



▶ **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
OPEN TUE – FRI
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarata-east/

17 December 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

My soul rejoices in my God

St Alipius parish

MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Tuesday – Friday 9:30 AM

Saturday 9:30 AM, 6:00 PM

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

10:30 AM (2nd & 4th)

Ss Peter and Paul's

Sunday 9:00 AM (2nd & 4th)

10:30 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th)

Rosary – Thursday 11:00 AM

Mass and prayer resources

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Counting team 6 this week – 9:30 AM

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

Faithfully departed:

Madeline Bellinger

Anniversaries:

Anna Ridsdale, Ruth Strauss

Unwell:

Socorro De Chavez, Peter McLachlan, Sarah McLachlan, Eleanor McMahon, Patricia Murry, Shelley Pawang, Carole Simmons

PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest

Fr Jorge Jr De Chavez, 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

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.



FR JORGE FAREWELL

Thank you to everyone who came to wish Fr Jorge all the best at his farewell mass and BBQ at St Alipius.



Father Jorge's final mass with us will be on Christmas Day. He heads off on Boxing Day for the long drive across the Nullarbor to his new parish in Western Australia.

FR JORGE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Fr Jorge would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year. Thank you for the ride over the past 4 years. Prayer for me as I embark on my new mission. All the best

SVDP CHRISTMAS - NEW YEAR BREAK

Ballarat Assistance Centre (6 Dawson St Sth) will
CLOSE on
FRIDAY 15th DECEMBER @ 12 NOON.
IT WILL RE-OPEN on
MONDAY 8th JANUARY @ 10.00 a.m.
Assistance via Help Line will remain open
Phone 5334 2844

PIETY STALL

Columban Calendars are available for \$10.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

This year Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, so masses that weekend will be as follows:

Saturday 23 December – 4th Sunday of Advent vigil
6:00 PM – St Alipius

Sunday 24 December – 4th Sunday of Advent
9:00 AM – Ss Peter and Paul's
10:30 AM – St Alipius

Sunday 24 December – Christmas vigil
6:00 PM – Children's mass at St Alipius
7:30 PM – Ss Peter and Paul's
9:00 PM – St Alipius

Monday 25 December – Christmas Day
9:00 AM – Ss Peter and Paul's
10:30 AM – St Alipius

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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

Supporting our parish priests	\$899
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$343.20

SVDP CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Ballarat East Conference of SVdP invites you to support their Christmas Appeal which plays a vital role in enabling the good works of the Society to continue serving the community via the envelopes at the end of the pews (put into the offertory collection basket), www.vinnies.org.au, or phoning 13 18 12. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

NEW MINISTRY DISTRICTS

The letter from Bishop Paul Bird CSsR regarding ministry districts in the Ballarat region is available from the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parishes-in-the-ballarat-region/

SIMBANG GABI

The Simbang Gabi will commence a 9-day Novena before Christmas starting on Friday 15 December. Mass will be at 7 PM every night except Saturday 16 when it will start at 8 PM. Friday 22 will be the last night, and everyone is welcome to the hall to share a meal. Please bring a plate or dish to share.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

The past weeks in our schools have been busy as they finish up for this year. There have been wonderful celebrations of achievements at masses and liturgies, which have seen farewells to students and staff who are moving on to other things. No matter the direction they are heading, we hope the coming year is a wonderful one for those who are moving on. We wish all staff and students a very happy and holy Christmas followed by a safe and relaxing holiday.

BAPTISMS

Campbell Hugh Anstis
Child of Scott and Bianca Anstis

Frankie Louise & Oakleigh Jane Collins
Child of Ben Collins and Molly O'Loughlin

The church gives faith to your children through Baptism, and you have the task to make it grow.
Pope Francis

VCE RESULTS

As a parish we would like to congratulate students who have completed their schooling this year, bringing an end to 13 years of education. Many students received VCE results this week and we hope that all are happy with their results after their hard work, particularly during the past two years. Best wishes too, to all students who are headed into the workforce. The end of school for all students sees the beginning of a new and exciting era.

UKRAINE ADVENT APPEAL

During Advent 2022, all Australian dioceses were invited to take up a special collection for the people of Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised to support people in the war-torn nation through the work of Mudra Sprava (Wise Action), a Patriarchal Charitable Foundation in Ukraine. The organisation has three focus areas: Evacuation of people from frontline territories; food packages for people in need; and shelters for internally displaced persons. To donate to this year's appeal, visit www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/advent-appeal-for-ukraine-2/

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/. You can subscribe to be emailed future editions.

