



JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

~ East Lake Macquarie ~

◆ St Francis Xavier's Belmont ◆ St Patrick's Swansea ◆ St Pius X Windale ◆

· FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT · YEAR C · 30 NOVEMBER 2025 ·

Parish Presbytery

Parish Priest Fr Gerard Mackie PP
Postal Address PO Box 277
BELMONT NSW 2280
02 4945 1244
Phone
Email gem5403@gmail.com

Parish Office

Accounts and Administration Officer Mrs Liza Ruitenbach
Street Address 40 Ernest Street
BELMONT NSW 2280
Postal Address PO Box 277
BELMONT NSW 2280
02 4945 4402
Phone
Email elmparish@mn.catholic.org.au
Facebook  [Jesus the Good Shepherd Parish-East Lake Macquarie](https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Catholic-Church/Jesus-the-Good-Shepherd-Parish-East-Lake-Macquarie-10554244421379/)
Webpage <https://mn.catholic.org.au/parish/jesus-the-good-shepherd-east-lake-macquarie/>

Columbarium All enquiries via Parish Office

Office Hours

Monday 8:00AM – 1:00PM
Wednesday 8:00AM – 1:00PM
Thursday 8:00AM – 1:00PM

Schools

St Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School Belmont

Principal Mrs Freda Pascoe
Street Address 42 Ernest Street
BELMONT NSW 2280
Postal Address PO Box 206
BELMONT NSW 2280
02 4945 2404
Phone
Email admin@belmont.catholic.edu.au
Website www.belmont.catholic.edu.au
OOSH <https://stnicholasoosh.org.au/belmont>

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School Swansea

Principal Ms Lucy Harvey
Street Address 213 Northcote Avenue
SWANSEA NSW 2281
Postal Address PO Box 141
SWANSEA NSW 2281
02 4971 1560
Phone
Email admin@swansea.catholic.edu.au
Website www.swansea.catholic.edu.au

St Pius X Catholic Primary School Windale

Principal Mr Stephen Pryde
Street Address 2 Lake Street
WINDALE NSW 2306
Postal Address As above
Phone 02 4948 8467
Email admin@windale.catholic.edu.au
Website www.windale.catholic.edu.au

Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

Bishop Bishop Michael Kennedy
Street Address 841 Hunter Street
NEWCASTLE WEST NSW 2302
Postal Address PO Box 780
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300
02 4979 1200
Phone
Email chancery@mn.catholic.org.au
Website www.mn.catholic.org.au

Liturgical Celebrations

Weekday Mass Times

Monday: 8:30AM Belmont
Tuesday: 8:30AM Windale
Wednesday: 8:30AM Swansea
Thursday: 8:30AM Belmont
Friday: 8:30AM Swansea
Saturday: 8:30AM Belmont

Sunday Mass Times

Saturday: 6:00PM Swansea
Sunday: 7:30AM Windale
9:00AM Belmont

Live Stream

Our Mass continues to be livestreamed daily and available via Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Catholic-Church/Jesus-the-Good-Shepherd-Parish-East-Lake-Macquarie-10554244421379/>.

Morning Prayer

Morning Prayer is prayed 15 minutes before our weekday Mass.

Rosary

We invite everyone to pray the Rosary daily after the 8:30AM weekday Mass from Monday to Saturday. Rosary is also prayed on Saturdays prior to the Vigil Mass at St Patrick's Swansea, commencing forty (40) minutes before the Mass starting 5:20PM Summer and 4:20PM Winter.

Feast Days

30 Nov First Sunday of Advent
3 Dec Saint Francis Xavier, Priest
4 Dec Saint John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Mass at Jesus the Good Shepherd

The following information is to assist parishioners and visitors:

- ✓ **Physical distancing** is still appropriate.
- ✓ The wearing of a **face mask** can help protect you and those around you. Masks are available at the church entrance.
- ✓ **Hand sanitiser** helps to reduce the spread of viruses and is available.
- ✓ **Holy Water** is available and changed regularly.
- ✓ Select your **bulletin** and please take it home with you afterwards. Bulletins are no longer re-used. **Children's worksheets** are available.
- ✓ The **Sign of Peace** remains contactless except between those residing in the same household.
- ✓ The distribution of **Communion** during Mass. The **Communion host** can be received in the hand, and on the tongue with care. For the latter please, proceed to the Priest only and at the end of the line. The **Precious Blood** is available to receive. A person with symptoms of cold, flu, COVID, or other viruses should not share the chalice with others.
- ✓ There are two (2) **collection plates** during Mass. Thank you for your continued support. The following option is available:
The **First Collection** supports all our Diocesan Priests:
Account name: ELM Parish Reference: <your name>
BSB: 066-739 Account Number: 100005583
The **Second Collection** supports our Parish running expenses:
Account Name: ELM Parish Reference: <your name>
BSB: 066-739 Account Number: 100005586

Parish Office

When visiting the Parish Office:

- ✓ For your safety, use the footpath. **Do not** walk across the garden.
- ✓ All on-site visitors are required to sign-in.
- ✓ Physical distancing is still appropriate when entering a building.
- ✓ Hand sanitizer and face masks are available if needed.

