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**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, March 7, 2024**. You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

**Laudato Si': Everything is connected- "Think before you buy"**

Did you know? A great way to reduce waste is to think about whether you need something before you buy it. See if you can buy it second hand rather than new. Buying from small local business is also a good way to reduce your environmental impact.

**Child Safe Church** The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Lexton, Miners Rest and Waubra) 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 Parish website or on the foyer notice board. If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Office, Fr. Marcello or one of the Safe Guarding Officers at [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or [ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

**Pope Francis' Prayer for Peace in Ukraine:** I ask you to pray the Our Father for peace in Ukraine, now and throughout this day. **Our Father...**

Let us ask the Lord to grant that the country may grow in the spirit of brotherhood, and that all hurts, fears and divisions will be overcome. We have spoken about the Holocaust. But let us think too that [in Ukraine] millions of people were killed [1932-1933]. They are a people who have suffered; they have suffered from hunger, suffered from much brutality and they deserve peace.

May the prayers and supplications that today rise up to heaven touch the minds and hearts of world leaders, so that dialogue may prevail and the common good be placed ahead of partisan interests. Please, no more war.



*Laudato Si'*



"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (Laudato Si', 217).

*reduce reuse recycle rethink repurpose*



**Parishes of St Columba's and Our Lady Help of Christians**

Communities of Ballarat North, Lexton, Miners Rest, Waubra, Wendouree

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



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

**Office:** 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree **Phone:** 5339 2302

**Email:** [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

**P O Box** 192, Wendouree

**School Principal:** Leigh Bradshaw

**School Phone:** 5339 4726

**School Co-Principals:** Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

**School Phone:** 5332 4894

**Staffing**

**Parish Priest:**  
Fr Marcello Colasante

**Finance Officer:**  
Bernadette Prestwood

**St Columba's**  
Parish Co-Ordinator:  
Lia Andanar Yu

Wed-Friday 10:00am -2:00pm

**Safeguarding Officer:**  
Peter Marquand

**Our Lady Help of Christians**  
Parish Co-ordinator and  
Safeguarding Officer:  
Maree Roache

Wed-Friday 9:00am -1:00pm

**MASS TIMES (This week)**

**St Columba's**  
Sunday 10.00 am  
Wednesday 10.00 am

**Our Lady Help of Christians**  
**Waubra** 1st & 3rd Sunday 8.30 am  
**Beaufort** 2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am  
**Lexton** 5th Sunday 8.30 am  
**Wendouree**

Saturday (Vigil) 6.00 pm  
Thursday 10.00 am  
Friday 10.00 am

**Readings for Next Weekend**

Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46  
Ps 31:1-2, 5, 11 R. v.7  
1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1  
Mark 1:40-45



**4th February 2024 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

In Australia, Word of God Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday in February. It comes at a time when our planetary community yearns for deep healing. It invites us to bring the distress of the Earth community into dialogue with the gospel. In the first century Mediterranean world, sickness was attributed to social rather than to physical causes. The corollary of this was that healing focussed principally on restoration of the person to her or his place or status in the society or community. Healing of an individual brought not only the person but the community itself to wholeness.

Last Sunday, we reflected on the "healing" of a man with an "unclean spirit". Jesus, healer and teacher, expelled the unclean spirit and thus restored health to the man as well as to the worshipping community. The healing took place in the Capernaum synagogue on the Sabbath. This story marked the beginning of Mark's account of a typical day in Jesus' ministry. Today's gospel passage continues that account. Jesus leaves the synagogue and moves, in the company of two of his new disciples, to the house of Simon and Andrew. In other words, he shifts from a long-established gathering place for God's people to a prospective new locus of communal engagement, the house church. This new locus does not preclude the older locus: Jesus continues to teach and heal in the synagogues throughout Galilee.

In this new place of encounter with God, Jesus heals a woman with a "fever" who is identified only in relation to her son-in-law, Simon. Jesus takes her by the hand and raises her up. She is the first human character in the Markan gospel story who is said to "minister". In other words, the love of God working through Jesus draws her beyond herself to engage in a ministry of leadership in the community of God's people. Earlier in Mark's gospel we heard that angels "ministered" to Jesus in the desert. In other words, God looked after Jesus as he began his mission of bringing God's love into a broken world. Jesus will later insist that he also came "to minister" (10:45). This woman is caught up in the same mission as Jesus of bringing the community to health and wholeness.

That same evening, Simon's house becomes a magnet for "the whole city". Jesus heals their sick and afflicted and, early in the morning, seeks the solitude of a "desert" place for prayer. The disciples seek him out, as everyone is looking for him. Jesus makes it clear that he must move on and bring God's word and healing beyond the city to the neighbouring Galilean towns. God's word in this gospel story is for us as well as for those early disciples. Amid all the troubles besetting our world, we too must search out the solitude of a "desert" place for prayer, and engage with renewed energy and insight in whatever each new day brings.

~ Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm:** (R.) Praise the Lord who heals the brokenhearted.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! He bore our sickness, and endured our suffering. Alleluia!

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Anthony Dooley

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Alwyn Hayes and all whose anniversaries occur at this time.

**We pray:** for all in areas of conflict, war and natural disasters, for the sick and all in need of our prayers.

**Sacramental Statistics: 2023**

	Ballarat North	Wendouree
Baptisms	13	11
Confirmation	35	12
Eucharist	46	8
Funerals	19	15

**Word of God Sunday – February 4, 2024** In 1919, Pope Francis instituted the celebration of Word of God Sunday when issuing the apostolic letter *Aperuit Illis*. The letter encouraged the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God. A number of resources have been developed to help commemorate Word of God Sunday. Among ways Catholics and Catholic communities are being encouraged to mark the day are a special display of Sacred Scripture or the Book of the Gospels, the establishment of Bible study groups or the adoption of *lectio divina*, a common practice of reflection on Scripture. The following resources are available at <https://www.catholic.au/s/article/Word-of-God-Sunday>

**Sew and So** We are back on Thursday 8th February 2024 at 1.30pm at the St Columba's Church Foyer. Please mark the second Thursday of each month in your busy calendars. Looking forward to seeing you and any new people who would like to join us for a cuppa. Enquiries Margaret 53314032

**Pope's intention for February- For the terminally ill:** Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

St Columba's Feb 11th		Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Terry Ranger	
COMMENTATOR	Colleen Wakefield	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Vicki Moroney	
COMMUNION MINISTER	Tim O'Farrell	
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Kathleen Keogh	
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe	

**Collections Last Weekend Columba's** Thank you for your contributions.  
 Presbytery: \$ 347.85 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 995.00

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

*The Parishes of St. Columba's Ballarat North and Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree recognise the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.*

**150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat** The Diocese of Ballarat will turn 150 on March 30, 2024. This year there will be many events to acknowledge this significant anniversary. Keep up-to-date at the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/our-diocese/150th-anniversary-of-the-diocese-of-ballarat/>

**Catholic Diocese of Ballarat**

*Community Remember Revitalise Hope*

**150 years**

*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer*  
Romans 12:12

Planning by 150th Anniversary Committee

Ash Wednesday  
'Repent and believe the good news'  
February 14, 2024

Anniversaries Liturgy in Cathedral  
Mass of the Oils  
March 25, 2024

Anniversaries Liturgies in Parishes  
Fifth Sunday of Easter  
April 28, 2024

Pentecost Sunday  
Commissioning for ministry in parishes  
May 19, 2024

Diocesan Assembly  
November 15 - 16, 2024

2023

2023

Parishes develop Parish Leadership Teams

Feb 2024

Feb - Mar 2024

Lent  
'Repent and believe the good news'  
February 14 - March 24, 2024

Mar 2024

Mar 2024

150th Anniversary Holy Saturday  
March 30, 2024

Apr 2024

Apr - May 2024

Anniversary Week Catholic Education Week  
April 29 - May 3, 2024

May 2024

Mid 2024

Formation in Parishes from Mid 2024

Nov 2024

**Notes about Holy Communion** Bishop Paul issued the following information for people of the diocese last year and this is still relevant:

Now that the Covid pandemic is less in the news, a number of people have asked about arrangements for the reception of Holy Communion. Some have proposed reintroducing options that were permitted before the pandemic, particularly receiving the host on the tongue and sharing the chalice.

Over the past few weeks, I have consulted various people about this, including the members of our Diocesan Liturgical Commission. I have also received advice from a medical point of view. This has included advice from the Chief Executive Officer of the Southern Grampians Health Service and the Head of the Infectious Diseases Department at the Alfred Hospital. These consultations have highlighted the fact that Covid infections are still a serious concern and that we can reduce the risk of infections by continuing the present provisions regarding Holy Communion.

I have concluded that it is not yet time to reintroduce the sharing of the chalice. While reception of Holy Communion under both species of bread and wine is a fuller sign of our sharing in the banquet of Christ, we can find reassurance in the teaching of the Council of Trent that the whole Christ, body and blood, soul and divinity, is contained under each species. So, even when we simply receive the host, we are receiving the whole Christ.

In regard to the way of receiving the host, recognising the continuing risks of the pandemic, and out of consideration for the health of all parishioners, I recommend reverent reception of the host in the hand rather than reception on the tongue.

May our Communion draw us ever closer to Christ and strengthen our love and care for one another.

God bless you all.

Bishop Paul  
 Paul Bird CSsR  
 Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat

OLHC Feb 10th	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG	Corrie Harbour	
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Lyn Gray	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Darryl Clark & Trish Pora	
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Jennifer Adams & Bev Haywood	
SACRISTAN	Geoff & Marg Mc Lean	

**Collections Last weekend OLHC** Thank you for your contributions.  
 Presbytery: \$ 364.65 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 465.00