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Child Safe Church The Parishes of St Columba's, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat and St John the Baptist Beaufort 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 Diocesan or Parish website or on the foyer notice board. If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Offices, one of our priests or Safe Guarding Officers at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/>

Pope's Prayer for January – For the right to an education: Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected. Lord, hear us.

Wishing you a Blessed and Peace filled Christmas Season and a Safe and Happy New Year!

Our Diocesan Community Issue 3 The final edition of ODC for the year is available at our church foyer. Please feel free to take copies to the home-bound, nursing homes, hospitals, etc., to spread the good news of the diocese.



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Parishes of St Columba's and St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat

Communities of Ballarat North, Ballarat Cathedral, Beaufort

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au (select Parish)

Office: 306 Gregory St, Ballarat Nth **Phone:** 5331 1012
Email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Office: 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat **Phone:** 5331 2933
Email: ballarat@ballarat.catholic.org.au

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

Staffing

Administrator:
Fr Edward Moloney
Assistant Priests:
Fr Francis Kureeckal MST
Fr Abraham Thomas MST
Fr James McKay

Finance Officer:
Jackie Wrigglesworth

St Columba's Parish Coordinator:
Lia Andanar Yu
Wed-Friday 10:00am – 2:00pm
(closed on school holidays)

Safeguarding Officer:
Anthea Hinchey

MASS TIMES (This week)

St Columba's
Sunday 10.00 am
Wednesday 10.00 am
[Reconciliation 10.30am]

Beaufort
2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am

Readings for Next Weekend
Isaiah 60: 1-6
Ps 71: 1-2, 7-8, 10-13, R. see v.11
Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6
Matthew 2: 1-12



29th December 2024 ~ The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Focus on the Scriptures

The Joy and the Pain of Parenting The time between Christmas and New Year is often family time. It is also a time to think about what family means. For many, it is a challenge to juggle various conflicting commitments. We do our best and trust that everyone will understand the difficult choices that sometimes have to be made. It is now ten years since the first phase of the Synod on the Family in Rome. So much has happened globally since then that we are in danger of letting that significant event pass into history without giving it the ongoing attention it deserves. The Pope's concluding words of concern for "difficult cases and wounded families" merit our attention. For Pope Francis, the Synod was "about bearing witness to everyone that, for the Church, the Gospel continues to be a vital source of eternal newness, against all those who would 'indoctrinate' it in dead stones to be hurled at others." The pope reasserted his constant message that the Church's "first duty is not to hand down condemnations or anathemas, but to proclaim God's mercy."

Today's readings invite us to focus on family relationships. At a very basic level, we are all "children of God" (1 John 3:1), invited to remember the love that God has "lavished on us". In the gospel reading, Luke presents the young Jesus coming with his parents from Nazareth to Jerusalem "as usual" for the great feast of Passover. He is twelve years of age, capable in that culture of making quite serious decisions for himself. He does just that, much to the consternation of his parents, who become aware only after a day's journey that he has remained in Jerusalem and has not joined the extended family group or synodia for the return journey to Nazareth. Mary and Joseph are not well pleased. They express their concern but fail to understand his response: he is primarily God's child and must follow God's call first and foremost. This does not preclude obedience to his parents. It does, however, foreshadow the pain involved in parenting this young man whose mission will take him along paths they would never have chosen for him. This may sound familiar to those who are parents of young adults.

As Luke's story unfolds, Joseph fades from the narrative. Mary lives in the reflective way we are all called to live, "storing all these things in her heart". Sometimes God's call to children is in tension with the wishes or hopes of their parents. Children are first of all "children of God". Much as we might want to hold on to them, we do so at our peril, while respecting the fact that many are constrained by lack of employment and affordable housing to remain with their parents well into adulthood. We try to understand their choices, we do everything we can to nurture their uniqueness, and we pray that they will grow in wisdom and stature and in favour with God as responsible members of the whole Earth community.

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.
Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you. Alleluia!

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

Anniversaries: We remember: John Bourke, Alison Johns, Roma Hills

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

Parish Office hours over the Christmas period Fr. Francis will be taking leave during the month of January and Lia will be away. Whilst the parish office will not be staffed during this time, please make contact via email or in an emergency please call St Patrick's Cathedral 5331 2933.

Diocesan Office Closures Diocesan office dates in December/January are available from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/diocesan-offices-dates-for-christmas-new-year-2/>

Advance Notice of dates 2025:

**Rite of Election* – Saturday, March 1, 2025 at 12.30pm, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat;

**Mass of the Oils* – Monday, April 14, 2025 at 1.00pm, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Afternoon tea will follow in the Hall.

Time line of Future Parish Merge Parish activity will remain operating independently for the immediate future, but in time the parishes will come together as one, with a projected date of merger 1st July 2025. Through a position of collaboration, the parishes will work towards a harmonious grouping. There are many gifts and talents in the communities and many experts in various fields. The Priests want to use the expertise of the Laity as we explore the merging of the parishes.

