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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 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.

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.

Nazareth House Auxiliary Christmas Stall Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th December. Foyer of Nazareth House 218 Mill St 9am - 2pm. Baked goods, Christmas Gifts & Decorations and much more. Great Christmas Hamper raffle to be drawn on the Sunday

OLHC Parish Wendouree Christmas Day Lunch OLHC Parish Wendouree volunteers are hosting a free lunch on Christmas Day in the Parish Hall, 482A Gillies Street North, Wendouree from 12.00noon to 2.00pm. Bookings are essential as seating is limited, ph. 0491 029217.

Thank you to all the very wonderful volunteers for all their work in making the Christmas Day lunch at OLHC so special over all the years it has been held. We welcome all those who would like to be with us as a guest or a volunteer on the day, and we are especially looking for a few fit people who might commit to two hours of their time between 2.00pm - 4.00pm to clean up/pack up. To volunteer, please phone 0467 683504.



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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 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
Zephaniah 3:14-18
Is 12:2-6 R. v. 6
Philippians 4: 4-7
Luke 3: 10-18



8th December 2024 ~ Second Sunday of Advent Year C

Focus on the Scriptures

Prepare the Way Since the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis has called us to look into our hearts and to bring the compassion and mercy of God to our troubled planetary home. Care of our common home and of all that inhabits our planet is both a gospel imperative and an urgent call to the whole human community. Our courageous pope gives extraordinary leadership in this respect.

Like Luke, author of the third gospel, Pope Francis recognises that the message is for the whole world and not simply for the Church community. Luke situates his gospel drama on a national and international stage and in relation to global events. He wants to insist that religion is no private affair and that the story of the movement around Jesus of Nazareth is no ordinary, everyday story. It is, rather, a story with momentous political and religious significance. His references to Herod Antipas and to Pilate foreshadow the imminent fate of John and the eventual fate of Jesus. Luke is strong on dramatic impact and less concerned about the facts. He situates events in the "pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas", implying that there were two high priests at the same time. In fact, Caiaphas succeeded his father-in-law Annas as high priest, even if the influence of the latter persisted into Caiaphas' pontificate.

Luke presents John the son of Zechariah as a prophet in the long line of prophets that culminates in the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the global stage. Jesus is the one who truly brings the salvation of our God. It is worth noting that prophecy in Luke is not reserved to the male characters. With the shift from private to public space in Luke 3, however, women prophets who featured prominently in the earlier chapters (Elizabeth, Mary, and Anna) now disappear from the narrative.

Luke 3:1-6 contains some of Luke's favourite themes: prophecy and its fulfilment; the word of God; reversal of expectations; conversion or repentance; proclaiming the good news; forgiveness of sins; salvation. As in Israel's past, the wilderness or desert is the locus of God's revelation. The prophet John calls on the people of the region around the Jordan River to turn their hearts and their lives around, to accept "a baptism of metanoia/conversion for the forgiveness of sins".

We listen to the Isaiah citation that follows ("Prepare the way...") against the backdrop of the first reading from the prophet Baruch. While we might critique the violent metaphorical language that speaks of God's salvation in terms of filling the valleys and levelling the hills, we yearn for a time when "all flesh", human and other-than-human, will see the salvation of God. God's way involves putting on the "cloak of integrity" or the "robe of righteousness" and allowing God to provide an escort of mercy and right relationship. If we take seriously the call to live the gospel, we shall surely search for ways to heal the broken relationships within our ailing planet.
-Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths: all people shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: We commend to God: Tom Kelly

Anniversaries: We remember: Patricia Hay, Carmel Waight, Eileen Segrave, Kathy Perkins, Maureen Casey, Greg Roberts, Joan Richardson, Nance Reidy

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

Baptism This weekend we welcome to our Parish through the sacrament of Baptism: **Luda Beatrice Murphy**, daughter of Riley and Mesina.

“The Church gives the faith to your children through Baptism and you have the task to make it grow....”

- Pope Francis



May Luda grow in faith with the support of her family and our Catholic Community.

