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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

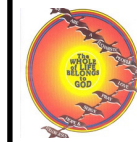
Aboriginal Stations of the Cross available for purchase

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)



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

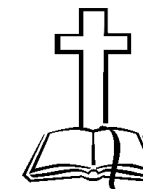
Sunday 10.00 am
Wednesday 10.00 am
Friday 2.00 pm (Funeral)

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
Tuesday 10.30 am (Funeral)
Thursday 10.00 am
Friday 10.00 am

Readings for Next Weekend

Ez 37:12-14
Ps 129. R. v.7
Rom 8:8-11
Jn 11:1-45



19th March 2023 ~ 4th Sunday of Lent Yr A

Focus on the Scriptures

Last week, we journeyed with the woman of Samaria from bewilderment to deep insight into Jesus' identity and mission and to a strong personal faith commitment. This week, we are invited on a faith journey with a man born blind and with the varying groups of participants in the drama. All have the opportunity of coming to faith. Ironically, the blind come to see, both physically and spiritually, while those who are gifted with physical sight remain in spiritual darkness.

In healing the man born blind, Jesus performs the sixth of eight powerful actions or "signs" in John's gospel that reveal God's power at work in Jesus and in the lives of those who seek life. The "signs" invite the reader/hearer/viewer to accept Jesus and his revelation of God and God's purposes.

Time features significantly in the story. Jesus heals the blind beggar on the Sabbath. The Jerusalem authorities have already raised objections about Jesus' Sabbath healing activity (John 5). Once again, they object that he is failing to observe the Sabbath. They label him a sinner. Ironically, in the final authoritative analysis, it is they who "remain in their sins".

This story reminds us of the need to check our assumptions and, if necessary, to revise our thinking and action. It also reminds us to accept the fact that we can be wrong about things we have always believed. It invites us to be open to seeing differently or from a new perspective. Jesus' disciples, the parents of the man born blind, his neighbours, the religious authorities all operate out of unchecked assumptions. They mostly come to the wrong conclusions. Only those willing to admit that they have it wrong have any chance of coming to faith. In the present global political climate, admitting that one "got it wrong" seems to be anathema. And yet, from a gospel perspective, it is a sign of real strength.

In the common estimation, the man was blind, so he or his parents must have sinned. Not so, according to Jesus. From the perspective of the authorities, Jesus heals on the Sabbath and is therefore a sinner. Not so, from Jesus' point of view. The man was born blind and so needs others to speak for him. Not so, say his parents, he can speak for himself. He does speak for himself and quite eloquently, to the chagrin of the religious authorities. He presents them with the truth about Jesus but they refuse to accept the word of an outcast. Their reaction is violent: they drive him out. But Jesus goes in search of him and leads him to yet deeper levels of faith and understanding. You may like to read the story once more and put yourself in the place of the different characters. It seems to me that there is a little bit of each character in every one of us.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm:(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want
Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Bernie Klein, John Leggio

Anniversaries: We remember: Peter Reidy, Frank Danaher, Anne Cheesman, Annie Sullivan, John McNamara, Connie Vincent, Brian Troy

We pray: for the people of Ukraine, Turkey and Syria.

Choir for Mass of the Oils 2023 Singers and musicians in the diocese are invited to join the music group which is being formed for the Mass of the Oils on Monday, April 3, 2023 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 6.30pm. All are welcome to attend. Supper will follow in the Hall. Choir practice times are on Sundays, March 19, March 26 and April 2 at 6.15pm (following 5.00pm Mass). To register your interest, please contact Julie Boyd Pastoral Ministry Office julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph. 5337 7159.

ACRATH: Students respond to Pope Francis' call for change makers

With support from ACRATH member Sr Colleen Jackson rsc, Australian and New Zealand Catholic secondary school students are responding to a call from Pope Francis to be the change makers in the struggle against human trafficking. Through contributing to a video made by ACRATH and Talitha Kum, they hope to influence other young people to act and help eradicate forced labour from the production of chocolate, clothing and technology. The video and further information is available at <https://acrath.org.au/videos/our-pilgrimage-for-dignity/>

ACRATH: Take the bitterness out of chocolate Easter chocolate is already on the supermarket shelves, so let's recommit to using our chocolate dollars to buy slavery-free chocolate this year. It's also the right time to tell our families, friends and communities about the exploitation of children in chocolate production. Encourage them to start buying slavery-free chocolate now – and to keep going after Easter. For more details, you can find the Be Slavery Free Chocolate Scorecard at <https://www.beslaveryfree.com/chocolate>. The scorecard published in 2022 and updated before Easter, features most of your favourite brands and explains how they rate in several key areas including child labour, payment of a living income and the impact on climate.

