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Buy Chocolates made without Slavery this Easter There is now a wide range of slavery-free chocolate and Easter eggs available, including a budget priced range of UTZ certified products in ALDI, Coles and a wide selection at Haighs and OXFAM shops. Information flyer is posted in foyer

Other notices: **Parish Appointments** Bishop Paul Bird has announced: Fr Bill van de Camp will be retiring on weekend 4-5 May. Fr John Fitzgerald will become administrator of Koroit and Port Fairy in addition to St Joseph's in Warrnambool. Fr John Corrigan (Western Border Parish) will become assistant priest at Koroit, Port Fairy and Warrnambool. Fr Anthony Nagothu (St Patrick's Cathedral) will become assistant priest in the Western Border Parish.

Mercy Connect has secured David Nyuol Vincent as a guest speaker. He will be coming to Ballarat on evening of the 27th June to speak about his experiences as one of the Lost Boys of Sudan. David was trained as a boy soldier in Ethiopia and lived as a Refugee in Kenya. After reaching Australia he has become an advocate for refugees and the Sudanese community. Just now we are looking at expressions of interest from people who would wish to hear him speak. Once we know the audience we can settle on a venue. Entrance: Gold coin donation. If you are interested please email: mercyconnectb@gmail.com



Parishes of St Columba's and Our Lady Help of Christians

Communities of Ballarat North, Learmonth, Lexton, Miners Rest, Waubra, Wendouree



306 Gregory St, Ballarat North **Phone:** 5331 1012
Email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Web: ballarat.catholic.org.au (Select parish)
School Web: www.scballarat.catholic.edu.au
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480a Gillies Street, P O Box 192 Wendouree **Phone:** 5339 2302
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31st March 2019 ~ 4th Sunday of Lent (C)

Focus on the Scriptures

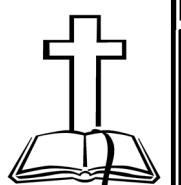
Unfailing forgiveness and arms open to welcome back wayward sons and daughters is a key motif in today's gospel story. There is no room in the hearts of Jesus' critics for such forgiveness: upright law-abiding people should exclude "sinners" from their company. In a first-century Jewish context, it was easy enough to be a sinner. Whole groups of people, depending on their occupation, fell into that category simply because they failed to observe one or more of the 618 prescriptions of the law. Jesus' response to critics is the story of a parent whose adult children lose their way. One son finds his way back to the centre of family life and the support of the wider community while the other more law-abiding son seems to place himself outside the family circle, holding on to the resentment he feels at his sibling's return.

We need to attend to the gaps in the story: there may be daughters as well as sons in the family; there is surely another parent, a mother who shares the heartache of her husband when their younger son requests his share of the estate. To make such a request in this context is tantamount to wishing his parents dead. The older brother is not disadvantaged: he is assured of a two-thirds share according to the law as well as the ongoing love and support of his family, as his father makes clear.

The contrast between the young man's acquisitive nature and his parents' capacity to relinquish substantial property in the interests of relationship is striking. No motive is offered for the son's readiness to break all his ties and get as far away as he can. In the distant country, he squanders both his inheritance and his identity. A "severe famine" becomes the catalyst for his change of direction. Famine in any age means devastation of the earth that can lead to displacement, to broken relationships and even to global conflicts. In turning back, the young man shows no real interest in a restored relationship with his family or ancestral lands. Rather, he devises a plan that will put food in his belly. He composes a speech about having sinned against his father and against God and about being prepared to share the status of the servants. Thanks to the expansive heart of an extraordinarily compassionate parent, he does not have to deliver the speech he has prepared. Famine becomes feast. So it is with our merciful God. We abandon, even betray. We waste the bounty of Earth. Our motives for returning to the sources of love and community are very mixed, and yet our merciful God is ever ready, with our cooperation, to turn famine into feast. For that to happen in our times, we must turn away from our acquisitive, wasteful ways and respond as one to the pain of our planetary home.

Responsorial Psalm: Taste and see the goodness of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation: Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ! I will rise and go to my Father and tell him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!



Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Maria Tocchet, Fr Joseph Tran, Bill Walsh, Des Ryan

Anniversaries: We remember: Peter Leonard, Julianne Spicer

We pray: for the sick of our Parishes, especially Sasskiah Gallagher, Blake Dridan, Pat Hogan and for those on the RCIA & RCIC journey for 2019.

