23 DEC – Tuesday of the 4th week of Advent

07:00 AM Cathedral Mass

12:00 NN Cathedral Mass Private Intention

WEDNESDAY 24 DEC – Wednesday of the 4th week of Advent

07:00 AM Cathedral Mass

09:15 AM Cathedral Mass Private Intention

12:00 NN Cathedral Mass +Arturo, Rufina, Roderick & Rodelie Abuan

CHRISTMAS TIME

05:00 PM Cathedral - First Vespers of Christmas

06:00 PM Cathedral Christmas Vigil Mass with a focus for families & children

10:30 PM Cathedral Christmas Night Mass

THURSDAY 25 DEC – THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

08:00 AM Cathedral Christmas Morning Mass

10:00 AM Cathedral Christmas Day Mass

FRIDAY 26 DEC – St Stephen, the first martyr

09:15 AM Cathedral Mass +Hewens, Smith & Browning Families

05:30 PM Cathedral Mass +Evelyn Griffith

SATURDAY 27 DEC – St John, apostle, evangelist

09:00 AM Cathedral Mass Private Intention

01:00 PM Marriage of Telesia Pili Lafaaau & Taniela Kite

06:00 PM Cathedral Mass Pro populo

SUNDAY 28 DEC – The HOLY FAMILY

08:00 AM Cathedral Mass Pro populo

10:00 AM Cathedral Mass Pro populo

11:00 AM Solemn Mass with Choir (Latin parts)

04:30 PM NO VESPERS TODAY

05:30 PM Cathedral Mass

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Cathedral)

ADVENT | MONDAY 22 DEC 11:00 AM

MONDAY - THURSDAY 11:30 – 11:50 AM

FRIDAY 04:45 – 05:15 PM

SATURDAY 09:45 – 10:45 AM & 04:30 – 05:30 PM

SUPPORTING OUR PRIESTS & PARISH

1<sup>ST</sup> COLLECTION (cash or eft only)

(supports the clergy: food, housekeeping, annual retreat & monthly stipend)

Account Name: St Mary’s Presbytery Account

BSB: 082-105 Acc. No: 001023527

2<sup>ND</sup> COLLECTION (cash, eft or tap & go - credit card)

(supports the Cathedral Parish: insurance, employees’ salary, repair & maintenance, office and church requisites, utilities, etc)

Account Name: St Mary’s Cathedral Parish

BSB: 082-105 Acc. No: 001006225

(Ref: Planned Giving Number and/or your name)

Thank you for your support!

IN YOUR CHARITY,PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR:

RECENTLY DECEASED: Gregory Gilbert, Colin Cox, Susan O’Brien (Inverell), Irene Bible, Gervasio Miking, Richard Sibraa, Maureen Bullen

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES: Jill Egan, Warwick Ruscoe

SICK: Vicki Caldwell, Kelemete Hefe, Tom Briggs, Brian Bible, Craig Elliott, Eric McLeod, Pauline Godschalk, Estela & Nelson Segovia, Joseph Hanna, Kristine Sevilla, James Righetti, Lisa Hallman, Elizabeth Williams, Cristina Arellano, Billy Steller, Jessie Hanson, Vanessa Hardy, Maria Grezl, Wili Suluma, Katrin Gödderz, Mary Peter, Sharyn Lucas, Carmen & John Gallagher, Bob Watson, Ferg Watson, Raymond Watson, Robert Watson, Maureen Campbell, Ann Haydon, Irene & Leigh Owen, Robyn Keogh, Robert Markeljic, Don Armatage, Molly Burke, Melissa Gamblen, Hannah Whitton, Tom Britt, Danny Jones, Michael Zhu, Aeron Ryan, Blake Ross, Gemma Milliken, Frederic Kelmeyer, Silvia & Ralph Bowles.

21 DECEMBER, FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

	6PM	8AM	10AM	11AM	5:30PM
Welcomer	K McMahon	P Stier	T Rimpici	APike	Turley
Reader 1	K McMahon	C Stephen	I Mittheu	M Van Gend	J Chin
Reader 2	D Fittler	J Toakley	J Turner		D Roff
PoF	W Clark	A Rogers	P Hordern		J Roff
ExMin	C Khan	D Miron	B Robinson		K Steller

25 DECEMBER, THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS)

	6PM	10:30PM	8AM	10AM
Welcomer	D Fittler	M Carson	M Barry	?
Reader 1	F Miller	KMcMahon	Sr Mary I	C Chapman
Reader 2	CStephen	L Quast	N Ramazani	S Chapman
PoF	J Miller	Sr Celine M	F Miron	?
Gifts	Ward Family	J Carson	?	C O’Brien

28 DECEMBER, THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

	6PM	8AM	10AM	11AM	5:30PM
Welcomer	W Clark	M Barry	T Rimpici	APike	Chin
Reader 1	C Doherty	B Mackson	A Dinh	MVanGend	P Turley
Reader 2	A May	F Miron	K Frazier		RCamillieri
PoF	J Carson	N Ramazani	M Suluma		J Maher
ExMin	K McMahon	D Miron	B Robinson		D Roff

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS

	Actual	Target	Difference
1st Collection	\$2,198.00	\$2,114.00	\$84.00 ☺
2nd Collection	\$5,174.00	\$6,350.00	-\$1,176.00 ☹

Cathedral Parish Child & Vulnerable Adults Protection and Safeguarding Statement

Commitment to Safety

Our parish is dedicated to creating a safe, respectful, and welcoming environment for all, especially children and vulnerable adults.

