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**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, May 2, 2024.** You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

**"Learn about your food"**

*Did you know? Discovering more about food helps you eat meals that are better for the planet. Learn if your snack grew on a tree or comes from a farm. How did it end up in that wrapper?*

**Child Safe Church** The Parishes of St Columba's, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat and St John the Baptist Beaufort 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 Diocesan or Parish website or on the foyer notice board. If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Offices, one of our priests or Safe Guarding Officers at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/>

**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.



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\*Interest rates subject to change. View current rates on the [CDF website](http://www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au).



**Parishes of St Columba's and St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat**

Communities of Ballarat North, Ballarat Cathedral, Beaufort

[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

**Office:** 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat **Phone:** 5331 2933  
**Email:** ballarat@ballarat.catholic.org.au

**School Co-Principals:** Shaun Mohr & Bambi Afford  
**School Phone:** 5332 4894

**21st April 2024 ~ 4th Sunday of Easter Year B**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

**Embracing the Whole Earth Community with Reverence and Compassion** We do not often think of ourselves as sheep, and yet that is what we are called in today's gospel. The liturgy for Good Shepherd Sunday invites us to reflect on Jesus of Nazareth as the noble or good shepherd of the believing community and his followers as "sheep". "Shepherd" in its literal sense is not part of our 21st century vocabulary, and yet we use it metaphorically, both as a verb and as a noun. Its verbal form connotes care and compassion, protection, guidance and tender relationship. In John's gospel, Jesus rightly claims for himself the title "good shepherd". He contrasts the good shepherd or leader with the leader that fails to care for the flock. Knowing one's sheep, staying with them in the face of mortal danger and being prepared to die for them are marks of the good shepherd.

There are echoes here of Ezekiel 34 where the "shepherd/sheep" metaphor describes the leaders of Israel in their relationships with the people. There are likewise echoes of a description of the Emperor Tiberius in whose reign Jesus was executed, precisely because he did not abandon his "flock". The Roman historian Suetonius has this to say of Tiberius: "To the governors who recommended burdensome taxes for his provinces, he wrote in answer that it was the part of a good shepherd to shear his flock, not skin it" (Suetonius, Life of Tiberius 32.2).

In the pre-industrial biblical world, the "shepherd/sheep" metaphor was heard by an audience that enjoyed a much closer relationship with sheep and their human carers than do most people today. In my country, for instance, there are 70 million sheep and 26.82 million people. In other words, the ovine inhabitants of Australia significantly outnumber the human. Yet most of our highly urbanised human population knows its sheep only in their disembodied forms. The human-ovine relationship is, for the most part, reduced to that of consumer and consumed. Sheep are valued, not for their intrinsic goodness as creations of a loving God, but rather as commodities that provide food and clothing for the human population. We now know that modern domesticated sheep evolved from creatures that pre-date modern humans. We might take time to consider the implications of this for our relationship with the other-than-human inhabitants of our planetary home. Our reflections might include some consideration of the wisdom or otherwise of continuing to breed these creatures for human consumption, often at the expense of the environment.

Good Shepherd Sunday provides us with an opportunity to move beyond our human-centred views of the world and our human-centred interpretations of our sacred texts. We might hear a call to value the realities that underpin gospel images such as the Good Shepherd/sheep metaphor. We might also hear a call to expand our appreciation of all the inhabitants of our planet. To be good shepherds in our time is to embrace the whole Earth Community with reverence and compassion.

~Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm: (R.)** The stone rejected by the builders has become the cornerstone.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me. Alleluia!

**Staffing**

**Administrator:**  
Fr Edward Moloney  
**Assistant Priests:**  
Fr Francis Kureeckal MST  
Fr James McKay

**Finance Officer:**  
Bernadette Prestwood

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

**Safeguarding Officer:**  
Peter Marquand

**MASS TIMES (This week)**

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

**Beaufort**  
2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am

**Readings for Next Weekend**

Acts of the Apostles 9: 26-31  
Ps 21: 26-28, 30-32,  
R.v.26  
1 John 3:18-24  
John 15:1-8



**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Sr Mary Madden RSM

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Fr. Bob Maguire, Anne Tierney, Michael Phillips, Neil Hanrahan, Lorna Batty, Mary Smerdon, Barry McNamara, Veronica McNamara

**We pray:** for all in areas of conflict, war and natural disasters, for those who are sick in our parish and all in need of our prayers.

**ANZAC Day Mass 25<sup>th</sup> April at St Patrick's Cathedral** An opportunity for all parishioners to come and pray for Australian and New Zealand soldiers who gave their lives for our freedom. We also remember the families of those who lost their loved ones during conflict. We continue to pray for peace in our world, which begins with each one of us. Mass will be held at the Cathedral at 9.15am.

