

Pope Francis @Pontifex.com 2017

Dec 24th—"May we be in this world a ray of that light which shone forth from Bethlehem, bringing joy and peace to the hearts of all women and men."

Dec 31st—"This light which comes from the Holy Family encourages us to offer human warmth in those family situation in which, for various reasons, there is a lack of peace and harmony and forgiveness. Our concrete solidarity is just as present, especially when it comes to families who are undergoing difficult situations because of illness, lack of work, discrimination and the need to emigrate."

A VOCATION VIEW

Dec 24th—Every person who has ever born a child, and every person who has freely vowed away this honour, helps in some mysterious way to bring Jesus Christ into this world again. Can you say: "Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord"?

Dec 31st—The Old Law said that every first born male shall be dedicated to the Lord. Is there a priest, deacon, brother, or sister from your family? Now is the time for families to encourage a vocation!



A very Merry Christmas and a big thank you to all the parishioners for their generous donations of toys for Giving Tree in the Church foyer. It is greatly appreciated by the members of the Ararat conference.

St. Vincent de Paul Society of Australia supports the latest **#LetThemStay** campaign. Please see the foyer notice board for details

Open new horizons
for spreading joy

Young people, faith
& vocational discernment

YEAR OF
YOUTH
2018
#YearofYouth

Lifeline: 131114 Ararat Police: 5355 1500
Counselling service: Relationships Australia – 1800 052 674
Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Towards Healing – 1800 099 340
Sexual Assault Crisis line: 1800 806 292



Child Safe Church

Here at the Church of the Immaculate Conception we follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed by the Ballarat Diocesan Office.

Our Safe Guarding Officer is Emma Coburn and you can download our Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy from the Parish website.

If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Office, a member of the Clergy or the Safe Guarding Officer on ararat@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Church Toilets

All children—Primary school age and under— must be accompanied by an adult. Thank you for your understanding.



Monday, 25 Dec 2017

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Day Mass during the Day

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.

First Reading **Is 52:7-10**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God.

Responsorial Psalm **Ps 97:1-6. R. v.3**

(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord
for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm
have brought salvation. (R.)

2. The Lord has made known his salvation;
has shown his justice to the nations.

He has remembered his truth and love
for the house of **Israel**. (R.)

3. All the ends of the earth have seen
the salvation of our God.

Shout to the Lord all the earth,
ring out your joy. (R.)

4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,
with the sound of music.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn
acclaim the King, the Lord. (R.)

Second Reading **Heb 1:1-6**

In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

A holy day has dawned upon us.

Come you nations and adore the Lord.

Today a great light has come upon the earth.

Alleluia!

Gospel **Jn 1:1-18**

The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory.

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25th December 2017

RECENT DEATHS:

Arthur Clark

ANNIVERSARIES:

Timothy Weeks, Pat Brennan, Doris Tognon, Fr Paddy Bushell, John Sullivan, Evie Hayes, Matthew Sullivan, Edward Mulcahy, Kath Schwab, Fr Pat Culligan, Peter Sinnott, James Sinnott, Fred Mason, Kathleen McLeod, Mary O'Neill, Shane Walls, Anne Handley, Joseph Colwell, Mary Pola, Peter Williams, Andrew Jackson, Bishop Joe Grech, Zsonella McGrath, James O'Connor, Fr. Ted Glowrey, Johanna Lannen, Winifred Hynes, Annette Mair, Bernice Clinton, Bernardino Torrecampo, Ivan Lee, Des Brennan, Sr Veronica O'Brien, Bernie Moloney, Stephanie Mitchell

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Sr. Alexia Riddington

If you would like a sick person prayed for, ask for their permission. Names will be included for the duration of ONE MONTH after which family or friends can request more time.

Please pray for the intentions of :

Baptism

PARISH PRAYER

Loving God, Good Shepherd of us all,
gather us and form us into a welcoming Parish family.

