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**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)

**COVID Safe Plan**

Checking-in is no longer required. Face masks are no longer required in most indoor settings but they are still recommended. Carry a mask when leaving home. Masks are strongly recommend if you have any COVID-19 symptoms, are with people who may be vulnerable to COVID-19 and/or are outdoors and cannot physically distance.

- If you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough or sore throat) please do not attend Mass.
- If you are waiting results of a COVID test, stay home.
- Please use the hand sanitiser available upon entering the Church.

**We appreciate your assistance in helping stop the spread of the virus.**

**The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Prayer for Peace and Justice in Ukraine**

God of peace and justice,  
who change the hardened heart and break the power of violence,  
we entrust the people of Ukraine to you.

Protect them in this time of peril;  
let them know not death but life, not slavery but freedom.

You are Father of all;  
we are brothers and sisters.  
Give us the strength to live that truth in love,  
choosing peace not war.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Historical context**

**The Nativity scene**

St Francis of Assisi is credited with setting up the first nativity scene and thus establishing a tradition that is carried on today in homes, churches and public spaces in Christian communities everywhere. In 1223, in the town of Greccio he created a life size tableau of the nativity scene to heighten the awareness of the celebration of the birth of Christ. It included statues of the holy family and a live ox and donkey. The inclusion of the livestock has no scriptural support and it is to Francis that we owe the array of sheep, oxen and donkeys that have become standard inclusions in our nativity scenes.



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

Office: 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree Phone: 5339 2302  
Prayer Line: 5339 2302  
Email: wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
P O Box 192, Wendouree  
School Principal: Leigh Bradshaw School Phone: 5339 4726

*The Parishes acknowledge that the Aboriginal people of Australia are our first nation people and the traditional owners and custodians of the land.*

**25th December, 2022 - The Nativity of the Lord**

**Parish Priest:**  
Fr Marcello Colasante

**Staffing**

**St Columba's**  
Office Hours: Wed—Friday  
10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Parish Co-ord: Lia Andanar Yu

Safeguarding Officer:  
Peter Marquand

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

Maree Roache  
Office Hours: Wed-Fri 9– 1pm

**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 6:00 pm  
Thursday 10:00 am  
Friday 10:00 am

**Readings for Next Weekend:**  
Solemnity of Mary (A)

- Nm 65: 22-27
- Ps 66 2-3, 5. 6.
- 8. R. v 2
- Gal 4: 4-7
- Lk2: 16-21



**Focus on the Scripture**  
If you were to give just a cursory glance at a collection of 'religious' Christmas cards, or even the local nativity scene, you would undoubtedly see a varied assortment of shepherds, wise men, livestock and angels gathered around the holy family in a timber structure of some sort. Even the most casual reading of Luke's account of the birth of Christ would reveal that most of the nativity figurines are missing! Our retelling of the birth of Christ tends to be an amalgamation of the Luke and Matthew versions with a bit of creative tradition thrown in for good measure.

The Luke account of the nativity carries a very specific theology that runs throughout the rest of that gospel. It is a theology that places the outcast and downtrodden at the centre of Jesus' mission. In this account, Jesus is born outside the town because there is no room for Joseph and Mary within the safety of the inn. Like those he will minister to later in life, Jesus is born 'on the edge' – even outside the boundaries. Rather than the impressive 'Wise Men' of the Matthew infancy account, the witnesses to Jesus' birth in the Luke account are lowly shepherds. Unlike the somewhat romantic notion we may have of shepherds, in Jesus' time they were regarded as little better than thieves and cut-throats. All they could be trusted to do was tend sheep outside of townships and away from 'civilised' society. They held one of the lowest positions in Jewish society. The gospel writer's choice of these witnesses to the birth of Jesus is a very deliberate one that clearly announces the purpose and direction of Jesus' mission.



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**Responsorial Psalm:** All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Basil Torpy, Henry Reitch  
**Anniversaries: We remember** those family members who have passed into eternal life.

**We pray: Those in need of our prayers:** for the people of the Ukraine, those suffering in Africa, and those effected by flooding.

**Vincent de Paul Flood Appeal** The St Vincent de Paul Society has established a Victorian Flood Appeal. Contributions can be made by:



- Calling 13 18 12 or Visiting <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-vic/vinnies-vic-flood-appeal-2022>

*You can also*

- make a monetary donation through any Vinnies Shops at point of purchase
- via your local IGA where the purchase of a token supports the recovery of Victorians devastated by these recent floods.

**Baptism Preparation Session** Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Centralised Baptism Preparation Session will be held at MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms of St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall on Thursday 2nd February, 2023 at 10.00am & 5.30pm. Bookings to be made with Parish Office.

