



▶ **SS PETER & PAULS**  
701 FISKEN ST  
BUNINYONG 3357



▶ **ST ALIPIUS**  
82 VICTORIA ST  
BALLARAT EAST 3350



▶ **PARISH OFFICE**  
84 VICTORIA ST  
BALLARAT EAST 3350  
PH 5332 6611  
CLOSED UNTIL 23 JAN

7 January 2024

The Epiphany of the Lord

*We have come to adore the Lord*

# St Alipius parish

[ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

[www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarata-east/](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarata-east/)

## MASS TIMES

### St Alipius

Tuesday – Saturday 9:30 am

Saturday 6:00 PM

Sunday 9:00 AM (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> weeks)

10:30 AM (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)

### Ss Peter and Paul's

Sunday 9:00 AM (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)

10:30 AM (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>)

Rosary – Thursday 11:00 AM

### Mass and prayer resources

[www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au)

No counting team this week

Our Parish is committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land and pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging.

## WE PRAY FOR

### Recently Deceased:

Charlie Tarquinio, Sheila Skinner, Mark Bevelander

**Unwell:** Patricia Murray, Socorro de Chavez, Shelley Pawang, Carole Simmons, Peter McLachlan, Sarah McLachlan, Eleanor McMahon

## PARISH TEAM

### Parish Administrator

Fr Concord Bagaioisan, OSJ

### Visiting Priest

Fr Barry Ryan

### Sacramental and Parish Coordinator

Cathy Prunty

### Administrative Assistant

Natalie Shannon

### Finance Officer

Bernadette Prestwood

### Child Safety Officer

Emily Clarke

*Note that emails and phone messages will still be checked while the office is closed.*

## PARISH VISION

The combined communities of St Alipius Parish reach out in the spirit of faith, hope, love, and acceptance, as God calls us to in the gospels.

## PARISH MISSION

Our mission in the Parish of St Alipius is to actively engage and serve our combined communities, embodying the teachings of the Gospel. Strengthened in the spirit of faith, hope, love acceptance and Mercy, we strive to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. Guided by God's call to service, we aim to build strong connections, provide spiritual nourishment, promote social justice, and offer support to individuals and families in their journey of faith. Through our dedicated interactions, we seek to deepen our relationships with God, inspire transformation, and make a positive impact in the lives of those we encounter, spreading God's love and compassion to all.



## WELCOME FR CON

The parish warmly welcomes Fr Concord "Con" Bagaosan OSJ, from the Congregation of the Oblates of Saint Joseph.

Fr Con was born in a small town in the southern part of the Philippines in 1968. He joined the Oblates in 1985 and was ordained a priest in 1996.

In 2009 Fr Con began his mission to Australia. His first parish was in Albany, Western Australia, where he started to learn the Australian language and culture.

Fr Con remembers being asked to "Bring a plate" and wondering why he should bring a plate. Another time he was asked, "How are you travelling?"

Over time, Fr Con learned the idiomatic expressions we use in Australia, and he loves still learning about the Australian way of life. St Alipius will be Fr Con's fourth Australian parish.



Did you know that Fr. Con loves to fish? Perhaps if fishing is an interest of yours, you could share some local knowledge with him as to the best places to go.

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS

The parish office will not be open during usual hours between Boxing Day and 22 January 2024. We will check emails and messages regularly, so please don't hesitate to make contact if needed and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and thank you all for your support throughout the past year.

Cathy and Natalie.

## STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Thank you to all parishioners who contribute to our stewardship program. Your generosity is appreciated.

We invite anybody who would like to join the program to please contact the parish office.

## DIOCESAN E-NEWS

The latest edition of e-News has been published and is available at [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/). You can subscribe to be emailed future editions.

## SAVE THE DATES

**The Rite of Election** will be held at 12:30 PM on Saturday 17 February at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Lunch will follow in the Hall.

**The Mass of the Oils** will be held at 11:30 AM on Monday 25 March at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Lunch and displays will follow in the Hall.

## BAPTISMS

**Summer Lee Fleming**

Child of Andrew and Amy Fleming

*I have called you by your name, you are mine.*

*Isaiah 43:1*

## CHANGE TO ENTRY CODES ON CHURCHES

As part of a compliance audit currently happening in the parish, the codes which allow people to enter the St. Alipius and Ss. Peter and Paul's churches will be changed on January 31<sup>st</sup>. If you need access to these churches you will need to make contact with the parish office to complete a form and provide a copy of your WWCC. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause, but know that you will understand.

## LAUDATO SI'

In his encyclical Laudato Si', Pope Francis reminds us that everything is connected. Our relationship with nature is not separate from our relationship with God and others. This concept of integral ecology encourages us to care for the Earth and each other. It calls us to action.

The Diocesan Social Justice Commission, in collaboration with Caritas (Diocese of Ballarat), Earthcare Ballarat and the Pastoral Ministry Office, encourages us to **"Be compost smart"**. Did you know? Learning more about composting helps the earth. Instead of just food scraps, you can also compost cardboard, egg cartons, paper napkins, grass clippings and newspapers.



