



Bishop's Office
5 Lyons Street South
Ballarat VIC 3350
P.O. Box 121
Ballarat VIC 3353

Phone: (03) 5337 7121
Fax: (03) 5332 1122

E-mail: bishopsoffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au

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Parishioners of Ballarat East and Buninyong

Dear Parishioners,

Over the past few weeks we have been coming to terms with the news that Fr Peter Sherman had decided to conclude his service in priestly ministry. This has been unsettling, particularly for the communities of St Alipius, Ballarat East, and Saints Peter and Paul, Buninyong. People have been concerned about what provisions will be made for the pastoral care of these communities for the future. In recent years, the Diocesan Pastoral Planning project *Looking Forward* has encouraged resource sharing amongst parishes and the development of ministry districts in the various regions of the diocese. The six Ballarat parishes have undertaken joint initiatives for Baptism preparation, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Children and stewardship renewal.

Building on this growing collaboration amongst the Ballarat parishes, I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Fr Justin Driscoll as Administrator of the Parish of Ballarat East, incorporating the communities of St Alipius, Ballarat East, and St Peter and Paul, Buninyong. This appointment is in addition to Fr Justin's current appointment as Administrator of St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Ballarat. I am also appointing Fr Jorge De Chavez OSJ as Assistant Priest in St Patrick's Cathedral Parish and in the Parish of Ballarat East. They will have the help of Fr Vincent Pham Van Long CSsR.

Fr Kevin Maloney will assume responsibility for the Parish of Linton as well as continuing as the Parish Priest of Redan and Sebastopol with the assistance of Fr Lovin Lolo CSsR. Fr Marcello Colasante will assume responsibility for the Parish of Beaufort, while continuing as the Parish Priest of Ballarat North and Wendouree. He will be assisted by Fr Sajan Matthew.

I am most grateful to all for their willingness to enter into greater collaboration, forming a ministry district across the Greater Ballarat Region, seeking to build up each of the local faith communities. I pray that Christ will guide all the members of the parish teams. May their ministry bring joy to them as well as to the communities they serve.

I have arranged to visit the parish and celebrate the Masses at Ballarat East and Buninyong on the weekend of August 17-18. I look forward to seeing you then.

Yours in Christ,

Paul Bird CSsR

Bishop of Ballarat