Touch our hearts with your love so that we, in turn, may reach out in love to one another,
in a neighbourly community. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Parish Priest:

Fr. Andrew Hayes

andrew.hayes@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Download Church Bulletin -

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Parish Secretary:

Joyce Clery

ararat@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Safe Guarding Officer:

Emma Coburn

ararat@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Contact:

03 53525460

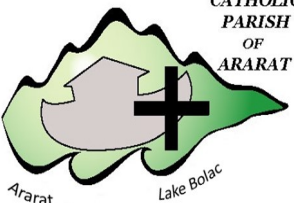
PO BOX 92, Ararat, VIC 3377

Office Hours:

Wed/Thurs/Fri

10am-3pm

CATHOLIC PARISH OF ARARAT



PRINCIPAL ST. MARY'S SCHOOL:

Mr Tom Hogan

Download newsletter—www.smararat.catholic.edu.au

PRINCIPAL MARIAN COLLEGE:

Mrs Carmel Barker

Download newsletter—www.mcararat.catholic.edu.au

MASS TIMES

Ararat

(Immaculate Conception)

Lake Bolac

(St. Bernard's)

Saturday

6.00pm

Sunday

10.30am

8.30am (except 2nd Sunday)

Masses This Week in Ararat

For the next couple of weeks Fr Andrew will be having a rest ("well earned" he says). Weekday Masses will resume early in January.

LAKE BOLAC– Christmas Eve Dec 24th

READER:

Jane Higgins

PRAYERS:

V. Albert

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER:

R. Smith

Cleaning:

LAKE BOLAC– MASS Dec 31st

READER:

R. Liston

PRAYERS:

Jane Higgins

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER:

L. Breen

Cleaning:

R. Liston

LAKE BOLAC– MASS Jan 7th 2018

READER:

T. Higgins

PRAYERS:

J. Aldous

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER:

M. Phillips

Cleaning:

M-A Otto

Saint of the Week:

St. Stephen

Feastday:

December 26

Patron

of Deacons, altar Servers, bricklayers, casket makers, & Stonemasons

Death:

34

Saint Stephen was one of the first ordained deacons of the Church. He was also the first Christian martyr. The Greek word from which we derive the English word martyr literally means witness. In that sense, every Christian is called to bear witness to Jesus Christ, in both their words and their actions. Not all are asked to shed their blood.

Saint of the Week:

Mary the Blessed Virgin

Feastday:

January 1

Patron

of all humanity

Birth:

September 8, Nativity of Mary

Death:


August 15, Assumption of Mary

Mary, also known as St. Mary the Virgin, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Mary, Mary Mother of God or the Virgin Mary is believed by many to be the greatest of all Christian saints. The Virgin Mother "was, after her Son, exalted by divine grace above all angels and men."

Read more on

www.catholic.org/saints

Joke of the Week:



2017 Joys and Sorrows

I write these reflections on the evening of Sunday December 10. For the past few days, over a hundred young people from our diocese of Ballarat have been in Sydney for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival. I have been delighted to be there with them as they joined more than 18,000 young people from all around Australia in days of fun and faith.

The celebrations began with the Lights of Christmas at Sydney’s St Mary’s cathedral on Wednesday evening. The open space in front of the cathedral was a sea of faces as the building was lit up with laser lights, beginning with a kaleidoscope of colours drawn from the cathedral’s stained glass and concluding with some classic paintings of Mary and the Child Jesus. Over the following three days, the young people converged on Sydney’s Olympic Park. They sang along with a great range of music, sometimes very bright and very loud, sometimes hushed. They waved the lights on their mobile phones like thousands of candles. They knelt and prayed in silence in the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. They met with bishops from all around the country to share their views about life and about the church. They enjoyed meals with their friends and made new friends. On the final evening, they celebrated a Mass under the stars in the heart of Sydney.

I give thanks that I was able to be there with so many young people from our diocese and beyond. It was for me a time of great joy.

