



Dear Parishioners at The Oaks and Camden

RE: WEEKLY MESSAGE FOR WEEKEND 27/28 NOVEMBER 2021

2nd Sunday of Advent



Spiritual Insight by Pope Francis

Together with a culture of work, there must be a culture of leisure as gratification. To put it another way: people who work must take the time to relax, to be with their families, to enjoy themselves, read, listen to music, play a sport.

The Oaks and Oakdale

The meeting scheduled for **Thursday 2nd December at 6:00 PM** was attended by 27 people which could be considered as very good turn-out and indicative of the concern that many people have for the future of the parish. The following issues were discussed:

1. Partnership with Camden

To be open to the possibility of entering into a formal partnership with Camden, resulting in both parishes having the same parish priest, administration, website, pastoral programmes, sacramental programmes, newsletters and so on. It would also be envisaged that a formal partnership would lead to the same parish pastoral council and finance council.

However, each parish would continue to retain its own identity, fixed assets and bank accounts.

After discussion, a large majority felt that more time and discernment were necessary. Accordingly, the possibility won't be presented to the Camden pastoral and finance councils.

2. Sale of Land

Social distancing has resulted in a sharp fall in the number of people being able to attend Mass and, therefore, a decline in parish income. There is a parcel of rural land adjoining the cemetery that is unlikely to ever be of any practical value and could be sold to buy a house(s) that would yield rental income. This possibility will be considered.

After discussion, broad-based consensus was reached to investigate the land and obtain a valuation. No further decision was taken.

3. Rationalisation of Masses

Even before the pandemic, there were barely 100 people combined attending Masses each week at Oakdale and The Oaks. The number has declined because of public health orders about social distancing. Normally one Mass would be sufficient for 100 people. Oakdale is large enough to comfortably accommodate this number and quite a few more. The historic church at The Oaks is really too small. The possibility of a new facility came under consideration.

4. Presbytery

Once income is increased, the possibility of emptying the presbytery was discussed. Fencing and serious restoration would then be required if being prepared for rental.

After discussion, it was resolved to reconsider the matter next year.

26 John Street (PO Box 7) Camden NSW 2570 (02) 4655 8797 camden@dow.org.au
59 Holdsworth Drive, Narellan Vale NSW 2567 (ring Camden) camden@dow.org.au
5 /15 Merlin Street (PO Box 169) The Oaks NSW 2570 (ring Camden) theoaks@dow.org.au
Blattman Ave, Oakdale NSW 2570 Oakdale (ring Camden) theoaks@dow.org.au

ST. PAUL'S
CATHOLIC PARISH
CAMDEN

ST. ALOYSIUS
CATHOLIC PARISH
THE OAKS

ST CLARE'S
CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY
NARELLAN

ST JOSEPH
THE WORKER
CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY
OAKDALE

Sacrament of Penance Programme for Children 2021/2022

Families with children who have been baptised and who are in Year 2 at school or higher are still able to collect a Timeline this week after any of the Masses. Enrolment Forms can also be collected.

As stated last week, involvement in the programme requires motivation, commitment, and belief in the teachings of the Catholic Church. A humility of heart and an openness to personal conversion are highly desirable.



“No Shows” ~ Still a Problem

With the relaxation of the social distancing requirements, Masses in Camden last weekend were able to accommodate up to 270 people each. At both 8:00 AM and 10:00 AM Masses on Sunday morning more than 40 bookings were lodged at each Mass in which people didn't show up. Please be thoughtful of other parishioners who might otherwise have attended these Masses.

This is looming as a serious problem for Christmas. Even though all social distancing restrictions might be discontinued by NSW Health by mid-December, bookings for Christmas Masses will still apply at Oakdale (100), The Oaks (50) and Camden (500) to avoid over-crowding.

Before the pandemic, especially at the early Vigil, parishioners would often be crammed into Mass like sardines. Surely, we all remember this kind of experience. But in the interests of appropriate precautions, such over-crowding should still be carefully avoided. That is why limits will be imposed.

It will be most unfortunate if people make a booking and then fail to show up. Our beautiful Christmas Masses across both parishes should be as available to as many parishioners as possible. Thanks in anticipation.



Late Arrivals to Mass ~ Also a Problem

We have a very dedicated team of monitors who arrive early for Mass each week to assist with seamless entry into the church. These monitors also want to attend their particular Mass. Your prompt arrival to be seated for the commencement of Mass will enable the monitors to also be in attendance when Mass begins.

We do understand that babies and small children can sometimes delay arrival so please try to arrive on time.



Parish Christmas Concert at St Paul's

Many of our parishioners would already be aware of our Christmas concert that includes many of our parish's finest musicians and vocalists. The concert has been scheduled for

Sunday Evening 19 December from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

It's all a little experimental so it's not so easy to assess the level of interest. So bookings will be necessary. This occasion promises to be a wonderful time that includes our all our favourite Christmas carols. More details in coming weeks.

