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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](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or [ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

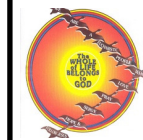
**Aboriginal Stations of the Cross available for purchase**

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](http://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](mailto:ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

Office: 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree Phone: 5339 2302  
Email: [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto: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**

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**

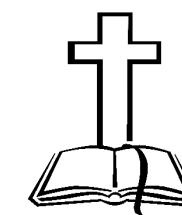
Sunday 10.00 am  
Wednesday 10.00 am  
Thursday 9.30 am

**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 No Mass  
Friday 10.00 am

**Readings for Next Weekend**

Sir 15:15-20  
Ps 118:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34. R.v.1  
1 Cor 2:6-10  
Mt 5:17-37



**5th February 2023 ~ 5th Sunday Ordinary Time Year A**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

In today's gospel, Jesus addresses two short parables to his disciples in the presence of the crowds. Parables were intended to tease their hearers, inviting them to see things from a new perspective, to see themselves in a new light. Jesus told these parables in early first century Palestine with its particular symbol system, while we hear them through the multiple layers of our own twenty-first century contexts and symbol systems. "Salt" and "light" have slightly different resonances in different contexts, as do "earth" and "world". Exploring those resonances or nuances can bring us to a deeper appreciation of the text.

This short reflection allows for a focus only on "the salt of the earth" parable or metaphor. For Jesus' Palestinian audience, salt was used to preserve and to season food. It also functioned as a cleansing or purifying agent. It could only lose its savour if contaminated by additives. We can resonate with all of that. For some of the Jewish rabbis, salt signified wisdom: a "salted" disciple was a "wise" disciple. In some parts of the ancient world, as in Pakistan today, salt was used in dyeing processes as a way of intensifying as well as preserving the colour of fabrics. Many Westerners are not aware of this practice. These days we are rightly concerned about high levels of salinity in overworked soil. That was certainly not so for first-century Palestinians.

When we declare someone to be "salt of the earth", we are generally referring to the sheer goodness of the person in question, her/his down to earth reliability, lack of pretentiousness and practical wisdom. To be salt of the earth is to season the earth community, to intensify its beauty, to be wise in one's judgments, to be just and compassionate in all of one's dealings. This parable, with its multi-layered symbolism, certainly teases the mind.

In the original Greek, the emphasis is on the first word in the sentence. Jesus is telling his hearers, disciples and crowds, that they are the salt of the earth. They do not have to become the salt of the earth; they are the salt of the earth. In short, he is affirming their worth. In its literary context, that assertion contrasts Jesus' followers with those who might persecute them. It affirms their capacity to stand strong in the face of opposition, "for the sake of justice". If they allow their commitment to be shaken, then the "salt" will be contaminated and the "earth" cannot be seasoned. As we reflect on the diverse metaphorical applications of salt and earth, we might take a moment to give thanks to God for the gift of the material realities that underlie these powerful metaphors. This weekend, as I celebrate six decades of consecrated Mercy living, I give thanks for the wonders of our planetary home and for all who have shown me what it means to be salt of the earth and light of the world.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm:**(R.) A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; the man who follows me will have the light of life. Alleluia!

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Barbara Beechey

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Gerald Gunther, Elizabeth Carey, Marianne Kenna, Bill Martin, Mary Martin, Allan Noone

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

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

Lily Jane Drake daughter of Christopher and Sarah.

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

May Lily grow in faith with the support of her 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 at MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms of St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat, **Thursday March 2, 2023**. You may attend either the **10.00am** or **5.30pm** session.

**Mission: One Heart Many Voices Conference 2023** The Mission: One Heart Many Voices conference, "Lead, Act, Now" will be held from May 3-5, 2023 in Sydney – face-to-face and online. Registration and information available at <https://2023.mohmv.com.au/>. Early bird full registration before February 28 is \$550.00. Full registration from March 1 is \$649.00. Concession rate \$539.00. Single day rate \$209.00.