**2023 Pilgrimage to the Holy Land** Expressions of interest are invited to join a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, June 11th - 24th 2023 - Jordan, Petra, Dead Sea, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Mt of Olives, Jericho, Qumran. Fully escorted, all inclusive pilgrimage accompanied by Fr Justin Driscoll and arranged through Lifestyle Travel in Ballarat. Contact Fr Justin for further information (Daylesford 0448 220 685) or [info@lifestyletravel.com.au](mailto:info@lifestyletravel.com.au)



**Parish Office hours over the Christmas period.**

Both Maree and Lia will be taking leave during the month of January. Whilst the parish offices will not be staffed during this time, please make contact via email or phone parish offices (OLHC—5339 3202, St Columba's 5331 1012). In case of an emergency please contact St Patrick's Cathedral - 5331 2933

| St Columba's 1st January | (next week)       | Sunday 10:00 am |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| LEADER of SONG           | Volunteer please  |                 |
| COMMENTATOR              | Judy Brown        |                 |
| MINISTER OF THE WORD     | Fiona Newton      |                 |
| COMMUNION MINISTER       | Colleen Wakefield |                 |
| DIGITAL PORJECTOR        | Bruce Chapman     |                 |
| SACRISTAN                | Volunteer please  |                 |

| Collections at St Columba's | Thank you for your generous support          |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Presbytery: \$ 232.20       | Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1.565.00 |

**Sacristan Assistance at OLHC** Are you able to help with Sacristan duties at OLHC on Saturday evening 6.00pm Mass?



The tasks are to open the Church and assemble Mass requirements, and lock up at the end of the liturgy. Guidance is available and ongoing.

In each four-month roster cycle, you will be rostered 3 or 4 times.

Please phone OLHC office if you can help. Office 53392302. **Thanks**

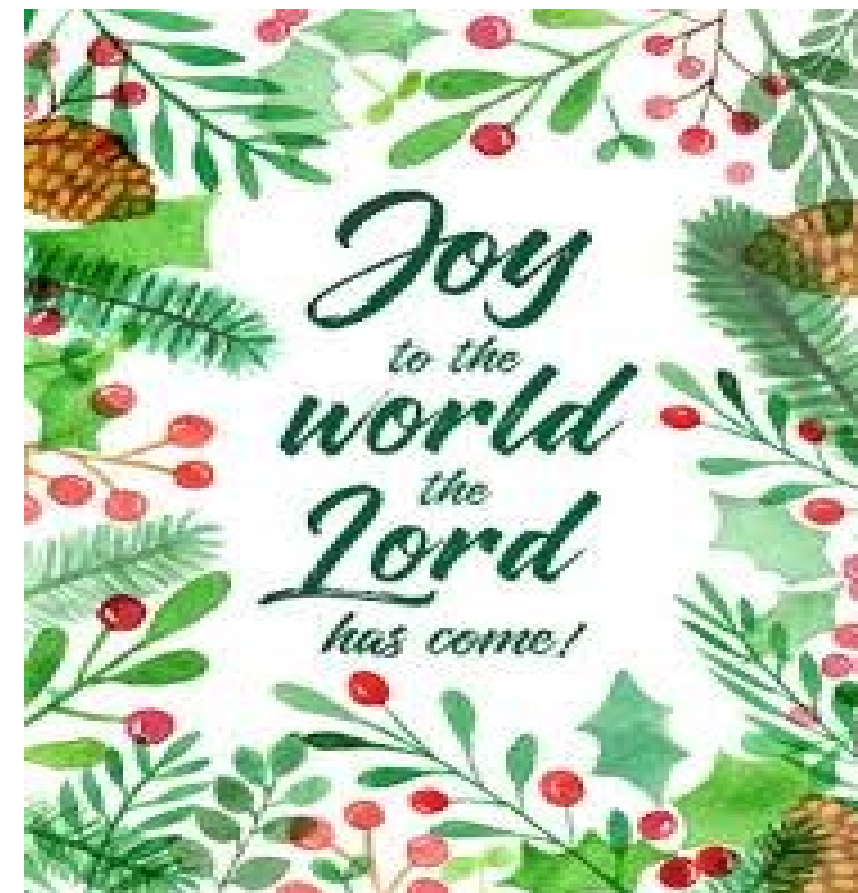
**Pope's Intention for December.** We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.



**Prayer Requests:** At different times in our lives, circumstances happen for which there is added need for prayer, and there is comfort in knowing that we need not be alone in praying. Our parish is connecting with a Ballarat wide Prayer-Line where requests for prayer can be made. All prayer requests are confidential. Please ring the Parish Office 5339 2302. The parish phone is monitored for messages at all times and your request will be forwarded to the Prayer-Line.



Sincere thank you to all involved in supporting the liturgical life of OLHC parish. The generous parishioners who share their gifts and talents with our community enrich our celebrations. Thanks to the members of the Bereavement team, Liturgy Committee including Proclaimers, of the Word and prayers of the faithful, Eucharistic ministers, Décor team, maintenance volunteers, gardening volunteers, Sacrament Team, Finance Committee, Parish Pastoral Council and all who assist in making our Parish a welcoming environment. Thanks to the Exodus Leadership Team who have continued their listening and hospitality work, to all who generously continue the work of St Vincent de Paul, and the Christmas Lunch committee with their many volunteers who provide hospitality for community members to celebrate Christmas. Thanks to the OLHC School staff and students for their on-going support of this parish throughout the year.



*Fr Marcello, along with Lia and Maree wish all members of our community a blessed and peaceful Christmas season, and a safe and happy New Year*

| OLHC 31st December     | (next week)                                | Saturday 6:00 pm |
|------------------------|--|------------------|
| LEADER OF SONG         | Vin Dillon                                 |                  |
| PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL | Kath Leonard                               |                  |
| MINISTER OF THE WORD   | Trish Lawson & Jennifer Lawson             |                  |
| COMMUNION MINISTERS    | Helen Rieniets & Pauline Newman            |                  |
| SACRISTAN              | Lyn Gray & Kylie Gray                      |                  |
| Waubra Church cleaning | December: TBA                              |                  |
| Collections at OLHC    | We thank you for your generous support     |                  |
| Presbytery: \$ 351.95  | Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 265.00 |                  |