

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS

"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay."

7 Grantham Road, Seven Hills. NSW. 2147

Ph. 9622 2920

Email: secretary@lol7hills.com.au

Parish Priest: Fr Henry Huu Duc Tran
Parish Deacon: Deacon Thong Nguyen
Parish Office Team: Rosie Sadipoor, Kim Dang Jane Nguyen
Office Hours: Monday-Friday: 9am - 3.00pm
WEEKDAY MASS: Tues, Wed, Fri. 8.00am
 Thursday 9.00am
WEEKEND MASS: Saturday Vigil 6pm
 Sunday 8am & 9.30am

Parish School: OLOL 8869 6800
Principal: Ms Keiran Byrnes
Reconciliation: Saturday 4:30-5:30pm
Baptismal Preparation: 21st February 2024
Baptism: 10th December 2023
Sacrament Co-Ordinator: Mrs Artelle Lenthall
Parish Website: www.lol7hills.com.au
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LOL7Hills/>

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 3 December 2023 • Year B



Let us Pray for the Sick

Leonila Ahillon, Mary Attard, Cynthia Avery, Barrie Chamberlain, Rosella Booth, Anthony Janicska, Carlos Moreno, Zeferino Jayson Morales, Debra Price, Camy Ratnam, Sue Tipaldo, Sr Colleen O'Sullivan, Natalie Woodward.

If you would like to add to our Sick List or know of any Parishioner who is unwell please contact Father Henry or email the Parish Office: secretary@lol7hills.com.au
 We can also arrange for Holy Communion or a visit if required.

Let us Pray for the Deceased

Recently Deceased: Mansour Ahmad, Ronald Bailey, Connie Busuttill, Noel DCruz, Maximilian Epondulan, Gladys Fernando, John Lionel, Joan Falzon, Mary Ann Farugia, Alfredo Fernandez, Ranjan Fernando, Epifanio Jalandoni, Mary Mifsud, Solomon Morias, Anthony & Evangelista Micallef, Pacienza Piscopo, Mercedes Yu, Epifania Cruz Samaniego, Maria Fely Sebastian, Joseph & Theresa Vella.

Anniversaries: Fredy Alphonse, Carolina Borg, Josephine & Family Calleja, Fe Licup Carmen, Mary Carmenzuli, Mervyn Costello, Conchita Deloso, Antonia, John Falzon, Josephine Francis, Charles Francis, Francis, Russell, Sheela Franklin, Paul Gauci, Charlie Gravina, Martha Joseph, Ngoc Khuong Mai, Thelma Morrissey, Lourda Motha, Xavier Jm Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Paul Mula, Jason Muscat, Alberto Nahoy, Joseph Thang Nguyen, Aurora Nonato, Sam Silvia, Cordula Paiva, Roseline Ratnam, Lorraine Rigney, Cornelio & Iluminada Rondario, Caroline Susainathan, Jim & Alison Vella, Melchor Usman.

Remembrance: Neil Amaratunga, France Angseeing, Carmen Attard, Joseph Azzopardi, Roy, Mary & Des Barney, Eveillino Bhundoo, Brian Carrebine, Lina Cabaero, Mary Chircop, Sam & Silvia Debattista, Carmen, Joe, Lonsan, Jimmy & Tony De Guarie, Melvyn Fernandes, Sammy Formosa, Evangeline Garcia, Jose Garcia, Christine Gomez, Harold, Sashin Patrick Manamperi, Elenoa Matavesi, Pauline Meilak, Mary Mifsud, Emilia & William Mifsud, Marcel Mohsen, Anton Motha, Louis & Stephen Mula, Felix & Adriana Muscat, Michelle Muscat, Mary & Francis Muscat, Josephine Muscat, Charles Muscat, Philippa & Jim Muscat, Piu Muscat, Adrian Pereira, Lakshman Pereira, John Portelli, John Ratnam, Jose Sanchez, Joyce & John Sutari, Shane Vaz, Jonathan Tek Kie, Stevenson Upulasi.