## AID TO CHURCH IN NEED

The Pontifical Foundation Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has committed an aid package of \$190,000 to support the Christians of the Holy Land during the current crisis. This aid will assist impoverished Christians in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, as well as Christian migrant workers and asylum seekers in Israel. Scan or click the QR code to donate.



## DIOCESE TURNS 150

The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat will turn 150 on 30 March 2024. There will be several events held next year to mark this occasion. The latest edition of Our Diocesan Community has a very informative article about the formation of the diocese, written by Sr Berenice Kerr RSM. A timeline of events is on display in each church.

## FUNERAL MINISTRY THANKS

For a number of years now, Carmel Flynn has been coordinating Funeral Ministry in the parish. In recent times Carmel has indicated her wish to give up the coordination of this program, although she will continue supporting the parish in the running of funerals. Carmel has put hours of work into every funeral that she has coordinated and is responsible for preparing the remembrance Mass each November. On behalf of the parish, we wish to say thank you to Carmel for the time and effort she has put in over the past four or five years. Carmel your work has been greatly appreciated.

## LAY MINISTRY PROGRAM

The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) is a growing initiative to offer adult religious education and faith formation anytime and anywhere, online. This US\$50 online study and formation course is for employed or volunteer lay workers in parishes and is available through the Diocese of Ballarat's partner, Dayton University.

There are 41 subjects to choose from – find one that interests you!

The first Cycle for 2024 begins on 15 January 2024. Registrations are open now. Scan or click the QR code or email [djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:djurdjia.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7121.



## PRAYING WITH THE POPE

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer) is an international movement that is more than 170 years old. Each month, the Pope puts forward a prayer intention and asks Catholics around the world to join him in prayer. These intentions cover all areas of life, encouraging faith, renewing hope, and calling us to loving service. 'The Pope Video' forms part of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network – [www.thepopevideo.org](http://www.thepopevideo.org).

Pope's intention for January – For the gift of diversity: Let us pray that the Spirit helps us recognise the gifts of different charisms within the Christian community and discover the richness of different ritual traditions in the heart of the Catholic Church.

## SOCIAL GATHERING

Everyone is welcome to join us for a social evening on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm at the Red Lion Hotel. This will allow everyone to get to say hello and socialise as the holidays finish. Names and numbers are needed to be in by Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January. Please email the office, speak to Natalie or Cathy or ring the office and leave numbers on the answering machine. This is also an opportunity to welcome Fr Con to our parish.

# The Wisdom of Strangers

## Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

The Feast of the Epiphany: Matthew 2:1–12

God's presence is revealed to us in diverse ways: we can read the book of God's vast creation; we can search out the meaning of our dreams; we can learn from our own and others' experience; and we can listen to the voice of our sacred scriptures.

Being attentive to God's presence has nothing to do with naïve dependence on our own judgment or on the judgement of others. It has more to do with a way of being in the world that involves openness to the unexpected and a critical and careful personal and communal dialogue between our life experience and our faith tradition.

A deep awareness of our place in the Earth community teaches us humility. It also teaches respect for the whole of creation and for the power of the more-than-human to lead us beyond ourselves.

While this has always been true, the present global conflicts and the extreme weather events of the past few years have brought home to most of us our utter dependence on right relationships within our planetary home and on a healthy environment.

Epiphany is the feast of the wise ones or astrologers "from the East" who are led beyond themselves and their immediate location by the rising of a

star. They form their own preliminary hypothesis and travel west to search out the meaning of this sign.

They learn from the official interpreters of the Jewish scriptures, the "scribes of the people". They then follow the star that leads them to the newborn child, the incarnate Wisdom of God.

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### *The star that leads them to the newborn child*

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The gospel does not stipulate how many wise ones or magi come to pay homage to the child. There is no indication in the story as to whether they are men or women or both.

The three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh have been traditionally associated with three different characters, usually kings, of diverse nationality and colour.

These strangers are the first to recognise "God-with-us" in the person of Jesus of Nazareth and to pay him homage.

They also come to recognise, in a dream, the duplicity of King Herod. They have the wisdom not to accede



to Herod's request to "bring him word" of the newborn king. Warned once again in a dream, they return home "by another road".

The story-teller Matthew leaves room in the tableau for the insertion of the wise ones who will emerge through the ages.

There is an invitation for us to enter into Matthew's drama, to be the wise ones, to join with people of diverse cultures, to engage in our own search for wisdom, to honour the birth and the life of every child and to follow the star that leads to truth and lasting peace.

There is also an invitation to be wary of self-serving rulers who find their positions threatened by the sort of power that is based on vulnerability and openness to new life.

**THIS WEEK'S READINGS**  
**THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**  
ISAIAH 60:1–6  
EPHESIANS 3:2–3, 5–6  
MATTHEW 2:1–12

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS**  
**SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
SAMUEL 3:3–10, 19  
1 CORINTHIANS 6:13–15, 17–20  
JOHN 1:35–42