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**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, March 7, 2024.** You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

**Laudato Si': Everything is connected-** "Think before you buy" Did you know? A great way to reduce waste is to think about whether you need something before you buy it. See if you can buy it second hand rather than new. Buying from small local business is also a good way to reduce your environmental impact.

**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)

**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.

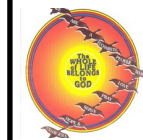


*Laudato Si'*



"Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (Laudato Si', 217).

*reduce reuse recycle rethink repurpose*



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  
**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)

**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**

Genesis 22:1—2, 9-13, 15-18

Psalm 115: 10, 15-19 R. 114:9

Romans 8: 31-34

Mark 9:2—10



18th February 2024 ~ First Sunday of Lent Year B

Focus on the Scriptures

**Take Stock and Believe the Good News** Lent comes around each year and presents us with its usual challenge to take stock of our lives, to see more clearly what is in our hearts and to discover what might be calling us out of our comfort zones. It is a time to consider how we might respond to the pain of the world and of its inhabitants. It is a time for personal as well as group reflection, a time for entering into "the wilderness" and for grappling with the mysteries of life. It is a time of preparation for Easter when we will renew our baptismal vows and celebrate the greatest mysteries of our faith.

The gospel reading invites us to reflect on Jesus' forty-day experience in "the wilderness". Jesus is said to be "filled with the Holy Spirit" and, like so many human beings before and since, is "led by the Spirit" into the wilderness of life to be "tested" there. ["Tested" is a more accurate translation of the original Greek term than is "tempted"]. Forty is a symbolic number in Israel's story: the great flood lasts forty days and forty nights; Moses spends forty days and forty nights on the mountain of God; Israel wanders for forty years in the wilderness; King David reigns for forty years; the prophet Elijah travels forty days and forty nights in the wilderness on his way to the mountain of God.

The wilderness of Judah, with its unique desert flora and fauna, its wadis and waterholes, is ever so real. At the same time, it functions symbolically in the narrative. In Israel's story, it is the place of testing for God's people: "Remember the long way that your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness... testing you to know what was in your heart" (Deuteronomy 8:2). Jesus now passes the tests that Israel failed in the wilderness.

Jesus is "with the wild beasts". This terse statement recalls the prophet Isaiah's vision of a future time of reconciliation and harmony when "the wolf will lie down with the lamb" (Isaiah 11:6-9). Jesus is presented as the one who ushers in that age of peace and healing of division. God's agents care for him in his time of testing: "angels minister to him". In this context, Jesus announces the coming of God's empire or reign. His message is to "repent", "think again", to take stock in a way that might turn lives around in God's direction, and to "believe the good news" that he is set to proclaim in word and action. The call to repent is a call to expand our thinking and to change our behaviour. At a time of growing divide between the mega-rich and the desperately poor, we might look back to our symbolic tradition and forward to ways of bringing good news to those most deeply affected by the inequities in our world.

~ Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm: (R.)** Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

**Recently Deceased: We commend to God:** Kevin Hynes, Sr. Angela (Josepha) Caine RSM

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Marion Voss, Patrick Duffy, Margaret Pearson, Patrick Duggan

**We pray:** for all in areas of conflict, war and natural disasters, for those who are sick in our parish and all in need of our prayers.

**Lenten Program** Anyone wishing to join the Lenten program in a group gathering, at OLHC, commencing Tuesday 20th Feb, at 2 pm. All most welcome. For queries contact Lauren Rhodes 0405277778.

**Wisdom At the Cathedral** All are welcome to the first talk for the year in the Cathedral parish's series Wisdom at the Cathedral. Fr Bill Lowry from the Warrnambool parish will speak on *Discerning God's Will in Your Life*. Learn about the processes employed by the saints and the Lord himself in discerning the Father's will for their lives. The talk and discussion time will go for an hour and will be followed by a cup of tea. 7pm sharp, Thursday 29 February in the MacKillop/Glowrey rooms. Entry by donation. For all enquiries please contact Fiona Bradley on [fionalouisebradley@gmail.com](mailto:fionalouisebradley@gmail.com).

**Mass of the Oils 2024 & 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat**  
The Mass of the Oils this year will incorporate acknowledgement of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat and will be held on Monday, March 25, 2024 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 11.30am (please note change of time). Lunch and displays will follow in the Hall. At the Mass we are inviting 1 – 2 volunteers from each parish to present a symbol or photo that best represents their parish. Many parishes have multiple communities, so the symbol or photo can represent the whole parish or it can be something from the different communities. The symbol/photo framed should be 5in x 7in (12cm x 17.5cm) or for the larger parishes who may need more room, up to 8in x 10in (20cm x 25cm) size framed.