**Names are to be submitted to the Parish Office on or before a Thursday and will be published for 4 weeks at a time.*

Funeral Notices

May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen

Maximilian Elijah Epondulan - Tuesday 5th December

Viewing from 9.30am and Mass at 11.00am

Burial at 1.00pm at the Garden of Innocence, Castlebrook Memorial park, 712-746 Old Windsor Rd, Rouse Hill.

Please wear white and black.

KEEP UP TO DATE By visiting our parish website www.lol7hills.org.au

Our Lady of Lourdes



Ever Immaculate Virgin, Mother of mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, you know my needs, my troubles, my sufferings; cast on me a look of pity.

By appearing in the grotto of Lourdes, you were pleased to make it a privileged sanctuary,

from which you dispense your favours, and already many sufferers have obtained the cure of their infirmities, both spiritual and physical. I come, therefore, with the most unbounded confidence to implore your maternal intercession. Obtain most loving mother, my requests, through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
 Amen.

REGULAR COLLECTIONS - First and Second

FIRST COLLECTION and Matt's Point is for the support of Priests throughout the Diocese.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account name: Parramatta Diocesan Clergy

BSB: 067 950

ACC: 00 00 4265

Reference: Seven Hills - 6035

SECOND COLLECTION or Planned Giving Program

On behalf of the Parish Community, I would like to thank you very much for your ongoing support, which has been absolutely vital in keeping our Parish going strong. Projects completed include the Hall Kitchen renovation, Parish Meeting Room painting, Parish Office and Meeting Room Roof painted, Church roof cleaned and ceiling repaired and painted.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church.

BSB: 067 950

ACC: 000552

Reference: (Your Planned Giving envelope number or for a one off donation, 'DONATION')

IN-PERSON BANK DEPOSIT (at a Bank Inst / Branch)

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church

BSB: 062 315

ACC ID # 00901486

AGENT # 660

THE PILGRIM STATUE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The Statue of Virgin Mary is available for home visitation and will reside with you for a week, being Sunday to Saturday. If you are wishing to participate, please leave your name and address at the Parish Office or contact Maryse Augseeing on 0467 701 010 .

All are welcome to join us for **Our Lady of Lourdes, Seven Hills, Sydney, NSW, Australia Facebook LIVE-STREAM WEEKEND MASS** celebrated by **Fr. Henry Huu Duc Tran on Saturdays 6PM (Vigil), Sundays: 8AM, 9:30AM** <https://www.facebook.com/LOL7Hills/>

FIRST READING A reading from the prophet Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8

You, Lord, yourself are our Father, Our Redeemer is your ancient name. Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways and harden our hearts against fearing you? Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance. Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down – at your Presence the mountains would melt.

No ear has heard, no eye has seen any god but you act like this for those who trust him. You guide those who act with integrity and keep your ways in mind. You were angry when we were sinners; we had long been rebels against you. We were all like men unclean, all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing. We have all withered like leaves and our sins blew us away like the wind. No one invoked your name or roused himself to catch hold of you. For you hid your face from us and gave us up to the power of our sins. And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R) Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

1. O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.
O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help. **(R.)**

3. May your hand be on the man you have
chosen, the man you have given your
strength. And we shall never forsake you
again: give us life that we may call upon
your name. **(R.)**

2. God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. **(R.)**

SECOND READING A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 1:3-9

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace. I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 13:33-37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

The Gospel of the Lord.



PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen



GOSPEL REFLECTION - 1st Sunday of Advent Mark 13:33-37

As the Advent season begins, Jesus reminds us in today's Gospel that we must always be ready because we do not know the day or the hour when he will return to the earth. In Greek, the original language of the Gospels, *parousia* is the word for the second coming of Jesus.

The early Christians believed the *parousia* would occur within their own lifetime. Jesus would return to conquer the world and the world as we know it would end. With Jesus in complete control, the reign of God would begin and there would be no more wars, hunger, or suffering. God would then transform the earth into a new garden of Eden, just as it was before the first sin.

This belief in Jesus' imminent return caused a problem for the early Church. Some Christians who concluded there wasn't much sense in working if the world was going to end some time soon, relied on others to support them while they spent their time praying and waiting for the *parousia*. This led the author of the second letter to the Thessalonians to lay down the rule that anyone who would not work should not eat (3:10).

