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Child Safe Church The Parishes of St Columba's, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat and St John the Baptist Beaufort follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed by the Ballarat Diocesan Office. You can download our Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy from the Diocesan or Parish website or on the foyer notice board. If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Offices, one of our priests or Safe Guarding Officers at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/>

Pope's Prayer for January – For the right to an education: Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected. Lord, hear us.

Our Diocesan Community Issue 3 The final edition of ODC for the year is available at our church foyer. Please feel free to take copies to the home-bound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the good news of the diocese.



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Parishes of St Columba's and St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat

Communities of Ballarat North, Ballarat Cathedral, Beaufort

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au (select Parish)

Office: 306 Gregory St, Ballarat Nth **Phone:** 5331 1012
Email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Office: 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat **Phone:** 5331 2933
Email: ballarat@ballarat.catholic.org.au

School Co-Principals: Shaun Mohr & Bambi Afford
School Phone: 5332 4894

Staffing

Administrator:
Fr Edward Moloney
Assistant Priests:
Fr Francis Kureeckal MST
Fr Abraham Thomas MST
Fr James McKay

Finance Officer:
Jackie Wrigglesworth

St Columba's Parish Coordinator:
Lia Andanar Yu
Wed-Friday 10:00am – 2:00pm
(closed on school holidays)

Safeguarding Officer:
Anthea Hinchey

MASS TIMES (This week)

St Columba's
Sunday 10.00 am
Wednesday 10.00 am
[Reconciliation 10.30am]

Beaufort
2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am

Readings for Next Weekend
Isaiah 62: 1-5
Ps 95: 1-3, 7-10, R. v.3
1 Corinthians 12:4-11
John 2: 1-11



12th January 2025 ~ The Baptism of Jesus Year C

Focus on the Scriptures

Baptised with the Holy Spirit and with Fire The liturgy of the Christmas season invited us to reflect on and to experience the various comings of Christ in our world. It invited us to open ourselves to the action of God's grace at work in our encounters with the living Christ. The readings from Luke's gospel led us from the story of the birth of Jesus to the story of his personal decision at age twelve to remain in God's house, the Jerusalem Temple, listening to the teachers of the Law and astonishing them with his answers to their questions.

Today's celebration of the baptism of Jesus marks the end of the Christmas Season and the beginning of Ordinary Time. Now, as an adult and along with "all the people", Jesus receives John's water baptism. The crowds are wondering if John the Baptist might be the Christ/Messiah, God's anointed one. John points the people away from himself and towards Jesus who "will baptise ... with the Holy Spirit and fire". Did Jesus also engage in a ministry of baptising the people "for the forgiveness of sins" or is John's reference to Jesus' activity of baptising with the Holy Spirit and fire a metaphor for the distinctive features of his future gospel ministry? It could well be both. As already noted in the reflection for the third Sunday of Advent, the three instruments of God's saving and purifying action for the Essene community at Qumran were the earth elements of fire and water imbued with "a holy Spirit". In Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles, the presence of the Holy Spirit is marked by tongues of fire. Fire is a powerful symbol that functions as a threat on the one hand and as a source of energy and light on the other. Our warming planetary home witnesses to our widespread failure to hear the wisdom of first peoples on how to live with fire, not as threat, but as source of energy and light.

The gospel reading names Jesus as God's Chosen One, the Beloved, on whom God's Spirit rests. In light of the first reading from Isaiah 42, the voice of God in the baptism scene commissions Jesus to bring forth justice, sensitively and without fanfare; to be a source of light to the peoples; to open the eyes of the blind and to set the captives free. Those baptised into Christ through the ages are baptised "with the Holy Spirit and fire" and are called to the same mission as Jesus and the same sensitive approach to that mission. The fire in our hearts sometimes flickers in the face of life's challenges. We can be guilty of crushing "the bruised reed" or extinguishing the flickering flame of hope. As we move into Ordinary Time with its demands, we might think about stirring the embers and fanning the flame of God's love so that justice might prevail in our world and for our planet-justice without violence, if not without pain.

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The heavens were opened and the Father's voice was heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: all who have died recently

Anniversaries: We remember: Mary Phillips, Cardinal George Pell, Hilda Crowe, Kathleen Moss, Leonilda Delore, Nancy Ross, Michael Fitzpatrick, Mary Thompson, Helen Charleson

We pray: for all in areas of conflict, war, natural disasters, for those who are sick and all in need of our prayers.

Parish Office hours over the Christmas period Fr. Francis will be taking leave during the month of January and Lia will be away. Whilst the parish office will not be staffed during this time, please make contact via email or in an emergency please call St Patrick's Cathedral 5331 2933.

Wishing you a Blessed and Happy Jubilee Year of Hope!

