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**Child Safe Church** The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including 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?**

- 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



**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](http://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

**26 April 2020 ~ Third Sunday of Easter (A)**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

**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

Extraordinary things can happen if we open ourselves to the presence of a stranger on life's journey. That seems to be a key element in today's gospel passage from the well-known and well-loved Emmaus story. Imagine two dejected disciples (Cleopas and possibly his wife) on Easter Day, on the road back from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus, a few kilometres away. On their journey, they encounter Jesus who has been raised. At first, they fail to recognise him. Their sadness at his violent death has blinded them to the significance of the women's account of the empty tomb. It has blinded them to what is happening before their very eyes.

Jesus engages them in conversation and holds up a metaphorical mirror to their experience of loss and grief. Their hearts "burn" within them as he reveals to them the meaning of his death and resurrection in the light of their sacred scriptures. Yet still they fail to recognise the one whom they have described as "a prophet mighty in deed and word." They invite him to share a meal with them and their eyes are opened: they recognise him in the blessing and breaking of the bread they share with him. He disappears from their midst. They cannot contain the joy they have experienced in realising that Jesus is alive and once more present to them, though in a new and transforming way.

Cleopas and partner go straight back to Jerusalem to share this good news with the other disciples. Now all the assembled disciples experience powerfully the presence of the risen Jesus in their midst. They too pass over the women's story. It is the appearance to Peter of the resurrected Jesus that is the ground of their new faith. As the story continues beyond today's reading, we learn that the male disciples will also share a meal with him and he will open their minds to understand the scriptures. Everything will fall into place. The fear that has paralysed them will fall away. They will not only understand Jesus' death and resurrection in the light of the scriptures. They will be "clothed with power from on high" to exercise their role as witnesses to this great mystery.

Extraordinary things can happen to those hospitable enough to "break bread" with "strangers" in whom they do not immediately recognise God's presence. If we open our hearts to those who have sought a welcome on our shores and are now awaiting permanency, we might come to participate more deeply in the joy of the resurrection. Opening our hearts is always a possibility while opening our homes is not in these days of restricted physical contact. My experience at this time is of reverse ministry: a young refugee couple is presently doing my essential shopping and leaving it on the front doorstep. Though "strangers" in our land, they are demonstrating what it means to be "of God".  
Veronica Lawson RSM



**Readings for next weekend:**  
Acts 2:14, 36-41  
Ps 22:1-6, R. v.1  
1 Pt 2:20-25  
Jn 10:1-10

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Lorna Batty

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Mary Smerdon, Betty Kirkpatrick

**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](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=western%20border%20catholic%20parish): 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](https://www.facebook.com/stjosephswarrnambool): 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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3WAAtsklIV8): Sunday Masses available on Sacred Heart Parish Mildura YouTube page <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3WAAtsklIV8>
- [St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Ballarat](https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9): 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](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.

**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. More information at <https://www.pray.com.au/with-jesus-in-the-desert-a-retreat-for-a-time-of-isolation/>

**POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER FOR PROTECTION FROM CORONAVIRUS**

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.  
 We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.  
 At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.  
 You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need.  
 We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.  
 Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us:  
 He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.  
 Amen.

*We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.  
 Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test  
 – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.*

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1st Collection:	\$	2nd Collection (Env, DD, CC etc)	\$ 885.00
Easter Offerings:	\$ 20.00	Caritas Project Compassion (to date)	\$ 845.00

**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. Caritas Lenten envelopes or boxes can also be left at the office. 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

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**Readings for the Third Sunday of Easter Year A**

**First Reading** [Acts 2:14, 22-33](#) A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd in a loud voice: 'Men of Israel, listen to what I am going to say: Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God by the miracles and portents and signs that God worked through him when he was among you, as you all know. This man, who was put into your power by the deliberate intention and foreknowledge of God, you took and had crucified by men outside the Law. You killed him, but God raised him to life, freeing him from the pangs of Hades; for it was impossible for him to be held in its power since, as David says of him: I saw the Lord before me always, for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me. So my heart was glad and my tongue cried out with joy: my body, too, will rest in the hope that you will not abandon my soul to Hades nor allow your holy one to experience corruption. You have made known the way of life to me, you will fill me with gladness through your presence.

'Brothers, no one can deny that the patriarch David himself is dead and buried: his tomb is still with us. But since he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn him an oath to make one of his descendants succeed him on the throne, what he foresaw and spoke about was the resurrection of the Christ: he is the one who was not abandoned to Hades, and whose body did not experience corruption. God raised this man Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses to that. Now raised to the heights by God's right hand, he has received from the Father the Holy Spirit, who was promised, and what you see and hear is the outpouring of that Spirit.'

**Responsorial Psalm** [Ps 15:1-2, 5, 7-11, R. v.11](#)

(R.) Lord, you will show us the path of life.  
 1. Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.  
 I say to the Lord: 'You are my God.  
 O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup; it is you yourself who are my prize.' (R.)  
 2. I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel, who even at night directs my heart.  
 I keep the Lord ever in my sight: since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm. (R.)  
 3. And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad; even my body shall rest in safety.  
 For you will not leave my soul among the dead, nor let your beloved know decay. (R.)  
 4. You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, at your right hand happiness for ever. (R.)

**Second Reading** [1 Pt 1:17-21](#) A reading from the first letter of St Peter

If you are acknowledging as your Father one who has no favourites and judges everyone according to what he has done, you must be scrupulously careful as long as you are living away from your home. Remember, the ransom that was paid to free you from the useless way of life your ancestors handed down was not paid in anything corruptible, neither in silver nor gold, but in the precious blood of a lamb without spot or stain, namely Christ; who, though known since before the world was made, has been revealed only in our time, the end of the ages, for your sake. Through him you now have faith in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory for that very reason – so that you would have faith and hope in God.

**Gospel** [Lk 24:13-35](#) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

*They recognised him at the breaking of bread*

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.



The Gospel of the Lord

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Easter Offerings	\$	Caritas Project Compassion (to date)	\$ 693.40.