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**Child Safe Church** The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Learmonth, 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 ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au or wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

**A Coronavirus Prayer**

**Loving God, Your desire is for our wholeness and well being. We hold in tenderness and prayer the collective suffering of our world at this time.**

**We grieve precious lives lost and vulnerable lives threatened.**

**We ache for ourselves and our neighbours, standing before an uncertain future.**

**We pray: may love, not fear, go viral. Inspire our leaders to discern and choose wisely, aligned with the common good.**

**Help us to practice social distancing and reveal to us new and creative ways to come together in spirit and in solidarity.**

**Call us to profound trust in your faithful presence, You, the God who does not abandon.**

**Amen**



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

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



**Office:** 306 Gregory St, Ballarat Nth **Phone:** 5331 1012  
**Email:** ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ballararnorthpastoral@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
**School Co-Principals:** Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr  
**School Phone:** 5332 4894

**Office:** 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree **Phone:** 5339 2302  
**Email:** wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
**P O Box** 192, Wendouree  
**School Principal:** Leigh Bradshaw  
**School Phone:** 5339 4726

**Parish Priest:** Fr Marcello Colasante

**Visiting Priest:** Fr Gary Jones

**Staff at St Columba's**  
Pastoral Associate: Judith O'Sullivan  
Wed—Friday 9:00am -1:00pm

**Staff at OLHC**  
Parish Co-ordinator: Maree Roache  
Wed- Friday 9:00am—1:00pm

**Safeguarding Officers**  
St Columba's: Peter Marquand  
OLHC: Maree Roache

**Mass times: St Columba's**  
Saturday Vigil: NO MASS  
Sunday: NO MASS  
Wednesday: NO MASS

**Mass times: OLHC**  
Saturday Vigil: NO MASS  
Sunday: 8:30 am NO MASS  
(1st & 3rd Sunday, Lexton 5th Sunday)

NO MASS  
Tuesday: NO MASS  
Thursday: NO MASS  
Friday: NO MASS

**Readings for next weekend:**

Is 50: 4-7  
Ps 21: 8-9, 19-20, 23-24. r V.2  
Phil 2: 6-11  
Mth 26: 14—27: 66



**29th March, 2020 ~ Fifth Sunday in Lent (A)**

**Focus of the Scripture**

On this last Sunday in Lent Lazarus is given to us to help us think about the tombs in which we lie hidden and the life to which we are called. The bad spirit seduces most of us into having some form of secretive life. It might be a secret we can't tell, a sin we can't confess or a memory we want to bury. At its worst it can be a lifestyle or a pattern of unethical behaviour we have divorced from the rest of our lives. We may even con ourselves into believing that all of this is normal and 'not so bad'.

These tombs often look similar. They seem small on the surface, but as we get away with our secrets we bury ourselves in them more deeply. We jealously guard the entrance, displacing energy to defend our tombs and we're ashamed if anyone rolls away the stone and sees the mess inside.

But this Sunday Jesus stands at the entrance of our tombs and calls us out of them. We're asked to face down the bad spirits that keep us locked in secrecy, to move away from shame, embrace repentance, recognise the price to be paid for being true to what's best in ourselves and we're invited to know the light and life of Christ's healing and forgiveness.

No one can pretend that this journey is easy, but it's what Lent is all about: the journey from the tomb of our own particular deaths, through penance to the new life of Easter. May this Eucharist allow us to see the Lord stand at our tomb and gently call us by name, 'Come forth'. And at His word may we be unbound and let go free. (Abridged)

Fr Richard Leonard SJ



**Responsorial Psalm:** With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption

**Gospel Acclamation:** Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ! I am the resurrection and the light, says the Lord; whoever believes in me will not die for ever. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Len Hyatt, Michael Nash

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Maria Tocchet, Fr Joseph Tran, Bill Walsh, Des Ryan, Peter Leonard, Julianne Spicer

**We pray:** Those in need of our prayers; for the Plenary Council process in Australia, our RCIA & RCIC candidates, all the sick and housebound, Doctors and Nursing staff

**Fifth Sunday in Lent** Tawonga is a 10-year-old girl living with a disability, and struggling with food insecurity and discrimination in Malawi. Since participating in a Caritas Australia supported program, Tawonga's life has transformed. Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to so this transformational program can continue to empower vulnerable women, men and children, and strengthen the communities around them.