March 31, 2019 - 4th Sunday of Lent "No longer was there manna for the Israelites, who that year ate of the yield of the land of Canaan." (Joshua 5:12)

Over the forty years that the Israelites journeyed through the desert, God provided them with manna to eat. As soon as they were able to enjoy the fruits of the Promised Land the manna ceased. Likewise, God's blessings to us may change over the years but it is important to trust that God will always provide us with all that we need.

Mass of the Oils Monday, April 15, 2019 The Mass of the Oils will be celebrated in St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat at 6.30pm on Monday, April 15, 2019. This Mass is a celebration of the whole Church of the Diocese of Ballarat. We celebrate the unity and ministry of the ordained priests in the midst of the entire priestly people of God of the Diocese. This Mass also has special significance for those who will use the blessed oils in 2019 – the sick, those to be baptised and confirmed. All members of the diocese are invited to participate in this celebration which truly expresses the unity of the Diocesan Church. Ministries required for the Mass of the Oils include ushers, readers, oils bearers, presentation of the gifts, collection of oils, musicians and singers. For further information contact the Pastoral Ministry Office, ph. 5337 7159 or pastoralministry@ballarat.catholic.org.au If you can assist at the Mass of the Oils as a reader, singer or musician or collector of oils please contact your Parish office.

Stations of the Cross will be offered on Fridays during Lent at 6.30pm in St Columba's Church. This will be followed by a time of reflection and sharing on the upcoming Sunday's Gospel. All welcome to join in this wonderful preparation for Easter. For further info please contact Judith on 5331 1012



2019 Celtic Winter Wonderland Tour of Ireland Nov 27th—Dec 11th, 2019. Flyer with tour details is in the foyer of each church

Welcome to the Mini Vinnies from St Columba's school who will be commissioned and receive their badges during the 6pm Mass this weekend. Congratulations and well done for being a part of the St Vincent de Paul Society.



Collections at St Columba's

We thank you for your generous support		
1st Collection (For the support of the Clergy in the Diocese)	\$ 680.70	
2nd Collection (Last weeks giving for up keep of Parish)	\$ 1,343.20	Average for this financial year \$ 1,711.26

SC 6th & 7th April

Sat 6pm

Sunday 10am

Liturgy tips

WELCOMER	Mary Dinning	Helen Linane
COMMENTATOR	Ruth Marquand	Irene Monigatti
FIRST MINISTER OF THE WORD	John van de Laar	Derek Streulens
SECOND MINISTER OF THE WORD	Eileen van de Laar	Kim Butler
GIFTS	Glenane Family	Volunteer please
MINISTERS OF EUCHARIST	Maureen Eddy, Kathleen Keogh, Jennifer Adams	Shane Bruty, Mary Kennedy, Torie Waight
OVERHEADS	Troy Severino	Sharon De Beer
SACRISTAN	Sullivan sisters	Josie Crowe

The Welcoming Parish We all know what it feels like to be welcomed at a gathering of friends and family. Many times, however, Catholic parishes don't apply the same thoughtful attention to detail as we would if we were planning a party at home. And feeling a sense of welcome is so important in our experience of Church. Welcoming and hospitality are cornerstones in the foundation of Church. They communicate to us in tangible ways who God is in this place and how Christ reaches out to us in love and reconciliation. Indeed welcome is often the first "sacrament" we encounter in our affiliation with a parish.

How are we doing?



Fourth Sunday of Lent 31st March Michaela is a 21-year-old trainee at Purple House, a dialysis center in the Central Desert for people suffering from kidney disease. With the support of Caritas partners, Michaela is helping to build a social enterprise, a connection to culture and a new outlook for the chronically ill. Please donate to Project Compassion 2019 and help provide essential health care, employment and training for First Australians like Michaela. Lives change when we all give 100%. You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.

Rosters for St Columba's will be in the foyer for you to complete. Readers please take readings from the back of the clipboard. Palm Sunday Passion copy is only for the Narrator. Extra helpers over the Triduum would also be helpful. New ministry rosters will begin after Easter please contact Judith for any changes. I will be preparing in the next week.

OLHC ~ Volunteers for the Easter Ceremonies. There are sheets for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday in the Foyer. Please consider what you could do.