The belief in Jesus' quick return also delayed the writing of the Gospel stories. Instead of recording what Jesus said and did, the early Christians verbally passed on stories about Jesus. They were not afraid that Jesus' teachings would get distorted because they expected the *parousia* to occur before the apostles and other eyewitnesses were all dead. One of them would always be around to insure the accuracy of what was being said.

Only after it was clear that the *parousia* was not going to occur as soon as they first thought, did the early Christians finally begin writing the Gospels.

Because of this, the first Gospel (Mark) was not written until about 65-70 A.D. That's thirty-five to forty years after the death and resurrection of Jesus!

For Reflection-

The early Christians went to an extreme by believing the parousia would occur at any minute but most modern Christians act as if the world cannot end in our own lifetime. Today's Gospel reading warns that this isn't necessarily true.

PARISH NEWS...

ADVENT WREATH

It is usually constructed around a circular base. This circular base is traditionally taken to symbolise the ever-renewing cycle of the seasons, and the four candles, represent the four Sundays of Advent. The first candle known as the Prophets' candle symbolises hope. Know that the prophets of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah, waited in hope for the coming, the Adventus, of the Messiah.



MINISTERS FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES

There is a sign up sheet at the back of the church from this weekend for Ministers of the Eucharist, Acolytes and Altar Servers who would like to serve at one of our Christmas Masses.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING AT THE PIETY SHOP

The Piety Shop has a lovely range of ideas for Christmas, come have a browse at the back of the Church, or call Jane in the parish office

CHILDREN'S LITURGY—CHRISTMAS STORY

Thank you to the children who have volunteered to act out the Christmas Story this year. This will take place on Sunday 24th December at 6pm mass. I please ask that children be present at every Sunday 9.30am Mass (3rd, 10th, 17th) so we are able to practice. We may also do a quick run through on Saturday 23rd December. Many thanks for your support, Jemelyn Demeterio

CHURCH CLEANING

We urgently need extra people to do the church cleaning once a month for about an hour. If you can help please phone the Parish Office or put your name and number on the A3 roster located at the back of the church under the weeks of your availability.

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

We would like to welcome Rev Deacon Thong Nguyen who was appointed recently to serve in our Parish community. Deacon Thong is my compatriot and we have known each other for a long time, five years before the end of the Vietnam War. We wish him all the best and look forward to his companionship with us.

CHURCH WELCOMERS

As part of the feedback from Synod in our parish, we need some new welcomers to greet and offer bulletins at all services to help continue to create a better community, welcoming parishioners and visitors before each mass. If you are able to assist please contact the parish office.

PARISH DINNER THANK YOU

We would like to thank our Parish staff for helping to prepare our Parish Thank You dinner and all our volunteers who joined the Dinner Thank You night. Many thanks to those who were unable to attend the event for the generosity to serve in various ministries within our parish.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE CATECHIST GROUP

Due to circumstances, lot of our current catechists have to take a break and we therefore urgently need others to replace. If you can spare an hour per week plus a few hours of preparation for the class, please consider to join this ministry by contacting our Parish Office. You'll receive lot of support, such as training and materials for the ministry to nurture the faith of children at public schools.

The Little Book for Advent

A 22-day reflection resource for Advent during the 2023-2024 liturgical year. This year's Advent resource invites us to explore more deeply what it means to allow God to come to birth in us.



DIOCESAN NEWS

Bishop's Christmas Appeal for Catholic Care chaplaincy services

Will you support our chaplains to listen with the ear of the heart? Your compassionate generosity and prayers will help our 15 Catholic Care chaplains to provide pastoral, spiritual, and sacramental support to seriously ill, lonely, and distraught people this Christmas. Please give generously to the Bishop's Christmas Appeal at yourcatholicfoundation.org.au/appeal or scan this QR code. Thank you.