**Appointments to Parishes** The new appointments took effect on April 10 We welcome the priests who will look after our St Columba's community:

Ballarat Cathedral Parish, **Ballarat North Parish** and Beaufort Parish

Administrator: Fr Edward Moloney  
Assistant Priests: Fr Francis Kureckal MST, Fr James McKay

*A warm welcome to Fr. Ed, Fr Francis and Fr. Jim!*

**Pope's intention for April – for the role of women:** Let us pray that the dignity and worth of women be recognised in every culture and for an end to the discrimination they face in various parts of the world. Lord, hear us.

**Damascus College Ballarat Reunions** Damascus College warmly welcomes past students and staff of Sacred Heart College, St Martin's in the Pines and Damascus College to our 2024 Class Reunions. This year, we are thrilled to host "class of" reunions for:

- Class of 1984 – 40 Year Reunion Celebration – Saturday, May 18
- Class of 1994 – 30 Year Reunion Celebration – Saturday, May 18
- Class of 2004 – 20 Year Reunion Celebration – Saturday, May 25
- Class of 2014 – 10 Year Reunion Celebration – Saturday, May 25

Please note: An all-years St Paul's Reunion will be held in 2025. For further details and booking links for each class reunion, please visit <https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/community/alumni/alumni-reunions-events>. Scroll down to 2024 'CLASS OF' Reunions and click the + to view details and book your ticket. For enquiries: [connecting@damascus.vic.edu.au](mailto:connecting@damascus.vic.edu.au)

St Columba's April 28th	(next week) Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Tony Beggs
COMMENTATOR	Fiona Newton
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Terry Ranger
COMMUNION MINISTER	Judy Brown
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe

**Collections April 12 to April 18 at St Columba's** Thank you.  
Presbytery: \$ 468.80 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,201.00

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*The Parish of St. Columba's Ballarat North recognises the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.*



**Baptism** This weekend we welcome to our Parish through the sacrament of Baptism:

**Charlie Reg Farquhar** son of Luke and Caitlin.

*"The Church gives the faith to your children through Baptism and you have the task to make it grow...." - Pope Francis*

May Charlie grow in faith with the support of his family and our Catholic Community.

### Update regarding Maintenance Work on St Patrick's Cathedral

**Fence** As reported in The Courier on Monday, March 25, ribbons were removed from St Patrick's Cathedral fence to allow maintenance work to be done on the fence. The date for the removal of ribbons was set in consultation with members of the Loud Fence movement.

Over the past two weeks, the fence has been cleaned and a first coat of paint has been applied to most of the fence. The finishing coat of paint will be applied in the coming weeks to complete the maintenance project.

Bishop Paul Bird and some members of the parish council will meet again with members of the Loud Fence movement next week. This will be to discuss arrangements for a meeting with survivors to hear their views on a memorial for those who have suffered abuse. The memorial could provide ongoing recognition of those who have suffered abuse and also be a reminder of the need for continuing attention to safeguarding children and vulnerable people in our community.

**Sr Mary Madden rsm RIP** The Funeral Mass for Sr Mary Madden rsm will take place on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at St Alipius Church Ballarat East at 10.30am AEST. The live-stream links are:

Funeral <https://youtube.com/live/aeXkdNueREc?feature=share>;

Burial <https://youtube.com/live/xTbxptzSWpl?feature=share>.

**150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat** Bishop Paul invites parish-ees to acknowledge the 150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat at Masses on the weekend of **April 27-28, 2024**. He has invited schools to mark the anniversary during the week of April 29 to May 3, coinciding with Catholic Education Week which was brought forward for the occasion.

**World Day of Prayer for Vocations today, April 21, 2024** The Universal Church celebrates Vocation Sunday on the Fourth Sunday of Easter. This is an opportunity for all to pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life. "Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:35-38). We remember young women and men throughout our country and diocese and pray they may be open to hear and respond generously to the Lord's call to marriage, the single life, the priesthood, diaconate, religious life, societies of apostolic life or secular institutes.

### Prayer for Vocations

O Holy Spirit of wisdom and divine love, awaken in the hearts of the young, Your knowledge, understanding, and counsel. May they discover the vocation wherein they can best serve God to be of service to their sisters and brothers.

Inflame all young hearts with courage and grant them your peace. Mary, Mother of our Saviour, and our Mother, pray for us.

### Thank you for your continued support through Project Compassion

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, for all future generations. Please remember to return your Project Compassion Boxes and envelopes to your Parish Office or donate online by visiting [www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413 or through the QR code. If you donate online or through the QR code, **remember to fill in your details and postcode** so the Diocese of Ballarat giving total can be recognised.

**Tea and Coffee after Mass every first Sunday of the month at St. Columba's** Our next tea and coffee is on Sunday, the 5th of May.

St Columba's May 5th	Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Terry Ranger
COMMENTATOR	Judy Brown
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Anthea Hinchey
COMMUNION MINISTER	Colleen Wakefield
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe