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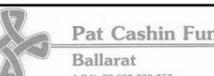
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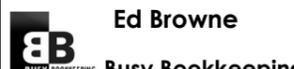
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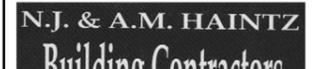
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Child Safe Church The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Learmonth, Lexton, Miners Rest and Waubra) follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as 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

How can I participate in Mass online?

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



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

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

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au (select Parish)

Presbytery: Phone 5332 4324



Office: 306 Gregory St, Ballarat Nth **Phone:** 5331 1012
Email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ballaratnorthpastoral@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

19 April 2020 ~ Second Sunday of Easter (A)

Focus on the Scriptures

Not so long ago we used to speak of the Sundays "after" Easter. The terminology has changed and we now speak of the Sundays "of" Easter. In other words, we now recognise that the liturgical readings and prayers for each Sunday between Easter and Pentecost invite us into different movements of the one great symphony of resurrection faith. Today's gospel tells of fear and joy and blessing. We bring our present experience of pandemic into dialogue with all of this.

The first scene in today's gospel has the disciples hiding behind closed doors "for fear" of those who had handed Jesus over to be executed by the Roman authorities. As supporters of someone executed on a political charge, they had reason to be fearful. Jesus appears among them, offers a greeting of peace, and tells them that he has been sent by God, his "Father". They receive from him the gift of the Holy Spirit. He sends them in turn to bring peace and to mediate the forgiveness of God through the power of the Spirit. The story invites us as believers to place ourselves in the shoes of the earliest disciples. It invites us to be open to receive the gift of the Spirit, to emerge from behind the doors that close us in on ourselves and that prevent us from rising above the fear of reprisals in the pursuit of justice and peace.

The second and third scenes in today's gospel focus on Thomas who was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared in their midst. Thomas seems to trust only his own experience. We all know people like Thomas. They test our patience because they seem to lack imagination. Then they make big statements when they come around to understanding what everyone else has known for a while. If we think, however, that those who hear in the first place are any better than Thomas, we need to note that the doors are still closed eight days later! The simple fact of knowing has not dispelled the fears. Even those who do believe and trust often need time to take the gospel message on board.

All three readings this Sunday affirm those who believe without "seeing". In the reading from Acts, many who had not seen the risen Jesus are drawn to the community of faith-filled believers. The community addressed in 1 Peter have "never seen him [the Christ]" and yet they love him and are filled with inexpressible joy. In the gospel, we too are declared blessed: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe",

As we continue to celebrate Easter, we join with the global community in celebrating the 50th annual Earth Day on Wednesday of this week. The theme for 2020 is climate action. We have dispelled our fears, listened to the science on Coronavirus and taken courageous action. We might pray for the same courageous action to save our planetary home.
Veronica Lawson RSM



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: NO MASS
(1st & 3rd Sunday, Lexton 5th Sunday)
Tuesday: NO MASS
Thursday: NO MASS
Friday: NO MASS

Readings for next weekend:

Acts 2:14, 22-33
Ps 15:1-2, 5, 7-11. R. v.11
1 Pt 1:17-21
Lk 24:13-35



Recently Deceased: We commend to God: All those who have died recently

Anniversaries: We remember: Margaret Meerbach, Peter Taffe, Therese Head, Stephen Head, Eileen McLoughlan, Helen McMahan-Martino,

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, Nursing staff, teachers & all essential services staff

Links to online Masses in the Diocese (Other links on back page)

- [St Mary Mackillop Parish, Western Border](#): Check the Western Border Catholic Parish facebook page for links to daily masses on YouTube <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=western%20border%20catholic%20parish>
- [St Joseph's Parish Warrnambool](#): Check the St Joseph's Warrnambool facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stjosephswarrnambool> for links to Masses on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHcYtCTuk5DivKLWY1bvqg>
- [Sacred Heart Parish, Mildura](#): Sunday Masses available on Sacred Heart Parish Mildura YouTube page <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3WAtsklIV8>
- [St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Ballarat](#): Mass livestreamed daily at 11.30am can be viewed on Patrick's Cathedral facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9>

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

Notice sheet for both parishes will still be uploaded onto our webpage each Friday, however if you would like a hard copy or copies to deliver it into letterboxes of those around you, please contact the office to arrange.

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

Matthew's Beatitudes and Catherine McAuley in Dialogue with Earth's Distress Veronica Lawson RSM recently held a webinar exploring the Beatitudes and Catherine McAuley at this time of the Earth's distress. Watch the video here <https://vimeo.com/404735366>

With Jesus in the Desert: A retreat for a time of isolation

The staff of Jesuit Communications have prepared a 14-day retreat for the use of people who have to isolate themselves for 14 days during the Coronavirus crisis. Of course, other people who may find it helpful are also welcome to use it. The retreat has suggestions for each of the 14 days, though participants are free to follow it through or to pick out particular days. A shorter retreat that keeps the basic pattern could involve days 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14. More information at <https://www.pray.com.au/with-jesus-in-the-desert-a-retreat-for-a-time-of-isolation/>

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1st Collection	\$ 220.00	2nd Collection (Env, DD, CC etc)	\$ 2,453.00
Easter Offerings	\$ 110.00	Caritas Project Compassion	\$ 180.00

Stewardship Envelopes In this unchartered world of COVID—19 Pandemic it is most uncertain when Places of Worship will reopen to the public for Liturgical celebrations. Should you wish to maintain your contributions you are most welcome to hand your envelopes into the office during office hours. Alternatively if you are comfortable with Internet Banking we can provide you with the appropriate bank account details for contributions to be made in this way. Continuing your generous contributions at this difficult time is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

First assembly of the Plenary Council postponed In response to the dramatic changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the bishops of Australia have made the "difficult, but necessary" decision to postpone the first assembly of the Plenary Council

Readings for the Second Sunday of Easter Year A

First Reading [Acts 2:42-47](#) A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

The faithful lived together and owned everything in common.

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone. The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

Responsorial Psalm [Ps 117:2-4, 13-15, 22-24](#). R. v.1

(R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

1. Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say:

'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.' (R.)

2. I was thrust, thrust down and falling but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour.

There are shouts of joy and victory in the tents of the just. (R.)

3. The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad. (R.)

Second Reading [1 Pt 1:3-9](#) A reading from the first letter of St Peter

He has given us a new birth as his children, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead.

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

Gospel [Jn 20:19-31](#) A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them.

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

The Gospel of the Lord

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