Sacramental Programs

***** *Diocesan Survey******

Dear Parishioners,

A working group has recently been established to review our current Sacramental processes across the Diocese. The goal is to identify how best to support both those participating in the programs and the facilitators who lead them.

To assist with this, we invite participants and facilitators in Sacramental programs, to complete a short survey to gather insights into how these programs are delivered. The feedback collected will help shape future diocesan support.

Please use the links below to access the survey appropriate to your circumstance to give feedback about your experiences. Please note that the surveys will close on 19 December 2025.

Survey Links:

Participants in the Sacramental programs -
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NBWRBK9>

Parents of participants -
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S759LTP>

Facilitators of the Sacramental programs -
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S7NL7TS>

Individuals who have taken part in the **RCIA** program -
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S9JFVK7>

Advent



Historical Context – The Advent Wreath

One of the major symbols of the Advent season is the wreath. The encircling wreath is symbolic of God without beginning or end and the green foliage represents our hope in God. There are usually five candles in the wreath, a central white candle representing the light of Christ that came into the world and then four outside candles that are usually purple and rose coloured. The first candle is generally symbolic of Hope and Expectation. The third candle – the rose or pink candle – celebrates the Joy that is anticipated in the coming of Christ. The progressive lighting of the candles marks the journey towards the Nativity.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for

Sick: Therese Smith, Geoff Brown.

(Once the person is no longer in need of prayer, would you kindly inform the Parish Office)

Recently Deceased:

Anniversaries:

Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them. ☩ May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen

Mass Intentions for publication may be submitted on an envelope on the collection plate, or to the Parish Office by email, or by phone; by 9:00AM Wednesday each week ahead. **Envelopes are available at the church entrance.** Please write details clearly to avoid errors. A reminder that you need the permission of the person, or their family, to enable us to publish names.

Pope's Prayer Intentions

You are invited to answer the Holy Father's request and to join with many people worldwide in praying for this intention each month.

<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

November intention is for the prevention of suicide

Let us pray that those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts might find the support, care and love they need in their community, and be open to the beauty of life.

Safeguarding in Our Parish

Our Children and Vulnerable Adults

The Parish of Jesus, the Good Shepherd is committed to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Information brochures are available at the entrance to the Church. Our **Parish Promoters of Safeguarding** are all the members of the Parish Pastoral Council.

Reflection

by Dianne Bergant CSA



The first reading of the first Sunday of this liturgical year contains a vision of universal peace and an invitation to participate in that peace by fidelity to the word of God. This vision of the future describes the eschatological age of complete faithfulness to God and the peace and harmony among people that will flow from it. Although the peace depicted here can come only from God, people do in fact play a very important role in its advent. Because this eschatological age has not yet come in its fullness, this vision is a promise, and an invitation that will continue to be relevant to each succeeding generation.

The responsorial psalm, a song of Zion, is an individual hymn of joy and praise of one who had the opportunity to go to the temple in Jerusalem. The city was built on Mount Zion, a hill that towered above much of the neighbouring low-lying terrain. This not only gave it a vantage point from which one could survey the surrounding territory, an important asset in case of possible attack, but its height enabled it to be seen from a distance, thus creating the impression of watchfulness and protection. Peace, as spoken of here, incorporates more than the absence of war or strife. It includes prosperity, well-being, and completeness. It is for this peace that the psalmist requests prayer.

Paul speaks about the decisive time of fulfilment, the kairós, the period of transition from the present age of sin to the long-awaited age of fulfilment. He employs several images to characterise this division of time: 'this age' is like slumber, or night and darkness; 'the age to come' is like wakefulness, or day and light. The statement 'already but not yet' acknowledges that the age of fulfilment has already dawned, but it has not yet been brought to completion. The new life that Christians are called to live is characterised as putting on clothing – armour, because they face spiritual warfare. To 'put on the Lord Jesus Christ' means to become identified with him.