**Mercy Connect Ballarat/Bendigo Co-ordinator** Mercy Connect is a program within Mercy Works which recruits, trains and supports volunteers to mentor refugee students and their families as they settle in Australia. We are seeking a Co-ordinator of our Ballarat/Bendigo Mercy Connect Education project. The role involves connecting all volunteers with students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds in existing and potentially new primary and secondary schools across Ballarat/Bendigo. It also includes recruiting and training new volunteers. While providing assistance in the educational setting, the primary focus is one of mentoring and providing ongoing support and training. The Co-ordinator is required to liaise with schools in providing volunteers appropriate to the situation. A key focus will be expanding the project within the Bendigo region. It is a two day a week position and based in Bendigo. For further info

<https://www.mercyworks.org.au/job-opportunities/>

**Baptisms** unfortunately we are unable to proceed with any Baptisms we had booked until further notice. Please also note that the Baptism preparations sessions have also been cancelled.

**Holy Communion to the homebound** is now suspended until further notice. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

**Resources for prayers at home** <https://www.cam.org.au/Guidance-for-Parishes-COVID-19>

[https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/\\_uploads/parish/files/LiturgyHelp.pdf](https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/_uploads/parish/files/LiturgyHelp.pdf)

#### **How can I participate in Mass in isolation?**

1. St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne—Mass is available daily. <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>
2. Pope Francis' daily Mass <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta.pagelist.html>
3. Mass for You at Home <http://www.mfyah.com/video.html> or <https://10play.com.au/mass-for-you-at-home>
4. Bishop Robert Barron <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcMjLgeWNwqL2LBGS-iPb1A> or <https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass>
5. Shalom world.org [shalomworld.org/dailymass](http://shalomworld.org/dailymass) or visit [shalomworld.org/connectedtv](http://shalomworld.org/connectedtv) to access the TV Channel

**Our Diocesan Community & eNews** The latest edition of ODC and eNews is now available to read online at [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au) under "News and Events"

**Parish Offices** will remain open but unfortunately we will be closed to the public. If you want to add an anniversary to the notice sheet or have any concerns please either ring or email to the office

**"Way of the Cross"** at Waubra has been cancelled due to COVID-19. As the community is unable to gather, the Booklet has been prepared so that community members can pray privately as a sign of our Christian community. Copies are available upon request. Please email or phone the OLHC parish.

**Website** please check the St Columba's Parish website for prayers at Home for Holy Week.

#### **Thursday 19th March 2020**

Dear Friends, Earlier today I sent out copies of the letter from the Victorian bishops regarding the suspension of liturgies as part of the efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus. The following are some notes providing further details for our diocese of Ballarat.

Given the seriousness of the current pandemic, we recognise the need to follow public safety provisions. The government restriction limiting indoor gatherings to 100 people applies to church congregations as well as to other groups. However, this does not rule out people visiting churches for personal prayer. To encourage such visits, I ask that, as far as possible, churches remain open to signal our continuing readiness to serve the community and as an invitation to people to take some quiet, prayerful moments in the midst of this stressful time.

While there will be no publicly advertised liturgies until further notice, the faithful are still able to gather in small groups, keeping some physical distance between participants. This might be, for example, for small gatherings for morning or evening prayer.

Priests and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion will still be able to take Communion to the sick and elderly when requested, unless they themselves are at risk of transmitting the virus. All ministers should follow precautions recommended by health authorities when visiting people's homes, aged care facilities and hospitals.

In the coming days, we will add some resources to our diocesan website to help us in our prayer in this very unusual situation. I will also provide some particular notes regarding Holy Week and Easter and how we might celebrate these special days in these exceptional circumstances.

