



St Mary MacKillop
Catholic Parish
ORAN PARK

PARISH BULLETIN

21 Dec 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent



For all things give thanks.

1 THESS 5:18



The Light That Cannot Be Overcome

PASTORAL LETTER TO THE FAITHFUL
FOLLOWING THE TRAGIC EVENTS AT BONDI

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with a heart full of sadness that I write to you in the wake of the tragic events that have unfolded in Bondi on Sunday afternoon. In this season of Advent, a time when we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, this terrible event weighs heavily on us all. We find ourselves burdened with grief and questions in the face of this senseless loss of life and the pain inflicted on so many. The killings that took place last Sunday in Bondi are a painful reminder of the reality of violence, hatred and fear, all of which were directed at our Jewish brothers and sisters here in Australia and therefore directed at all of us. Pope Leo XIV has cried out "Enough of these forms of antisemitic violence". This is a cry that we all should be making as people of faith, a people of peace and a people who are called to honour the dignity of every human being. A people who are called to love.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we hear the Gospel proclaim the story of Mary and Joseph, who, amidst their own fears and uncertainties, trusted in the promises of God. The angel's words to Joseph,

"Do not be afraid" (Matthew 1:20), echo across the centuries to us now. These words are a reminder that God is ever with us, even in the darkest of moments, Emmanuel, God with us, dwells among us, bringing light into our shadows and hope into our despair.

Advent is a season of waiting, yearning, and hoping. It is a time when we are reminded that God, entered into a violent broken world, not with a display of aggression, but rather with the vulnerability of a child. In Jesus the wisdom of the world is subverted, and we find not only the answer to our eternal longing but the courage to choose hope amidst the challenges of the here and now.

In this time of grief, we are called to reject further division and hate, and to embody the forgiveness and love that Advent heralds. Just as Mary's quiet "yes" to God changed the course of history, we are invited to say "yes" to being instruments of peace, healing,

and reconciliation. Let us open our hearts to those who are most affected by this tragedy, those who are grieving, those who are injured, and even those whose actions have caused such harm. As a community of faith, we are called to be a sign of God's mercy, to stand in solidarity with the suffering, and to proclaim through our actions that no darkness can overcome the light of Christ (John 1:5).

As we approach Christmas, let us draw strength from the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and Reconciliation, where we encounter Christ, the source of all hope and consolation. Let us bring our grief, our questions, and our fears to God, trusting in God's infinite mercy and love. Let us also take comfort in the knowledge that God is always close to the broken-hearted (Psalm 34:18).

I encourage you to spend time in prayer with your families and in your parish communities during this final week of Advent. As we light the fourth candle on the Advent wreath, may its light remind us of the enduring hope we have in the coming of Christ, who is the Prince of Peace. May we, like Mary and Joseph, trust in God's plan and allow His love to guide us through this difficult time.

As your shepherd, I assure you of my continued prayers for you. I ask that you pray for me, for one another, for our Jewish brothers and sisters, and for peace in our world. Let us walk together in faith, hope, and love, as we look forward to the joy of Christ's birth and the promise of His abiding presence among us. The presence of love.

Yours in Christ

+Brian Mascord

Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG

4th Sunday of Advent 2025

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IN OUR PARISH

Monday 22 December
1pm Rosary, Leppington.

Tuesday 23 December
9:30am Rosary on Zoom
5pm Devotions &
6pm Reconciliation &
Adoration
6:40 Evening Prayer &
Benediction
7pm Mass, Oran Park

Wednesday 24 December
REFER QR CODE

Thursday 25 December
REFER QR CODE

Friday 26 December
9.30am Mass

Saturday 27 December
4pm Reconciliation &
5pm Mass, Oran Park

Sunday 28 December
8am Mass, Leppington
8am Mass, Oran Park
10am Mass, Oran Park

5pm Mass, Oran Park

Chaldean Holy Mass
12:00noon Sunday

LITURGY OF THE WORD

1st READING IIs 7:10-14: The virgin will conceive.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 23:1-6: R. Let the Lord enter; he is king of glory.

2nd READING Rom 1:1-7: Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is the Son of God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia!

A virgin will give birth to a son;
his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us.
Alleluia! (Mt 1:23)

GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11 (JB): Are you the one who is to come, or must we wait for someone else?



WE REMEMBER IN PRAYERS

We pray for our faithful departed who have died recently and whose anniversaries are remembered at this time.

We also join in prayer for those who are unwell or in need of extra prayers.

Anthony Vella, Frank Tipler, Margaret Noronha, Joe Tabone, Fernando Bareto Daluz, Anna Torcaso, Juliet Decruz

We invite you to share the names of those who are sick or in need of extra prayers by emailing the Parish Office

PARISH CHRISTMAS OFFICE HOURS

Please note the Parish Office will be closed from Monday, 22 December, to Friday, 26 December.

