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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 wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

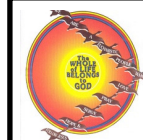


Mon-Fri 8.30 am - 6.00 pm
Saturdays 9.00 am - 5.00 pm
2 Bridge Mall Ballarat Vic 3350
Ph: 5331 4900

COVID Safe Plan

- If you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough or sore throat) please do not attend Mass.
- If you are waiting results of a COVID test stay home
- Contact tracing is required for all Masses. Please use the QR code as you enter the foyer
- Ensure that you maintain appropriate physical distancing at all times .
- A face mask is recommended whilst visiting the Church
- Please use the hand sanitiser available upon entering the Church.
- Please do not touch any surfaces unnecessarily.
- Once Mass has concluded, please leave the Church immediately afterwards to allow for cleaning of all surfaces.

Your assistance in helping to stop the spread of the virus is appreciated.



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)



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

Office: 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree Phone: 5339 2302
Email: wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

School Co-Principals: Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr
School Phone: 5332 4894

P O Box 192, Wendouree
School Principal: Leigh Bradshaw
School Phone: 5339 4726

Parish Priest:

Fr Marcello Colasante

Staffing

St Columba's

Tues—Wed 9:00am –1:00pm

Our Safeguarding Officer:
Peter Marquand

Our Lady Help of Christians

Parish Co-ordinator and
Safeguarding Officer:
Maree Roache

Wed-Friday 9:00am—1:00pm

MASS TIMES (This week)

St Columba's

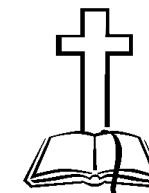
Sunday 10:00 am
Wednesday 10:00 am

Our Lady Help of Christians

Waubra 1st & 3rd Sunday 8.30 am
Beaufort 2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am
Lexton 5th Sunday 8.30 am
Wendouree
Saturday 6:00 pm
Thursday 10:00 am

Readings for Next Weekend:

Sir 3: 2-6, 12-14
Ps 127: 1-5 R.v.1
Col 3:12-21
Lk 2: 41-52



19th December 2021 4th Sunday of Advent

Focus on the Scriptures

The fourth Sunday of Advent draws us closer to the celebration of the Christmas mysteries. The gospel offers the story of the young pregnant woman, Miriam of Nazareth, travelling purposefully from her home town of Nazareth to the hill country of Judaea, some 130 kilometres to the south, to be with an older woman who is also pregnant, her cousin Elizabeth. Mary enters “the house of Zechariah” who remains in the background. While Zechariah is the householder according to Jewish law, his earlier reluctance to believe renders him silent and powerless to offer hospitality. Elizabeth’s contrasting openness to recognise and to affirm the living presence of God in their midst makes her the true householder and foreshadows the reversal that is to characterise the new order, an order that is yet to be fully realised. The two women embrace and, in their loving embrace, the Spirit-filled life gestating within Mary encounters and physically affects the life that is coming to birth in Elizabeth.

Elizabeth’s words resound throughout the ages in the prayer we know as the Hail Mary: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb...” These are the words of one prophetic woman to another. Elizabeth recognises that Mary is blessed by God because she believed that God’s promise to her would be fulfilled. As God’s prophet, Elizabeth gives expression to the faith that is to be embraced by all who accept that Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Miriam of Nazareth, is the Holy One of God (Luke 1:35). The lives of both women prophets have been transformed through the power of God’s Spirit. Their respective children will bring to birth unprecedented events in human history.

Elizabeth’s proclamation of the blessing of God on Mary is found daily on the lips of countless faith-filled Christians across the globe. It echoes the blessing prayer of Moses to the Israelites (Deuteronomy 28: 2-4): “May you be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. Blessed is the fruit of your womb, the produce of your soil and the offspring of your livestock...” This ancient blessing recognizes the interconnection of all God’s creation. We might make it our own blessing prayer. In our times, God’s blessing on the whole Earth community can only become a reality when we stop playing politics in the interests of short-term gains or personal greed, when we read the signs of the times and work together to address the underlying causes of global warming and its effects. Advent is not a time of passive waiting. It is a time to ponder the various ways that God sustains life in its diverse forms. It is a time to become householders, like Elizabeth, who clear the paths and open our doors for the God of life to enter in. It is a time to embrace, to “be there” for one another and to nurture the life that is coming to birth.

Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! I am the servant of the Lord; may his will for me be done. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Kathleen Thorne, Frank Murphy

Anniversaries: We remember: Kathleen McDaid, Guiseppe Raschila, Sarah Tonkin, Kerin Graham, David Fithall, Ronald Mark Edgar, Ronald Leslie Edgar, Stephen Head and Patrick Curran

We pray: for in need of our prayers especially those who have no-one to pray for them

CatholicCare Victoria - Free Mental Health & Wellbeing Guide

CatholicCare Victoria has been supporting the Ballarat community for almost 45 years. To help in these tough times, we've developed a free guide to mental health and wellbeing, created by regional Victorians, for regional Victorians. Download your copy today at <https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/campaign/13/mental-health-and-wellbeing-guide?>

OLHC Parish Wendouree Christmas Day Lunch OLHC Parish Wendouree volunteers will be preparing free, hot Christmas meals for people to collect on Christmas Day. This is the 30th year the parish has provided Christmas lunch for those in need. Bookings are essential, ph. 0419 975 914 or email christmaslunchwendouree@gmail.com. Arrangements can be made for those unable to collect meals.

Christmas Liturgies

Christmas Eve:

Friday	24th Dec	5.00 pm Mass	Ballarat North
		7.00 pm Mass	Wendouree
		9.00 pm Mass	Beaufort

Christmas Day:

Saturday	25th Dec	8.30 am Mass	Waubra
		10.00 am Mass	Ballarat North

Feast of the Holy Family:

Sunday	26th Dec	8.30 am Mass	Beaufort
		10.00 am Mass	Ballarat North

Mary, Mother of God

Saturday	1st Jan	9.00 am Mass (New Years Day)	Wendouree
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Synod of Bishops Catholics across Australia are invited to participate in a period of local consultation for the next international Synod of Bishops, which has the theme, "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission". The People of God are invited to use a guided, prayerful reflection method to consider a series of questions and make submissions via an online portal. Those submissions will help the Bishops develop a national report to support the global process leading to an international gathering in 2023. Find out more at <http://www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

A Climate that Reflects Justice: Advent Week 4 God of Justice, Empower us to work together as one global community to find creative and just solutions to protect those most vulnerable in our world and all of creation for future generations. Move us into action for climate justice and to restore your creation. Amen.

St Columba's 24/25 Dec	(Next Week) Christmas Eve/ Day
LEADER OF SONG	Terry Ranger / Tony Beggs
COMMENTATOR	N/A
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Volunteer
COMMUNION MINISTER	Volunteer
OVERHEADS	Volunteer
SACRISTAN	Volunteer

Collections at St Columba's We thank you for your generous support
 Presbytery: \$ 238.15 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 2,030.00

Parish Nativity Scenes The coordinators of the "Making a scene at Christmas" nativity displays are asking parishes to send in photos of their nativity scenes so they can be added to an online display, which will featured on the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat website. Please email these images to jane.collins@ballarat.catholic.org.au. Looking forward to receiving the beautiful images of the many nativity scenes around the diocese.

Mary Mackillop Heritage Centre & Museum With Christmas coming up, please consider supporting the work of the Sisters of St Joseph by purchasing a 2022 Josephite Calendar (\$8.00) and/or a present from the Museum Gift Shop (communion & confirmation gifts, devotional items, Vatican Library collection, rosary beads, holding crosses, candles, cards, statues, crucifixes, books and Peruvian handmade items) <https://www.mmhc.org.au/facilities/gift-shop/>. Accommodation is available at the Mary Mackillop Heritage Centre for events like the Boxing Day Test, Australian Open or the theatre in the heart of Melbourne. For those staying in the apartments, there is free onsite parking located across from Fitzroy Gardens and the Cathedral. Contact Kate for accommodation enquiries, ph. 9926 9300.