Be Part of Our Synod Journey: Diocesan Synod Report Now Available

The Diocesan Synod Report is now available for download. The newly released Diocesan Synod Report offers a summary of our first Diocesan Synod assembly, held from 13-15 October 2023, its preparatory stages, in-depth details of the proceedings, and insights from delegates. Download your copy from the Parramatta Synod website now:

<https://parracatholic.org/synod2023/>

Donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal

Following a series of surprise attacks against Israel by Hamas in early October, Caritas Australia is supporting partner agencies on the ground to provide emergency cash, shelter, and psychosocial support to those affected by the violence. The efforts of these partner agencies are expected to support 17,000 displaced families, representing around 100,000 of the 1 million people displaced. To support Caritas Australia's Gaza Appeal call 1800 024 413 toll free or please visit www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/gaza-crisis/

60th Year of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Commemorative Mass: 4 December

Bishop Vincent invites all to join him in a commemorative Mass to mark the 60th Anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) to be held at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta on Monday 4 December at 7.30pm. Please RSVP for catering purposes to 0460 037 795 or Hannah Portelli hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org

Glenbrook Parish Christmas concert: 10 December

St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook, invite you to their annual Christmas concert event on Sunday 10 December at 7.30pm in the parish church. The evening will include choir and musical performances alongside themed readings for Christmas. Suggested donations for entry are \$15 for individuals and \$35 for families. For enquiries, please contact 0421 105 017.

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra St Patrick's Cathedral Concert: 12 December

Reel in the festive season with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Choir on Tuesday 12 December, 7:30PM at St Patrick's Cathedral for their annual Christmas concert, *Noël! Noël!*. Gather your loved ones and join us for this beloved festive tradition, as the Brandenburg perform stunning choral works and Christmas classics, conducted by Artistic Director Paul Dyer. **SPECIAL OFFER: Get four tickets for just \$149!** There are less than 200 tickets remaining, so head to brandenburg.com.au or call 1300 782 856 to book your tickets now.

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 or visit our website to download an enrolment form at <https://officeforworship.org.au/>

Epiphany Pilgrimage and Fiesta 2024

Commit the first fruits of your new year to Christ with the 2024 Epiphany Pilgrimage (2 - 9 Jan 2024). Enjoy 7 days of bushwalking, fellowship and prayer as we journey from Emu Plains to the top of the Blue Mountains, experiencing the wonderful hospitality of parish communities along the way. Day 1 is a family-friendly day, with the option for a children's pilgrimage finishing with the Fannies Fiesta at St Finbar's Glenbrook. For more information and to register for all or part of the journey, visit www.epiphanypilgrimage.org.

Are you interested in becoming a pastoral and professional supervisor?

Transforming Practices offers a rich formation in Pastoral Supervision. Supervision Formation comprises of 5 two day Modules, held over 7 months. The next Portfolio of Learning Day will be held on Friday 3 February 2024 (with sufficient applicants). For those proceeding – an Introductory Day will be held on Friday 5 April 2024. All training days may be held on Zoom, face to face or in dual mode depending on successful applicant's location. For program prerequisites, please visit www.transformingpractices.org. For further information, please contact the Registrar, Mary Pearson via email marypearson@gmail.com

Sydney Summer School of Evangelisation: 7 – 14 January 2024

Summer School is a week-long, live-in, life-changing retreat at the Mt Carmel Retreat Centre in Varroville NSW, featuring praise and worship, inspiring talks, engaging liturgy, time to chill & learn and more in the midst of a community of 150+ young people aged 16-35. Registrations open 31 October. Register by 30 November to receive early bird rates (concession \$525/adult \$625). More info: contact@summerschool.org.au. Bookings: summerschool.org.au

Marriage Preparation Courses in 2024

Getting married in 2024? Let the Diocese of Parramatta help you prepare. Visit www.parracatholic.org/pmp to view course dates in the New Year, to book and pay. An online preparation called *SmartLoving* can also be booked via the website. For more information, email met@parracatholic.org or phone Karin on 0419 242 435 or Marisa on 0412 280 017.

Soul Food Podcast – Mission Enhancement Team

Do you find life & faith inspiration by listening to the experiences of others?

The Mission Enhancement Team's *Soul Food Podcast* features life & faith stories of people from our diocesan family. Listen now for FREE via our website or on Spotify: <https://pfparra.org.au/soulfood/>



POPE FRANCIS' ANGELUS

Dear brothers and sisters, blessed Sunday!