Eco playgroup at St Columba's is held on Fridays in the School Hall 9am—10.30am. As it is held on the school grounds, parents need a WWC card. For further details please see the flyer in the Church foyer or contact the school. This is open to all school & parish families.

Sew'n'so Thursday 11th April 2019 at 1.30 in the Church Foyer. This month we are having Peter Marquand coming to talk to us about "All things gardening", including the history and development of Begonias. Come along with questions. All welcome. Enquiries Margaret 53314032.

Thank you once again to all parishioners who have already returned their completed pledge commitments and Parish Groups and Ministries forms to our Parish Office. We'll finalise our Program over the next week. Please note that your new pledge commitment will take effect on Sunday 14th April 2019. Letters of confirmation of your new commitment, and new sets of renumbered pledge envelopes (where appropriate) will be available at all Masses on the weekend of Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th April. They will be sorted alphabetically by surname. I thank you once again for your generous response. *Fr Marcello*

Palm Sunday Events to Support People Seeking Asylum You are invited to two events in support of people seeking asylum, to be held on Palm Sunday - Sunday, April 14, 2019 (flyers on noticeboard) • Catholic Prayer and Reflection at the Cardinal Knox Centre, 383 Albert Street East Melbourne at 1.00pm. • Public Rally at the State Library, corner of La Trobe and Swanston Streets, Melbourne at 2.00pm.

Wanted OLHC are seeking to procure an unused portable projector screen to be donated to the Parish Centre. Please contact Maree of you can assist.



Baptisms OLHC welcome through Baptism Annabelle Jones, daughter of Gabrielle and Paul, Polly Maisie Meade, daughter of Hanna and Matthew, and Lulu Harriet Thornton, daughter of Christopher and Grace We pray that they will grow in faith with the loving support of their parents, families and our Parish communities

Baptism preparation the next Baptism preparation session will be held on Thursday 4th April. Please note that both parish offices will be closed for this from 9.30am—11.30am

Parish Pastoral Council of OLHC provides leadership for the Parish. There will be three vacancies to replace retiring members mid-year. If you are interested in supporting OLHC parish and future directions, please make contact with current PPC members: Mario Cordioli; Val Bourke; Corrie Harbour; Clare Mullane; Sue Calistro; Daryl Clark; and Lia Yu. The PPC is a two year commitment for the benefit of the parish. Please consider!

OLHC Property Security The PPC seeking assistance to oversee the security of the property on weekends. John Calistro has volunteered to have his name on a list. The PPC is seeking two more members of the community to be named on a list of contact people. If you can assist please notify Maree

Exodus Community Donations Please support this very worthwhile project via donations of non-perishable food stuffs. Donation basket in OLHC foyer.

St Columba's Funeral Ministry meeting Tuesday 2nd April at 4pm in Church Foyer

Collections at OLHC

We thank you for your generous support		
1st Collection (For support of the Clergy in the Diocese)	\$ 621.55	Loose money (2nd collection) \$ 112
2nd Collection (Last weeks giving for up-keep of Parish)	\$ 1,061.75	Weekly Average this Financial Year \$ 1,497

OLHC 6/7th April

Sat 6 pm

Sun 10:00 am

What's coming up:

LEADER of SONG	Sue Searls	Vin Dillon	Easter Liturgies at OLHC:
MINISTER of the WORD	John Schonfelder	Deanna Osman	April
MINISTERS OF EUCHARIST	Pat Dillon, Lia Yu, Pauline Newman, + 2 volunteers	Harry Kennedy, Coralie Kennedy, Tony Bruty + 2 volunteers	Tues 16th Parish Reconciliation 7:00 pm
SACRISTAN	Pauline Howard	Peter & Deanna Osman	Thurs 18th Holy Thursday Mass at 7:00 pm
COUNTERS	Peter and Deanna Osman		Fri 19th Way of the Cross, Waubra -10am Lord's Passion , OLHC , 3pm
Rural Communities 8:30 am	Lexton	Waubra	Sat 20th Easter Vigil at OLHC at 6:00 pm
Minister of Word:	Tony Cini	Sharon Moran	Sun 21st Mass at Waubra at 8:30am
Minister of Eucharist :	Sharon Moran	Tony Cini	Mass at OLHC at 10:00 am
Church Cleaning:		Anne Dalton	