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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 [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or [ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

**Our Diocesan Community** Please feel free to take copies to the homebound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the good news of the diocese.

**Pope Francis' Prayer for Peace in Ukraine:** I ask you to pray the Our Father for peace in Ukraine, now and throughout this day. **Our Father...**

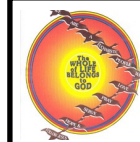
Let us ask the Lord to grant that the country may grow in the spirit of brotherhood, and that all hurts, fears and divisions will be overcome. We have spoken about the Holocaust. But let us think too that [in Ukraine] millions of people were killed [1932-1933]. They are a people who have suffered; they have suffered from hunger, suffered from much brutality and they deserve peace.

May the prayers and supplications that today rise up to heaven touch the minds and hearts of world leaders, so that dialogue may prevail and the common good be placed ahead of partisan interests. Please, no more war.

**COVID Safe Plan**

Checking-in is no longer a requirement. Face Masks are no longer required to be worn in most indoor settings but are recommended, particularly if you have any COVID-19 symptoms. They are also recommended for people who may be vulnerable to COVID-19 and are in settings where keeping a safe physical distance from other people is not possible.

- **If you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough or sore throat) please do not attend Mass.**
- **If you are awaiting results of a COVID test, please stay home.**
- **Please use the hand sanitiser available upon entering the Church.**
- **Please do not touch any surfaces unnecessarily.**



**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](mailto:ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

**Office:** 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree **Phone:** 5339 2302

**Email:** [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

**P O Box** 192, Wendouree

**School Co-Principals:** Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

**School Principal:** Leigh Bradshaw

**School Phone:** 5332 4894

**School Phone:** 5339 4726

**Staffing**

**Parish Priest:**  
Fr Marcello Colasante

**Finance Officer:**  
Bernadette Prestwood

**St Columba's**  
Parish Co-Ordinator:  
Lia Andanar Yu  
Wed-Friday 10:00am –2:00pm

**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 (This week)**

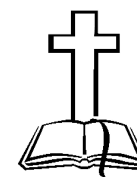
**St Columba's**  
Sunday 10.00 am  
Wednesday 10.00 am

**Our Lady Help of Christians**  
**Waubra** 1st & 3rd Sunday 8.30 am  
**Beaufort** 2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am  
**Lexton** 5th Sunday 8.30 am  
**Wendouree**

Saturday (Vigil) 6.00 pm  
Thursday 10.00 am  
Friday 10.00 am

**Readings for Next Weekend**

Jeremiah 20:7-9  
Ps 62:2-6, 8-9. R.v.2  
Romans 12:1-2  
Matthew 16: 21-27



**27th August 2023 ~ Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time Yr. A**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

"Be yourself. Everybody else is taken", sings Melinda Schneider. The lyrics of this song, composed for Melinda's dying father, affirm some fairly obvious truths. Even though we know that "everybody else is taken", most of us spend energy trying to measure up to other peoples' expectations and fail to be truly ourselves. In our self-absorption, we can also misread others and fail to know them as they are. Accepting ourselves and being accepted as we are is among the most precious of gifts. Jesus knew this. He was utterly true to himself and he allowed others time to discover for themselves his real identity and the nature of his mission. If the mission were to succeed, then his followers needed to look beyond their preconceptions about him and accept him as God's anointed, as the revelation of the living God.

Jesus' true identity is a key issue for Matthew's community, as it is for us. From the outset, Jesus is presented as the anointed of God, the Messiah or the Christos. Before his birth, the reader knows him as "Emmanuel", God with us. What the narrator asserts at the outset, certain characters in the story come to understand. Jesus' fearless teaching and his healing ministry bring the crowd to recognise him as a prophet and as the incarnate Wisdom of God. The power of God at work in Peter leads him to a deep understanding of Jesus' identity. Peter has faltered in the past and will falter again, even to the point of denying any knowledge of or association with Jesus. He finally arrives at deep insight, however, and proclaims his faith in Jesus as both Christ/Messiah and son of the living God. Insight is a gift, and God can work wherever there is openness and goodwill. Peter is presented here as having both. He is declared "blessed" on account of this gift of insight and entrusted with the "keys" of God's empire.

