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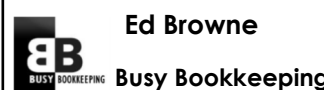
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**Child Safe Church** The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Lexton, Miners Rest and Waubra) follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed 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 ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au or wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

**Links to online Masses in the Diocese**

- **St Mary Mackillop Parish, Western Border:** Check the Western Border Catholic Parish facebook page for links to daily masses on YouTube <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=western%20border%20catholic%20parish>
- **St Joseph's Parish Warrnambool:** Check the St Joseph's Warrnambool facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stjosephswarrnambool> for links to Masses on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHcYtCTuk5DivKLWY1bvqg>
- **Sacred Heart Parish, Mildura:** Sunday Masses available on Sacred Heart Parish Mildura YouTube page <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3WAtskilV8>
- **St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Ballarat:** Mass livestreamed daily at 11.30am can be viewed on Patrick's Cathedral facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9>



**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 or ballaratnorthpastoral@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
**School Co-Principals:** Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr  
**School Phone:** 5332 4894

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

**Parish Priest:**

Fr Marcello Colasante

**Staffing**

**St Columba's**

Pastoral Associate:

Judith O'Sullivan

Tues-Friday 9:00am–1:00pm

Our 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**

**St Columba's**

Saturday Vigil: 5.00 pm

Tuesday: 10:00 am

Wednesday: 10:00 am

**Our Lady Help of Christians**

(Waubra 1st & 3rd Sunday,

Lexton 5th Sunday)

Sunday: 8.30 am (Waubra)

10:00 am

Thursday: 10:00 am

Friday: 10:00 am

**Readings for next weekend:**

Wis 12:13,16-19

Ps 85:5-6, 9-10, 15-16. R. v.5

Rom 8:26-27

Mt 13:24-43



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

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Ray (Buck) Jeffrey, Keith Davies, Bob Smerdon, Luca Antonelli

**We pray:** Those in need of our prayers; our RCIC candidates, all the sick especially Frank O'Connor and all those struggling with the effects of Covid-19

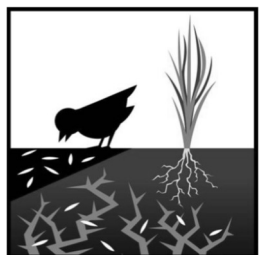
**12th July 2020 ~ 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, we have necessarily distanced ourselves from others. Some of us have retreated to the natural world so that our sensitivities have sharpened and our planetary awareness has heightened. We have become more attuned to the complexity of nature and to its rhythms. We have observed the diverse feeding habits of the birds, for instance, and their communication patterns. There is new and renewed interest in gardening, in the growing of vegetables and fruit in pots or in built-up garden beds. Such changes in lifestyle are conditioning us to use our eyes to see and our ears to listen, as today's gospel invites us to do. Jesus' directive, "let anyone with ears listen", is a reminder that we do have ears and that we do not always hear. Ann Lewin's words come to mind: "You do not have to Look for anything. Just look. You do not have to Listen for specific Sounds. Just Listen. You do not have to Accomplish anything. Just Be. And in the Looking and the Listening and the Being, find Me."

To what sort of being, of looking and listening does today's gospel call us? The parable of the soil, of the seed, of the birds and the thorns, of the sun and the sower alerts us to Jesus' deep sense of connection with life in its multiple forms. It calls us to examine our connection with the natural world. For a long time, we have focussed on the human character in the parable, a character who evokes an agricultural world that is far removed from our post-industrial world, but not so far removed from the world of millions of people in our planetary home who live close to the soil and to earth's elements and who struggle to produce the food they need to stay alive. Is the Matthean Jesus presenting in the sower an image of an estate owner, or a tenant farmer or even a slave? Or is the reader being asked to imagine the sower, whether estate owner, tenant farmer or slave, as an image of an extraordinarily generous God whose life-sustaining gifts are there for all, no matter their readiness to receive? It may not be one or the other but both.

What of the silty clay loam or red sandy soil, of the wheat or barley seed, of the birds and the thorns and the sun? We know that barley was domesticated some ten thousand years ago in what became bible lands and that these lands are also the original home of the finest bread-making wheat. The birds and the thorns and the sun are for another reflection. We bring our experience of looking and listening and being into dialogue with the parable and search out its meaning for us. We trust that God will ensure an abundant harvest if we but learn to look and to listen to the needs of a planet in peril. **Veronica Lawson RSM**



**R sponsorial Psalm:** (R.) The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower; all who come to him will live for ever. Alleluia!

**Weekend Masses** continue as follows Saturday Vigil at **5.00 pm** at **St Columba's** and Sunday morning at **10.00 am** at **Our Lady Help of Christians** for **20** attendees. For contact tracing purposes registration will be required.

As contact details ie: name and phone number are still required, it will be appreciated that if you intend coming to Mass, that contact be made during office hours with the respective Parish Office prior to doing so. If you leave a message please ensure you leave your contact number. Please follow social distancing at all times and use hand sanitizer as you enter and leave the Church.