**Sew and So** On Thursday 9th February 2023 at 1.30pm at the St Columba's Foyer. So many people have said they would come for a get together. Please be part of it. We had a lovely crowd for our December meeting and everyone enjoyed each others' company. Enquiries Margaret 53314032. All Welcome.

**Assembly of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania 2023** The Assembly of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania will be held in Fiji from February 5-10, 2023. People of the diocese are invited to pray for blessings on this assembly <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/federation-of-catholic-bishops-conferences-of-oceania/>

St Columba's 12th Feb	(next week)	Sun 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Terry Ranger
COMMENTATOR		Peter Marquand
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Volunteer please
COMMUNION MINISTER		Kaye Merbach
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Vicki Moroney
SACRISTAN		Barb Brown/ Norah Moloney/ Josie Crowe

**Collections Last Weekend St Columba's** Thank you for your contributions  
 Presbytery: \$ 533.70 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,130.00

**Word of God Sunday** – Today, the Church in Australia celebrates Word of God Sunday, the first Sunday in February. Pope Francis established the day devoted to "the celebration, study and dissemination" of the Word of God. Visit [www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodSunday](http://www.catholic.org.au/wordofgodSunday) to access resources to help commemorate the day and for suggestions on how to better engage with Sacred Scripture in various ways and settings.

**Project Compassion Sunday: February 19, 2023** Bishop Paul Bird CSsR will launch Project Compassion on Sunday, February 19, 2023 during Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat.

**Round Table Ecological Theology Sessions** The recent Plenary Council committed the Catholic Church in Australia to developing and committing to a culture of life-long faith formation. For some years now, Fr. Barry Ryan and Sr. Veronica Lawson have been offering regular adult theology classes. A new series of six sessions begins on Wednesday, February 22 (1-3pm or 7-9pm) at Mercy Centre, 16 Gent St. Ballarat East. Then (March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28, July 26). For further information please send your mobile number and email to Sr. Veronica on [veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au](mailto:veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au)

**Advance Notice**

**Rite of Election 2023:** Saturday, February 25, 2023 at 12.30pm at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Lunch will follow in the Hall.

**Mass of the Oils 2023:** Monday, April 3, 2023 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 6.30pm. Supper will follow in the Hall.

**Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Patchewollock Final Mass** An invitation to people of the diocese to attend the Final Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, Patchewollock on Saturday, March 18, 2023. Bishop Paul Bird CSsR and Fr Anthony Nagothu, Parish Priest, will celebrate Mass at 3.00pm. Following Mass there will be a gathering at the Patchewollock Community Centre. Please bring food to share and drinks of your choice. Flyer is on the Ouyen Parish webpage <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ouyen/>

**Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – Online Study**

The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation is an initiative to offer adult religious education and faith formation anytime and anywhere. This low-cost (\$50usd) online study and formation for employed or volunteer lay workers in parishes is available through our partner, Dayton University. The next Cycle for 2023 begins February 27. There are 38 subjects to choose from – find one that interests you! 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 [djurja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:djurja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7121.

**Welcome** to St Columba's school staff! As we commission them, we pray that 2023 will be a fruitful year for themselves as educators and the children entrusted to their care!

**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](http://www.thepopevideo.org).

**Pope's intention for February:** - For parishes: We pray that parishes, placing communion at the centre, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most in need.

**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](mailto:info@lifestyletravel.com.au)

**Palms Australia Call to Mission: Change their lives ... and yours** Communities in Africa, Asia or the Pacific are seeking Australians from a variety of professions and trades to share their skills with those who have less opportunity to develop their talents.

Explore 35 positions on the Palms website [www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au). You can also see news including stories from those currently supported in Timor-Leste, Samoa, American Samoa and Thailand. Please enquire further about potential assignments for you or someone you know: RING: 02 9560 533 or 0422 472 567.

OLHC 11th February	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG		Corrie Harbour
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL		Volunteer please
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Darryl Clark and Laureen Rhodes
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Christine Richardson and Helen Rieniets
SACRISTAN		Lyn Gray and Kylie Gray

**Collections last Weekend OLHC** Thank you for your contributions  
 Presbytery: \$ 493.40 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,105.00