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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

Aboriginal Stations of the Cross available for purchase

Within the chapel of Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Thornbury, in Melbourne's inner north, a set of Indigenous Stations of the Cross are on display, which were created by artist 'John Dunn', a member of the Stolen Generations. These Stations are an exploration of his own journey and they illustrate beautifully how Aboriginal people resonate with the sufferings of Jesus. 10cm x 16cm resource sets are available for parishes, churches and school communities at \$15.00 each. For more information go to <https://art.catholic.org.au/2021/07/13/aboriginal-stations-of-the-cross/>

COVID Safe Plan

Checking-in is no longer a requirement. Face Masks are no longer required to be worn in most indoor settings but are recommended, particularly if you have any COVID-19 symptoms. They are also recommended for people who may be vulnerable to COVID-19 and are in settings where keeping a safe physical distance from other people is not possible.

- **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 awaiting results of a COVID test, please stay home.**
- **Please use the hand sanitiser available upon entering the Church.**
- **Please do not touch any surfaces unnecessarily.**



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)



The Parishes acknowledge that the Aboriginal people of Australia are our first nation people and the traditional owners and custodians of the land.

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

P O Box 192, Wendouree

School Principal: Leigh Bradshaw

School Phone: 5339 4726

School Co-Principals: Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

School Phone: 5332 4894

Parish Priest:

Fr Marcello Colasante

Staffing

St Columba's

Parish Co-Ordinator: Lia Andanan Yu
Wed-Friday 10:00am –2:00pm

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 (Anointing)

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 11.00 am Kelaston
Friday 10.00 am

Readings for Next Weekend:

Is 7:10-14
Ps 23: 1-6. R. see
vv 7, 10
Rom 1:1-7
Mt 1:18-24



11th December 2022 ~ 3rd Sunday of Advent Year A

Focus on the Scriptures

The third Sunday of Advent used to be called Gaudete (be joyful) Sunday. It provided a mid-term break within a period of austerity or penance in preparation for Christmas. Advent is no longer celebrated as a penitential period, but rather as a reflective time of expectation and hope. The invitation to rejoice nonetheless remains part of the Advent liturgy: it is certainly present in the first reading: "the desert shall rejoice and bloom ..." (Isaiah 35:1-6, 10).

Today's gospel passage is full of questions. John sends his disciples to Jesus with a question: "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another? Jesus responds by directing them to the evidence: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them." He adds a comment about those who take no offence at him: they are blessed. He then turns to the crowds with a series of rhetorical questions about their motivation for going out to John in the desert. His words to the crowds conclude with an identification of John as God's prophet and messenger, his own precursor. He pays an extraordinary tribute to John, but leaves the reader puzzling about the final statement: the least in the kingdom is greater than John.

John's imprisonment is a sobering reminder of what can happen to those who are faithful to their mission. As Matthew's Jesus will attest, John is no reed shaken by the wind. This could well be a subtle reference to Herod Antipas' choice of the reed as a symbol on the coins commemorating his building of Tiberias by the Sea of Galilee. Herod has arrested and imprisoned John and will later have him put to death on specious grounds. John is not a fickle reed like Herod: he is steadfast and strong.

The reader knows that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah or God's Anointed One. John is checking it out. He clearly has contact with disciples whom he sends to Jesus with the question about his identity. Is Advent over or not? The answer to John's question is to be found in what they hear and see. The restorative and healing activity of Jesus is realising the Messianic dream of the prophet Isaiah (today's first reading). In a sense, Advent never ends. The women and children brought into our own cities as sex slaves can attest to this, as can those who have known the indignity of detention on Manus Island or Nauru and who live in expectation of permanent visas. We might well pray: "Strengthen our weak hands, and make firm our feeble knees" in the face of such challenges. The Christ, the Anointed of God, lives on in the community and the community is called to bring the saving power of God, the joy of the Gospel, to a troubled world.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm:(R.) Lord, come and save us.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he sent me to bring Good News to the poor. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Kathy Perkins

Anniversaries: We remember: Maureen Casey, Bernard Righetti, Stan Sheehan, Greg Roberts, Joan Richardson, Eileen Segrave, Nance Reidy

We pray: for the people of Ukraine, all who are sick, those affected by flooding and all in need of our prayers.



Baptism This weekend we welcome to our Parish through the sacrament of Baptism:

Willow Enid Howley and Hazel Quinn Howley, children of Michael and Kristen.

“The Church gives the faith to your children through Baptism and you have the task to make it grow....” - Pope Francis

May Willow and Hazel grow in faith with the support of their family and our Catholic Community.

Centralised Baptism Preparation Session Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Next session will be held at MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms of St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat, **Thursday February 2, 2023**. You may attend either the **10.00am** or **5.30pm** session.

Caritas Australia - Take action on climate change As climate change damages our homes and land, the impact on our neighbours in the Pacific is extreme. Our voices, together, can get governments and polluters to take action to achieve climate justice and protect our common home. Sign the pledge at <https://www.caritas.org.au/act/climate-change-action/> to support Caritas Australia's climate action campaign.

