

## Year of St Joseph

Pope Francis on December 8, 2020 published an Apostolic Letter *Patris corde* (With a Father's Heart), commemorating the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a "Year of St Joseph", running from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021. A number of resources are being developed by the ACBC to encourage and support the celebration of the Year of St Joseph. The resources are available from the ACBC website <https://catholic.org.au/yearofstjoseph>

## Plenary Council Update

In light of the ongoing uncertainty around future COVID-19 restrictions regarding travel and public gatherings, especially social distancing, a decision has been taken for the first Plenary Council assembly to take place using a combination of online and in-person delivery. Read more at the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/first-plenary-council-assembly-mixes-in-person-online-format/>

**Discernment Papers:** The six discernment papers have been released and are available to read at <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/read>. The National Plenary Facilitation Team have released a resource to assist parishes and communities to explore each of the papers (attached). Here in the diocese, we will endeavour to look at one paper for a month. **For the month of December we will look at HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Open to Conversion, Renewal and Reform?** *The "call to conversion" is "the indispensable condition of Christian love." (TMA 50) Christians respond to this call when they openly acknowledge personal and communal failings and experience the joy of reconciliation shaped by renewed relationship with the Trinitarian God. Ongoing conversion is the source of renewal and of authentic reform. Catholics in Australia experience the riches of the Church's traditions, through liturgy, parish life and the Church's contributions to welfare, education and healthcare. At the same time, they acknowledge hindrances to personal and institutional conversion toward Christ. The Report repeatedly refers to the Church's rites of reconciliation (particularly the Third Rite), indicating that the Church in Australia needs to respond to this desire for formation in, and access to, sacramental reconciliation.* 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](mailto:jane.collins@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

Read the discernment paper: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-6.pdf>

Visit the thematic page: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/renewal/>

**Plenary Council Discernment papers now available in audio format:** The Diocese of Bathurst has taken the discernment papers to another format, recording audio versions to help with the reception of the documents. All six discernment papers have now been recorded and can be accessed on the Plenary Council website <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/>

**Reflections on the papers from the Ballarat Diocese:** Can be read at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/listen-to-what-the-spirit-is-saying/>

## Missionary Sisters of Services' mission entity offering \$3000 grants

The Missionary Sisters of Services' mission entity, "Highways and Byways - A Community of Service" is calling for applications for its 2021 Small Grants Program on the theme 'Healing the Land, Healing Ourselves, Together'. Funding of up to \$3000 is available to assist people and communities to address disadvantage and inequality particularly in rural, regional and remote areas of Australia. Further information available at <https://missionarysisters.org.au/2020/11/17/small-grants-program-now-open-3000-grants-available/>

## St Bernard's Liturgy & Cleaning Roster 2021

DATE	READER	PRAYERS of FAITHFUL	CLEANING
Wk 3 - Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> January	Rosemary Liston	Tricia Higgins	Judy Upton/Karen Gleeson
Wk 5 - Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> January	Helen Smith	Michael Phillips	Jane Higgins



## Ararat Sunday 10 Jan 2021

### The Baptism of the Lord

As we celebrate, we acknowledge the Indigenous owners of the land on which our Churches are built, the Tjapwurong people, and we respect the presence of the spirits of their ancestors among us.

## Fr. Andrew Hayes

Masses this Week

**Stawell:** Tues to Friday 10am

### Ararat

Tues 12<sup>th</sup> 9.30am

Fri 15<sup>th</sup> 11am (with lunch)

### The Feast of Baptism

Join the dots. They are rioting on Christmas Island. They are storming the Capitol. They are coming home from exile in Babylon. Baptisms in the Jordan. "You are my Son the beloved. My favour rests on you." Join the dots.

I see people struggling with life and freedom. People fleeing from captivity in Egypt (the beginnings of baptism – come to the Easter Vigil when we'll hear "come to the water" again.) People fleeing from captivity in Babylon (1<sup>st</sup> reading.) People demanding freedom from captivity on Christmas Island. People demanding freedom from something in America. I'm not sure just what they're fighting for really, and I think it's inappropriate, but people don't riot when their lives are dandy.