The gospel reading is a lesson on the character of the parousía or future coming of the Son of Man. It addresses the sudden nature of this imminent time of fulfilment and of the need to be ready at all times for its dawning. In order to explain this, Jesus draws an analogy with one of the stories of ancient Jewish tradition, and then sketches two very ordinary experiences of life as demonstrations. He concludes with a kind of parable that teaches a lesson. All of these teaching devices follow the same twofold pattern: 1) the people had no idea of what was in store for them; 2) calamity befell them because they were unprepared. The message here is clear: 'Stay awake!' 'Be prepared!' © Dianne Bergant CSA

Reflection Resources

God's Word Daily Reflections 2026: The new edition of God's Word Daily Reflections is now available for purchase from the Parish Office. Cost is \$20.00.

Advent Reflection Book - The Promise: The Promise, a beautifully presented 88-page book of daily reflections is available from the Parish Office or Belmont Sacristans. Cost is \$7.50.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult, contact the Office of Safeguarding via P 02 4979 1390

or [E childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au).

For further information visit:

Website: www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au

Facebook: <https://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/>

Complaints: <https://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/making-a-complaint/>



Parish News

Welcome

We welcome new parishioners and visitors. We invite you to pick up and complete our 'New to the Parish?' flyer.

Bulletin Notices, Flyers and Posters

To avoid disappointment, all items for the parish bulletin need to be received at the Parish Office by 9:00AM on Wednesdays. A reminder that ALL requests for posters, flyers, newsletters, etc, need to be submitted via the office for distribution.

Children's Worksheets

Each weekend there is a new Children's Liturgy worksheet available at the Church entrance.

Sacraments

Congratulations to the children who received the Sacrament of HOLY COMMUNION last weekend. Please continue to pray for them and their families.

St Vincent de Paul

The St Vincent de Paul Society's Christmas Appeal will continue this weekend. Vinnies members will be collecting donations at all three churches.

The deepening cost-of-living crisis is driving more and more people into poverty and disadvantage. Your donation this Christmas will help provide practical, immediate assistance and lasting support so no family will have to make the impossible decision between going hungry or keeping the lights on. Please give generously.

Columban Calendars

Columban Calendars will be on sale in our three (3) churches until sold out. Vinnies members will be selling them for \$10 each.

St Patricks Craft Christmas Hamper raffle

Raffle tickets \$1 each, on sale now. Drawn 17 December 2025. Proceeds to St Vincent de Paul.

Parish Insurance

AN invoice for the Parish Insurance 2025-2026 has arrived totalling \$30,013.26.

Bequests

A bequest is a gift left in a will. To help our Parish continue its mission of proclaiming God's Word, you might consider including it in your will. Your gift will go towards the ongoing upkeep of the parish, the churches and its building. For more information go to <https://mn.catholic.org.au/about/bequests/>

Parish Caring Group

If you are an authorized account signatory, or know who is, kindly advise the office. We have mail that requires urgent action.

Parish Teams and Groups

Catholic Grandparents Association

Jesus, The Good Shepherd Parish is now affiliated with the Catholic Grandparents Association (CGA). Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, and all Catholic seniors, if you would like to join, contact Paul C M 0422 252 453. The purpose is to pass on the faith. For more information go to www.catholicgrandparentsassociation.org.

Children Liturgy of the Word

Our next Children's Liturgy of the Word will be celebrated on Sunday 21 December 2025 during the 9:00AM Mass, and on every third Sunday of every month at Belmont Church. Stay for a cuppa and a chat after Mass. A Sign-In Book is available before Mass. See page 2.

Choir

A choir has been formed to sing Latin Gregorian chant occasionally at the 9:00AM Mass at St Francis Xavier's Church, Belmont. If anyone has an interest in joining the choir, contact Andrew on M 0405 772 779.

Family Group Movement

The Passionist Family Groups provide an extended family for all who wish to belong. Everyone is welcome to join. Enquiries: John and Pauline via P 02 4946 7460 or E mcqraths_12@hotmail.com.

Friendship Group

The next Friendship Group for singles lunch will be held on Sunday 7 December 2025 at 12:00PM at Belmont Hotel Pacific Highway Belmont. RSVP before 5:00PM on Thursday 4/12/2025 by contacting Mary on M 0408 498 898. New members always welcome. This is to be a Secret Santa event.

Social Justice Committee

Our Social Justice Committee is calling for new members. We meet three to four times a year. If you'd like to join or learn more, contact Mary R M 0402 498 898.

St Patricks Craft Group

Our parish craft group gathers weekly in the Swansea Church Hall at 9:30AM on Mondays, except January. All welcome. Enquiries: Gay M 0419 211 573.