ADVENT RECONCILIATION TIMES

Advent, like Lent, is a Season of the Church's year that invites us to be reconciled to God and to one another so that we can "prepare a way for the Lord". To allow as many Parishioners as possible to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) in preparation for Christmas, we will be holding the following sessions of Reconciliation:

Tuesday, 23 December : 5pm-6.45pm

NEW to our Parish ?

Whether you are here for the very first time, or have been here for a while, we would love to connect with you.

Please scan the QR Code and a member of our Welcome Ministry will be in touch soon.



TAKE ME HOME

CHRISTMAS MASS

Our Christmas Day Mass at Oran Park will now be held in the School Hall.

For Christmas mass timings scan the below QR code:



'25Christmas

ST. MARY MOTHER OF GOD, LEPPINGTON

Inaugural Xmas raffle draw and Picnic day, following Sunday mass.

The Xmas raffle prize draw will be held at 9.00am following Sunday mass (21 Dec).

To celebrate this event, we ask that parishioners join us and bring along a picnic basket or a plate of food to share.

Coffee and Tea will be available.

PARISH 10TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK

Orders are now open for you to purchase your copy of our Parish 10th Anniversary Book for \$30 per copy.

Please scan the QR Code or use the link <https://bit.ly/10ANN> to register your order and a member of our Parish Admin. Team will contact you to arrange collection.



10ANNBOOK

Cash purchases are now available at Oran Park (Piety Stall) and Leppington (Welcome Table).

2026 SACRAMENTAL CALENDAR

Our Parish 2026 Youth Sacramental Calendar is now available on the Parish Website. Those families wishing to enrol their children in 2026 for RCIC, 1st Holy Communion or Confirmation are asked to visit the website and note when online enrolments will be available.

2026 CARMELITE RETREAT PROGRAM

Through a range of day, weekend, and weeklong retreats, this year's Carmelite Retreat Program offers opportunities for prayer, reflection, spiritual growth and community. Whether you are new to Carmelite spirituality or a seasoned pilgrim, you'll find nourishment and inspiration for your journey with God. Please collect a flyer from the Welcome Table or contact the Mt Carmel Retreat Centre : bookings@mtcarmel.com.au

RCIC (Rite of Christian Initiation of Children)

Children 7 years and above who are not baptised or who have been baptised in a Christian church other than Catholic, are still able to make their 1st Reconciliation and/or 1st Holy Communion by taking part in our Parish RCIC (Rite of Christian Initiation of Children) program prior to enrolling in our 1st Reconciliation/1st Holy Communion preparation program. Those families interested in being a part of RCIC are asked to send an email to oranpark@dow.org.au. Enrolments for RCIC will be available on the Parish website from 2 Feb 26. Answer: St. John was in the prison. Answer to match up puzzle: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk; lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.

EXODUS 90

UNCOMMON

Freedom

CALLING ALL MEN

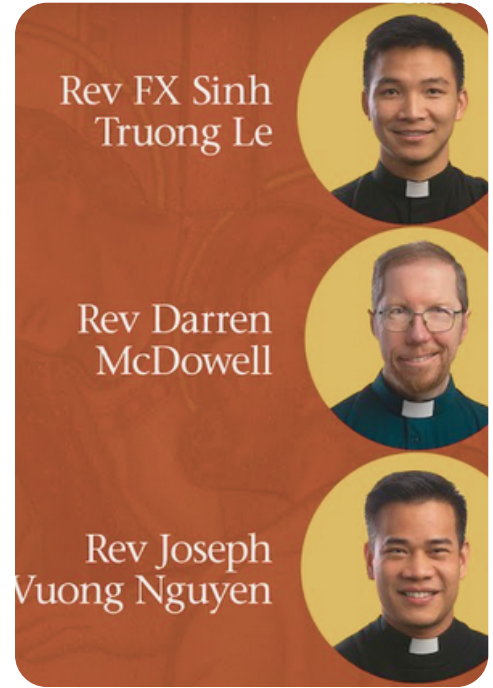
Grow in personal freedom through prayer, asceticism, and fraternity.

True freedom isn't doing whatever you want—it's living for worship, sacrifice, and love. Join tens of thousands of men for the Exodus 90 Challenge beginning January 5, 2026, and discover what it means to be uncommonly free in Jesus Christ.

Download the Exodus 90 App to Get Started

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT: IVAN: ivansiladji@gmail.com
FRANK: franklamasan_au@yahoo.com.au

AROUND WOLLONGONG DIOCESE



A JOYFUL TRIPLE ORDINATION FOR OUR DIOCESE!

