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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, April 4, 2024**. You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

"Walk, cycle or use public transport" Did you know? Choosing active transport like walking and cycling can not only dramatically reduce your carbon footprint, but you could end up saving money and staying fit at the same time! When walking or cycling is not an option, swapping the car for a bus or train can also make a significant dent in emissions.

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

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'



"Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest" (Laudato Si' 48).

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 (select Parish)



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

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

Email: wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

P O Box 192, Wendouree

School Principal: Leigh Bradshaw

School Co-Principals: Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

School Phone: 5332 4894

School Phone: 5339 4726

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

Jeremiah 31: 31-34

Ps 50:3-4, 12-15. R. v.12

Hebrews 5:7-9

John 12:20-33



10th March 2024 ~ Fourth Sunday of Lent Year B

Focus on the Scriptures

The gospel for today is the concluding section of Jesus' conversation with a Pharisee called Nicodemus who comes to him "by night". It features a number of typically Johannine themes: life, eternal life, believing, seeing, God's love, salvation, judgment, light, darkness, the world, truth. John loves to play on words. Without losing sight of the material reality underlying each image, we need to keep asking: how is this word or expression to be understood in this particular context? In John's gospel, the characters often misunderstand and this gives Jesus the opportunity to lead his hearers to a deeper or different understanding of his words.

As 21st century readers, we operate out of a symbol system that belongs in a different time and a different place. Hence the need to explore the traditions informing the stories. The first two verses of today's reading evoke the ancient Israelite tradition of the bronze serpent (Numbers 21:5-9). According to the story, the Israelites are unhappy with their lot in the desert. They complain about the food or lack thereof. They blame both God and Moses. Their situation worsens with the outbreak of a plague of poisonous snakes whose bite has killed a considerable number of them. The people interpret the plague as punishment for their sin of speaking against God. They ask Moses to intercede with God. God instructs Moses to make an image of a fiery serpent and set it on a pole: anyone affected by snakebite has only to look upon the image to find life and healing. And so it happens: the bronze serpent is lifted up and those who "see" or "look upon it" find life.

Life and death, seeing and believing in God's love and mercy are at the heart of the story of the bronze serpent. The gospel writer taps into the collective memory of the emerging Christian community: just as the serpent was lifted up and the people found life, so will Jesus be lifted up and those who believe in him will find life. In John's gospel, seeing is often equated with believing and believing leads to "life".

The bottom line is God's saving love for "the world", for the whole Earth community, human and other-than-human. Most of the themes in this passage have already been introduced in the prologue to the gospel. Here for the first time in the gospel, God's saving activity is expressed in terms of "love". God's love is explicitly related to the gift of Jesus, God's Son, for the salvation of the world. Salvation resides in acceptance of Jesus while judgment is the refusal to accept Jesus as the revelation of God. Later in this gospel (12:33), Jesus will again reference the bronze serpent story in an expansive embrace of all creation: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all to myself."

~ Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) Let my tongue be silenced, if ever I forget you!

Gospel Acclamation: Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son, that all who believe in him might have eternal life. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Margaret O'Brien

Anniversaries: We remember: Philip O'Brien, Muriel Langerr, Sr Mary Lynch RSM, Bryan Deady, Sheila Prendergast,

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

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



Flynn Dowler and Casey Dowler, children of Paul and Megan.

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

May Flynn and Casey grow in faith with the support of their family and our Catholic Community.

Tea and Coffee after Mass every first Sunday of the month at St. Columba’s A couple of weeks ago I had a ‘thank you’ to the women who have been instrumental in initiating the cup of tea/coffee after mass on the 1st Sunday and commented that there haven’t been any men involved; WELL last Sunday I was informed that there are men who assist with the wash up; SO thanks to those men too. Many hands make light work!
~Sister Geraldine

Diocese of Ballarat 150th anniversary (1874 - 2024) At the 150th anniversary Mass of the Oils (11.30am Monday March 25th), each parish is invited to bring in the entrance procession a symbol or photo representing them. Without being too prescriptive a photo collage might be the most effective way to symbolise the Parish of Ballarat North and the Parish of Wendouree. Photos of celebrations such as weddings, first communions, confirmations are being sought from parishioners so that we might create the photo collage. Please contact either Parish office if you are able to assist in any way.

