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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

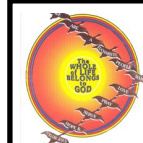
Aboriginal Stations of the Cross available for purchase

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 Next Weekend:

Is 35:1-6,10

Ps 145:6-10. R. see

Is 35:4 v 7

James 5:7-10

Mt 11:2-11



4th December 2022 ~ 2nd Sunday of Advent Year A

Focus on the Scriptures

Desertification of earth is becoming the norm in these troubled times of fluctuating flood and fire and desert features powerfully in today's gospel reading. The desert is the biblical place of encounter with God, the place of beginnings and of testing. The voice of John the Baptizer is heard in the Judean desert. His food and clothing are desert-derived. John is identified as the one of whom Isaiah spoke, the voice crying out in the wilderness, "Prepare the way...." Ecologically, the Isaian image is confronting: preparing the way involves major earthworks that reconfigure the landscape, levelling the mountains and filling the valleys to create straight paths. Yet the way is never straight and the metaphor must not be literalised. John knows this. The preparation he calls for is ongoing metanoia or reevaluating: keep on turning your lives around, keep on expanding your horizons, for the kin-dom of the heavens is "close at hand". The kin-dom is both present and yet still approaching: the verb used here, *ēngiken*, allows for this ambiguity.

The first reading from Isaiah (11:1-10) provides content to the notion of kin-dom or basileia: John is announcing the advent of God's long empire of justice and right relationship. He offers a baptism of repentance (metanoia). In other words, John's baptism presupposes a commitment to a renewed way of life. His ministry is hugely effective. It attracts "people of Jerusalem, all Judaea and the region along the Jordan River." The arrival of two groups of religious authorities prompts a fierce response: "you brood of vipers". John has no patience with those who use their privileged positions to seek their own advantage. He challenges them with the striking image of the "more powerful one who will baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire" and will sort out those who refuse to turn their lives around (the chaff) from those who listen to the call for metanoia (the wheat). The latter are "gathered in" while the former are burned "in a fire that never goes out".

Fire is a multi-faceted image in the biblical record. In our gospel text, it is used metaphorically for the judgment on the wicked. Fire, as we well know in this dry land, is a challenging symbol: it is both friend and foe. In the first-century Manual of Discipline from the Qumran community by the Dead Sea, water, refining by fire, and "a holy Spirit" are listed together as the instruments of God's saving and purifying action. John, who may have been a member of the Qumran community, presents his own role as preparatory to that of Jesus, the Spirit-filled, powerful and enduring agent of God's refining and purifying work in the world. We recognise our own ongoing need for a "baptism" with the Holy Spirit and fire. We prepare the way by constantly expanding our vision and turning our lives around in the direction of God's reign of compassionate care for all God's people and for all creation.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm:(R.) Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Thelma McDonald, Catherine Grant, Roger Molomby

Anniversaries: We remember: Michael Rix, Terry Carman, Mary McCauley, Sinie Dam, Dorothy Vaughan, Brian Fitzpatrick, Fr John Martin, Carmel Caligari, Trevor Jeffreys, Paul Melenhorst, June Henderson

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

International Volunteers Day – December 5, 2022 Volunteering Australia proudly supports International Volunteer Day (IVD) to raise awareness on the important role volunteers play in responding to challenges facing the world. The 2022 theme is "Solidarity through Volunteering". There are millions of volunteers in Australia and the contribution that they make to communities around the country is enormous. IVD is an opportunity to acknowledge, thank and shine a light on the important work of volunteers, more details are available at: www.volunteeringaustralia.org **A big thank you to our wonderful volunteers here at St Columba's Parish! Godspeed!**

Sew and So Thursday 8th December 2022, 1:30, Saint Columba's Church Foyer. Come along for a cuppa and bring a favourite Christmas Decoration and tell us the story of it. Also if anyone has knitting rugs or baby singlets for East Timor this is an opportunity to drop them for collection. Happy and Holy Christmas. Our next gathering is in February. Enquiries Margaret 53314032

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>

St Columba's 11th Dec	(next week)	Sun 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Mark Lacey
COMMENTATOR		Colleen Wakefield
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Volunteer please
COMMUNION MINISTER		Judy Brown
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Fiona Newton
SACRISTAN		Volunteer please

Collections Last Weekend St Columba's Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 217.55 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,025.00

Christmas Mass Times

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

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:** 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.

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

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. The team is delighted that after two years of takeaway Christmas lunches because of COVID restrictions, this year we are able to have a sit-down meal. This fulfils one of the key reasons for the lunch which is to provide a community experience for those who otherwise will be spending Christmas Day alone. Bookings are essential as seating is limited. Phone 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.

St Vincent de Paul Flood Appeal The St Vincent de Paul Society has established a Victorian Flood Appeal. Contributions can be made by calling 13 18 12; Visiting <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/appeals-vic/vinnies-vic-flood-appeal-2022> or you can also make a monetary donation through any Vinnies Shops at point of purchase and via your local IGA where the purchase of a token supports the recovery of Victorians devastated by these recent floods.

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.

Free Advent resources 2022 Advent Calendar with lots of practical ideas to help families journey through Advent, the Names of Jesus Advent chain to help families explore who Jesus is and the Little Nativity Pack so that children can play out the wonderful story of Jesus' coming! Resources are available at <https://evangelisationbrisbane.org.au/shop/free-resources/>



OLHC 10th December	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG		Corrie Harbour
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL		Elly Green
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Vin Dillon & Zeena Lazarus
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Trish Pora & Jennifer Adams
SACRISTAN		Kath Leonard & Anne Slattery

Collections last Weekend OLHC Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 297.90 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 385.00