

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sandy Watkins: 0409 492 508 Fr Marcello Colasante: 0416 194 825
Contact: St Columbas Ballarat North: 5331 1012 Email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Special Parish Events (Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals) Phone: Bernadette Franc 0427678830

Parish Support - *If you need help with anything, please phone one of our members:*
Gail Hall: 0412 311 586 Bernadette Franc: 0427 678 830

SUNDAY – December 10th
2nd Sunday in Advent

DEATHS:

ANNIVERSARIES:

Rita Waugh, Sharon Barker, John Treacy, Agnes & Perc Lunn, Mary McMahon, Mary Agnes Doyle, Michael McCluskey, John Pearce, Dal McErvale, Roger Molomby, Leondis Dean, Tom Mulcahy, Bernard Righetti, Harry Thorpe, Emma Williams, Fred Waugh, Adelaide de Souza, John Sail, Natalie Gillingham, Catherine Collins, Gerald Collins, Fr John Martin, John Jess & Dawn Scrivener.

PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Pat Byrne, Blake Dridan, Shelagh Mulcahy, Fr Adrian McInerney, Graeme Trethowan, Tony Collins, Frank Meehan, Wilma Tiley and all those in need of prayer.

ROSTER:

Introduction & Reading

Today: Sue Mahony.
Dec 17th: Angela Gerrard.

Prayers of the Faithful

Today: Bernadette Franc
Dec 17th: Charlie Franc

Assembly Leaders

Dec 17th: Genevieve & Clarrie Johnston

Special Minister

Dec 17th: Therese Jess

Music

Sue Mahony

Church Cleaning, Linen, Flowers

Dec 17th: Carmel Milenkovic & Judy Franc

Church Grounds:

Dec 17th: Peter Milenkovic & Charlie Franc

Newsletter:

December: Bernadette Franc 0427678830

MASS TIMES

Dec 17th: LLA 10.00 am

Columban Calendars are available from Sue Mahony for \$8 each.

Christmas Gift Box is at the front of the church for non-perishable items. Last day for donations will be Sun Nov 17th. Many thanks in advance.

“Organs of the Ballarat Godfields’ will be on again on January 12th -16th 2024.for information and bookings go to www.ballatorgans.com.au

150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat - Significant Catholic Person/People from your Parish

In preparation for the Ballarat Diocese’s 150 year Anniversary in 2024, the anniversary committee for the Mass of the Oils are searching for 1 or 2 significant Catholics from your parish for a display to be presented in the Hall after the Mass of the Oils on Monday, March 25, 2024. This could be a well-known person who has achieved success in their chosen field or it could be someone who has left a legacy in your parish, as a benefactor, contributor or historian. Please provide names and supporting information and photo to jane.collins@ballarat.catholic.org.au before February 5, 2024.

Mass of the Oils 2024: Monday, March 25, 2024 at St Patrick’s Cathedral Ballarat at 11.30am (please note change of time). Lunch and displays will follow in the Hall.

Advance Notice 2024

Rite of Election 2024: Saturday, February 17, 2024 at 12.30pm at St Patrick’s Cathedral Ballarat. Lunch will follow in the Hall.

AN URGENT PRAYER FOR PEACE

God of compassion, we turn to you with heavy hearts as we consider the needs of your family. Israelis and Palestinians, we are all your people, each of us loved by You and called to live in peace and justice.

We lament the dreadful loss of life, destruction of property and loss of human dignity. We are pained by so much suffering. We beg you to bring healing to this ancient place. Help your people find a way forward.

Enable everyone to look each other in the eye, and embrace each other as sisters and brothers, as they find your image in every face.

We ask that courage and grace will help create a wiser and more gentle future, where everyone has a home. God of wisdom, come to our aid. Amen.

By Michael McGirr / Caritas Australia

waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 3:4, 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mk 1: 1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Make straight the paths of the Lord.

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am going to send my messenger before you;

he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he 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.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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Breaking Open the Word



THE SAVING WORD

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / B

10 DECEMBER 2023

IN THE WILDERNESS

In Australia we experience the desert and wilderness in all its beauty and expanse, yet it can be a lonely, dangerous place. Today we hear a voice crying out in the wilderness in the time of Isaiah and echoed in the Gospel. This voice also cries out to us today, in the wilderness and the desert of our lives. The voice is consolation: "Console, console my people" (Is 40:1). It bellows, "In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Is 40:3). Isaiah's words create an image of the landscape of our life and soul, in need of God.

The Gospel engages this imagery for John the Baptist, a guide in the wilderness who heralds the Messiah. Mark gives name to the voice just as he identified that this writing is "The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (1:1). Although the name of Isaiah is invoked, the first quote is from Malachi "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way (1:2 cf. Mal 3:1); then comes the echo from Isaiah 40:3. Here in the wilderness John announces the one who is to come who will baptise with the Holy Spirit (Mark 7-8). This is the announcement of the Messiah, the one longed for. As we hear that voice in our wilderness, we know that Jesus is with us. We can reflect on our attention to his presence and our welcome to him in our souls and lives.

Dr Rosemary Canavan

FIRST READING

Isa 40:1-5, 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Prepare the way for the Lord.

'Console my people, console them'
says your God.

'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem
and call to her

that her time of service is ended,

that her sin is atoned for,

that she has received from the hand of the Lord
double punishment for her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness
a way for the Lord.

Make a straight highway for our God
across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
let every cliff become a plain,
and the ridges a valley;

then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all mankind shall see it;

for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain,
joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice,

joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear,

say to the towns of Judah,

'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power,
his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him,
his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock,
gathering lambs in his arms,
holding them against his breast

and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 84:9-14. R. v. 8

R. Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace,/ peace for his
people./ His help is near for those who fear
him/ and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**



2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;/ justice
and peace have embraced./ Faithfulness shall
spring from the earth/ and justice look down
from heaven. **R.**

3. The Lord will make us prosper/ and
our earth shall yield its fruit./ Justice shall
march before him/ and peace shall follow his
steps. **R.**

SECOND READING

2 Pet 3:8-14

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

We wait for new heavens and a new earth.

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised; the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are

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



Paul Bird CSsR
Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat

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