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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

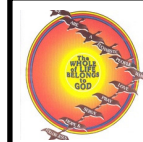
Aboriginal Stations of the Cross available for purchase

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 Andanar 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

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

Friday 10.00 am

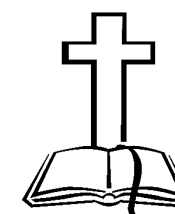
Readings for the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Day:

Is 52:7-10

Ps 97: 1-6. R.v.3

Heb 1:1-6

Jn 1:1-18



18th December 2022 ~ 4th Sunday of Advent Year A

Focus on the Scriptures

One of my friends asked me what I would like for Christmas. "Nothing" was my immediate response. "I just want to be with community and family and friends, especially those who would otherwise be alone". Being with others in joy or sorrow or in the humdrum of life is probably the best gift we can offer and the best gift we can receive. It is not always possible to be present in person and we are well aware that "being-with" is not restricted to physical presence. There is a sense in which those we love are always with us and we are always with them, even when the demands of life and our work or ministry choices separate us geographically. Real friends are "with-us" even in our absence and "being-with" in spirit or in person is closely allied with "being-for". Today's gospel affirms "being-with" as God's Christmas gift to us. It calls us to search out ways of being with and for those outside our immediate circle, particularly those affected by war or by climate distress.

The first chapter of Matthew's gospel tells us that the expected child Messiah or Christ-child is "God-with-us", Emmanuel. The gospel will conclude with the assurance of the resurrected Christ, "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20). As we celebrate the successive liturgical seasons in the coming year, we shall have the opportunity to enter into the gospel story of God-with-us and with all of creation, and to live out the pattern of the Christ story more fully in our lives.

There is no angelic annunciation to Mary in Matthew's gospel, no embrace of an expectant mother. There is no inn or innkeeper, no shepherds or shepherds' fields. These are all features of Luke's tableau. Matthew brings different features and different characters to centre stage. Chief among Matthew's characters is Joseph who, like Joseph of old, receives God's revelation in a series of dreams. The angelic announcement in today's gospel is to Joseph: he is not to be afraid, but is to accept the extraordinary ways of God which will bring salvation for God's people. Joseph trusts the word of God's messenger: he abandons his own plans and lives by faith in God.

If we try to harmonise the different gospel accounts of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus, we may lose some of the wondrous mystery of the feast we celebrate. If, on the other hand, we attend to the awesome truth that God is with us, then we might be more attentive to how we are with one another. We may also come to acknowledge our presence or "being-with" as a precious Christmas gift. Those who distance themselves from the community of life run the risk of succumbing to fear and of losing the joy in living. Acceptance of the truth that God is with us has the potential to drive out fear and to draw us into the deepest mysteries of life.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm:(R.) Let the Lord enter; He is king of glory.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! A virgin will give birth to a son; his name will be Emmanuel: God is with us. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: all who have died recently.

Anniversaries: We remember: Kathleen Thorne, Kathleen McDaid, Sarah Tonkin, David Fithall, Ronald Mark Edgar, Ronald Leslie Edgar, Stephen Head, Patrick Curran

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

Centralised Baptism Preparation Session Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Next session will be 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 24th Dec (Saturday)		Sat 5.30 pm
LEADER OF SONG	Mark Lacey	
COMMENTATOR	Terry Ranger	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Peter Marquand	
COMMUNION MINISTER	Volunteer please	
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Vicki Moroney	
SACRISTAN	Barbara Brown	

St Columba's 25th Dec	(next week)	Sun 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Tony Beggs	
COMMENTATOR	Volunteer please	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Volunteer please	
COMMUNION MINISTER	Volunteer please	
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman	
SACRISTAN	Josie Crowe	

Collections Last Weekend St Columba's Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 276.80 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 915.00

Christmas Liturgies

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.

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:

The masses began last Thursday and the next ones are on 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 or 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.

Office staff annual break Lia, our Parish Coordinator, is on leave and will be back at the Parish Office on the 2nd of February 2023. Whilst the parish office will not be staffed during this time, please make contact via email at ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au or phone 5331 1012. In an emergency please contact St Patrick's Cathedral 5331 2933.

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 24th December	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG	Corrie Harbour	
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Volunteer please	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Volunteer please	
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Volunteer please	
SACRISTAN	Volunteer please	

Collections last Weekend OLHC Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 284.30 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 635.00