Mass of the Oils livestream This year the Mass of the Oils will be livestreamed at <https://youtube.com/live/SdivlIKiHSs?feature=share>

Sew and So Thursday, 14th March 2024, at 1.30pm, St Columba’s Church Foyer. All welcome. Enquiries Margaret 53314032

St Columba’s March 17th		Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Tony Beggs
COMMENTATOR		Min Myers
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Jo-anne van der Voort
COMMUNION MINISTER		Judy Brown
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN		Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe

Collections Last Weekend Columba’s Thank you for your contributions.
Presbytery: \$ 376.50 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 895.00

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.

Appointments to Parishes

Hello Everyone,

On December 6, following discussions with priests and parishioners, I announced that we would have four ministry districts in the Ballarat region. After further consultations, I am now able to make appointments of priests to serve in these groups of parishes. The following appointments will take effect on **April 10, 2024**.

Ballarat Cathedral Parish, **Ballarat North Parish** and Beaufort Parish
Administrator: **Fr Edward Moloney**
Assistant Priests: **Fr James McKay, Fr Francis Kureeckal MST**

Ballarat East Parish, Bungaree Parish and Gordon Parish
Parish Priest: **Fr Justin Driscoll**
Assistant Priest: **Fr Matthew Restall**

Redan Parish, Sebastopol Parish and Linton Parish
Parish Priest: **Fr Concord Bagaoisan OSJ**
Assistant Priest: **Fr Eladio Lizada OSJ**

Wendouree Parish, Creswick Parish and Daylesford Parish
Parish Priest: **Fr Marcello Colasante**

In view of Fr Matthew Restall’s appointment to the Ballarat East, Bungaree and Gordon Parishes, I have appointed Fr Sajan Mathew as Assistant Priest in the Paul VI Parish in the Wimmera-Mallee. The priests who are currently serving in these parishes will continue in their current appointments until April 10, when the new appointments will take effect. I hope this advance planning will be helpful in allowing time to prepare for the transition to the new arrangements. I thank everyone who has been involved in the consultations over the past few months. I thank the priests for their readiness to serve in the various parish communities.

God bless you all.

Bishop Paul



Paul Bird CSsR
Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat

Caritas AUSTRALIA Project Compassion Sunday
March 9 & 10



Fourth Sunday of Lent: Meet Memory As the eldest child in a low-income farming family in rural Malawi, Memory faced many barriers to her education. But, with the support of Caritas Australia, she enrolled in a technical school and became the first female carpenter in her village.



Please donate to Project Compassion Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow for all future generations. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting <https://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion> or by calling 1800 024 413.

Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Download the weekly reflection by Michael McGirr from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/welfare/mission-and-outreach/project-compassion-2024/>

Pope’s intention for March – for new martyrs: Let us pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world might imbue the Church with their courage and missionary drive. Lord, hear us.

Mary Ward for Saint Mary Ward supporters are seeking support for their cause for canonisation of the foundress of the Loreto Sisters (IBVM). To sign the petition go to their website: [Petition · Help our cause to have Mary Ward declared a Saint! · Change.org](https://www.petition.com.au/petition/mary-ward-declared-a-saint)

East Timor Knitting After a successful effort last year, it would be nice to have additional people to knit little sets or crochet rugs. Donations of time, 8ply acrylic yarn or money to buy the yarn are welcome. Contact Lauren 0405277778 with donations or money or, alternatively, money can be put in an envelope marked East Timor Project and left on the collection plates.

OLHC March 16th	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG		Vin Dillon
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL		Veronica Stott
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Kevin Murphy & Trish Pora
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Tony Bruty & Jennifer Adams
SACRISTAN		Tony & Pauline Newman

Collections Last weekend OLHC Thank you for your contributions.
Presbytery: \$ 604.80 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,455.70