The specific power of binding and loosing that is given to Peter is subsequently given to the community of disciples (18:18). The saying is framed by instructions about dealing with transgressors and by the assertion that where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, he is there in their midst. "Binding and loosing" belong to all who gather in the name of Jesus whom Matthew presents as God-with-us, as prophet and Wisdom, as the Christ and as the revelation of the living God. The exercise of the power "to bind and to loose" demands the same wisdom and insight as does the capacity to recognise and affirm the true identity of Jesus. Gathering in the name of Jesus is a challenge at any time. It is a particular challenge in the face of the disillusionment and hurt caused by abuse of the most vulnerable in our midst. We pray for the wisdom to find new ways of being church and of truly dealing with transgression.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm:**(R.) Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the work of your hands.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! You are Peter, the rock on which I will build my Church; the gates of hell will not hold out against it. Alleluia!

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Gavin Frawley, Kevin Eddy

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Basil Ffrench, Margaret Trevenen, Mark Milne, Eddie Kennedy, Francis Reidy, Therese Hayes, Eileen O'Meara, Gerald Butler, Fides Lilia Nery

**We pray:** for those in need, all who are sick, and for the people of Ukraine, Turkey and Syria.

**Today is Social Justice Sunday, August 27, 2023** The Australian bishops' have launched the 2023-2024 Social Justice Statement, "Listen, Learn, Love: A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples". Copies of the statement and resources are available from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/welfare/social-justice/social-justice-statement/>.

**Ballarat Clergy Support Fund: Collection for Sick and Retired Priests – next weekend** Creating a secure retirement future for the priests of the diocese is a duty and care in which we can all participate. Seventeen retired priests are currently supported by this Fund. Some live privately, some are retired in units in Ballarat or elsewhere, others live in supported accommodation. A credit card facility is available for your convenience, and contributions over \$2.00 are tax-deductible. *Caring for those who care for us – the Church community's responsibility.*

**Next Centralised Baptism Preparation Session** Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Next sessions are at the MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms, St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat, **Thursday, 7th September 2023**. You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

**CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal** The CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal is held in August each year in partnership with parishes and is their major annual fundraiser. CatholicCare Victoria delivers programs and services to support families, children, young people and individuals to help everyone reach their full potential. The services include counselling and mental health services, specialised support for children and teens, refugee and asylum seeker help, pastoral care in hospitals and prisons, support for separating families, social housing and homelessness support. Please donate to the CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal. Your support and generosity will help provide caring and compassionate support for struggling individuals and families in our community. Please donate at [www.catholiccarevic.org.au](http://www.catholiccarevic.org.au) or call (03) 9287 5513.

St Columba's 3rd Sept	(next week)	Sun 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Terry Ranger
COMMENTATOR		Peter Marquand
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Geraldine Mugavin
COMMUNION MINISTER		Bruce Chapman
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Fiona Newton
SACRISTAN		Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe

**Collections Last Weekend St Columba's** *Thank you for your contributions*  
 Presbytery: \$ 447.00 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 620.00

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*The Parishes of St. Columba's Ballarat North and Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree recognise the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.*

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults RCIA** There will be an information/enquiry meeting on **Tuesday 12th September, 5.30pm** at St Aloysius Parish Centre, Ripon Street Redan (between the school and Church). This meeting is for anyone over the age of 16 who is considering becoming a Catholic. This is the initial enquiry meeting, you will be given all relevant information, no commitment needs to be made at this stage. If you require further information, please contact Bernadette at the **St Aloysius Parish Office on 0455 212 123**.

