



St Patrick's Stawell, Immaculate Conception Ararat, St Francis of Assisi Landsborough and St Bernard's Lake Bolac form Holy Spirit Parish, Gariwerd.

We acknowledge recognise and respect the elders and families of the Barengi Gadjin and Eastern Maar people, the traditional owners of the land on which our parish gathers. We commit ourselves to walking in unity with our First Nations people.

First Reading **Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11**

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.' A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

Responsorial Psalm **Ps 84:9-14. R. v.8**

(R.) Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.

I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people. His help is near for those who fear him and his glory will dwell in our land. (R.)

Mercy and faithfulness have met; justice and peace have embraced. Faithfulness shall spring from the earth and justice look down from heaven. **(R.)**

The Lord will make us prosper and our earth shall yield its fruit. Justice shall march before him and peace shall follow his steps. **(R.)**

Second Reading **2 Peter 3:8-14**

A reading from the second letter of St Peter.

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises,

as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up. Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 3:4. 6

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:

all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way. A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan, they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'



Information – Holy Spirit Parish, Gariwerd

Parish Priest Fr. Andrew Hayes andrew.hayes@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Bulletin Online www.ballarat.catholic.org.au – follow link to parish
Secretary / Child Safe Jill Croxford gariwerd@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Email gariwerd@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Office 304a Barkly St Ararat. Open Thursdays and Fridays 9am – 3pm
Phone 03 5352 5460
Post Box PO BOX 92, Ararat, VIC 3377



Mass Times

Ararat Sunday 8.30am
Stawell Sunday 10.30am
Lake Bolac 1st 3rd 5th Sundays 6.30pm Vigil Sat
Landsborough 2nd 4th Sundays 12.30pm
Glenthompson (Hamilton Parish) 2nd 4th Sundays 8.30am

Readings for next Sunday

17th Dec 2023
Third Sunday of Advent Year B
Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11/1 Thessalonians 5:16-24/John1:6-8.19-28

Weekday Masses (usual schedule)

Tuesday: 10am Stawell (Check bulletin for occasional changes)
Wednesday: Aged Care
Thursday: 2.30pm Hopkins
Friday: 11am Ararat (Check bulletin for occasional changes)

Aged Care Roster

1st Wednesday 11.15am Eventide
2nd Wednesday 11am Lowe St
3rd Wednesday 10.30am Garden View
4th Wednesday 10am ARVillage

School End of Year Mass

Wednesday 13th Dec 9.15am Stawell and Thursday 14th Dec 9.15am Ararat
Parishioners Welcome.

December Dates

Sat Dec 16th Reconciliation Lake Bolac during Mass
Tues Dec 19th Reconciliation 5pm Stawell / 6.30pm Ararat
Fri Dec 22nd Carols and Supper in Ararat Parish Centre

Christmas Eve Roster Sunday 24 December

| | | | | | |
|---------|--------------|------------------|---------|------------|--|
| 8.30am | Ararat | (Mass) | 10.30am | Stawell | (Mass) |
| 12.30pm | Landsborough | (Christmas Mass) | 6pm | Stawell | (Christmas Mass with Carols at 5.30pm) |
| 7.30pm | Ararat | (Christmas Mass) | 9.15pm | Lake Bolac | (Christmas Mass) |

Anniversaries

Penny Lang, Agnes Joyce, Fr. John Martin, George Seeary 1987, Fr. Syd Morey, Maureen Dalgleish, Lionel Delzotto 1990, Robert Radley 2015, James Murray 1912, Athol Howman, Fr. Martin Gleeson, James Moneghetti, Theresa Cashman 1959, Harry Connell 1970, Doreen Presser 1972, Cyril Peters 1997, Rudolf Schwab, Osmond Smith, Eric Hogan, Herman Krawczinski, Graeme Pora, Victims of Pearl Harbour Bombings 1941, Neil George Stapleton, Lawrence Phillips 1943, Fr. John Monaghan, Josephine Neilson, Norma Lannen, Allan Griffen 1963, Mary McSparron 1975, Edmund Moran, Bishop Henry Cleary, Clare Rieniets, Ronald Jerram, Kathleen Rutter 1974, Charles Fitzgerald 1974, Malcolm Brown 1983, Elsie May O'Sullivan 2005, Kathleen Fitzgerald 1950, Rohan Laurie 1998.