Vinnies Christmas Kindness Appeal Aussie families are struggling to survive the increasing cost-of-living pressures this Christmas. Your generosity can provide urgent relief for a family who's doing it tough this Christmas and give them hope for a better future. To donate go to <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/christmas-appeal>

2023 Pilgrimage to the Holy Land Expressions of interest are invited to join a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, June 11th - 24th 2023 - Jordan, Petra, Dead Sea, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Mt of Olives, Jericho, Qumran. Fully escorted, all inclusive pilgrimage accompanied by Fr Justin Driscoll and arranged through Lifestyle Travel in Ballarat. Contact Fr Justin for further information (Daylesford 0448 220 685) or info@lifestyletravel.com.au

St Columba's 18th Dec	(next week)	Sun 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Tony Beggs
COMMENTATOR		Peter Marquand
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Terry Ranger
COMMUNION MINISTER		Kaye Merbach
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Vicki Moroney
SACRISTAN		Volunteer please

Collections Last Weekend St Columba's Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 303.05 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 905.00

Christmas Liturgies

14th December 10:00 am Anointing Mass St Columba's
 20th December 7:00 pm Reconciliation OLHC Wendouree
 24th December 5:30 pm St. Columba's
 7:00 pm OLHC Wendouree
 9:00 pm Beaufort
 25th December, 8:30 am Waubra
 10.00 am St. Columba's



Volunteers please for Christmas Masses at St. Columba's church. If you're happy to help out, please write your name on the sign-up sheet at the church foyer.

Simbang Gabi a Filipino Christmas tradition, is a spiritual preparation for Christmas as it commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a series of nine Masses on the days leading up to Christmas, which will be held at St Alipius Parish Church, Victoria Street, Ballarat East:

Thursday, December 15 at 7.00pm; Friday, December 16 at 7.00pm; Saturday, December 17 at 8.00pm (NB: change of time); Sunday, December 18 at 7.00pm; Monday, December 19 at 7.00pm; Tuesday, December 20 at 7.00pm; Wednesday, December 21 at 7.00pm; Thursday, December 22 at 7.00pm; Friday, December 23 at 7.00pm with a shared Christmas dinner in the hall to follow.

If you have any questions/need further information, please contact Fr Eladio, ph 0450 017 007 or Dion, ph 0427 876 553. All welcome to attend

Diocesan Christmas Appeal 2022 Our Christmas Appeal is one way in which the Diocese can respond to the many communities from near and far who turn to us for assistance. Christmas this year will have extra demands as we continue recovering from the pandemic and struggle with ever increasing costs of daily living. Thank you for your generous support of last year's appeal which was distributed as follows:

Appeal for Ukraine	\$10,000	
Catholic Mission	\$ 5,000	
Caritas Australia	\$ 5,000	
Nazareth House Ballarat	\$ 5,000	
Diocese of Lismore Flood Appeal	\$ 5,000	
St Vincent De Paul Victorian Flood Appeal	\$ 5,000	
St Columban's Mission, Peru	\$ 5,000	
Australian Catholic Religious...		
Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH)	\$ 2,000	\$42,000

In commending the Diocesan Christmas Appeal to you, an opportunity to contribute will be given at Mass on Christmas Eve.

OLHC Parish Wendouree Christmas Day Lunch OLHC Parish Wendouree volunteers are hosting lunch on Christmas Day in the Parish Hall, 482 Gillies Street, Wendouree from 12.00noon – 2.00pm. Bookings are essential as seating is limited, ph. 0419 975914. Transport to the Hall is available. If you are able to volunteer on this day, please phone the number listed to register your availability.

Making a Scene at Christmas at Bridge Mall, Dec 10 to 23, 2022 A display of over 500 Christmas Nativities from more than 60 countries. You can see and smell real frankincense and myrrh and see coins minted around the time the census was called that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem. There will be hand crafted cultural nativities from Australia, Africa, Asia, North & South America and Europe (and one that went to Antarctica). Entry is by gold coin donation. All welcome.

Advent Appeal for Ukraine The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference is supporting a special Advent appeal for the people of Ukraine, following a request from Bishop Mykola Bychok CSsR, Eparch of Sts Peter and Paul for the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia. Collections in dioceses, eparchies and parishes in Advent will support Mudra Sprava (Wise Action), a Patriarchal Charitable Foundation in Ukraine. The organisation has three focus areas: Evacuation of people from frontline territories; food packages for people in need; shelters for internally displaced persons. Find out more at www.catholic.au

Christmas Stall at Nazareth House Nazareth House Auxiliary are having a Christmas stall on Saturday, December 17 and Sunday, December 18 in the reception area of Nazareth House (218 Mill Street, Ballarat) from 10.00am – 2.00pm each day. For further information contact Margaret, ph. 0419003415.

Pope's intention for December: For volunteer not-for-profit organisations: We pray that volunteer non-profit organisations committed to human development, find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

OLHC 17th December	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG		Paul Hogan
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL		Lyn Gray
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Helen & Colin Feely
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Christine Richardson & Tony Bruty
SACRISTAN		Tony & Pauline Newman

Collections last Weekend OLHC Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 493.45 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,535.00