Today I cannot appear at the window because I have this problem of inflammation of the lungs, and Monsignor Braida will read the reflection. He knows them well because it is he who writes them, and he always does it so well! Thank you very much for your presence.

Today, the last Sunday of the liturgical year and Solemnity of *Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe*, the Gospel speaks to us about the final judgement (*Mt* 25: 31-46) and tells us that it will be based on *charity*.

The scene that it presents to us is that of a regal hall, in which Jesus, "the Son of man" (v. 31) is seated on a throne. All the peoples are gathered at His feet and conspicuous among them are "the blessed" (v. 34), the friends of the King. But who are they? What is so special about these friends in the eyes of their Lord? According to the criteria of the world, the king's friends should be those who have given him wealth and power, who have helped him to conquer territories, to win battles, to make himself great among other rulers, perhaps to appear as a star on the front pages of newspapers or on social media, and to them he should say: "Thank you, because you have made me rich and famous, envied and feared".

This is according to the criteria of the world.

However, according to the criteria of Jesus, friends are others: they are those who have served the weakest people. This is because the Son of man is a completely different King, who calls the poor "brethren", who identifies with the hungry, the thirsty, the outsiders, the sick, the imprisoned, and says: "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (v. 40). He is a King sensitive to the problem of hunger, the need for a home, sickness and imprisonment (cf. vv. 35-36): all realities that are unfortunately all too current. The hungry, the homeless, often dressed as they can, crowd our streets: we meet them every day. And also with regard to infirmity and prison, we all know what it means to be sick, to make mistakes and to pay the consequences.

Well, the Gospel today tells us that the "blessed" are those who respond to these forms of poverty with *love*, with service: not by turning away, but by giving food and drink, clothing, sheltering, visiting; in a word, by *being close* to those in need. And this is because Jesus, our King who calls himself the *Son of man*, finds his favourite sisters and brothers in the most fragile women and men. His "royal court" is held where there are those who suffer and need help. This is the "court" of our King. And the style with which his friends, those who have Jesus for Lord, are called to distinguish themselves is his own style: compassion, mercy, tenderness. They ennoble the heart and descend like oil on the wounds of those wounded by life. So, brothers and sisters, let us ask ourselves: do we believe that true kingship consists in mercy? Do we believe in the power of love? Do we believe that charity is the most kingly manifestation of man, and is an indispensable requirement for the Christian? And finally, a particular question: am I a friend of the King, that is, do I feel *personally* involved in the needs of the suffering people I find on my path?

May Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth, help us to love Jesus our King in the least of his brethren.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today in the particular Churches we celebrate the 38th World Youth Day, on the theme *Rejoicing in hope*. I bless those who are taking part in the initiatives organized in the dioceses, in continuity with the World Youth Day in Lisbon. I embrace young people, the present and future of the world, and I encourage them to be joyful protagonists in the life of the Church.

Yesterday tormented Ukraine commemorated the *Holodomor*, the genocide perpetrated by the Soviet regime which, 90 years ago, caused millions of people to starve to death. That lacerating wound, instead of healing, is made even more painful by the atrocities of the war that continues to make that dear nation suffer. For all peoples torn apart by conflicts, let us continue to pray tirelessly, because prayer is the force of peace that stops the spiral of hatred, that breaks the cycle of revenge and opens up unexpected paths of reconciliation. Today let us thank God that there is finally a truce between Israel and Palestine, and some hostages have been freed. Let us pray that they will all be freed as soon as possible – think of their families! –, that more humanitarian aid will enter Gaza, and that dialogue is insisted upon: it is the only way, the only way to achieve peace. Those do not want dialogue do not want peace.

Besides war, our world is threatened by another great danger, that of the climate, which puts life on Earth, especially for the future generations, at risk. And this is contrary to the plan of God, who created everything for life. Therefore, next weekend, I will go to the United Arab Emirates to speak on Saturday at the COP 28 in Dubai. I thank everyone who will accompany this journey with prayer and with the commitment to take to heart the preservation of the common home.

