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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)

**Our Diocesan Community** Please feel free to take copies to the homebound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the good news of the diocese.

**Pope Francis' Prayer for Peace in Ukraine:** I ask you to pray the Our Father for peace in Ukraine, now and throughout this day. **Our Father...**

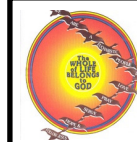
Let us ask the Lord to grant that the country may grow in the spirit of brotherhood, and that all hurts, fears and divisions will be overcome. We have spoken about the Holocaust. But let us think too that [in Ukraine] millions of people were killed [1932-1933]. They are a people who have suffered; they have suffered from hunger, suffered from much brutality and they deserve peace.

May the prayers and supplications that today rise up to heaven touch the minds and hearts of world leaders, so that dialogue may prevail and the common good be placed ahead of partisan interests. Please, no more war.

**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)



**Office:** 306 Gregory St, Ballarat Nth **Phone:** 5331 1012  
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**Office:** 480a Gillies Street, Wendouree **Phone:** 5339 2302

**Email:** [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

**P O Box** 192, Wendouree

**School Principal:** Leigh Bradshaw

**School Co-Principals:** Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr

**School Phone:** 5332 4894

**School Phone:** 5339 4726

**Staffing**

**Parish Priest:**

Fr Marcello Colasante

**Finance Officer:**

Bernadette Prestwood

**St Columba's**

Parish Co-Ordinator:

Lia Andanar Yu

Wed-Friday 10:00am –2:00pm

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 (Vigil) 6.00 pm

Thursday 10.00 am

Friday 10.00 am

**Readings for Next Weekend**

1Kings: 3:5, 7-12

Ps: 118: 57, 72, 76-77,  
127-130 R.v.97

Rom 8: 28– 30

Mt 13: 44-52



**23rd July 2023 ~ 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

Experienced gardeners or farmers or bakers might take issue with Jesus' choice of images for God's empire or kin-dom of the heavens. They may be singularly unimpressed by the methods of the farmer-gardener-God presented in today's gospel reading. An "enemy" planting weeds "all through the crop" is no surprise to readers familiar with the earlier part of this parable chapter, although the land-owner's decision to leave the weeds to endanger the wheat crop seems none too smart. Mustard, known for its propensity to grow wild and threaten the life of every other plant in the garden, makes for an equally strange kin-dom analogy. God's empire imaged as a baker woman taking yeast, a substance considered to be a corrupting influence in the first century Jewish world, and mixing it into twenty kilos of wheat flour, stretches the imagination in other directions.

These images cut across the readers' expectations quite dramatically. What might they be telling us about God's kin-dom of the skies? In the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven, there is a movement from small to great that communicates something about the power of God to bring abundance of life from the most inauspicious beginnings. They do not seem to fit with the parable of the wheat and the weeds until we look a little more closely. The element of danger to the life of the whole is common to all three parables. Maybe Matthew's Jesus is telling us that God is a God of risk who does not intervene but allows the weeds and endangering herbs to "infect" God's field. Harvest season will be time enough to divide the wheat from the weeds, the life-giving from the infectious. In the meantime, the good seed must take hold. The good will finally outweigh the evil. That is small comfort, of course, to those who suffer at the hands of evildoers.

In the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven, Jesus seems to be telling his hearers that their idea of infection or danger is different from his. At one level, he engages the more-than-human and talks about respect for the complexity of ecosystems. At another, he is talking about societal inclusion: the people that many consider unclean or sinful or demon-possessed are not to be displaced from God's field or God's table. On the contrary, they may be the very ones who season the life of the whole. Life is messy after all and God is in the mess. It is worth noting that the leaven parable offers one of the few occasions in the gospel where God is imaged as female. While we know that God is neither male nor female, most of us have been conditioned to use only male images for God. The parable of the woman kneading dough validates the potential of female experience to reflect the life and activity of God in our world.

- Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm:**(R.) Lord, you are good and forgiving.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia!

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

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Steve Mikus, Frank Clarke, Sheila Foley, Joan O'Connor, Marie McKenna, Frank O'Connor, Alan Rix, Nick Morcom, Bill & Mena Heagney,

**We pray:** for those in need, all who are sick, and for the people of Ukraine, Turkey and Syria.

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

**St Vincent Pallotti Scholarship Trust** The St Vincent Pallotti Scholarship Trust offers scholarships to enable lay people to further their understanding and skills in leadership/ministry or a specialised activity, such as promoting faith enhancement, social justice and pastoral care. For more information and application forms, please visit : [pallottine.org.au/svpscholarship](http://pallottine.org.au/svpscholarship) Closing Date: 4 August 2023.