Bookings can be made in the usual way on our parish website from

9:00 AM, Wednesday 8 December 2021

St Vincent De Paul Society

Please help Vinnies make the Christmas celebrations more enjoyable for families in our parishes

Dear Fr Michael,

Thank you for agreeing to hold the St Vincent Christmas Appeal this weekend, 4th and 5th December at all Masses.

First, the response from St Paul's Primary School, St Clare's Narellan Vale, St Justin Oran Park and Mater Dei have been outstanding. We have packed thirty hampers from their contributions, more than what we anticipated. The hampers contain basic items for a Christmas meal such as puddings, cakes, sweets, other suitable Christmas foods and miscellaneous foods for snacks.

This year we decided that all toys donated would be given to the Afghan Refugee children in the Campbelltown area. Consequently, our hampers this year will not have toys included with them.

We will be supplementing each hamper with a meat order from a local butcher. These will be for \$40 or \$80 to allow the families to get fresh meat of their choice. We will also supplement each hamper with a Woolworths or Coles order so our recipients will be able not only to purchase other groceries but also items for their children.

Our appeal this year is for cash donations. These donations will pay for the meat and Woolworths and Coles vouchers included with the hampers.

With your permission we will place envelopes on the pews and have a leaving collection at all Masses.

Thank you, Father, for your ongoing support and that of the parishioners. Over the past five months we have been able to assist over thirty families and provide financial support of over \$8000. This is possible because of the generosity of our parishioners to our appeals and their support through the poor box.

We would be grateful if you please thank our parishioners on our behalf for their ever-supportive generosity.

We have been given surplus packets of Christmas cards left over from last year which are free to those who may want them. They are on the tables inside the chapel, and we ask that families take only one or two packets so they may be shared with as many parishioners who may desire them.

With sincere thanks in anticipation,
Pat O'Flynn



Christmas Mass Times ~ Bookings Necessary from Tuesday 21 December 9.00am

Christmas Eve ~ Friday 24th December

Friday		Celebrant	Musician/Vocalists
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Victor	Maria and Sarah
Camden	7:00 PM	Father Victor	Craig, Brian and Colin
Camden	9:00 PM	Father Michael	Belinda and Tasha
Oakdale	5:00 PM	Father Michael	TBA
The Oaks	6:30 PM	Father Michael	TBA

Christmas Day ~ Saturday 25th December

Camden	Midnight	Father Michael	Choir
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Victor	Jen and Josh

Boxing Day ~ Sunday 26th December

The Oaks	9:00 AM	Father Victor	
Camden	8:00 AM	Father Michael	Choir
Camden	10:00 AM	Father Michael	Eva and Darko
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Victor	Craig



Patronal Feast this Week

7 December: St Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church, Memoria

Born of a Roman family about the year 340, he studied law at Rome, entered the public service and then, while living in Milan, he was unexpectedly chosen to be bishop and ordained on 7 December in the year 374. He carried out the work of his office assiduously, being a true shepherd and teacher of the faithful, and especially did he show charity towards all. He strenuously guarded the rights of the Church, and in his writings and in his work defended the true faith against the Arians. He died on 4 April, Holy Saturday, in the year 397.

PS Arians taught that within the Blessed Trinity, God the Father was a bit greater than God the Son and that God the Son was a bit greater than God the Holy Spirit. The Catholic authentic teaching is that the three Persons are One God, undivided in unity and equal in majesty. Google for more information.

8 December: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Solemnity

The Immaculate Conception is the Catholic doctrine which says that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was conceived in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne, without original sin. The Immaculate Conception does not mean the conception of Jesus in the womb of his mother Mary.

This formulation of this doctrine is in accord with the sacred texts of Scripture: “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.....(Luke 1:28)”



Second Sunday of Advent 4/5 December

Saturday		Celebrant	Musician/Vocalists
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Michael	Quiet Mass
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Victor	Belinda and Sarah
Oakdale	5:00 PM	Father Michael	
Sunday			
The Oaks	9:00 AM	Father Michael	
Camden	8:00 AM	Father Victor	Steve and Damian
Camden	10:00 AM	Father Victor	Choir
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Michael	Jenny and Tasha

Third Sunday of Advent 11/12 November

Saturday		Celebrant	Musician/Vocalists
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Victor	Quiet Mass
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Michael	Maria and Sarah
Oakdale	5:00 PM	Father Victor	
Sunday			
The Oaks	9:00 AM	Father Victor	
Camden	8:00 AM	Father Michael	Choir
Camden	10:00 AM	Father Michael	Eva and Darko
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Victor	Tony

From The Diocese ~ Get Connected

Every week, there are many great opportunities to be part of special events, courses, free resources and to nurture and encourage you and your family in your faith.

A simple way to stay informed and connected is to invite the faithful to subscribe at <https://dow.sh/stayingconnected> to receive regular stay connected updates or visit <https://dow.sh/weeklybulletin> to see a full list of notices sent to parishes weekly.



Kind Regards

Father Michael