Golden Gate Roster Dec 10th Elizabeth

Lake Bolac Roster Sat Dec 16th Reader Deb Glasson/ Prayers of Faithful Damian Phillips
Sun Dec 24th TBA

Ararat Roster Sun Dec 10th Facilitator Teresa Gemmola /Reader Harry C/Euch Min Anna C
Sun Dec 17th Facilitator Cathy McA /Reader Pat L/Euch Sr John
Sun Dec 24th 8.30am Volunteers needed.
Sun Dec 24th 7.30pm Volunteers needed.

Stawell Roster Sun Dec 10th S/Minister K Ashton /Reader J Van Diesen/ Offertory M McGaffin
Sun Dec 17th S/Minister M R Thomas/Reader K Dallinger/ Offertory Pasqual Family
Sun Dec 24th 10.30am S/Minister K Ashton/Reader M R Thomas/ Offer M McGaffin
Sun Dec 24th 6pm S/Minister M Maestros /Reader K Dallinger/ Offertory G Pascall

Golden Gate Lodge It is with sadness that we bid farewell to our friends at Golden Gate Lodge after more than twenty three years. It has been a privilege visiting Golden Gate each Sunday to lead a Communion Service. Many of our friends have died over the years, but we still have a small group of 9/10 residents who attend each week. We wish all the residents and Marianne, Laurie, Katelin, Ben and Staff, who provided loving care and support to the residents, and a welcome to the Ministry Team, the very best for the future. We will miss you. God bless!

Ararat St Vincent de Paul are again asking for Families to donate a toy for Christmas. Please place under the Christmas Tree at the back of the church and they will be collected. We are anticipating more families will be needing out help this year so your donation will be very much appreciated. The final collection of the toys will be the 17th of Dec to allow for packing and distribution. Thank you

Do you know anyone who is doing it tough and would like help at Christmas? Please ask them to come to our Stawell Inter Church Council welfare Cottage at 20 Sloane St in November on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 10:30am – 12:30pm and put their name down for our Christmas distribution. "Christmas is an especially stressful time for those in need in our local community. Last Christmas Stawell Inter Church Council welfare Cottage and St Vincent de Paul helped 138 households, made up of 198 adults, 51 kids aged 14-18 and 147 children aged 13 years and younger have a happier Christmas. If you are able, could you please support us in this year's Christmas distribution by putting a cash donation into our donation box in the Church? Help us help those in need this Christmas."

Stawell CWL are selling **Christian Christmas Cards** and **Columban Calendars** in the St Pat's church hall after Sunday Masses. \$10 for a pack of 10 cards. Profits to Stawell Inter Church Council welfare Cottage Christmas distribution to those in need in our town and region."

There will be an Ecumenical Christmas choir and it will be singing on Friday 15th Dec in the Main Street and again at the Stawell Community Carols that night at 6pm. The choir is looking for voices and everyone is welcome. Practice is in the Uniting Church at 4pm on Thursdays 7 and 14 Dec.

Stawell Community Carols – Friday 15th December, 2023 6pm – 9.30pm at the Stawell Entertainment Centre.

Christmas Cards by St Mary's Students The students at St Mary's have participated in a competition to make Christmas Cards. To help raise money for the St Vinnies Christmas Appeal and Art supplies for the school, the cards will be on sale from the school and after Church on Sundays in Ararat. \$10 for 10 cards

St Bernard's Lake Bolac - A box will be placed at the back of the church for donations of non-perishable food items, to assist with the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.

CatholicCare Giving Tree Appeal

This Christmas, we want to give young people and their families the support they need, so that they can enjoy their Christmas together rather than face the tough times alone. CatholicCare Victoria believes families should never have to choose between seeking help for their kids or putting food on the table. Scan or click the QR code to donate.



Caritas Christmas Appeal

Donate this Christmas and give the gift of a child's smile. Your donation helps families receive a brighter future. Scan or click the QR code to donate.