Zero Tolerance for Abuse

We have a strict zero-tolerance policy for any form of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children or vulnerable adults.

Compliance with Safeguarding Standards

Our parish follows the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Integrity in Our Common Mission, and adheres to the NSW Child Safe Standards to ensure our practices are aligned with best-practice safeguarding principles.

Please ensure that your children are accompanied when leaving the Cathedral during Mass to go to the toilet or for any other reason.

Saints Mary & Joseph Cathedral Parish Armidale

Most Reverend Peter Mel Murphy Ph.D

Bishop of Armidale

132 DANGAR St (PO Box 2025), ARMIDALE 2350, PH 6772 2218

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Administrator: Fr Damien Locke | [FrDLocke@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:FrDLocke@armidale.catholic.org.au)

Assistant Priest: Fr Elino (Eli) Comanda OSJ | [frelino@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:frelino@armidale.catholic.org.au)

Parish Secretary Ms Tina Clarke | Office Hours: Mon - Fri 9am - 1pm

Principal, St Mary’s Catholic Primary School: Mrs Belinda Burton

Principal, O’Connor Catholic College: Mr Philip Gibney

Interim Parish Pastoral Council Chair: Mr Michael Barry

Parish Finance Council Chair: Mrs Fiona Miron

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (A/2) 21ST DECEMBER 2025

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-14

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.”’

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalms 23(24):1-6

R: Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

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:

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:

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

Romans 1:1-7

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.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Matt 1:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son;

His name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-24

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.

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION in Preparation for Christmas

Will take place on Monday 22 December at 5.30pm with a visiting priest available. All are encouraged and welcome to attend.



## NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

**CHRISTMAS VIGIL MASS 6:00 PM** | With a focus on families and children, children are welcome to dress up as shepherds/angels.

### CHRISTMAS DUES

Every year, excess funds in the first collection (Presbytery Account) are sent to Priest Salary Fund to help priests in the smaller parishes like ours. This also means that, at the beginning of each year our Presbytery Account is \$0.

Help us cover our costs for January. Envelopes for Christmas Offering are available in the foyer and side entrances and may be left on the collection plate at any Mass. This contributes towards the support of our priest and presbytery upkeep. Thank you!

**FR DAMIEN** | as we are now aware that Fr Damien is leaving the parish, we are very grateful for his time here in Armidale would like to offer him a testimonial. Envelopes are available over the next two weekends and can be placed on the collection plates.

### CATECHISTS 2026

Would you like to join our Catechists team for 2026 and make a difference to the lives of children in our State Primary Schools? Are you called to be a disciple to spread the mission of God? Can you spare an hour a week as a Catechist or an Assistant? Please contact Kerry Steller or Tina Clarke at the Parish Office on 67722218 for further information.

### CLEANING ROSTER FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

Volunteers are needed over the December/January period. There is a roster in the Cathedral foyer. Please add your name alongside the week/date that you are available to help. If you would further information, please contact the Parish Office 67722218.

### FIVE FIRST SATURDAYS DEVOTION

Marian devotion on the first Saturday of each month . Next gathering this **Saturday 3rd January 2026 at 9.30am**, immediately after the 9am Mass in the Cathedral.

**FISHERS OF MEN PRAYER GROUP** | meets in the Parish Meeting Room, Mondays 7:30 - 9:30 pm. For enquiries contact Nirmal on 0430871064 .

**HOLY FACE DEVOTION** | Tuesday's at 5:45 pm in the Parish Prayer Room (formerly Adoration Chapel).

### CATHEDRAL PARISH ADORATION PROGRAM

The Parish Adoration Program will be take a break from: Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday 24 December at 3pm through to Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Monday 9 February at 8am.

### CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD UPDATE AND MORE HELPERS NEEDED

During 2025 we have been blessed to be able to run three groups of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) – two sessions for the 3-6 yr olds and one session for the 6-9 yr olds. Next year we hope to start an additional session for the 9-12 yr olds. If you would like your child to start attending CGS in 2026, please register your interest with Monica van Gend on 0431 385 524 (we have a waitlist for the 3-6 yr olds).

Also, we are in need of 2 more adult helpers for our sessions in 2026. All that is required is 1.5 hrs a week (or fortnight) and a WWCC, we will provide training. Please contact Janine Turner on 0416 767 866 if you are able to offer any help.

## FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS

Calling for donations of **WHITE** fresh flowers and greenery/foilage for Christmas. If you have or know of anyone who has fresh cut white flowers or suitable greenery to decorate our beautiful Cathedral for Christmas could you please deliver them to the side entrance of the Holy Family Parish Office between **10-10.30 on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December?**



## VINNIES BLUE BUCKET APPEAL THANK YOU

Thank you to all our generous Cathedral Parish parishioners. The Blue Bucket Appeal raised \$8,151 at our Masses and from the Magellan Mothers Christmas Afternoon Tea. All monies raised will be used in Armidale to provide Christmas hampers, food vouchers, gifts and other assistance to our local needy over the Christmas period. Thank you also to St Mary's and O'Connor for their generous Christmas Appeal donations.



## IMMACULATA MISSION SCHOOL 2026

**What is it?** A wonderful opportunity to grow in faith through daily Mass, Adoration and times of prayer, fantastic Catholic speakers (including international speakers Steve and Katey Norman from Renewal Ministries), share groups, fun activities, friendship and lots more.

**What is the theme?** "Our Father" - join us and go deeper in God's goodness and love!

**When is it?** 1-7 Jan for youth and adults (14 years and up); 1-5 Jan for married couples and families (includes children's ministry)

**Where is it?** Armidale, NSW

**For costs, more information and to register visit:**  
[www.immaculata.org.au/ims](http://www.immaculata.org.au/ims)

Registrations close 23rd December.

## LIGHTING THE FOURTH CANDLE: LOVE

We light the fourth candle, the candle of **Love**, as Christmas now draws very near. This light reminds us of God's boundless love shown in sending His Son, Jesus. As all four candles will now blaze, they symbolize the fullness of light and hope that Jesus brings to the world.

Gracious God, as we light this fourth candle, we celebrate your incredible love for us, perfectly shown in Jesus Christ. Help us to be filled with that love, to reflect it in our lives, and to share it with those in need. May this light transform our hearts and guide us to welcome Him, our Lord and Savior, with open arms. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen



# Welcome Home

Go our beautiful Cathedral of Saints Mary and Joseph this

# CHRISTMAS

Carols in the Cathedral 17 December, 6pm  
Christmas Lessons & Carols 20 December, 7.30pm  
*Our Lady of the Angels Chapel*

First Vespers of Christmas 24 December, 5pm  
Christmas Vigil Mass 24 December 6pm  
*with a focus for Families and Children*

Christmas Night Mass 24 December, 10.30pm  
Christmas Morning Mass 25 December, 8.00am  
Christmas Day Mass 10.00am

## POPE FRANCIS | ANGELUS | Saint Peter's Square |4th Sunday of Advent, 22 December 2013

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, the Gospel tells us about the events preceding the birth of Jesus, and the Evangelist Matthew presents them from the point of view of St Joseph, the betrothed of the Virgin Mary.

Joseph and Mary were dwelling in Nazareth; they were not yet living together, because they were not yet married. In the meantime, Mary, after having welcomed the Angel's announcement, came to be with child by the power of the Holy Spirit. When Joseph realized this, he was bewildered. The Gospel does not explain what his thoughts were, but it does tell us the essential: he seeks to do the will of God and is ready for the most radical renunciation. Rather than defending himself and asserting his rights, Joseph chooses what for him is an enormous sacrifice. And the Gospel tells us: "Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to send her away quietly" (1:19).

This brief sentence reveals a true inner drama if we think about the love that Joseph had for Mary! But even in these circumstances, Joseph intends to do the will of God and decides, surely with great sorrow, to send Mary away quietly. We need to meditate on these words in order to understand the great trial that Joseph had to endure in the days preceding Jesus' birth. It was a trial similar to the sacrifice of Abraham, when God asked him for his son Isaac (cf. Gen 22): to give up what was most precious, the person most beloved.

But as in the case of Abraham, the Lord intervenes: he found the faith he was looking for and he opens up a different path, a path of love and of happiness. "Joseph," he says, "do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 1:20).

This Gospel passage reveals to us the greatness of St Joseph's heart and soul. He was following a good plan for his life, but God was reserving another plan for him, a greater mission. Joseph was a man who always listened to the voice of God, he was deeply sensitive to his secret will, he was a man attentive to the messages that came to him from the depths of his heart and from on high. He did not persist in following his own plan for his life, he did not allow bitterness to poison his soul; rather, he was ready to make himself available to the news that, in a such a bewildering way, was being presented to him. And thus, he was a good man. He did not hate, and he did not allow bitterness to poison his soul. Yet how many times does hatred, or even dislike and bitterness poison our souls! And this is harmful. Never allow it: he is an example of this. And Joseph thereby became even freer and greater. By accepting himself according to God's design, Joseph fully finds himself, beyond himself. His freedom to renounce even what is his, the possession of his very life, and his full interior availability to the will of God challenge us and show us the way.

Let us make ourselves ready to celebrate Christmas by contemplating Mary and Joseph: Mary, the woman full of grace who had the courage to entrust herself totally to the Word of God; Joseph, the faithful and just man who chose to believe the Lord rather than listen to the voices of doubt and human pride. With them, let us walk together toward Bethlehem.