You will now no longer need to register prior to a weekday Mass, just register your details as you arrive. Please note change to SC office hours.

**Congratulations** to Jada Ellen Shara Blake who will be baptized on Saturday evening at St Columba's during the 5pm Mass. Jada has been a part of our RCIC group since the beginning of the year. We pray that she will grow in faith with the loving support of her family, friends and our parish community.



SUPPORT OUR PARISHES



Our CDF (Catholic Development Fund – Ballarat) together with CDF Pay have developed an online thanksgiving portal known as CDF Pay for Parishes. During this time where Masses in the diocese are suspended or reduced as a consequence of COVID-19, the financial support of parishioners is greatly appreciated. Many parishioners give physically to our parish utilising the first and second collection plates, which has been a feature of parish life for many years. As an alternative parishioners are invited to consider using the new electronic parish thanksgiving program. This portal is available to support our parish in both/either the first and second collections. Electronic offerings can be made as one off payments or you can set up a regular payment. You will receive an electronic receipt for any payments made. Payment link can be found by scrolling down on our webpage or using the link. <https://ballarat.cdfpay.org.au/details/?id=6>

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**Sea Sunday Appeal** today, July 12, 2020 is Sea Sunday, when the church prays for those who live and work at sea. There will be a national Appeal for Stella Maris, Apostleship of the Sea, the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church. Donations will provide practical and spiritual support to seafarers in these challenging times of COVID-19. Please give generously. Go to [bit.ly/seasundayaustralia](http://bit.ly/seasundayaustralia)

**Australian Catholic Men's Gathering** The Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference National Catholic Men's Gathering for 2020 is now being offered as an online event for registered participants on Saturday, July 31. For more information go to [www.catholicmensgathering.com.au](http://www.catholicmensgathering.com.au)

**St Vincent Pallotti Scholarship Trust** Scholarships are offered to enable lay people to further their understanding and skills in leadership/ministry or a specialised activity, such as promoting faith enhancement, social justice and pastoral care. <https://pallottine.org.au/scholarships/st-vincent-pallotti-scholarship-for-lay-ministry.html>. Closing date July 31, 2020.

**The Marriage Course Remake Launch - New Website and Trainings** To celebrate the launch of The Marriage Course in Australia, we've launched a new website, an Australian Marriage Course builder with new invitational resources and training sessions at <https://www.marriagecourse.org.au/>

**Collections at St Columba's** **We thank you for your generous support**  
 1st Collection: \$ 181.30 2nd Collection (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,310.00  
 Easter Offerings: \$ 5.00

**St Vincent de Paul Society Winter Appeal** Vinnies like everyone, has been impacted by COVID-19. We have had to adapt our traditional ways of providing help to those who seek our assistance to meet both the government and St Vincent de Paul directives. It is a testament to the commitment and flexibility of our members that we have been able to continue to provide support to those in need during this time. As a result of the coronavirus many people have found themselves in the position of having a job one day, and being unemployed the next. This will lead to an increasing number of people reaching out to Vinnies for help for the very first time. Therefore, this year's appeal will focus on addressing the needs of Victorians who have been impacted by COVID-19. Now more than ever, the funds raised during this appeal are critical in ensuring that Vinnies can continue to be there for people when they need us most. You can donate to our appeal via: **1. Envelopes available at churches.** Please write your name and address on the envelope so receipts can be issued. Once completed envelopes can left at the parish office. **2. Online** at [vinnies.org.au](http://vinnies.org.au) **3. By phone 13 18 12.** All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. There is also a basket in St Columba's Church or you can leave donations at the office.

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**Readings for Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time A**

**First Reading** Is 55:10-11 A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 64:10-14. R. Lk 8:8

(R.) The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

1. You care for the earth, give it water,  
you fill it with riches.  
Your river in heaven brims over  
to provide its grain. (R.)
2. And thus you provide for the earth;  
you drench its furrows,  
you level it, soften it with showers,  
you bless its growth. (R.)
3. You crown the year with your goodness.  
Abundance flows in your steps,  
in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. (R.)
4. The hills are girded with joy,  
the meadows covered with flocks,  
the valleys are decked with wheat.  
They shout for joy, yes, they sing. (R.)

**Second Reading** Rom 8:18-23 A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

**Gospel** Mt 13:1-23 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables.

He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?' 'Because' he replied 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you, but they are not revealed to them. For anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So in their case this prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled:

You will listen and listen again, but not understand,  
see and see again, but not perceive.  
For the heart of this nation has grown coarse,  
their ears are dull of hearing,  
and they have shut their eyes,  
for fear they should see with their eyes,  
hear with their ears,  
understand with their heart,  
and be converted  
and be healed by me.

'But happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

'You, therefore, are to hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the man who received the seed on the edge of the path. The one who received it on patches of rock is the man who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But he has no root in him, he does not last; let some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, and he falls away at once. The one who received the seed in thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this world and the lure of riches choke the word and so he produces nothing. And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'



The Gospel of the Lord

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