**St Columba's Sacramental Program** Preparation sessions are ongoing for First Eucharist for the 46 candidates. Celebration of **First Eucharist** will be on the **3rd and 10th of September**. Please keep the children and their families in your prayers.

**McAuley House for Women and Children** McAuley House is celebrating 15 years since the establishment of McAuley Community Services for Women, following the merger of Mercy Care and Regina Coeli. Over the past 15 years McAuley House has supported more than 13,000 women and children. The demand for services remains high. McAuley House will continue advocating for real change that will allow more women and children to remain safely in their homes after violence and avoid homelessness and further disadvantage. A donation to McAuley House supports women and children to be safe and continue this important work <https://www.mcauley.org.au/ways-to-give/donate/>

**Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – Online Study** The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) is a growing initiative to offer adult religious education and faith formation anytime and anywhere, online. This low-cost (\$50usd) online study and formation for employed or volunteer lay workers in parishes is available through our partner, Dayton University. The next Cycle begins on August 28. There are 41 subjects to choose from – find one that interests you! Registrations are open now until August 21. For more information, email [djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:djurджа.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7121.

**Graduate Certificate in Teaching Meditation** Catholic Theological College is running an online information session for the Graduate Certificate in Teaching Meditation on Monday, September 4, 2023 at 7.30pm (AEST). Registration is essential at [Meeting Registration - Zoom](https://www.ctc.edu.au) or at <https://www.ctc.edu.au>

**Please join us for a Kitchen Table Conversation!** A Kitchen Table Conversation is a wonderful opportunity to join with others and listen, learn and reflect on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament referendum that will be held in the coming months. Sessions will be held on August 29, September 11 and September 28 from 3.30-4.45pm online via Zoom. For more information and registration details go to: <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/pastoral/aboriginal-catholic-ministry/>

**Knights of the Southern Cross Victoria's Archbishop's Dinner** The annual Archbishop's Dinner in support of Corpus Christ Seminary, will be held on Friday, September 1, 2023 at Moonee Valley Racecourse at 7.00pm. Guest speaker is Corpus Christi College Seminary Rector, Fr Cameron Forbes. Scan or click on the QR code for more information from Facebook.



**Neil Para's 1000 km Walk for Freedom - asking the PM for a fair go for Refugees** Neil is walking 1000 km from Ballarat to Sydney, to ask Prime Minister Albanese for fairness for refugees who've lived here in Australia for more than a decade. Neil is a refugee who fled war and persecution in Sri Lanka and has lived in Ballarat since 2013. The government's recent announcement has given permanence to 19,000 – but what about the rest? For more details and to sign the petition, please go to [https://www.change.org/p/neil-is-a-refugee-in-australia-he-is-walking-1000-km-to-ask-albomp-for-a-fair-go?utm\\_source=share](https://www.change.org/p/neil-is-a-refugee-in-australia-he-is-walking-1000-km-to-ask-albomp-for-a-fair-go?utm_source=share)

**Sacred Heart College Ballarat Reunion** A reunion of SHC Ballarat East class of 1965 plus anyone who attended SHC, will be held on Sunday, October 15, 2023 at GC's Ballarat from 11.00am – 3.00pm. To attend email [loisknights345@hotmail.com](mailto:loisknights345@hotmail.com) or ph. 0419 902538

**CSSV Annual Conference 2024 Date claimer** The Catholic Social Services Conference will be held from February 21-23, 2024, in conjunction with Catholic Social Services Australia at the Catholic Leadership Centre. The theme of the conference is "Commons, Commonality, Common Good." Early bird tickets available at the CSSV website.

OLHC 2nd September	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG		Sue Searls
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL		Volunteer please
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Zeena Lazarus & Vin Dillon
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Jennifer Adams & Bev Hayward
SACRISTAN		John & Sue Calistro

**Collections Last Weekend** *Thank you for your contributions*  
 Presbytery: \$ 323.80 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 375.00