I welcome you with affection, pilgrims from Italy and other parts of the world, in particular those from Pakistan, Poland and Portugal. I greet the faithful of Civitavecchia, Tarquinia and Piacenza, and the *Deputazione San Vito Martire* of Lequile, Lecce. I greet the candidates for confirmation from Viserba, Rimini; "*Assisi nel vento*" Group, and the "Don Giorgio Trotta" Choir from Vieste.

I wish you all a good Sunday. And please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci*!

Dear brothers and sisters,

After having seen, last time, that the Christian proclamation is joy, today let us focus on a second aspect: it is *for everyone*, Christian proclamation is a joy for everyone. When we truly meet the Lord Jesus, the wonder of this encounter pervades our life and demands to be taken beyond us. He desires this, that His Gospel is for everyone. Indeed, in it there is a “humanizing power”, a fulfilment of life that is destined for every man and woman, because Christ was born, died, and rose again for everyone. For everyone: no-one excluded.

In *Evangelii Gaudium* we read that everyone has “a right to receive the Gospel. Christians have the duty to proclaim the Gospel without excluding anyone. Instead of seeming to impose new obligations, they should appear as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet. It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but ‘by attraction’” (no. 14). Brothers, sisters, let us feel that we are at the service of the *universal destination of the Gospel*, it is for everyone; and let us distinguish ourselves for our capacity to come out of ourselves.

A proclamation, in order to be true, must leave behind one’s own selfishness – and let us also have the capacity to cross all borders. Christians meet on the parvis more than in the sacristy, and go “to the streets and lanes of the city” (Lk14:21). They must be open and expansive, Christians must be “extrovert”, and this character of theirs comes from Jesus, who make his presence in the world a continuous journey, aimed at reaching out to everyone, even learning from some of his encounters.

In this sense, the Gospel reports Jesus’ surprising encounter with a foreign woman, a Canaanite who begs him to cure her sick daughter (cf. Mt 15:21-28). Jesus refuses, saying that he was sent only “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” and that “it is not fair to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs” (vv. 24, 26). But the woman, with the insistence typical of the simple, replies that “even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table” (v. 27). Jesus is struck by this and says, “woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire” (v. 28). The encounter with this woman has something unique about it. Not only does someone make Jesus change his mind, and a woman, foreign and a pagan, but the Lord himself finds confirmation that his preaching should not be limited to the people to whom he belongs, but open to all.

The Bible shows us that when God calls a person and makes a pact with some of them, the criterion is always this: *elect someone to reach others*, this is the criterion of God, of God’s calling. All the Lord’s friends have experienced the beauty, but also the responsibility and the burden of being “chosen” by him. And everyone has felt discouragement in the face of their own weaknesses or the loss of their certainties. But perhaps the greatest temptation is that of considering the calling received as a privilege: please, no, the calling is not a privilege, ever. We cannot say that we are privileged compared to others – no. The calling is for a service. And God chooses one in order to love everyone, to reach everyone.

It is also to prevent the temptation of identifying Christianity with a culture, with an ethnicity, with a system. In this way, though, it loses its truly *Catholic* nature, or rather for everyone, universal: it is not a little group of first-class, chosen people. Let us not forget: God chooses some to love *all*. This horizon of universality. The Gospel is not only for me, it is for everyone; let us not forget this. Thank you.

Special Greetings

I extend a warm welcome to the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors, especially the groups from England, Finland, the Netherlands, Malaysia, the Philippines, Korea and the United States of America. Upon all of you I invoke the joy and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you!

Summary of the Holy Father's words

Dear brothers and sisters!

In our continuing catechesis on apostolic zeal, we are reflecting on the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* and its summons to proclaim “the joy of the Gospel”. That joy is meant for everyone, since the risen Lord wishes to call all men and women to share in the fullness of life. In fidelity to the mission we received in baptism, we have a duty to share the Gospel with all whom we meet, not excluding anyone, because Christ was born, died, and rose again for all. The Scriptures reveal that when God calls individuals to discipleship, he also sends them forth as witnesses of his redeeming love. The Church herself is “catholic”, universal, for she has been entrusted with the mission of making disciples of all nations, while also fostering unity that respects and reconciles the rich variety of histories and cultures. May we who have experienced the beauty and joy of the Gospel become ever more conscious that its message is good news for all, and strive to show the face of a Church that is welcoming and embraces all.