Highways and Byways Small Grants Program 2022 The 2022 Highways and Byways Small Grants Program is now open for applications. The theme is Healing the Land – Healing Ourselves – Together. Grants of up to \$3,000 are available to community organisations, especially in rural and regional areas, for projects that focus on healing the land in holistic ways and increasing opportunities to build community through practical projects, leadership and skills acquisition, and knowledge transfer. For more information go to <https://highwaysandbyways.org.au/grants/>

Diocesan Christmas Appeal 2021 is one way which the Diocese of Ballarat responds to many communities near and far who turn to us for assistance. Often these requests come through people who have personal links with the Diocese.

Yours generous support of last year's appeal raised **\$33,000** which was distributed as follows:

Catholic Mission	\$ 5,000
Caritas Australia	\$ 5,000
Nazareth House Ballarat	\$ 5,000
Mallee Family Care Christmas Appeal	\$ 5,000
CatholicCare Victoria Christmas Appeal	\$ 5,000
Act for Peace	\$ 2,000
Raise the Rent Ballarat	\$ 2,000
Wendouree West Exodus Community	\$ 2,000
Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH)	\$ 2,000

Whilst many demands are placed on our generosity at this time of year, the 2021 Christmas Appeal is commended to you for your support. You may contribute by leaving your donation in the bowl marked "Christmas Appeal" which will be at the front of the sanctuary on Christmas Eve/Day

Making a Scene at Christmas: Bridge Market in Bridge Mall December 11th—20th. Display of over 500 Christmas Nativities from more than 60 countries. Gold coin donation. All welcome



All Things New Ignatian Gathering 2022 The Society of Jesus (Australian Jesuits) invites you to its Ignatian Gathering for Young Adults (18-30 years) to take place in Melbourne from January 17 – 21 2022 at Newman College (<https://newman.unimelb.edu.au/about/architecture/>). This gathering is a chance for young people to 'reset, reconnect and re-engage' through building friendships, sharing values, celebrating gratitude, offering service. As implied by the theme, 'All Things New - 2022: spirituality + service + wellbeing', the gathering will focus on these three areas. Cost is \$320.00 plus \$8.50 trybooking fee. Price includes all meals, program activities and individual rooms. All participants will need to comply with the venue's COVID-safe and vaccination requirements at the time of the event, to be able to take part in the gathering. For more information please contact maqisaustralia@sja.org. To register go to <https://www.trybooking.com/BUNRC>.

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – Online Study

Our partner, Dayton University, offers low-cost (\$50usd) online study and formation for employed or volunteer lay workers in parishes. Study cycles are over 3 or 5 weeks. The first Cycle of 2022 begins January 17 . Registrations are open now. More information is available on the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/pastoral/pastoral-ministry/lay-pastoral-ministry-program/> or email [djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:djurija.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7121.

Praying with Pope Francis

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer) is an international movement that is more than 170 years old. Each month, the Pope puts forward a prayer intention and asks Catholics around the world to join him in prayer. These intentions cover all sorts of areas of life, encouraging faith, renewing hope and calling us to loving service. Praying each month 'The Pope Video' forms part of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network – view at www.thepopevideo.org. Pope's intention for December: **Evangelisation - Catechists:** Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God. May they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the spirit. November:

Vinnies Christmas Kindness Appeal This Christmas donate to Vinnies. Your gift can change a life. There are families who are experiencing poverty and homelessness this Christmas and your help can provide them with much needed essentials like food, clothing and a place to call home. To donate go to <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/christmas-kindness>

OLHC 24th December	(next week) Christmas Eve 7.00 pm
LEADER OF SONG	Corrie Harbour
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Volunteer Please
FIRST MINISTER OF THE WORD	Kylie Gray
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Pauline Nrewnman and Harry Kennedy
SACRISTAN & REGISTRATION	Anne Slattery, Tony and Pauline Newman

Collections at OLHC We thank you for your generous support
 Presbytery: \$ 349.30 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,425.00