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, Feb 6, 2024**. You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.

Pope's Prayer for December- For Christians in areas of conflict: Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope. Lord, hear us.

St Columba's Jan 5 (next week) Sunday 10.00 am	
LEADER OF SONG	Musicians on break
COMMENTATOR	Tom Keogh
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Kathleen Keogh
COMMUNION MINISTER	Tim O'Farrell
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Josie Crowe

Collections last week Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ To be confirmed Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ TBC

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Parish of St. Columba's Ballarat North recognises the traditional owners of parish lands. We acknowledge their ancestors with respect and we are committed to working for justice and reconciliation.

Jubilee Year 2025- Pilgrims of Hope Pope Francis has declared a Jubilee Year of Hope in 2025, centred on the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope." A Jubilee is a special year of grace and conversion, involving prayer, pilgrimage and sacramental repentance, held every 25 years, or during other years as called for by the Pope. Through a series of concrete rituals, acts and commitments, the goal of a Jubilee year is to inspire and encourage holiness of life among the faithful and therefore to strengthen the Church's witness to God's loving mercy in and for the world.

Pope Francis opened the Holy Door of the Basilica of St Peter in the Vatican on December 24, 2024 to begin the year. On the following Sunday, today December 29, the Holy Door of the Pope's Cathedral, St John Lateran, will be opened. Then on January 1, 2025, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St Mary Major will be opened. Finally, Sunday, January 5, 2025 will mark the opening of the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. Pope Francis has decreed that on Sunday, December 29, 2024, in every cathedral and co-cathedral, diocesan bishops are to celebrate Holy Mass as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year, using the ritual indications that will be provided for that occasion. Bishop Paul will celebrate Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 10:30am this morning. The Holy Year will conclude in the particular Churches on Sunday, December 28, 2025. The doors of St John Lateran, the Basilica of St Mary Major and the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls will also close on this date.

St Columba's Jan 12 Sunday 10.00 am	
LEADER OF SONG	Musicians on break
COMMENTATOR	Colleen Wakefield
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Bruce Chapman
COMMUNION MINISTER	Judy Brown
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Vicki Moroney
SACRISTAN	Norah Moloney

St Columba's Jan 19 Sunday 10:00 am	
LEADER OF SONG	Musicians on break
COMMENTATOR	Fiona Newton/Volunteer please
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Mitch Chalmers
COMMUNION MINISTER	Colleen Wakefield
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Fiona Newton

Bishop Paul's message about the Diocesan Christmas Appeal 2024

Our Christmas Appeal is one way by which the Diocese can respond to the many communities from near and far who turn to us for assistance. Often these requests come from people who have personal links with the Diocese of Ballarat. I thank the people of the Diocese for their support of last year's appeal. The funds raised were distributed as follows:

Caritas Lebanon Appeal	\$ 5,000
Catholic Mission Myanmar Appeal	\$ 5,000
St Columban's Mission Peru	\$ 5,000
Nazareth House Ballarat	\$ 5,000
St Vincent De Paul	\$ 5,000
Catholic Care Victoria	\$ 5,000
Australian Catholic Religious...	
Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH)	<u>\$ 2,000</u> \$32,000

World Day of Peace – January 1, 2025 Hope has been a constant theme in all of Pope Francis' World Day of Peace messages. This is all the more true in his message for the 58th World Day of Peace, which will be marked on January 1, 2025, as the Church begins the Jubilee of Hope amid an unprecedented combination of challenges facing the world today. Read the Pope's message for World Day of Peace at <https://shorturl.at/6DZCp>.

High Court Judgement – Message from Bishop Paul

Dear People of the Diocese,

You may have seen media coverage following a recent judgement of the High Court of Australia that involved the Diocese of Ballarat. This judgement has prompted renewed discussion about liability. I appreciate people's concern for those who have suffered abuse and people's questions about organisations accepting responsibility. I offer the following notes in response to people's concern and questions.

In cases where there is evidence that the Diocese of Ballarat has been negligent in the duty of safeguarding children, the Diocese accepts liability and provides compensation to victims.

In the case considered by the High Court, Victorian courts had found that the Diocese of Ballarat was not negligent but still held that the Diocese was liable – vicariously. The High Court set aside this decision of the Victorian courts.

I would like to make it clear that the Diocese of Ballarat will continue to accept liability and provide compensation in cases where there is evidence that the Diocese has been negligent in safeguarding. In addition, the Diocese will continue to provide compensation through the Federal Government's Redress Scheme and through the state-wide Church process called Pathways Victoria. As well as providing compensation in these ways, the Diocese will continue to provide assistance to those who have suffered abuse by funding counselling and other pastoral help. God bless you all. ~ Bishop Paul