Making a Scene at Christmas

Over 500 Christmas Nativities from more than 60 countries will be displayed at the Bridge Mall Ballarat and at the Catholic Diocesan Archives from Tuesday, December 5 – Friday, December 22, 2023. You can see and smell real frankincense and myrrh; see coins minted around the time the census was called that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem; see hand crafted cultural nativities from Australia, Africa, Asia, North & South America and Europe (and one that went to Antarctica); nativities that prize social justice and the environment. Schools can book for an educational experience. For more information on the Ballarat Bridge Mall display, please contact Fiona Tonkin Fiona.tonkin@ballarat.catholic.org.au. Every one welcome. Entry is a gold coin donation.

Mother superior tells two new nuns that they have to paint their room without getting any paint on their clothes. One nun suggests to the other, "Hey, let's take all our clothes off, fold them up, and lock the door." So they do this, and begin painting their room. Soon they hear a knock at the door. They ask, "Who is it?" "Blind man!" The nuns look at each other and one nun says, "He's blind, so he can't see. What could it hurt?" They let him in. The blind man walks in and says, "Where do you want me to hang the blinds?"

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

In the wilderness God's salvation comes to a broken people. In the midst of what is seemingly an impossible situation, hope emerges with vigour. In this context, hope is an openness to surprise, the surprise that God is in no way limited to the imaginings of human minds and the consequences of human history. This is the kind of hope that is proclaimed in the wilderness by John; it is the kind of hope that trusts that from the impossible, God can work a new creation. There is something of a time warp in Christianity. What is future is made present. The prophetic oracle announces the future as if it is already happening. This sense of the future-present prompts new ways of living. As the future takes root in human lives, the present is transformed into a new creation and the Day of the Lord appears. God's future comes through the wilderness into the broken city and inspires a broken-hearted people. The contrite heart is a broken heart, an emptied-out heart, a hope-filled heart. It is a heart that is unencumbered by the past and that lives currently in the passing of time and the fragility of being alive. The contrite, broken heart can be filled only by what is promised in the future. This is the paradox of Advent. In the middle of the wilderness, God works the impossible in those whose hearts are ready for the surprise of hope.

REFLECTION by Fr Michael Tate Two Gospels

John immersed, baptised, his followers in water, symbolising the washing away of the sins of the *past*. But he could not empower people by drenching them in the dynamic life of God. John anticipates 'Someone' (not named!) who *does* have the power to inundate, baptise, people with the Holy Spirit. From the heading of St Mark's Gospel, we know that that 'Someone' is 'Jesus Christ, Son of God' who came to flood our lives with that Divine Power which can effect a completely new *future* for humanity. That is why St Mark took the term 'gospel' (good news) which was used on inscriptions announcing an Emperor's birth or victory, and used it to describe his inspired rendering of the mission of Jesus Christ, which was to inaugurate the 'Kingdom of God', overcoming the pretensions of all Emperors of any kind throughout history. We could pause for a moment to thank God for the Good News of our being baptised with *water* in the 'Name of the Father and of the Son and of the *Holy Spirit*.'

Lectionary Art and Reflection by Jenny Close

Reflection by Artist

Mark's Gospel begins with a narrative about baptism with water and the Holy Spirit. The earthly water washes away the detritus of sin and the Holy Spirit regenerates: the water is ours to use, but the Holy Spirit is pure gift. The focus on repentance and grace is part of our Advent task – to prepare ourselves by reflecting on our lives and seeking forgiveness while we watch and wait.

REFLECTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE – by Lisa-Marie Calderone-Stewart

Waiting for Christmas is hard. It is hard to wait for anything. But it is especially frustrating to wait for something when you don't know how long it will take or what is holding it up – for example, driving along on a busy highway and coming upon a traffic jam that cannot be explained. As far as you can see there is no accident, no construction, no reason for all four lanes to be at a standstill. But if you have been in such a situation long enough, you might have seen what sometimes happens. Sooner or later people start trickling out of their cars to talk to one another. They start getting acquainted and cracking jokes. Suddenly the waiting doesn't seem like such torture. Why? Because people begin to comfort one another. How does attitude affect waiting and even pain? How does comfort affect attitude? When have you been comforted by a friend or a family member? What words helped? What actions helped? What did he or she try to do for you? Have you ever been able to be of comfort to another? What have you done or said? What happened?