**East Timor Knitting** After such a successful effort last year, it would be nice to have some additional people to knit the little sets or crochet the rugs. Donations of Time, 8ply acrylic yarn or money to buy the yarn (if you don't knit or crochet) would be acceptable. Contact Lauren 0405277778 with donations or money or alternatively money can be put in an envelope marked East Timor Project and left on the collection plates at OLHC or St Columba's Church.

St Columba's Feb 25th		Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Terry Ranger	
COMMENTATOR	Judy Brown	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Anthea Hinchey	
COMMUNION MINISTER	Colleen Wakefield	
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman	
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe	

**Collections Last Weekend Columba's** Thank you for your contributions.  
Presbytery: \$ 608.95 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 935.00

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*The Parishes of St. Columba's Ballarat North and Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree recognise the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.*


**150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat** The Diocese of Ballarat will turn 150 on March 30, 2024. This year there will be many events to acknowledge this significant anniversary. Keep up-to-date at the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/our-diocese/150th-anniversary-of-the-diocese-of-ballarat/>

**Thank You!** The Christmas Day lunch at Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree again provided a joyful time of gathering and community for guests sharing part of their Christmas Day. It was lovely to see new guests among those who join us regularly. A dedicated and artistic team of volunteers prepared a beautifully decorated room and tables, and the kitchen teams produced a delicious meal.

A highlight this year was the singing group who took up the challenge to assist our musicians with the singing of carols and songs – at just a few minutes notice - before Grace was said. Thank you to our enthusiastic choristers!

We know that Christmas is a time of sharing. Guests join us for many reasons, but we often hear the feedback that people prefer to be included in a family on Christmas Day, and for the time we are together at lunch, we are part of one (big) family.

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers, donors and providers – many from our parishes - who helped make the day successful in whatever way you contributed. Thank you to our guests for sharing our day – we hope you had a happy time and returned to your home well fed and with memories of being with friends.

**Mission: Transform Lives - theirs... and yours** Communities in Africa, Asia,  Palms Australia

Australia and the Pacific are looking for qualified and experienced Australians from ALL sectors to share their skills with those who have had little opportunity for formal training. You too will learn and grow within a most welcoming community. Experience the joy as you assist to change lives. Bishop Paul has written a letter of endorsement for the work of Palms Australia. Learn more at <https://palms.org.au/> or ph. 02 9560 5333. Join the Mission Webinar on March 5, 2024, 6.00pm – 6.30pm <https://palms.org.au/event/global-development-webinar/> or join the two-week tour to Timor-Leste on 06/05/2024 to see Palms program participants our local partner communities in action together <https://palms.org.au/encounters/timor-leste-cultural-encounter/>



### Project Compassion Sunday 17 & 18 February



This year, Project Compassion brings you the stories of three resilient women from three different corners of the world. They are facing vastly different challenges, but are all united by one dream: to create a better tomorrow for all future generations.

Meet **Ronita** from the Philippines. Ronita is a mother of two young boys living in a slum in Quezon City. She went back to school to finish her education so that she could earn income to support her children.

Meet **Leaia** from Samoa. Not having access to a reliable source of clean water was very difficult for Leaia and her family. But, with the support of Caritas Australia, a water tank was installed at their home, improving their health and living conditions.

Meet **Memory** from Malawi. Memory, the eldest daughter from a rural Malawian family, trained to become a carpenter and is now a trailblazer for future generations of women in her village.

Throughout Project Compassion, you will get to know the stories of Ronita, Leaia and Memory. Journey with them as they forge a path to a brighter future for all generations.

**Please donate to Project Compassion** You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](https://caritas.org.au/project-compassion) or by calling 1800 024 413.

Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

**Pope's intention for February- For the terminally ill:** Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

OLHC Feb 24th	(next week)	Saturday 6.00pm
LEADER OF SONG	Paul Hogan	
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Margaret White	
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Colin & Helen Feely	
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Trish Lawson & Pat Dillon	
SACRISTAN	Tony & Pauline Newman	

**Collections Last weekend OLHC** Thank you for your contributions.  
Presbytery: \$ 324.65 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 660.00