Simbang Gabi- 9 Day Novena for Christmas Simbang Gabi is a Filipino Christmas tradition, a spiritual preparation for Christmas and commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a series of nine Masses on the days leading up to Christmas, which will be held at **St James' Parish Church Sebastopol**. Mass times are: Sunday, December 15 at 7.00pm; Monday, December 16 at 7.00pm; Tuesday, December 17 at 7.00pm; Wednesday, December 18 at 7.00pm; Thursday, December 19 at 7.00pm; Friday, December 20 at 7.00pm; Saturday, December 21 at 7.00pm; Sunday, December 22 at 7.00pm; Monday, December 23 at 7.00pm & dinner. Please bring a plate to share. If you have any questions/need further information, please contact Fr Eladio, ph. 0450 017 007 or Dion, ph. 0427 876 553. Everyone welcome to attend.

Adult Faith Formation: The Eucharist (Communion) St Patrick's Cathedral Parish Ballarat is offering a day of Adult Faith Formation on the importance of the Eucharist(Communion) **this afternoon**, December 8, 2024 from 2.00pm - 4.30pm at the MacKillop - Glowrey Rooms Cathedral precinct. This day is aimed at all members of the Church lay community: Congregation; Ministers; Sacristans. The day will Focus on the Eucharist, enhancing understanding of the Eucharist and highlighting our need for reverence for the Eucharist. There will also be time to review the role of the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Mass and when taking Communion to the sick and housebound. Current Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion please note that this formation day will fulfil your requirement to undertake formation tri-annually.

St Columba's Dec 15	(next week) Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG	Terry Ranger
COMMENTATOR	Anthea Hinchey
MINISTER OF THE WORD	Jo-anne van der Voort
COMMUNION MINISTER	Gina Hinchey
DIGITAL PROJECTOR	Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN	Fiona Newton

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.

Christmas Mass Times at St Columba's Church:

Christmas Eve, Tuesday, 24th December, 5:30 pm

Christmas Day, Wednesday, 25th December, 10:00 am

Volunteers most welcome If you are happy to help out during our Christmas Eve or Christmas Day masses, please write your name on our sign-up sheet at the church foyer. Thank you and God bless!

“Holding the Light” Remembering Victims and Survivors of Family Violence This ecumenical service offers an opportunity to remember and mourn those who have been killed as a result of domestic violence, to stand in solidarity with victim survivors and to reflect and commit ourselves to addressing the causes of violence in our communities. The service will be held on Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at St Alipius Church, Ballarat East at 5.00pm. December 10th is the UN Human Rights Day, concluding the 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign from November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women). This ecumenical service will name the dimensions and dynamics of the serious problem of violence in our society. We will name the God present in and through all our efforts to create lives free from violence. We will seek to hold the light for those who are in dark places and for those whose lives are emerging from darkness. Joce Bignold, CEO of McAuley Community Services for Women will be the guest speaker. All members of the community are invited to gather for this service.



Making a Scene at Christmas Over 500 Christmas Nativities from more than 60 countries will be displayed at the Bridge Mall Ballarat from Wednesday, December 4 to Friday, December 20, 2024. 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, & Europe (and one that went to Antarctica) and nativities that prize social justice and the environment. Entry is a gold coin donation. Everyone welcome!

Sew and So Thursday 12th December, 1:30pm, St Columba's church foyer. As this is our last gathering until February, come also for an enjoyable afternoon. Enquiries Margaret 53314032.

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

Anniversaries at St Alipius' Ballarat East 2024 is a significant year for St Alipius' Church in Ballarat East. With the broader community we are remembering the 170th anniversary of the Eureka rebellion including the involvement of Fr Patrick Smyth and the Catholics of the Ballarat Goldfields. 2024 is also the 150th anniversary of the opening of the existing St Alipius' Church in Victoria Street. Mass was first celebrated on the Ballarat Goldfields at Brown Hill in 1851 before relocating to the existing Victoria Street site in 1853, where the tent-church-school (as captured by artist Eugene Von Gerrard) was erected. These anniversaries are providing parishioners with opportunities to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of our history as well the opportunity to look to the future with hope and healing. All are welcome to gather at St Alipius Church for 6.00pm Mass on **Saturday, 14th December 2024**. Following the Mass we will gather for a BYO picnic tea in the Church grounds with a bbq available. Hot and cold drinks will be available. Photographic displays from across the years are being collated as well as 'people of St Alipius' being recorded. For more information please contact the parish office, ph. 5332 6611. For catering purposes, we would ask that you RSVP to the parish office no later than December 7.