



▶ **SS PETER & PAULS**
701 FISKEN ST
BUNINYONG 3357



▶ **ST ALIPIUS**
82 VICTORIA ST
BALLARAT EAST 3350



▶ **PARISH OFFICE**
84 VICTORIA ST
BALLARAT EAST 3350
PH 5332 6611
OPEN TUE – FRI
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

3 December 2023

First Sunday of Advent

The Lord is my shepherd

St Alipius parish

ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarata-east/

MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Tuesday – Thursday 9:30 AM

Saturday 9:30 AM, 6:00 PM

Sunday 9:00 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th weeks)

10:30 AM (2nd & 4th)

Ss Peter and Paul's

Sunday 9:00 AM (2nd & 4th)

10:30 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th)

Rosary – Thursday 11:00 AM

Mass and prayer resources

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Counting team 4 this week – 9:30 AM

Our Parish is committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land and pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging.

WE PRAY FOR

Faithfully departed: Mary Grace Olivares, NhelJun Dimaculangan (P)

Anniversaries:

Unwell: Socorro De Chavez, Peter McLachlan, Sarah McLachlan, Eleanor McMahon, Patricia Murry, Shelley Pawang, Carole Simmons

PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest

Fr Jorge Jr De Chavez, OSJ

Visiting Priest

Fr Barry Ryan

Sacramental and Parish Coordinator

Cathy Prunty

Administrative Assistant

Natalie Shannon

Finance Officer

Bernadette Prestwood

Child Safety Officer

Emily Clarke

PARISH VISION

The combined communities of St Alipius Parish reach out in the spirit of faith, hope, love, and acceptance, as God calls us to in the gospels.

PARISH MISSION

Our mission in the Parish of St Alipius is to actively engage and serve our combined communities, embodying the teachings of the Gospel. Strengthened in the spirit of faith, hope, love acceptance and Mercy, we strive to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. Guided by God's call to service, we aim to build strong connections, provide spiritual nourishment, promote social justice, and offer support to individuals and families in their journey of faith. Through our dedicated interactions, we seek to deepen our relationships with God, inspire transformation, and make a positive impact in the lives of those we encounter, spreading God's love and compassion to all.



FR JORGE FAREWELL

Father Jorge's final mass with us will be on Christmas Day. He heads off on Boxing Day for the long drive across the Nullarbor to his new parish in Western Australia. Everyone is invited to join Fr Jorge for a farewell mass at 6:00 PM on Saturday 9 December at St Alipius, followed by a BBQ in the church grounds (weather dependent). This is our chance to gather as a parish to thank and say goodbye to Fr. Jorge. Please bring a salad or dessert to share. Sausages will be provided. BYO drinks.

CHURCH WORKING BEES

Thank you to everyone who came along to the working bee at St Alipius last weekend. We were able to set up the nativity scenes both in and outside the church. There are some other jobs that still need to be done, so if you have a moment during the week and would be happy to help, please contact the parish office.

It is Ss Peter and Paul's working bee this Sunday after 10:30 AM mass. Please help if you can.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Farewell Mass and BBQ for Fr Jorge
6:00 PM, Saturday 9 December, St Alipius

LITURGY ROSTER

The St Alipius liturgy roster for December and January has been emailed to volunteers. For those not on email, collect a hard copy from the sacristy. Please remember to diarise when you are scheduled and arrive at least 10 minutes before the start of mass to sign in and check that all volunteers have turned up. Thank you.

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Thank you to all parishioners who contribute to our stewardship program. Your generosity is appreciated.

Supporting our parish priests	\$850
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	455.20

We invite anybody who would like to join the program to please contact the parish office.

PIETY STALL

Packs of five Christmas cards are now available from the Piety Stall for \$5.00. Columbian Calendars ARE NOW AVAILABLE for \$10.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

This year Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, so masses that weekend will be as follows:

Saturday 23 December – 4th Sunday of Advent vigil
6:00 PM – St Alipius

Sunday 24 December – 4th Sunday of Advent
9:00 AM – Ss Peter and Paul's
10:30 AM – St Alipius

Sunday 24 December – Christmas vigil
6:00 PM – Children's mass at St Alipius
7:30 PM – Ss Peter and Paul's
9:00 PM – St Alipius

Monday 25 December – Christmas Day
9:00 AM – Ss Peter and Paul's
10:30 AM – St Alipius

ALTAR SERVERS

The Children's Mass at 6:00 PM on Sunday 24 December provides a wonderful opportunity for any children in the parish who are interested in participating in the mass as an altar server. If you have children who are interested, please let the Parish Office know. Training will be provided, and altar servers will have an opportunity to serve during Advent Masses with coaching, in preparation for the Children's Mass.

SVDP CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Ballarat East Conference of SVdP invites you to support their Christmas Appeal which plays a vital role in enabling the good works of the Society to continue serving the community.

Over the past six months, the Society has provided over \$5.9 million in material assistance, including food, clothing, furniture, and financial support, to families and households in need throughout Victoria. With the current cost-of-living crisis, the assistance they provide for people experiencing hardship this festive season will be needed more than ever.

Parishioners are encouraged to help continue the Society's work of helping those most in need by donating via the envelopes at the end of the pews (put into the offertory collection basket), via www.vinnies.org.au, or phoning 13 18 12. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

NATIVITY DISPLAY

To spread a Christmas message of peace, love and family, this year's "Making a Scene at Christmas" display will be spread across two locations: a shop in the Bridge Mall from Tuesday, 5 December – Friday, 22 December and at the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat archives by appointment between 20 November – 22 December, and 4– 20 January 2024. Entry is a gold coin donation. Schools can book for an educational experience. For more information, please contact Fiona Tonkin at Fiona.tonkin@ballarat.catholic.org.au.

