



▶ **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/

10 December 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

Prepare the way of the Lord

St Alipius parish

MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Tuesday – Thursday 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 5 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:

Johnny Lamb

Anniversaries: Jim Power

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.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM BISHOP PAUL

Hello Everyone,

Over the past few months, our Diocesan Pastoral Planning Panel has met with priests and parishioners of parishes in the Ballarat region to review the ministry districts proposed in our Looking Forward Pastoral Plan.

The timing of this review is linked with some changes in appointments that we are anticipating in the coming months. Fr Eugene McKinnon has indicated that he would like to retire from his responsibilities as Parish Priest of Redan, Sebastopol and Linton when he turns 75 in April 2024. Also, Fr Jorge de Chavez has advised that his Congregation, the Oblates of St Joseph, plans to transfer him from his current role at Ballarat East to serve in a parish in Western Australia. Another Oblate priest will come to serve in our diocese. In the context of these expected changes, it seems opportune to review the appointments to the Ballarat region parishes generally.

In the light of the recent discussions, I am pleased to announce the following ministry districts, with the new grouping of parishes to take effect after Easter 2024. The new ministry districts will be:

- Cathedral Parish, Ballarat North Parish and Beaufort Parish
- Ballarat East Parish, Bungaree Parish and Gordon Parish
- Redan Parish, Sebastopol Parish and Linton Parish
- Wendouree Parish, Creswick Parish and Daylesford Parish

The priests who are currently serving in these parishes will continue in their current appointments until April 10, 2024. They have agreed that they will then conclude their appointments to allow new appointments to be made corresponding to the new ministry districts. I will contact priests throughout our diocese inviting them to express interest in serving in any of these ministry districts.

In consultation with our Diocesan Personnel Board, I will consider the expressions of interest early in the new year, with a view to making appointments to take effect on April 10, 2024. I hope this advance planning will be helpful in allowing time to prepare for the transition to the new arrangements.

God bless you all.

Bishop Paul

FR JORGE FAREWELL

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. Everyone is invited to join Fr Jorge for a farewell mass at 6:00 PM on Saturday 9 December at St Alipius, followed by a BBQ in the church hall (rain is forecast). This is our chance to gather as a parish to thank and say goodbye to Fr. Jorge. Please bring a salad or dessert to share. Sausages will be provided. BYO drinks.

CHRISTMAS ALTAR SERVERS

The Children's Mass at 6:00 PM on Sunday 24 December provides an opportunity for children to participate as an altar server. If you have interested children, please let the Parish Office know. Training will be provided.

PIETY STALL

Packs of five Christmas cards are available from the Piety Stall for \$5.00. Columban Calendars are \$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

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.

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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

Supporting our parish priests	\$825
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$431.20

We invite anybody who would like to join the program to please contact the parish office.

THANK YOU

Thanks to everyone who helped at the working bees held at both churches to prepare them for the Christmas season. Here are our lovely nativities.



BAPTISMS

Jed Alexander Charty
Child of Rohan and Lisa Charty

Miles Thomas and Sally Rose Noonan
Children of Darcy and Talisa Noonan

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

Pope Francis

DEACON ORDINATION

Seminarian Cay Trinh will be ordained as a Deacon for the Diocese of Ballarat at 10:00 AM on Saturday, 16 December at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. A prayer vigil for Cay will be held from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM at St Patrick's Cathedral on Friday 15 December. All welcome.

SYNOD UPDATE

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/

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.

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

PLENARY UPDATE

According to a letter to the People of God prepared for the Solemnity of Christ the King One "particular grace" of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia has been its encouragement of many initiatives in the Church across the country. As the Church marked the end of the liturgical year, the letter provides an update on work carrying forward the Plenary Council's outcomes while awaiting the Holy See's formal recognition of the Council's decrees. You can read the letter on the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/our-diocese/plenary-council-2020/

OUR DIOCESAN NEWS

The second edition of ODC 2023 has been published. Feel free to take copies to the homebound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the diocesan news.

Something Momentous Happening

Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

2nd Sunday of Advent: Mark 1:1–8

The first verse of Mark's gospel evokes the opening words of Genesis and thus situates the saving presence of Jesus the Christ in relation to the creation of earth and of all earth beings.

The whole of Mark's story of Jesus is presented as a beginning. It is the beginning of a faith journey into which the listener/reader is invited.

In some manuscripts of the Greek text, there are five words in this verse. In other manuscripts, there are seven. Our English translation requires twelve.

The term gospel (*euangelion*) means good news. It referred originally to the news of victory delivered by a messenger, usually in time of war. The good news in this context is about Jesus, a name meaning "YHWH saves."

The reader learns that this Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One of God, Israel's longed-for Messiah. The actors within the story have to discover this truth as the drama unfolds. The two additional words present Jesus as "son of God", as one having the characteristics of God.

John the Baptist is identified as the messenger who proclaims the need to prepare the way for the arrival of a new Presence in our world.

Mark creates the impression that something momentous is happening here.

John draws massive crowds from city and country alike. They come to him in the wilderness, the home of the other-than-human, home to diverse forms of life.

At a metaphorical level, wilderness recalls Israel's experience in the Sinai desert. It is the place of testing and of new beginnings for God's people, the place of God's coming or God's "advent" to Israel. Jesus will be impelled by the Spirit into the wilderness where he will pass the tests that the people of Israel failed.

Mark's story of Jesus is presented as a beginning

This reading invites us to prepare for God's advent or coming by ritualising *metanoia* (usually translated as "repentance"), and thus being ready for the one who comes.

The translation "repentance" does not convey the nuances of the Greek term *metanoia* which literally means a "change of mindset" and suggests an "expansion of horizons". God's advent demands a new mindset that will



predispose us to receive the gift of God's forgiveness and to be open to feel the pain of earth as well as the pain of those rendered poor.

Mark's depiction of John evokes the image of the prophet Elijah in 2 Kings 8 and the "hairy mantle" of the prophet in Zechariah 13:4.

John is a prophet who, like the prophets of old, calls God's people to reconsider where they stand in relation to God. He is also the one who heralds the advent of the "stronger" one who will baptise "with the Holy Spirit", although there is nothing in the subsequent narrative about Jesus baptising.

As we reflect attentively on Mark's gospel during this liturgical year, we might ask ourselves what it means to "baptise" with the Holy Spirit and what it means to follow one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ISAIAH 40:1–5, 9–11
2 PETER 3:8–14
MARK 1:1–8

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ISAIAH 61:1–2, 10–11
1 THESSALONIANS 5:16–24
JOHN 1:6–8, 19–28