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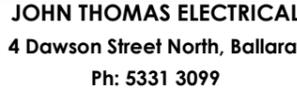
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Child Safe Church The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Lexton, Miners Rest and Waubra) follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed 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>
- **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 (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
Wed-Friday 9:00am -12:00pm

Our Safeguarding Officer:
Peter Marquand

Our Lady Help of Christians
Parish Co-ordinator and Safeguarding Officer:
Maree Roache
Wed-Friday 9:00am—12:00pm

MASS TIMES
St Columba's
No Masses until further notice

Our Lady Help of Christians
No Masses until further notice

Readings for next weekend:
Sir 27:30 – 28:7
Ps 102:1-4. 9-12. R. v.8
Rom 14:7-9
Mt 18:21-35



6th September 2020 ~ 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Focus on the Scriptures
As we celebrate this first Sunday of the Season of Creation, we are conscious of the need for the human community to be reconciled with Earth and with all that inhabits our common home. The theme for the 2020 Season of Creation is "Jubilee for the Earth". The Earth needs a rest from the effects of so much industrial activity, from the proliferation of single use plastic, from reliance on fossil fuels, from mindless consumption. The planet needs a "Rest" of biblical proportions, a Jubilee. Ironically, Covid-19 has given the planet a rest in some respects.

Should those who refuse to listen to the science on the climate crisis be shamed? Should the few who flaunt the restrictions necessitated by pandemic be shamed? Should they be deterred by heavy penalties? Or should we appeal to their better selves? Most agree that, while it is imperative that bad behaviour at every level be challenged, there is little to recommend the shaming of offenders. So, what does a just society do with its persistent offenders, with those whose behaviour continually disrupts the unity of a group on the one hand and the very future of life on the other? There is no easy answer.

What does the gospel tradition say to this? Today's gospel indicates that the power to deal with transgression is firmly in the hands of the community. All care must be taken to allow offenders to recognise and acknowledge their offences without being publically shamed. If that fails, the matter is referred to a group of witnesses, in line with Israel's ancient legal practice (Deut 19:15). The next step is referral to the assembled community. Those who refuse to listen are to be treated as "Gentiles" or "tax-collectors". Some scholars suggest that the Matthean Jesus is proposing expulsion of those who refuse to listen. Others consider that he is advocating the sort of compassionate approach he has personally shown to outsiders, to those in need of conversion. Since every one of us is in need of conversion in relation to planetary health, compassionate persistence is an attractive option.

We do well to seek the wisdom of others. We have the assurance that Jesus, God-with-us, is present in the assembly. We also have the assurance that our failure to deal with transgression can leave perpetrators unreconciled and susceptible to reoffending. We need to "loose" the sins of those who acknowledge their offences. In other words, we are called to forgive them and thus set them free from the burden of their sins. While the gospel passage focusses on forgiveness, our first concern must be with those who suffer at the hands of offenders, including the Earth itself. We must "surrender to the sky [our] heart of anger" (James K. Baxter) and, at the same time, work actively to provide our planetary home and all of its inhabitants with the Jubilee it surely needs.
Veronica Lawson RSM

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Gerald Butler, Newell Barrett

Anniversaries: We remember: Michael Franc, Maryanne Rawlings, Genoveva Jurisic, Fr Gavin O'Sullivan SJ, May O'Donnell, Paul Mahar, Anne Nutthall, Noreen Earl, Cathe McArdle, Gwen Dobell

We pray: Those in need of our prayers especially Saskiah Gallagher; all the sick and all those struggling with the effects of Covid-19, teachers and students of all Victorian schools

A prayer for Father's Day Gracious God, bless fathers and all father figures with such love and faithfulness that children flourish and grow in uprightness and joy. Bless those who long to be fathers and those for whom this day is difficult. Amen.
Happy Father's Day to all dads, grandads and spiritual father's in our communities!



Holy Land Collections The annual collection for the support of the church in the Holy Land normally takes place on Good Friday. This year, due to the closure of churches around the world during Holy Week because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Pope Francis moved the date for this collection to Sunday September 13th to coincide with the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross on September 14th. As we are still not able to gather for Masses in Ballarat to take up this collection, we invite you drop any donations into the Parish Office or use CDF Pay <https://ballarat.cdfpay.org.au/>

Are you a Spiritual Leader? – The Spiritual Leaders Program is a one-year, part-time program held on Friday mornings (and some Friday afternoons). It is suitable for people in outreach ministries and various positions of leadership within their faith community, such as priests, ministers, members of religious Orders, lay ecclesial ministers, community and spiritual leaders, chaplains, pastoral carers, and those in health and education. The program, which commences in Feb 2021, focuses on personal integration of the theory and practice of a contemplative, discerning approach to pastoral ministry. Previous participants have commented that this Program has been transformational in terms of their personal spirituality and their leadership skills. The Program may be available online via Zoom, face-to-face, or a combination of both. Apply to Heart of Life Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation. Fee-Help is available to qualifying participants. Brochure and application form at www.heartoflife.melbourne or tel 03 9890 1101.