GENERAL NOTICES...

NEW TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES? HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU?

Welcome. Wherever you are in your faith journey, it is great to have you. Please visit our website or call the parish office. We're here to serve you. www.olol7hills.org.au

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

SICK AND/OR HOMEBOUND?

Would you like to receive Communion? Or seriously ill or in danger of death? We have dedicated ministers who can visit and bring you communion. Feel free to approach or call Fr Henry for the Holy Anointing of the Sick. Please call the parish office 96222920

FUNERALS

When a Funeral is to be celebrated, please contact the parish office to organise a meeting with Fr Henry. Funerals are not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

BAPTISM

Parents desiring Baptism for their children are encouraged to contact the parish office to arrange for the required preparation class for parents.

MASS INTENTIONS

All Mass intentions must be submitted to the Parish Office on or before Thursday. Names will be published for 4 weeks at a time.



LOURDES OVER 50s GROUP

Over 50s meeting Thursday 8th February 2024, 10.30am– 1pm. Please bring a plate to share. Look forward to seeing you there.

Lourdes: Luminate Young Adults Group

The next group night is Saturday, 25th of November, 2023 7.00pm in the Parish Meeting Room. If you would like more information please contact Ian Epondulan: youtholol7h@gmail.com

LOURDES PLAYGROUP

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish playgroup is a fun playtime for children aged 0 to 5 years old and their carers. It is held every Friday morning during school terms 9.30am-11.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. For further information please contact Maria Hosni 0432 174 056 or the Parish Office.

FREE ZUMBA CLASSES

Every Tuesday and Thursday 6.00pm-7.00pm in the Hall. Everyone Welcome!

LEGION OF MARY

Thursdays at 1.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome.

Christ Catholic Community Prayer Group

Thursdays at 9.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome

VINNIES SUPPORT CENTRES ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN NEED

St Vincent de Paul Support Centres across Greater Sydney are still available and taking calls to arrange for food vouchers or other items to be provided to those in need. If you need assistance, call the Support Centres in Blacktown on (02)8861 9777, Harris Park on (02)8861 9757 and Penrith on (02)8861 9770. To find out more about what support is available, visit <http://vinnies.org.au/covidsupportnsw>

OFFERTORY PROCESSION FOR OUR WEEKEND MASSES

With the intention to help our community to get more involved at Mass and better appreciate our share in the priesthood of the faithful, meaning our call to be priests, prophets and kings or queens of Jesus through baptism that Fr David Orr reminded us in our recent Parish retreat, I would like to invite all our parishioners to take part in the offertory procession, especially families that have some special celebrations in the families, such as wedding anniversaries, baptisms, birthdays, or death anniversaries. Please see Fr Henry or Ernie before Mass to arrange it.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2023

DECEMBER

21 Individual Confession	8.30-9.30am
21 Parish Second Rite of Reconciliation	7.30pm
22 Individual Confession	9.30-10.30am
24 Children/Family Christmas Mass	6.00pm
24 Christmas Mass	9.00pm
24 Midnight Mass	12.00am
25 Christmas Day Mass	8.00 & 9.30am



LOL MINISTRY ROSTER

Acolytes, Ministers, Readers and Altar Servers, please remember to arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass.

2/3 December 2023

Acolytes	Vigil: Frank Paiva 8am: Terry Jordan 9.30am: Ramzee Michael
Ministers	Vigil: M. Mifsud, B. Motha 8am: J. Irudayaraj, A. McNally 9.30am: B. Chandler, M. Michael
Readers	Vigil: A. Punch, J. Sarmiento 8am: P. Ferriols, K. Walker 9.30am: C. Diaz, R. Epondulan
Altar Servers	Vigil: A. Bagatella, D. Sant, J. Sant 8am: K. Maruthanayagam, S. Park, P. Park 9.30am: C. Attard, M. Gluvic, F. Wanandy
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Tongan Choir
Musicians	Vigil: Christine Clark 8am: Fr. Henry 9.30am: Couples for Christ
Flowers	Fenty & Liz
Church Cleaning	9 December Tongan Community
Welcomers	Vigil: Ram Urge 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: Volunteers