**The Good Oil 2023 Writers' Award** Entries are invited for The Good Oil 2023 Writers' Award, an initiative of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan. The theme for this year's award is "Finding My Voice". Entry is free and open to both emerging and published writers. For more information go to <https://www.goodsams.org.au/article/the-good-oil-2023-writers-award-finding-my-voice>

**In the footsteps of Mary MacKillop Pilgrimage: October 17-28, 2023** This unique Australian Pilgrimage will take you on a journey to places associated with Mary MacKillop's life and ministry in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. The pilgrimage is operated by the Sisters of Saint Joseph and Mary MacKillop Place. It will be led by Sr Anne Bond rsj, a Sister from the Sisters of Saint Joseph, and Mr Garry McLean, the inaugural Director of the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre. The pilgrimage will begin in East Melbourne on October 17 and conclude at Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney on October 28. Along the way pilgrims will visit historic sites and towns including Portland, Penola, Robe and the Mary MacKillop Chapel in North Sydney. To register, please visit: <https://www.marymackillopplace.org.au/retreats-spirituality/australian-national-pilgrimage/>

St Columba's 30th July	(next week)	Sun 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Mark Lacey
COMMENTATOR		Vicki Moroney
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Min Myers
COMMUNION MINISTER		Volunteer please
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN		Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe

**Collections Last Weekend St Columba's** Thank you for your contributions  
 Presbytery: \$ 560.95 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,528.60

*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.*

**Today is World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly: Sunday, July 23, 2023** "His mercy is from age to age" (Lk1:50) is the theme chosen by the Holy Father for the third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. The Day is marked near the Feast of Sts Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. Parishes, schools, agencies, aged care facilities and other ministries are encouraged to find creative ways to celebrate the contribution of older people to their families and communities. Resources to celebrate this day are available from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/world-day-for-grandparents-and-the-elderly-sunday-july-23-2023/>

**Prayer for the Third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly 2023**

*Virgin Mary, Mother of faith and hope,  
 an example for this humanity bent by indifference,  
 make me as willing as You to accept the will of God,  
 to magnify and praise His Mercy.*

*Mary, Mother of fortitude, you who knows my heart,  
 do not allow me to become discouraged.  
 I confidently surrender my life into your hands.  
 Heal my wounds. May your tenderness accompany me on the way.*

*Your presence, Mother of love, brings us to experience the joy  
 of seeing our families united.  
 Help me to transmit the tenderness and Love of God  
 to the grandchildren and youth so that,  
 in addition to praying for them,  
 we can pray with them.*

*Mary, may the gift of the Holy Spirit intercede for me:  
 sustain my weakness; breathe into my heart the consolation  
 that I may leave traces of faith among the young,  
 bearing witness to the beauty of life,  
 knowing that life has a limit and that beyond it  
 lies before us our Father's embrace. Amen.*

**Praying with Pope Francis: Pope's intention for July – For a Eucharistic Life:** We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters. Lord, hear us.

**St Columba's Sacramental Program** has commenced in Term 3. Preparation sessions are ongoing and the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated in August. First Eucharist for these candidates will be celebrated on the 3rd and 10th of September. Please keep the children and their families in your prayers.

**St Patrick's Cathedral Choral and Organ Scholarships** St Patrick's Cathedral is establishing Choral and Organ Scholarships. The program will provide an opportunity for children with an aptitude and interest in music to sing regularly at Cathedral Masses. The children will receive annual scholarship payments towards their general education in return for their participation in the Cathedral Choir. They will benefit from vocal and musical tuition, and develop skills in teamwork, time-management, professionalism and discipline. Children in Grades 3-6 are welcome to audition for the choir, which will have a gender balance. The safety of the children will be of the highest priority, following the Safeguarding Children, Young People and at Risk Adults policies - <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/professional-standards-2-professional-standards/professional-standards/>.

**St Patrick's Cathedral Choral Scholarships Information Session** An information session will be held at 7pm on Thursday, 3rd of August in the MacKillop/Glowrey room at Saint Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat. Copies of the Choir Handbook, Audition Form or further information can be obtained by contacting the Choir Director, Mr Vincent Sully, on 0407 310 115 or [vincenzo101923@gmail.com](mailto:vincenzo101923@gmail.com).

**Catholic Mission Timor-Leste Adult Immersion** Catholic Mission invites you to learn more about the grassroots projects supported by Catholic Mission in Timor-Leste from November 4-12, 2023. This immersion will give you the opportunity to see the world through a different lens, you will witness the life-changing work taking place at the St Maria Mazarello vocational School and the Maria Auxiliadora Medical Clinic in Venilale. Be prepared to come home changed and challenged. Cost is \$3990.00 per person (ex. Darwin to Dili, Timor-Leste). Register your interest at <https://www.catholicmission.org.au/get-involved/immersions>

**Parish of Saints Anne and Joachim, Sunraysia** Bishop Paul Bird CSsR decreed the establishment of a new parish in the diocese on July 1, 2023 – the Parish of Saints Anne and Joachim, Sunraysia. The newly established parish will comprise the territory that belonged to the parishes of Merbein(est.1965), Mildura(est.1906) and Red Cliffs(est.1953). More information available from the diocesan website.

OLHC 29th July	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG		Corrie Harbour
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL		Veronica Stott
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Vin Dillon & Zeena Lazarus
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Helen Feely & Jennifer Adams
SACRISTAN		Kath Leonard & Anne Slattery

**Collections Last Weekend** Thank you for your contributions  
 Presbytery: \$ 317.80 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$1,030.00