CLERGY, BISHOP BRIAN
MASCORD

CARITAS AUSTRALIA: BE A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS FOR FAMILIES FACING ADVERSITY THIS CHRISTMAS.

This Christmas, we are inviting Australians to “be a light in the darkness” for families who are living through the trauma of war, displacement, and poverty. The intensity of the conflict in **Ukraine** has increased and more people are experiencing displacement and poverty. But with your support, we can bring hope to these families. Our partner, Caritas Ukraine are on the ground working hard to prepare food kits, emergency shelter kits and psychosocial assistance to families facing adversity. Donate today at <https://www.caritas.org.au/christmas-appeal/be-the-light-in-darkness/>

NEW STUDY OPPORTUNITIES AT THE NOTRE DAME STUDY CENTRE, ORAN PARK

The University of Notre Dame Australia is now offering a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Primary Education through the Notre Dame Study Centre at Oran Park.

Shalom World: A Global Catholic Media Hub – Your One-Stop Destination for True Peace!

No matter where you are on your faith journey, Shalom World invites you to dive into inspiring content, faith-filled adventures, uplifting news, and deep prayer—anytime, anywhere!

<https://shalomworld.org/>



THE ART OF DYING WELL – FOUR-PART SERIES

Clergy and parish communities are invited to attend The Art of Dying Well, a free four-week Saturday series presented by Bruce Missen, Managing Director of Willow Tree Funerals. Dates: Commencing Saturday, 10 January 2026 Time: 10:30 AM – 1:00 PM Venue: Our Lady of Mount Carmel, **Varroville** Details: Light refreshments provided. Please scan the QR code on the attached flyer to register. For more information: 02 8776 1667 or www.willowtreefunerals.com.au



“THE WORDS OF JESUS FREE US FROM THE
PRISON OF DESPAIR AND SUFFERING.”

— POPE LEO XIV, 14 DECEMBER 2025

TAKE ME HOME

Sydney Archdiocese dedicates Christmas light show to Bondi attack victims

In the aftermath of the Bondi Beach terror attack, Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher describes how the local community gathered together in front of the Catholic Cathedral to remember the victims at a special Christmas light show.

Pope Leo condemns antisemitism in phone call with Israeli President

Pope Leo XIV receives a telephone call from Isaac Herzog, President of Israel, following the recent terrorist attack in Sydney, and reiterates the Catholic Church's condemnation of all forms of antisemitism.

At pilgrimage of hope, Cardinal Tagle warns against fear-driven leadership

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle calls on Asian Catholics to reclaim the humility and courage of the Magi, warning Church leaders against the fear-driven attitudes embodied by Herod, as the Great Pilgrimage of Hope opens in Penang. Answers to cross word: Across: 2. Sheol 6. Immanuel 7. deep 8. the 10. virgin 12. child. Down: 1. name 3. house 4. man 5. Heaven 7. David 9. High 11. God

Thailand: Compassion in the villages of Chiang Mai

Among rice paddies and temples in northern Thailand, Idente Missionaries live alongside families in villages, transforming their shared life into a place of encounter between the Gospel and local traditions.

Living Ancestors: Voices of African Sisters are a testament of resilience

Countless stories of courage go untold, but the book “Living Ancestors” emerges as a voice for the unseen, the unheard and the deeply faithful women who have shaped Africa's spiritual and social spaces through decades of consecrated service. This ground-breaking work has been brought to life by Sr. Mumbi Kigutha of the Sister of the Precious Blood Dayton, Ohio, CPPS, offers a rare glimpse into their lived experiences.

Pope thanks UISG for bearing testimony to Gospel at frontiers of mission

In a letter sent on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the International Union of Superiors General, Pope Leo XIV urges women religious to be “pilgrims and missionary disciples of hope,” to heal the wounds of those they encounter.

China and the Church: Building a bridge

Vatican Media's headquarters holds a launch event for a new book by Chinese author Charetto Yan, entitled “My Chinese Dream: Dialogues and Encounters with Christianity”

50 Catholics martyred by the Nazis beatified in France

Three different groups of martyrs, nearly 200 in total, are beatified in celebrations in the Cathedrals of Jaen, Spain, and Notre Dame in Paris.

Thai and Cambodian Catholic Bishops sound alarm amid border clashes

The Catholic Bishops of Thailand and Cambodia voice their concern for the intensifying conflict along the two countries' shared border, as thousands of people have been displaced.

Anti-trafficking experts urge strong action 25 years from Palermo Protocol

At a conference organised by the Institute of Anthropology of the Pontifical Gregorian University, Church actors highlight the urgent need for action against human trafficking on the 25th anniversary of the Palermo Protocol.

VATICAN CHRISTMAS TREE AND NATIVITY SCENE