9/10 December 2023

Acolytes	Vigil: James Dinning 8am: Ernie Gartner 9.30am: Kilifi Huihui
Ministers	Vigil: C. Gonzales, C. Jansz 8am: F. Balatbat, Edith Gartner 9.30am: P. Gow, K. Huihui
Readers	Vigil: C. Rodrigues, M. Simic 8am: N. Arambulo, J. Cabasa 9.30am: A. H. R. Han, E. V. Pieris
Altar Servers	Vigil: L. Sadipoor, A. Spadaro, B. Spadaro 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: J. Martinez, M. Pieris, J. Pieris
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Young Adults Group
Musicians	Vigil: OFS 8am: Fr. Henry 9.30am: Tongan Choir
Flowers	Claudette & Judith
Church Cleaning	21 December Cathy Hutchings & Annette Peatman
Welcomers	Vigil: Helen Gonzales 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: Sastina Pieris

The Kids' Bulletin

First Sunday of Advent
December 3rd, 2023

Ready for His Return

"Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come." Mark 13:33 (NIV)

Choose the word that best matches the definition. Answers can be found in Mark 13:32-37 (NIV)



What time is it?

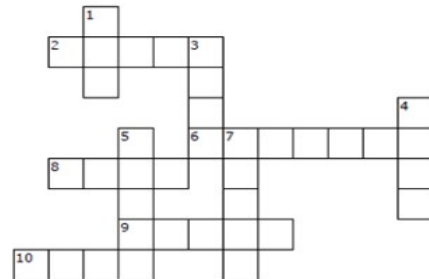


Color the picture, then each day color one star beginning with number one.

- ___ 1. The person who has something such as property
A. owner B. servant C. angel D. father
- ___ 2. To be in a period of rest such as when we go to bed at night
A. alert B. sleeping C. awake D. watch
- ___ 3. The loud cry of an adult male chicken
A. bark B. meow C. moo D. crow
- ___ 4. A period of sixty minutes
A. watch B. hour C. day D. week
- ___ 5. An adult male chicken
A. rooster B. hen C. chick D. goose
- ___ 6. To have information about something; to be aware of something
A. know B. think C. hope D. watch
- ___ 7. A period of 24 hours
A. minute B. week C. day D. month
- ___ 8. To keep an eye on; to guard
A. hide B. sleep C. time D. watch
- ___ 9. A particular moment in the day, such as eight o'clock
A. time B. watch C. sleep D. night
- ___ 10. The place where a person or family lives
A. tent B. heaven C. door D. house



X S Y U H H R S L E E P I N G
J I E C E U N C F P R N C A F
B N T R T E D V W U C Z R P L
T A P R V R C E O X Y R O Q U
W T E A A A Y H O S Z K O Y K
T L E U Z V N G B T S F S W J
A H G J L M M T L C W J T U S
M I D N I G H T S O Z G E H N
F M L Q O E I N N S K S R O N
A T W R V V X K O N L N Y U X
T V H E V E D A Y E W E C S K
H J L Z Z N G E G A W J E E C
E D T X W I I N D D O O R S N
R K D D R N A T U M B Q K O C
A T I M E G P D D I K Q S F O



ACROSS

2. To keep an eye on; to guard
6. An adult male chicken
8. To have information about something; to be aware of something
9. To be in a period of rest such as when we go to bed at night
10. A particular moment in the day, such as eight o'clock

DOWN

1. A period of 24 hours
3. A period of sixty minutes
4. The loud cry of an adult male chicken
5. The place where a person or family lives
7. The person who has something such as property

HOUR	DAY	WATCH	OWNER	KNOW
CROW	TIME	ROOSTER	SLEEP	HOUSE

My Advent Promises

How can I be Hopeful

How can I be Peaceful

How can I be Joyful

How can I be Loving

GUARD	DOOR	HOUR	ALERT	HOUSE
HEAVEN	SON	WATCH	ANGELS	CROWS
MIDNIGHT	FATHER	DAWN	ROOSTER	EVENING
DAY	TIME	SLEEPING	SERVANTS	KNOW