BAPTISMS

Noah John Findlay
Child of Ashley and Christine Findlay

Mary Claire Calingasan Albalate
Child of Ace and Sheryl Albalate

Nieve Alexandra and Ryley Georgia Lever–Easten
Child of Rohan Lever and Kerry Easten

The church gives faith to your children through Baptism, and you have the task to make it grow.

Pope Francis

CHANGES TO POWERPOINT

In keeping with the Diocese of Ballarat's [Guidelines for the Use of Visual Display Systems in Liturgical Celebrations](#), starting this weekend, the parish will be using an updated template for the PowerPoint slides that are used to accompany our masses. The most noticeable change is the reduction in the number of slides to help ensure that the focus of those present at mass is on the sacred mysteries that are celebrated at the altar, not on the overhead projections. Some shorter responses will no longer be displayed, but longer prayers and the lyrics to hymns will still be provided on screen. Please note that the Gloria is not said during Advent or Lent masses.

GIVING TREE APPEAL

CatholicCare Victoria wants to give young people and their families the support they need so that they can enjoy their Christmas together rather than face tough times alone. Families shouldn't have to choose between seeking help for their kids or putting food on the table. To donate to the appeal, please visit this website: www.catholiccarevic.org.au/campaign/donate/19/giving-tree-appeal

SEMINARIAN FUNDRAISER

The Cathedral Branch of the Catholic Women's League (CWL) is hosting a cake stall outside St Pat's after each mass on Sunday 10 December. A decorated Christmas cake will be raffled, with tickets available after this weekend's masses. Funds raised will assist the Ballarat Diocese's seminarians – Simon, Channa, Lam, and Peter. Donations of cakes and produce for the stall are welcome. If you can assist by baking, donating, or helping on the day, please contact Carmel 0401 175 045 or annekav1234@gmail.com.

PRAYING WITH THE POPE

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 areas of life, encouraging faith, renewing hope, and calling us to loving service. 'The Pope Video' forms part of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network – www.thepopevideo.org.

Pope's intention for December – For persons with disabilities: We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation. Lord, hear us.

CDF MERGER

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR has made an announcement regarding the merger of our Ballarat Catholic Development Fund with the Melbourne-Sale-Bunbury Catholic Development Fund. Details are available from www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/new-era-for-cdf

DEACON ORDINATION

Seminarian Cay Trinh will be ordained as a Deacon for the Diocese of Ballarat at 10:00 AM on Saturday, 16 December at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. All are welcome to attend.

Singers and musicians are invited to join the music group which is being formed to perform at the ordination. Practices will occur on Sunday 3 and 10 December at the Cathedral. Register your interest with Julie Boyd at julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph. 5337 7159.

OUR DIOCESAN NEWS

The second edition of ODC 2023 has been published. Feel free to take copies to the homebound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the good news of the diocese.

Eyes Wide Open!

Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

1st Sunday of Advent: Mark 13:33–37

The first Sunday in Advent marks the beginning of the new liturgical year.

It may seem strange to begin the church year with the parable of the watchful doorkeeper and a focus on the end or culmination of the present order of things. Is Advent not a time of preparation for Christmas, for the coming of the Christ child into the world?

In contrast with Matthew and Luke, Mark has no account of the birth of Jesus or of the events leading up to his birth.

From the very outset, Mark's interest is in the good news of Jesus the Christ and in the importance of "preparing the way" for the advent of God's reign of justice and compassion.

Our gospel reading forms the conclusion to Mark's so-called apocalyptic discourse. Apocalyptic literature emerged within Judaism in the context of crisis or persecution.

Its message was that God's coming can reverse the sufferings of the present, a hopeful message for our troubled world, particularly if we envisage multiple "comings" and not simply an end-time return.

Apocalyptic writings were intended to provide hope in the midst of disaster.

While Mark's discourse is delivered as a farewell teaching to the inner circle of Jesus' disciples, the concluding verse indicates that it is intended for a wider audience: "What I say to you, I say to all...." Like Jesus' close followers, Christian disciples through the ages are invited to stay awake, to be on the lookout, to be alert.

A hopeful message for our troubled world

The disciples are told to stay awake through the four watches of the Roman night: in the evening, at midnight, at cockcrow, and at dawn.

The parable thus foreshadows aspects of Jesus' suffering that were to be compounded by the abandonment of his closest friends. Peter, James, and John will fall asleep in Gethsemane. While the women will remain faithful, the male disciples will disperse, and Peter will deny Jesus.

We find our own experience mirrored in that of the disciples. It is easy to lose hope in the face of overwhelming violence and even to lose focus and walk away.



Advent is about recognising our tendency to be less than vigilant and even to turn away when our presence is most needed. It is about allowing the grace of God to take hold in our hearts, keeping us watchful for the sake of those on the edge and for the sake of a regenerated Earth.

Most of us would agree that our Earth communities are in crisis. We need to be alert to causes as well as to consequences so that the cycles of violence might eventually be broken.

Our gospel asks no less of us. As I look up from my writing, I see the magpies in the yard, ever alert, rarely asleep, ready to protect their territory and their young. The creatures of the earth can remind us that "eyes wide open" is the proper stance for gospel people as well as for birds or black swans.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
ISAIAH 63:16–17, 64:1,3–8
1 CORINTHIANS 1:3–9
MARK 13:33–37

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
ISAIAH 40:1–5, 9–11
2 PETER 3:8–14
MARK 1:1–8