Plenary Council Update The journey to the Plenary Council 2020 continues. While it is in a context more different than we could have ever expected, the need to pray, discern and listen to the Holy Spirit and each other is more important than ever. Discernment Papers: The six discernment papers have been released and are available to be read. The National Plenary Facilitation Team will soon release resources to assist parishes and communities to explore each of the papers. Here in the diocese, we will endeavour to look at one paper for a month. For the month of September we will look at HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Prayerful & Eucharistic? The Listening and Dialogue responses revealed the deep faith, integrity and sincerity of all the people who gave of themselves in their offerings. The responses included divergent opinions on various topics. At the same time, they showed a common faith in Christ and a common desire to follow his teaching in love of God and love of neighbour. They demonstrated a commitment to living the gospel of Christ and sharing the gospel with others, even in the midst of a largely secular culture. They expressed a love for the community of the Church, despite the well-documented failings of members of the community. They showed a desire to be a Christ-centred Church that is prayerful and Eucharistic. Have a read of the discernment paper, think about your parish and the diocese in general. We welcome any comments. Please send through to jane.collins@ballarat.catholic.org.au. Read the discernment paper <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-3.pdf>.

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Staying Connected ... Doing Ministry Safely Online A 90 minute online workshop designed for those working with children and young people in church communities. Thursday 10th September 5pm-6.30pm. More info and free registration at: www.trybooking.com/BKZSO

Season of Creation 1st September – 4th October 2020 Season of Creation and Ecological Justice: This year's theme is "Jubilee for the Earth" and is an annual celebration of prayer and action to protect creation and is celebrated by Christians of all traditions. In Laudato Si' Pope Francis asked us to care for creation and one another. You are warmly invited to find an oasis of peace and calm for 45 minutes with a guided meditation 'Finding God in Creation'. This Creation Examen will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, 16th September at 7.30pm. Developed by St Ignatius of Loyola, the Examen is a simple technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day which will help you to listen to the inner movements of your heart. This Ecological Examen asks you to reflect with gratitude on your personal relationship with God in creation, to notice where you can do more to protect creation and to promote ecological justice by standing in solidarity with those most impacted by environmental harm. Please respond by email and you will be sent a link to Zoom closer to the 16th Sept. catholicearthcare@ballarat.catholic.org.au A Christian Life Community and Catholic Earthcare Ballarat Diocese in collaboration.

Catholic Earthcare Convocation is now open for registrations! Catholic Earthcare is a place and platform where the many, diverse voices within our church community come together, in dialogue, to help and co-create our shared future. Come join us, digitally, so together we can all celebrate and Care for our Common Home!
<https://catholicearthcare.org.au/2020-convocation/>

Child Protection Sunday – 13th September 2020 The Catholic Church in Australia marks Child Protection Sunday, on which we pray for those who have been abused, their families and supporters. We recognise the harm done by priests, religious and lay people in Church settings. We recommit to practices that support survivors and make the Catholic Church and its ministries the safest possible place for children and vulnerable adults. You can find out more at: www.catholic.org.au/responseandprevention

New Diocesan Website was launched on Monday. Have a look around, hopefully you will find it easier to navigate.

Diocesan Resource Centre With the stage 3 restrictions, the Diocesan Resource Centre will be closed until further notice.

Readings for Twenty third Sunday in Ordinary Time A

First Reading Ez 33:7-9 A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows, 'Son of man, I have appointed you as sentry to the House of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, warn them in my name. If I say to a wicked man: Wicked wretch, you are to die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked man to renounce his ways, then he shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, however, you do warn a wicked man to renounce his ways and repent, and he does not repent, then he shall die for his sin, but you yourself will have saved your life.'



Responsorial Psalm Ps 94:1-2.6-9. R. v.8

(R.) O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;

hail the rock who saves us.

Let us come before him, giving thanks,

with songs let us hail the Lord. (R.)

2. Come in; let us bow and bend low;

let us kneel before the God who made us

for he is our God and we

the people who belong to his pasture,

the flock that is led by his hand. (R.)

3. O that today you would listen to his voice!

'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,

as on that day at Massah in the desert

when your fathers put me to the test;

when they tried me, though they saw my work.' (R.)

Second Reading Rom 13:8-10 A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love. If you love your fellow men you have carried out your obligations. All the commandments: You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and so on, are summed up in this single command: You must love your neighbour as yourself. Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments.

Gospel Mt 18:15-20 A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others with you: the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain any charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a pagan or a tax collector.

'I tell you solemnly, whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.

'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'

The Gospel of the Lord

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