Diocesan Office Closures Diocesan office dates in December/January are available from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/diocesan-offices-dates-for-christmas-new-year-2/>

Advance Notice of dates 2025:

**Rite of Election* – Saturday, March 1, 2025 at 12.30pm, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat;

**Mass of the Oils* – Monday, April 14, 2025 at 1.00pm, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Afternoon tea will follow in the Hall.

Time line of Future Parish Merge Parish activity will remain operating independently for the immediate future, but in time the parishes will come together as one, with a projected date of merger 1st July 2025. Through a position of collaboration, the parishes will work towards a harmonious grouping. There are many gifts and talents in the communities and many experts in various fields. The Priests want to use the expertise of the Laity as we explore the merging of the parishes.

Next Centralised Baptism Preparation Session Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Next sessions are at the MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms, St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat, **Thursday, Feb 6, 2024**. You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

St Columba's Jan 19		Sunday 10:00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Musicians on break	
COMMENTATOR	Fiona Newton/Volunteer please	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Mitch Chalmers	
COMMUNION MINISTER	Colleen Wakefield	
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman	
SACRISTAN	Fiona Newton	

Collections last week Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ To be confirmed Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ TBC

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Parish of St. Columba's Ballarat North recognises the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.

Jubilee Year 2025- Pilgrims of Hope Pope Francis has declared a Jubilee Year of Hope in 2025, centred on the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope." A Jubilee is a special year of grace and conversion, involving prayer, pilgrimage and sacramental repentance, held every 25 years, or during other years as called for by the Pope. Through a series of concrete rituals, acts and commitments, the goal of a Jubilee year is to inspire and encourage holiness of life among the faithful and therefore to strengthen the Church's witness to God's loving mercy in and for the world. Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of the Basilica of St Peter in the Vatican on December 24, 2024 to begin the year. On the following Sunday, December 29, the Holy Door of the Pope's Cathedral, St John Lateran, was opened. Then on January 1, 2025, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St Mary Major was opened. Finally, Sunday, January 5, marked the opening of the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. Pope Francis decreed that on Sunday, December 29, 2024, in every cathedral and co-cathedral, diocesan bishops were to celebrate Holy Mass as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year, using the ritual indications that were provided for that occasion. Bishop Paul celebrated Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. The Holy Year will conclude in the particular Churches on Sunday, December 28, 2025. The doors of St John Lateran, the Basilica of St Mary Major and the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls will also close on this date.

St Columba's Jan 26	Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Musicians on break
COMMENTATOR	Colleen Wakefield
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Vicki Moroney
COMMUNION MINISTER	Gina Hinchey
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown

Baptisms This weekend we welcome to our Parish through the sacrament of Baptism:

Sophie Olivia Spry and Henry John Spry children of David John and Lynette Minna.

"The Church gives the faith to your children through Baptism and you have the task to make it grow...." - Pope Francis

May Sophie and Henry grow in faith with the support of their family and our Catholic Community.

World Day of Peace – January 1, 2025 Hope has been a constant theme in all of Pope Francis' World Day of Peace messages. This is all the more true in his message for the 58th World Day of Peace, which was marked on January 1, 2025, as the Church begins the Jubilee of Hope amid an unprecedented combination of challenges facing the world today. Read the Pope's message for World Day of Peace at <https://shorturl.at/6DZCp>.

The Jubilee Prayer

*Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us
 in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
 and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
 reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.
 May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators
 of the seeds of the Gospel.
 May those seeds transform from within both
 humanity and the whole cosmos
 in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth,
 when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.
 May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
 a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
 May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer
 throughout the earth.
 To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.
 — Pope Francis*

Vatican International Photography Contest - Sport in Motion In the context of the Jubilee of Sport for the Year 2025, the Dicastery for Culture and Education (Vatican) is promoting an international photography contest, under the title 'Sport in Motion'. The contest is aimed at young photographers, professional or amateur, under the age of 25. The contest includes 5 categories of photography: Sport and hope (sport as a message of hope to society); Sport and family (sport as a moment of family life); Sport and disability (sport as a platform for inclusion); Sport and politics (sport as a resource accessible to all); Sport and ecology (the relationship of sport with the elements of nature). The deadline for participation ends on April 30, 2025 and the winners will be announced at the Jubilee of Sport (June 14-15, 2025). The winners will be awarded a meeting with the Holy Father, a visit to the Vatican Museums, a workshop in the *Osservatore Romano* newspaper and the international dissemination of the photos in the Holy See's media. Entries can be made by email to sportinmotion@dce.va and further information (entry form/rules/jury) can be found on the Dicastery's website <https://www.dce.va/it/news/2024/concorso-di-fotografia.html>

Prayer for children in our parishes That we may all work collaboratively to ensure the happiness and confidence of every child and foster an environment of safety and protection where children flourish. Let us pray to the Lord.