As we do our part to respond to the worldwide health emergency, it is good to add prayer to all the other steps we are taking. Earlier this week, a parishioner asked if I could compose a short prayer that would touch on some of the needs we see in the current crisis. On this feast of St Joseph, I offer the following:

***We pray for all those affected by the coronavirus pandemic in Australia and around the world. We pray for those who have died and for families who are grieving. We pray for those who are sick and for doctors and nurses and all who are caring for them, May Mary and Joseph and all the saints pray for us that we may have health of body and peace of heart and a spirit of kindness to one another.*** + Paul Bird CSr Bishop of Ballarat

**Monday 23rd March 2020** In line with government directives aimed at slowing the spread of the coronavirus, the Church will be closed to the public at least until the 14<sup>th</sup> April. Please continue your prayers at home for the health of our community. God bless you always. Bishop Paul Bird CSr

**Diocesan Religious Education Resource Centre Closure** With the ever-growing demand for office space for the Catholic Education Office, as well as changes in the tenancy of 5 Lyons Street South in 2021, the Bishop has advised that the Diocesan Resource Centre presently housed in the lower floor of this building will close by the end of this year. The Resource Centre has served parishes and schools in the diocese for over forty years and has been a valued repository of books, magazines, CDs and DVDs. Borrowings from the Centre will be available until March 27, after which it will be closed for a month while the collection is moved to a temporary storage area on site. From April 27, the Centre will be open Tuesday mornings only from 9.30am – 1.00pm. Enquiries or urgent borrowings can be directed to [resources@ceob.edu.au](mailto:resources@ceob.edu.au) or ph. 5337 7135. Towards the end of the year resources will be disseminated to parishes and schools, with explanation of this process forthcoming. Thank you for the support given to the Resource Centre over many years and may these resources find a welcome home in parishes and schools across the diocese. Any further enquiries can be directed to Kate Lawry: [klawry@ceob.edu.au](mailto:klawry@ceob.edu.au)

**Wed 18 March 2020** *Prayerful greetings to the people of God across Victoria.* This morning, the Prime Minister announced that non-essential indoor gatherings will be limited to 100 people, and outdoor events of more than 500 people will be disallowed, effective today. Given the seriousness of COVID-19, we support this measure as being responsible and sensible, and we encourage everyone to follow public safety guidelines respectfully. The Bishops of the Province of Victoria have given this prayerful and considered reflection, and have determined the following actions: Immediate suspension of public liturgies, celebrations of the Mass, until further notice. All other gatherings are suspended. For clarification of any concerns, please contact your local diocesan authority. We are very aware that this restriction will be particularly difficult for families who are planning liturgies such as funerals, weddings and baptisms. At this time, so long as appropriate precautions are able to be put in place (such as distancing between participants), it may be possible for these liturgies to proceed with a carefully limited congregation. Deferring these liturgies may also be an option that is offered to families. In light of this, all Catholics in Victoria are dispensed from their Sunday obligation until further notice (canon 1248). We encourage you to continue active participation in the life of the Church, through activities such as time in personal and family prayer, reflecting on the Scriptures, making a spiritual communion, or participating in a Mass online <http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand> or <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/>

We encourage our priests to continue to celebrate Mass for the spiritual good of God's people, the intentions of the faithful and the alleviation of the present crisis. We assure our people that the Mass is being offered for you in our parishes and that while you are not physically present, you still participate spiritually and that you are close to the hearts of your pastors in the Eucharist. Mass or [www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass](http://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass)). We urge the clergy to make themselves available to visit individuals, especially those who are unwell and vulnerable. This includes viaticum and all the opportunities for healing through the Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation. Again, we encourage you to regularly consult your local websites for further details of local arrangements. Tomorrow further pastoral guidelines will be shared in the Dioceses of Melbourne, Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst. Clergy and religious should consult with their Ordinary if any questions remain uncertain.

All of this is happening during the Season of Lent, a time of preparation for the Easter mysteries. While we are invited to be self-sacrificial at this time, we must remember the words of Jesus upon appearing before his disciples after his resurrection: Again and again he said 'peace be with you.' (Jn 20:19) Let us not panic, nor be anxious, nor reduce ourselves to caring only for ourselves. This is a time to be sensible, practical, prayerful, and to share Christ's peace with those who are struggling to feel calm and safe. + Victorian Bishops

**Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – Registrations now open** Low-cost online study and formation for lay workers in parish and other ministries; employed or volunteers. Sacraments, Scripture, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, Leadership and more. Study over 3 weeks in the Cycle 3 only. Study begins April 19. Registrations open now until April 8. More info at [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au) or email [kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 0407 523 424.

**Archdiocese of Melbourne - Positions Vacant** Parish Animation Consultant and Discipleship Specialist - Families and Youth. Check the website for further information <https://www.cam.org.au/Job>  
**St Joseph's Church Nullawil Final Mass** The Final Mass for St Joseph's Church Nullawil has been postponed – date to be advised.