By contrast, I felt a deep sadness in the days before the festival, when I read reports from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. These included a report in relation to the diocese of Ballarat. The Commission found grave failures in the way the diocese had responded to complaints of child sexual abuse, failures that led to unnecessary suffering for many victims and their families and brought distress to communities throughout the diocese.

This recent report was in addition to the report in February that put before us the extent of abuse in our diocese and throughout Australia over the decades. This tragic history of crime and the failure to respond properly to complaints have caused anguish to people in our diocese for many years and this year has brought further sadness as we have reflected on the findings of the Royal Commission.

As we come to the close of any year and look back on what the year has brought, we will usually find a mix of joys and sorrows. As I reflect on 2017, the joy and sorrow that I have mentioned loom large for me – the joy of a wonderful youth festival in the last few days and the sorrow of the crimes and failures in earlier times.

As this year comes to an end, I hope we can draw lessons from both the joys and sorrows we have known. From the failure to protect children in the past, may we learn to place the welfare of children at the centre of our concerns. From the witness of the young people who took part in the youth festival, may we learn to treasure the gift that young people are to our church and our world.

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR



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Ballarat VIC 3350
P.O. Box 121
Ballarat VIC 3353
Phone: (03) 5337 7121
Fax: (03) 5332 1122

E-mail: bishopsoffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au

December 15, 2017

**Statement from Bishop Paul Bird at the Conclusion of
the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**

Bishop Paul Bird has welcomed the release of the Commission's final report and acknowledged the years of hard work undertaken by the Commissioners and their staff. He joins the Commissioners in thanking each of the survivors who told the Commission their story. In doing so, with great courage, the survivors have helped us all to identify what should be done to make institutions safer for children in the future.

In his final address, the Chair of the Royal Commission said that "the conjunction of events which the Royal Commission has examined can only be described as a national tragedy." With deep sadness we recognise that people in positions of trust in our Catholic diocese of Ballarat contributed to this national tragedy, both by the abuse of children and by the failure to protect children from abuse.

The challenge before us now is to be part of a national commitment to care for children in our time. As the Chair of the Commission has said, "the sexual abuse of any child is intolerable in a civilised society" and "we must each resolve that we should do what we can to protect them."

Over the past five years our diocese has sought to cooperate with the Commission's inquiries. We have also sought to implement recommendations from the various reports the Commission has issued along the way. Now we must consider carefully the conclusions in the Commission's final report, to see what further lessons we should learn in regard to our response to those who have suffered abuse and the steps we should take to keep children safe today and in the years ahead.

NOTICES

A Blessed Christmas

Merry Christmas and a blessed 2018 to each and every parishioner of St Mary's and St Bernard's. Thank you all for your support during 2017. The new year promises to be exciting if we let it as we move into our new phase of managing (and thriving) with less available time from our priest in Ararat and Lake Bolac. Some will be aware that I will be away for significant time in 2018. There will be new jobs for parishioners, new challenges, new experiences. Stay tuned. For the time being, a blessed Christmas! Fr. Andrew

Bishop's Christmas Appeal

This annual appeal will take place at our Christmas Masses.

Some Parishioners may like to consider doing the Lay Ministry program (below) as we will need more people on board next year when Fr. Andrew is away!

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – now open for new participants

The Lay Pastoral Ministry Program offers low-cost opportunities for online study and formation for lay workers in the diocese, both employees and volunteers. A wide range of subject areas are offered: Scripture, Sacraments, Social Justice, Leadership skills, Youth Ministry, many more. Study one subject or many - it's a flexible program! Registration for the January 2018 study cycle is open now (closes 5 January). A study cycle means you do one subject over 5 weeks. There are 6 study cycles each year, you can start at any one.