In and against all of this we hear "my favour rests on you." We are very loved by God! For me that's less an appeasement and more a command to love and set free our own neighbours, because they are loved by God too. I'm shaped by this little bit of the Gospel, "I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals." It's why I have cold feet in Winter.

Join the dots: I've been sitting at the Murray this week reading a book I got for Christmas by Madeleine Chapman about Jacinda Ardern. Waitangi Day is February 6, the day on which a treaty was signed by the British colonisers and Maori chiefs. There's an angst about this day in New Zealand akin to the angst about celebrating Australia Day on the day of the British landing in Warrane on January 26.

For her first Waitangi Day as Prime Minister Jacinda didn't simply appear for the formalities, but came to Waitangi a week early. "MP's rarely stayed more than one day in Waitangi, with many choosing to spend a cursory morning there before heading back to the city. Northland is one of the most economically deprived regions in the country. Many interpreted Ardern choosing to spend a meaningful amount of time there as a show of her commitment to engage with all Maori, not just those in leadership or business positions."

### Cont'd opposite

She also cancelled the formal breakfast and cooked a bbq for 800 locals. One Maori commentator put it succinctly, "Such a different vibe this Waitangi. It's almost like all you need to do is listen and be respectful of historical grievance for people to be reassured and not throw stuff at you. Who could have predicted such a thing!" I don't know much about what Jacinda has done since, and to be sure she's not universally popular in New Zealand, but she's very good at symbolism.

Join the dots: This week's readings and the tv news and the book I got for Christmas are all about people with power listening to, or not, and empowering, or not, the people without. Mostly, we are the ones with power. We've got jobs and houses and freedom.

### Ararat QR Code



Location Code

A5W FTY

You will need to have downloaded the APP onto your phone. It will not work if you just take a "photo" of the image above. There will be someone to help. But we would urge you to come 10 minutes earlier to Mass if you are unsure of what to do.

### Bishops' Christmas Collection

2019 \$1740

2020 \$1400

**First Reading Is 42:1-4. 6-7**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord: Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom my soul delights. I have endowed him with my spirit that he may bring true justice to the nations. He does not cry out or shout aloud, or make his voice heard in the streets. He does not break the crushed reed, nor quench the wavering flame. Faithfully he brings true justice; he will neither waver, nor be crushed until true justice is established on earth for the islands are awaiting his law. I, the Lord, have called you to serve the cause of right; I have taken you by the hand and formed you; I have appointed you as covenant of the people and light of the nations, to open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who live in darkness from the dungeon. my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, 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 28:1-4. 9-10. R. v.11**

**(R.) The Lord will bless his people with peace.**

- O give the Lord you sons of God, give the Lord glory and power; give the Lord the glory of his name. Adore the Lord in his holy court. (R.)
- The Lord's voice resounding on the waters, the Lord on the immensity of waters; the voice of the Lord, full of power, the voice of the Lord, full of splendour. (R.)
- The God of glory thunders. In his temple they all cry: 'Glory!' The Lord sat enthroned over the flood: the Lord sits as king for ever. (R.)

**Second Reading Acts 10:34-38**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: 'The truth I have now come to realise' he said 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.

'It is true, God sent his word to the people of Israel, and it was to them that the good news of peace was brought by Jesus Christ - but Jesus Christ is Lord of all men. You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.'

**Gospel Acclamation See Mk 9:8**

Alleluia, alleluia!

The heavens were opened and the Father's voice was heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him.

Alleluia!

**Gospel Mk 1:7-11**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark

In the course of his preaching John the Baptist said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

It was at this time that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

**Gospel Reflection**

The baptism of Jesus in the gospel of Mark serves as a revelation of the identity of Jesus. Throughout this gospel there is secrecy about who Jesus really is. Whenever a person's faith reveals that Jesus is the Messiah or the Son of God, Jesus commands them to remain silent and not tell anyone else about him. However, through the baptism event, the reader is let in to the secret from the outset. Unlike the public announcements of Jesus as the beloved Son of God that occurs in other gospels, in the gospel of Mark, the voice is addressed to Jesus himself and there is no indication that anyone else hears it. The words used are, 'You are my Son' not, 'This is my Son.' But the reader is placed in the privileged position of knowing the truth about Jesus from the very beginning of the gospel. As they read further, they observe the disciples' growing yet imperfect understanding of this truth.