GIVING TREE APPEAL

CatholicCare Victoria wants to support families and young people so that they can enjoy their Christmas together. Please donate to their appeal at: www.catholiccarevic.org.au/campaign/donate/19/giving-tree-appeal

DIOCESE TURNS 150

In 2024 the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat will commemorate 150 years. There are several events to mark this occasion throughout the year, including an anniversary mass on the fifth Sunday of Easter, when all parishes will be asked to acknowledge the anniversary in their parishes. For more information on dates and events, please see the poster in church foyers.

OLHC CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Our Lady Help of Christmas Parish Wendouree is hosting Christmas Day lunch in their parish hall, 482 Gillies Street, Wendouree from 12:00 noon – 2:00 PM. Bookings are essential as seating is limited. Please phone 0419 975914 to book for lunch or to volunteer.

NATIVITY DISPLAY

"Making a Scene at Christmas" is in the Bridge Mall until Friday, 22 December and at the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat archives by appointment until 22 December, and 4– 20 January 2024. Entry is a gold coin donation.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Our Christmas Appeal is one way by which the diocese can respond to many communities from near and far who turn to us for assistance. Often these requests come through people who have personal links with the diocese of Ballarat. In anticipation I thank you for your co-operation in recommending the 2023 Christmas Appeal to the generosity of your parishioners and giving them the opportunity to make their contribution when convenient. I note that donations can now also be made directly via the "Parish Giving" link at the bottom of the Diocesan website home page. Click on "Parish Giving", select your parish, then from the drop down box "My Giving is For", select "Bishops Christmas Appeal. Paul Bird CSsR

SYNOD UPDATE

The General Secretariat of the Synod at the Holy See is encouraging the Church throughout the world to read and reflect on the synthesis report from the First Assembly of the Synod. For resources to help read and reflect upon the synthesis report from the First Assembly of the Synod, visit www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/for-a-synodal-church-communion-participation-and-mission/

True Light Coming into the World

Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

3rd Sunday of Advent: John 1:6–8, 19–28

The first section of today's gospel reading comes from the prologue of John's gospel and offers comment on the identity of John the Baptist.

The second section revolves around a question that has already been answered in the prologue. In other words, the reader knows the answer to the question that is put by the characters in the second section.

The prologue presents John the Baptist as one "sent from God". He is not "the light"; he is rather a "witness" whose role is to testify to "the light".

The true light [Jesus] was "coming into the world". As we proclaim Jesus as "the light", we might take time to appreciate the wonder and the properties of the material reality that informs this metaphor.

In the face of less than friendly questioning, John the Baptist responds simply and honestly to questions about his identity. The questions in this second section of the reading are relentless and John's responses are unambiguous.

He is not the Messiah/the Christ, the Anointed of God. He is not the prophet Elijah whom some identified with God's messenger of Malachi 3:1–3 who would return and restore the "descendants of Levi". He is not the

prophet-like Moses of Deuteronomy 15.

He states his identity with reference to the words of the prophet Isaiah: he is the voice crying out in the wilderness, inviting God's people to prepare the way for God's advent, God's coming.

John the Baptist knows who he is. He understands the parameters of his mission and he points his questioners in the direction of the truth. His role is pivotal in the story of God's saving action and in the unfolding of the drama of the fourth gospel.

He is the voice crying out in the wilderness

It is worth asking how we might answer the question that the priests and Levites put to John on behalf of the Jerusalem "Jews": "Who are you?"

If we can answer that question honestly; if we can admit who we are with all our strengths and limitations; if we can know our place in the scheme of things and own it in all humility, then we are probably in a good position to recognise and, like John, witness to the "one who is coming", the light of the world, the revelation of



God, the Word who became flesh and tented amongst us.

The global conflicts of the present might serve to sharpen our awareness of who we are and of how we are called to witness to "the light" who proclaimed a message of peace.

A caution is in order regarding this reading: not only Jesus and his opponents, but most of the actors in the gospel drama are Jewish.

The group of characters specifically named as "the Jews" includes some influential members of the Jewish religious leadership but cannot be identified with them because it comprises a more extensive group who are consistently in conflict with Jesus.

It would be a serious disservice to the gospel to condemn the Jewish people on the basis of this and similar stories of Jewish opposition to Jesus.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
ISAIAH 61:1–2, 10–11
1 THESSALONIANS 5:16–24
JOHN 1:6–8, 19–28

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
2 SAMUEL 7:1–5, 8–12, 14–16
ROMANS 16:25–27
LUKE 1:26–38