Details on the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au (link is on home page), or contact Amanda, ph: 5337 7125 or email amanda.smith@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Four Day Workshop

Kardia Formation invites you to join us for a weekend Summit in Melbourne with Margaret Silf, 18 – 20 May 2018, Imagining the Self in a Spiritually Expansive World and/or a four-day workshop The Future is Within Us, 14 – 17 May 2018. For more information www.kardia.com.au or see the flyer on the parish notice board.

ACYF - view Youth Festival events

All the highlight plenary events from the Youth Festival are available for viewing at xt3. How do we connect with young people? Have a look at this. View ACYF on demand at xt3.com

Year of Youth

Resources from the National Youth Office are now available, including *No Young People in my Parish*, and *A Guide to Listening Forums*. For these and other information go to 'Year of Youth' on the Youth and Young Adult Ministry page of the diocesan website: www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-and-agencies

National Council of Priests of Australia Response to the Royal Commission Report.

Attached to the notice board is the Statement from the National Council of Priests of Australia in response to the final Royal Commission Report.

CHURCH ROSTER

Day & Date	Facilitator	Reader	Eucharistic Minister	Golden Gate Communion	Welcomers	Counter	Collector	Flowers	Cleaning
Christmas Day Dec 25th			Sr. John						
Sat Jan 6th	G. White	N. Potter	A. Reynolds, L. Horsman & C. McAdie		Marg Joyce	A&V Joyce	V. Hooper	M. Egan & M. Brady	A. Galoso & M. Fe Galoso
Sun Jan 7th	J. Start	H. Collins	C. Bulger, & K. Cham-mings	H&A Collins	Pat Lardner & S. Pickering	(as above)	Jim Crowe	(as above)	(as above)
Sat Jan 13th	H. Collins	Beck Rodger	T. Gemmola		R&M Jerram	The Arnold Family, T. Weeks & C. Martin	Geoff White & Carmel Brennan	J. North & M. Cunningham	J. Clery
Sun Jan 14th	N. Potter	R. Cooper	M. Cunningham, Sr. John & C. Reid	J&J Crowe	Blessie Stoneman	(as above)	John Pola & P. Gemmola	(as above)	(as above)
Sat Jan 20th	P. Brennan	G. White	M. Mason, P. Brady		R&M Jerram & Tom Kidd	The Reynolds Family & P. McAloon	G. White & Tom Kidd	A. Joyce & Marilyn Brady	Jo Donnan
Sun Jan 21st	J. Clery	S. Reid	C. Reid, M. Ollie & J. Start	D&M Lister	Kathy Leggett & S. Pickering	(as above)	John Pola	(as above)	(as above)
Sat Jan 27th	P. Gemmola	I. Brady	H&A Collins		Margaret Ryan & Tom Kidd	I. Brady, P. Gemmola	Geoff White & R. Jerram	A. Joyce & Marilyn Brady	P. Weeks
Sun Jan 28th	C. Reid	C. Bulger	G. O'Loughlin, N. Billingsley & S. Reid	J. Start	P. Lardner	(as above)	Jim Crowe	(as above)	(as above)



Sunday, 31 Dec 2017

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph - Year B

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.

First Reading Sir 3:2-6. 12-14

Whoever fears the Lord honours his parents.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 127:1-5. R. see v.1

(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

1. O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. (R.)

2. Your wife like a fruitful vine in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive, around your table. (R.)

3. Indeed thus shall be blessed the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from [Zion](#)

all the days of your life! (R.)

Second Reading Col 3:12-21

Concerning the Christian life in the world

Gospel Acclamation Col 3:15. 16.

Gospel Lk 2:22-40

The child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom.

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30th/31st December 2017

RECENT DEATHS:

ANNIVERSARIES:

Jacob Pitcher, Theresa McColl, Roger Gleeson, Vincent Daly, Margaret Cochrane, Eileen Field, Fr Pat McGuire, Jessie Fleming, Vincent Thomas, Vera Shea, Anthony Gordon, Peter Keogh, Michael Campion, Don Rickard, Margaret Haslett

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Sr. Alexia Riddington

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