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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, April 4, 2024**. You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

"Walk, cycle or use public transport" Did you know? Choosing active transport like walking and cycling can not only dramatically reduce your carbon footprint, but you could end up saving money and staying fit at the same time! When walking or cycling is not an option, swapping the car for a bus or train can also make a significant dent in emissions.

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

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.



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*Interest rates subject to change. View current rates on the [CDF website](http://www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au).

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

School Co-Principals: Bambi Afford & Shaun Mohr
School Phone: 5332 4894

P O Box 192, Wendouree
School Principal: Leigh Bradshaw
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
Acts of the Apostles 3:13-15; 17-19
Ps 117:2-4, 15-18, 22-24 R. v.1
1 John 2:1-5
Luke 24:35-48

7th April 2024 ~ 2nd Sunday of Easter Year B

Focus on the Scriptures
Some of us may remember when we spoke of the Sundays after Easter. The terminology has changed and we now speak of the Sundays of Easter. In other words, we now recognise that the liturgical readings and prayers for each Sunday between Easter and Pentecost invite us into a different movement of the one great symphony of resurrection faith.
The first scene in today's gospel has the disciples hiding behind closed doors "for fear" of those who had handed Jesus over to be executed by the Roman authorities. The Risen One appears among them, offers a greeting of peace, and tells them that he has been sent by God, his "Father". They receive from him the gift of the Holy Spirit. He sends them in turn to bring peace and to mediate the forgiveness of God through the power of the Spirit. In other words, he sends them to create communities of people who listen to one another and who love one another into life. The story invites us as believers to place ourselves in the shoes of the earliest disciples. It invites us to receive the gift of the Spirit, to emerge from behind the doors that close us in on ourselves and that prevent us from rising above the fears that control and even paralyse us. We render the gospel ineffective, even powerless, when we make self-protection our priority.
The second and third scenes in today's gospel focus on Thomas who is not with the other disciples when Jesus first appears in their midst. Thomas is not exactly the trusting type. He seems to trust only his own experience. We all know people like Thomas. They test our patience because they seem to lack imagination. Then they make big statements when they come around to understanding what everyone else has known for a while. If we think, however, that the other disciples are any better than Thomas, we need to note that the doors are still closed eight days down the track! The simple fact of knowing has not dispelled the fears of the group.
Even those of us who do believe and trust need a bit of time and encouragement to take the gospel message to heart. We often need the example and support of others to move out beyond our personal fears and embrace the pain of the wider world. We are asked to do this right now as we emerge from the worst of the COVID pandemic. Some are too fearful to engage with the distress of our world and remain turned in upon themselves. It may be helpful to look back to today's first reading from Acts (2:32-35) where Luke presents an idealised picture of the post resurrection Jerusalem community: all things in common and the gospel received with great respect. While taking reasonable precautions, we are called to rise above our own fears and respond with love and generosity in times of crisis, to live the gospel message from death through resurrection and into "ordinary time"
~ Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good His love is everlasting.
Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! You believe in me Thomas because you have seen me: happy of those who have not seen me but still believe. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Maureen Darbin
Anniversaries: We remember: Sr. Patricia Vagg RSM, Terry Foran
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.

Mass of the Oils 2024 & 150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat (1874 - 2024) Thank you to all who attended and participated in the Mass of the Oils last Monday at St Patrick's Cathedral, either in person or online via the livestream. The representation from parishes, schools and agencies of the diocese in the choir, procession of parish symbols, procession of the oils, collection of the parish oils and various other ministries, made this a truly diocesan celebration. Special thanks to those who travelled considerable distance to attend the Mass. A report, photos and the livestream link from the Mass are available from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/mass-of-the-oils-2024/> During the procession of symbols, we presented our St Columba's album which was compiled by Margaret Ranger several years ago. We'd like to thank Margaret once more for the album that is a precious keepsake for our parish community.

Equipped for Mission: Answering the call to 'Go Make Disciples' Get ready to ignite your passion and unlock your potential! Join us for the Divine Renovation Equipped for Mission: Answering the call to 'Go Make Disciples' event, where we will empower you to make a real difference in your parish. Saturday, April 13, 2024 from 9.15am – 4.30pm at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish, 496 Nepean Highway, Narre Warren. Register to attend at <https://brushfire.com/divinerenovationministry-au/EquippingForMission/572688>

Our Diocesan Community – Issue 1 2024
The first edition of ODC 2024 has been published. Feel free to take copies to the homebound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the good news of the Diocese.

Diocesan e-News
The latest edition of the diocesan e-News has been published with stories of news and events in the diocese <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/>. You can also subscribe to receive e-News directly to your inbox on this same page.

Sew and So
Thursday 11th April 1.30 pm in St Columba's Church Foyer. All welcome. Enquiries Margaret 53314032

St Columba's April 14th	(next week) Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Mark Lacey
COMMENTATOR	Maree Phelan
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Bruce Chapman
COMMUNION MINISTER	Gina Hinchey
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Vicki Moroney
SACRISTAN	Barb Brown / Norah Moloney / Josie Crowe

Collections Last Weekend Columba's Thank you for your contributions.
Presbytery: \$ 675.85 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 659.00

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.