John the Baptist serves another particular function in the gospel story. Aside from fulfilling scriptural prophecy by proclaiming the one who is to come, he provides a point of contrast with Jesus. In many ways, John represents the Jewish religious belief of the time. For John, baptism is a ritual of purifying and forgiveness of sin that can be administered as often as required. The way to God is through strict observance of the Law and through ritual acts of prayer and purification. For Jesus though, the way to God is through love and through Jesus himself. The baptism that Jesus will give is a baptism of the Spirit – pouring out the Spirit on those who realise and accept the love of God in their lives.

**Pope Francis—Twitter**

I extend my affection to the brothers and sisters of the Oriental Churches, Catholic and Orthodox, who celebrate the Nativity of the Lord today. To them, I wish them a Holy Christmas in the light of Christ our peace and our hope!

**ANNIVERSARIES: Jan 11th—Jan 17th**

Peter Arandt, Imelda Gordan, Adorative McPhee, Bill Moloney, Bill Coster, Evelyn O'Neill, Brendan Moran, Rita Higgins, Stan Matthews, Fr John Kirby, Ian Pearce, John Shield, Mary Shield, Kathleen Lees, Percival Bushick, Fr. Frank Sexton CSsR, Francis Jaench, Stasia Matters, Norma Wilson, Mons. John Hoyne, Fr John Coughlan, Fr William Cain, Elizabeth Nicolaci, Maria Nicolaci, Pasquale Nicolaci, Maria Francesca Y Nicolaci, Concetta Nicolaci Y Tolomeo, Maria Franco, Pedro Franco, Romeo Raffaele Riso Maria Jioseffa Y Romeo, Marcelo Franco, Gerard Brown, Margaret Winnell, Bridget Cashin, John Downes, Lois Gordon

**Recent Deaths** Jean Rolfe, Fr Frank Hart (Sandhurst Diocese) & Fr George Pothiyitted (Fr John's nephew)

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:**

*Julie Neale and Margaret Hassall*

Please contact the office if you would like your name to be on the sick list. Names are kept on this list for one month—and be put on again.

Anyone in hospital wishing to have communion, please contact the office on 53525460.

**Ministry to the Sick:**

Please email Fr. Andrew during these difficult times to discuss Ministry to the sick on

andrew.hayes@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Or phone the office on 5358 1119 Stawell (Thursdays)

**Readings Jan 17th 2020**

**First Reading** I Sm 3:3-10.19

**Second Reading** I Cor 6:13-15. 17-20

**Saint of the Week St. Fursey**

Irish monastic founder, the brother of Sts. Foillan and Ulan, praised by St. Bede. Fursey was born on the island of Inisguia en Lough Carri, Ire-land, as a noble. He founded Rathmat Abbey, now probably Killursa. In 630 Fursey and his friends went to East Anglia, England, where he founded a monastery near Ugremouth on land donated by King Sigebert. In his later years, Fursey went to France to build a monastery at Lagny, near Paris, France. He was buried in Picardy. St. Bede and others wrote about Fursey's intense ecstasies.

Read more on—www.catholic.org/saints

**Phone Lines**

**Victorian Coronavirus Hotline — 1800 675 398**

If you suspect you may have the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) call the dedicated hotline – open 24 hours, seven days.

**Older persons COVID-19 Support line — 1800 171 866**

**Translations for Victorian Government coronavirus website -**  
[www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/translations](http://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/translations)

**Vinnies Ararat Phone: (03) 5352 5560**

**Salvation Army Australia — 13 SALVOS**

St Vincent de Paul, Stawell – 0437 344 323

Stawell Inter Church Council welfare Cottage – 0408 038 949

**Finances**

If you would like to donate to a parish, please see the details below. Many thanks

**Details for Ararat Parish:**

Parish Account "Main Church Account"

Westpac Bank BSB 033 201 // Acc 810035

Presbytery Account "Presbytery Account"

Westpac Bank BSB 033 201 //Acc 810043

**Details for Stawell Parish**

Parish Account BSB 013 815 Acc: 286326347

Presbytery Account BSB 013 815 Acc: 286326355

**Joke of the Week**

One minute you're young and fun. And the next, you're turning down the stereo in your car to see better.