



Joy to the World!
 The Lord is come:
 Let earth receive her *King*.
 Let ev'ry *heart*
 prepare Him room,
 And heav'n and nature *sing*.
 And heav'n and nature *sing*.
 And heav'n, and heav'n
 and nature sing.

Isaac Watts, when a teenager, began writing a new hymn every week for his church. He wrote "Joy to the World" as an expression of Psalm 98:4:

***Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth;
 Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises.***

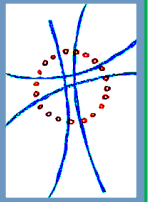


Acknowledgments

P1 & 2. Star of Bethlehem flowers—creative commons; Star—Clipart;
 P2. Baby Jesus—free pixels. P3. Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem—
 faithexplain.com; Christmas candle-free image P5. Nativity scene - Royalty free
 clipart. P8. Mary and baby Jesus—Pinterest & Joy to the World Clipart free . Pp
 5 & 8. Carols from 100 Favourite Hymns: Thomas Nelson.



CURSILLO COURIER
Grafton Diocese
Cursillo Movement
Christmas Edition 2025



From Bishop Murray

Because of travel commitments I missed Grafton's Jacaranda Festival this year. It's a highlight of the year around here. But of course I still enjoyed seeing the Jacaranda trees in all their purple and white beauty.

Festivals such as the Jacaranda Festival are a great opportunity for churches to have floral displays, admired by visitors and worshippers alike. Interestingly, St Jerome's writings from the Fourth Century tell us that flowers have embellished altars and churches since the days of the early church. Tradition has it that Mary's tears at the foot of the cross miraculously turned into flowers.

A lesser-known Christmas Carol is the 17th Century Dutch Carol, *King Jesus Hath a Garden*. As the Carol goes, *King Jesus hath a garden, full of divers flowers*.

It would be easy to consider King Jesus' garden to be The Garden of Eden, the perfect garden from which we were expelled in Genesis Chapter 3. But the final verse of this carol tells us otherwise:

***Ah! Jesu Lord, my health and wealth, my bliss
 complete,
 Make thou my heart thy garden-plot,
 fair, trim and neat.***



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Each flower mentioned has an associated virtue: *chastity* (lily), *humility* (violet), *patience* (damask rose), *obedience* (marigold), *charity* (crown imperial), and of course *Jesus* himself (star of Bethlehem).

As we look toward welcoming the new-born King at Christmas, let's make room for him to make his garden in our hearts, full of chastity, humility, patience, obedience, charity, and grace.

+Murray



Star of Bethlehem flower



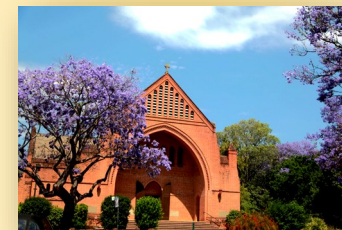
And Mary gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped him in cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7

Cursillo Weekend

2026

**This wonderful weekend will be held on
3rd, 4th, 5th October
at Grafton Cathedral.**

Is there someone you could invite?



**More details will be available next year!
It will be a combined weekend with
male and female candidates.**

**Please pray for the team as they prepare
for the three days.**

CURSILLO

Cathedral Ultreya 2026

Saturday, 7th February



GRAFTON CATHEDRAL

Theme:

“Seeking God’s Guidance”

9.30 am coffee/tea on arrival.

10.00 am Eucharist in the Cathedral.

*Please bring your own lunch.
Coffee/tea/slices provided*

Finish 3pm.



A Christmas message from our Spiritual Advisor

As Christmas approaches I think once again of that very first Christmas and the searching that took place. I think of Mary and Joseph making the long journey to Bethlehem and the necessity of finding a place to shelter where Jesus was born. Then the shepherds having been told of this special event went searching for that baby lying in a manger. Later, the wise ones followed the star searching for this special child. They didn't give up and what joy awaited them.

When I began my journey of searching for the reality of God I kept hearing the words, “*Seek and ye shall find*” so I kept on searching until I too discovered Jesus. What joy that moment brought! But seeking doesn't stop there. It's a lifetime of seeking God with our whole heart and going deeper into what God's presence means for each of us. The star and the angel's announcement led people to seek Jesus. That's our task as well. With the light of Christ shining through us, we too are encouraged to guide others to Jesus.

Many blessings of hope, joy, love and peace to you as you celebrate Jesus' birth with your family and friends this Christmas

Rev. Rhonda Callander



From our Diocesan Lay Coordinator



Dear Cursillistas,

On behalf of all the Cursillo Secretariat and myself I would like to wish you all a very **Merry Christmas**. Take the time to remember the joy of this season and the gift God gave us, the baby Jesus, our Savior.

I would also like to encourage you to come to our events next year. Our Diocesan **Cathedral Ultreya** is the 7th February in Grafton and is always a great event to catch up with other Cursillistas from all over the Diocese and join in God-focused communion and fellowship.

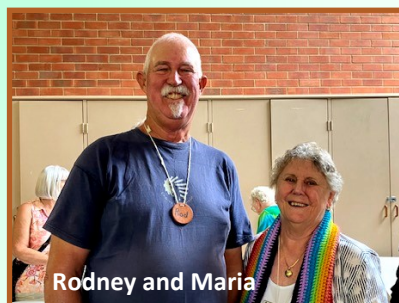
This coming year we are running another **Cursillo Weekend**. This will be held on the long weekend in October 2026 in Grafton. Please pray for Dawn Back from Lismore and her team as they prepare for the weekend and please look around: is there anyone in your parish who could be a candidate?

So again, may all the **peace, love** and **joy** this season represents be with you all, and I hope to see you all in the New Year.

Merry Christmas

De Colores, Rodney Lollback

Rodney Lollback is the out-going Diocesan Lay Co-Ordinator & Maria Gandey is the incoming. This transfer will take place during the Commissioning /De-Commissioning at the Ultreya on February 7th at the Cathedral.



Thank you, Rodney, for all you have done for Grafton Cursillo during your extended time as Diocesan Lay Co-Ordinator.

**Thanks for your huge commitment, and Susan too!
We all really appreciate you both.**

Silent Night, Holy Night



Silent night! **Holy** night!

All is **calm**, all is bright

'Round yon virgin

mother and child.

Holy infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in **heavenly** peace,

Seep in heavenly **peace**.

Joseph Mohr, a young German assistant priest, wrote the lyrics of this lilting carol for a Christmas Eve service in 1818.

It is the only hymn he wrote that has been translated into English. It has the universal message of peace.

Was it a silent night when Jesus was born?

The new-born baby's cries could be heard, cattle were lowing, and the shepherds came running to worship this newborn king.

This was a holy scene:

And Mary pondered all these things in her heart.