An Easter with a Special Anniversary This Easter, our diocese will be marking a special anniversary. It was on March 30, 1874, that Pope Pius the Ninth issued a decree establishing the Diocese of Ballarat. So, when we gather for the Easter Vigil on March 30 this year, it will be 150 years to the day since our diocese began.

The official description of a diocese focuses on the people who make up the diocesan community. The Code of Canon Law describes a diocese as “a portion of the people of God, which is entrusted to the care of a bishop” (Canon 369). So, when the number of people increases, there comes a time when a new bishop is appointed to care for that community. This is what happened in 1874 with the start of the Diocese of Ballarat. The population in the Colony of Victoria had grown so much that there were too many people for the Bishop of Melbourne to care for, so the Pope appointed two new bishops, one in Ballarat and one in Sandhurst (Bendigo), with responsibility to care for the communities of those regions.

Pope Pius the Ninth wrote as “the successor of Saint Peter to whom the Eternal Pastor gave the care of his flock”. This is how he explained the setting up of the new dioceses.

“Lest spiritual helps become lacking to the flock of believers, we are accustomed to increase the number of bishops for their assistance and convenience when we learn that the number of the flock has increased. Since by now the size of the territory of the Church of Melbourne in the Australian Colony of Victoria and the number of the faithful living there are such that, in the opinion of the bishops of Australia and especially of the Bishop of Melbourne himself, it is too difficult for one bishop to exercise care for that part of the Lord's flock, it seems to us that for the spiritual good and convenience of the faithful we should erect two new dioceses in the aforesaid territory. Wherefore, after we have considered maturely all the circumstances of this matter, and after we have heard the advice of our beloved brothers in the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, we, by our apostolic authority and by the force of these letters, erect and constitute in the territory of the Church of Melbourne in the Australian Colony of Victoria two new dioceses, one in the city of Sandhurst and one in the city of Ballarat.”

The Pope's decree described the boundaries of the new dioceses. The Diocese of Ballarat would include the western region of Victoria. “For the Diocese of Ballarat, we define as the boundaries the 144th degree of longitude as far as the sea and the Murray River, and that boundary which separates Victoria from the Diocese of Adelaide, or from the Colony of South Australia, in such a way that the same Murray River will be the northern boundary and the sea will be the southern boundary.” One hundred and fifty years later, we continue to echo the Pope's words in describing our diocese today. Our diocesan vision statement begins with the words, “We are a community of communities from the Murray to the sea.” The 150th anniversary will occur on March 30, which in 2024 happens to be Holy Saturday. This means that we will be able to mark the anniversary as we celebrate the Easter Vigil. Each time we light our tapers from the Easter candle, we give thanks that Jesus is risen and is with us as we gather in his name. When we celebrate the Easter Vigil this year, we might well remember that the risen Jesus has been with us as a diocesan community for the past 150 years. He has been with us through the joys and struggles of these years and he promises to remain with us always

Paul Bird CSsR
Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat



Happy Easter
and Thank You!



Thank you for your continued support through Project Compassion. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, for all future generations. Thank you for supporting Caritas Australia's Project Compassion 2024 Lenten appeal.



Please remember to return your Project Compassion Boxes and envelopes to your Parish Office or donate online by visiting www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413 or through the QR code. If you donate online or through the QR code, **remember to fill in your details and postcode** so the Diocese of Ballarat giving total can be recognised.

Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

Download the weekly reflection by Michael McGirr from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/welfare/mission-and-outreach/project-compassion-2024/>

Pope's intention for April – for the role of women: Let us pray that the dignity and worth of women be recognised in every culture and for an end to the discrimination they face in various parts of the world. Lord, hear us.

Made for Mission: Raising Leaders How do you raise up an army of leaders that can unleash change in your parish? It might be one of the most daunting questions to ask in parish renewal. Divine Renovation, Alpha Australia and Holy Trinity Catholic Parish invite you to a transformative experience designed to inspire, connect and equip parish leaders with the insights and tools needed to ignite parish renewal, by diving into the crucial area of raising up leaders in your parish. This session will be held on Thursday, April 11, 2024 from 6.00pm – 9.00pm at Holy Trinity Catholic Parish, 62A Everingham Road, Altona Meadows. Register to attend at <https://brushfire.com/divinerenovationministry-au/drausmadeformissionraisingleaders/572284/details>

OLHC April 13th	(next week) Saturday 6.00 pm
LEADER OF SONG	Sue Searls
PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL	Volunteer
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Darryl Clark & Ena Bruty
COMMUNION MINISTERS	Pat Dillon & Pauline Newman
SACRISTAN	Anne Slattery

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Presbytery: \$ 565.35 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 1,233.80
Good Friday Holy Places \$ 568.70