Lent resources There are a number of Lent prayer resources available on the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/pastoral/liturgy-sacraments/liturgy-resources/>

St Columba's 26th March (next week) Sun 10.00 am	
LEADER OF SONG	Mark Lacey
COMMENTATOR	Tom Keogh
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Peter Marquand
COMMUNION MINISTER	Judy Brown
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe

Collections Last Weekend St Columba's Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 442.05 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,879.00

In the spirit of reconciliation, the Parishes of St. Columba's and Our Lady Help of Christians acknowledge that the Aboriginal people of Australia are our first nation people and the traditional owners and custodians of the land.



Project Compassion Fourth Sunday of Lent – March 18 & 19, 2023 Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation's Young Mums and Bubs Group, supported by Caritas Australia, supports young women in the community with practical support like housing and helps mentor the next generation of young people. The work of Baabayn involves initiatives such as a Homework Club, a Young Mums and Bubs program and a youth group. They also provide advocacy, counselling services and links to government departments. With your support, the work of Baabayn can continue to work with young mothers at Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation and help them keep their culture strong for future generations. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes or envelopes available from your parish, visit <https://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion> or call 1800 024 413.



Please donate to Project Compassion 2023
 Together we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow
For All Future Generations

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 has begun at Mercy Centre 16 Gent St Ballarat East. The next session is on March 22, (1.00-3.00 pm or 7.00-9.00pm) then 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

Praying with Pope Francis: Pope's intention for March - For victims of abuse: We pray for those who have suffered harm from members of the Church. May they find within the Church herself a concrete response to their pain and suffering.

World Youth Day World Youth Day will be held from 1-6 August, 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal. Anyone interested in attending can register with the Archdiocese of Melbourne to join with them in pilgrimages they have on offer. More info at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/pastoral/youth-and-young-adult-ministry/world-youth-day/>

Palm Sunday Walk for Justice This year's walk will call for Justice for Refugees: Permanent visas for all, fair processes and income support for people who are seeking recognition as refugees. While the change of government at the federal election last year has brought hope for more compassionate policies, thousands of refugees and people seeking asylum are still in limbo waiting for certainty about their future. Walk with us this Palm Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 1.00pm for a group reflection and prayer led by Fr Andy Hamilton SJ, with the official Walk for Justice music and speeches starting around 1.30pm. Meet at the far right side of the State Library of Victoria (near the Joan of Arc statue and next to Little Lonsdale Street – you'll see a large 'CAPSA', 'Jesuit Social Services' or 'Xavier Social Justice Network' or 'CSSV' banner). If you have any questions, please get in touch with Maeve at CAPSA, email info@capsa.org.au.

Centralised Baptism Preparation Session Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. Next session is on Holy Thursday at MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms of St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat, **Thursday, 6th of April 2023 at 10.00am**. There will be just the one Baptism preparation morning session in April.

Advance Notice:

Holy Week Liturgies

Apr 6 Holy Thursday 7.00 pm St Columba's, Ballarat North
 Apr 7 Good Friday 3.00 pm OLHC Wendouree
 Apr 8 Easter Vigil 7.00 pm OLHC Wendouree

Easter Sunday

Apr 9 Easter Sunday 8.30 am Beaufort
 10.00 am St Columba's, Ballarat North

Australian Catholics Autumn 2023 issue "Touring the world of Jesus" is now available. For those interested, several copies are at the church foyer.

OLHC 25th March (next week) Saturday 6.00pm	
LEADER OF SONG	Vin Dillon
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Elly Green
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Jennifer Adams, Darryl Clark
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Pauline Newman
SACRISTAN	Lyn Gray, Michael Rienets

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