St Vincent de Paul

To enquire or join one of our Parish Conferences, contact one of the presidents. Belmont - John D M 0424 695 721, Swansea - Jenny P M 0439 814 874, Windale - Paul C M 0418240604

Diocesan News

Pilgrimage of the Migrant Jubilee Cross: A Conversation with Bishop Michael

Share the stories of our migrant communities. Come and be a part of a hope-filled conversation around the future of multi-cultural ministry in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. To read more go to: <https://mn.catholic.org.au/event/a-conversation-with-bishop-michael-on-the-migrant-jubilee-cross-pilgrimage/>

When: Friday 19 December, 2:00PM-4:00PM

Where: Victor Peters Suite, 841 Hunter Street Newcastle West

2026 Introductory Course in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

Commencing on Monday 2 February 2026, over five consecutive Mondays at MacKillop Parish, Charlestown. Topics covered include Pastoral Care, Listening, Self-Awareness, Grief, Healing and Illness and Community. Contact Fr Roger Zohrab for further information. M: 0418 438 649 or E: rzohrab@bigpond.com

Formation Films – Diocesan Resource Centre

Join in a Formation Film at 11:00AM on Saturday 6 December 2025. The film is "Journey to Bethlehem" a joyful musical. Christmas themed morning tea and lunch provided. Register via <https://forms.office.com/r/pL01SFGftC>

Other News

Palms



Develop community self-reliance and create lasting change! Discover How you can get involved in Palms International Volunteering.

Discover Palms International Volunteering <https://palms.org.au/event/> in these two special sessions where you'll hear how skill-exchange makes a lasting impact in communities in our Southeast Asian region.

1. Explore our **GAP YEAR opportunities** for (18-25yo) Year 12 graduates and university students, that could shape your future. Date: Thursday 4 December 2025

Time: 6:00PM or 9:00PM AEDT (NSW/VIC/ACT/TAS)

2. Join our **TIMOR-LESTE ENCOUNTER** Information session for those who would like a short taste and tour of Palms placements to Timor-Leste from 14-27 May 2026. Date: Monday 8 December 2025

Time: 7:30PM-8:30PM AEDT (NSW/VIC/ACT/TAS)

Venue: ONLINE-Scan the QR code or register at palms.org.au/events or P 02 9560 5333.



First Sunday of Advent Year A

Entrance Antiphon

Cf Psalm 24:1-3

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God.
In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.
Nor let my enemies exult over me;
and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

First Reading

Isaiah 2:1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The Lord will gather all nations in eternal peace in the kingdom of God.

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

In the days to come
the mountain of the Temple of the Lord
shall tower above the mountains
and be lifted higher than the hills.
All the nations will stream to it,
peoples without number will come to it; and they will say:

'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the Temple of the God of Jacob
that he may teach us his ways
so that we may walk in his paths;
since the Law will go out from Zion,
and the oracle of the Lord from Jerusalem.'

He will wield authority over the nations
and adjudicate between many peoples;
these will hammer their swords into ploughshares,
their spears into sickles.
Nation will not lift sword against nation,
there will be no more training for war.
O House of Jacob, come,
let us walk in the light of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 121:1-2, 4-5, 6-9. R. see v.1.

(R.) Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

1. I rejoiced when I heard them say:
'Let us go to God's house.'

And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

2. It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.
For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgement
of the house of David.

3. For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
'Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace!'

4. For love of my brethren and friends
I say: 'Peace upon you!'
For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good.

Second Reading

Romans 13:11-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

The time has come, our salvation is near.

You know 'the time' has come: you must wake up now: our salvation is even nearer than it was when we were converted. The night is almost over, it will be daylight soon – let us give up all the things we prefer to do under the cover of the dark; let us arm ourselves and appear in the light. Let us live decently as people do in the daytime: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 84:8

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

Gospel

Matthew 24:37-44

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Stay awake, you must be ready.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'As it was in Noah's day, so will it be when the Son of Man comes. For in those days before the Flood people were eating, drinking, taking wives, taking husbands, right up to the day Noah went into the ark, and they suspected nothing till the Flood came and swept all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. Then of two men in the fields one is taken, one left; of two women at the millstone grinding, one is taken, one left.

'So stay awake, because you do not know the day when your master is coming. You may be quite sure of this that if the householder had known at what time of the night the burglar would come, he would have stayed awake and would not have allowed anyone to break through the wall of his house. Therefore, you too must stand ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Communion Antiphon

Psalm 84:13

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.



Next Week's Readings

Second Sunday of Advent Year A

First Reading:	Is 11:1-10
Responsorial Psalm:	Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17. R. cf. v.7
Second Reading:	Rom 15:4-9
Gospel Acclamation:	Lk 3:4, 6
Gospel:	Mt 3:1-12