

Faith communities of Ballan, Ballarat East, Bungaree, Buninyong, Clarkes Hill, Dunnstown, Gordon and Springbank

Priests Frs Justin Driscoll & Matt Restall

Ballarat East Parish

Cathy Prunty and Natalie Gleeson
03 5332 6611
ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Tuesday – Friday 9:00 AM – 12:00PM

Bungaree and Gordon Parishes

Aileen Toohey
0492 903 409
bungaree@ballarat.catholic.org.au
gordon@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Tuesday – Thursday 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Ministry District Newsletter

Our parishes are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults

Child Safety Officers: Ballarat East Parish – Emily Clarke; Bungaree & Gordon Parishes – Aileen Toohey

3rd Sunday of Lent (C)

23rd March 2025

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday Mar 25 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Wednesday Mar 26 th	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
Thursday Mar 27 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
	10.30 am	St. Brigid's Ballan	
Friday Mar 28 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
	9.30 am	St. Michael's Bungaree	
Saturday Mar 29 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses			
Saturday Mar 29 th - Vigil		Sunday Mar 30 th	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Ballarat East Bungaree
6.30 pm	Springbank	10.30 am	Buninyong Ballan

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Megan Dunn (McGuigan), Merinda Payne, Dorothy Pearson, Carmel Quigley, Jim Watson, Herman Ruyg

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Carmel Doherty

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Pat Burvill, Elaine Conlan, Socorro De Chavez, Joan Egan, Evelyn Farrugia, Patricia (Patty) Gannon, Lyla Geary, Michelle Hall, (baby) Mia Hanrahan, John Healy, Sarah McLachlan, Thelma Keating, Carole Simmons, Owen Widdison

PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Ballarat East Parish:

Rose Consignado, Judith Glaubitz, Martin McGettigan, Dianne McKeegan, Claire Stewart.

Bungaree Parish:

Damian Ryan & Chris Frawley (Bungaree), Barry Sheehan & Dianne Reynolds (Dunnstown), Dom Prendergast, Maurice Mahar & Marty Forbes (Clarkes Hill).

Gordon Parish:

Sue Daly & Brendan Maher (Springbank), Joan Bourke & Shane Carey (Gordon), Mark Conlan & Jim Leahy (Ballan).



UPCOMING EVENTS

Aged Care Pastoral Care Information Session

Thursday March 27th

125th Anniversary Celebrations

St. Michael's Springbank

Saturday March 29th @ 6.30 pm

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

We are currently considering the reintroduction of Children's Liturgy within the parish. This program has been quite successful in the past and we would love to be able to offer it again. To run Children's Liturgy we would require two adults for each session, so we are asking for an indication from anyone who may like to know more about what is involved. At this stage we would plan to have the program on Saturday evenings where children would leave the church after the opening prayer and return during the Procession of Gifts. While our children participate in a program, hearing scripture and discussing it at a level which is appropriate to them. If you would be interested in finding out more, please contact Cathy at the parish office.

MORNING TEA BUNINYONG

Morning tea is held at Buninyong after every 10:30 Mass. This has provided a great opportunity for the community to come together on an informal, social basis. We are seeking more people prepared to coordinate morning tea. The tasks are simple and only required two to three times per year. Tasks involve bringing milk turning on the urn serving tea and coffee and contributing something simple to eat. Others in attendance tend to assist with washing dishes and cleaning up afterwards. If you are unable to do your rostered day a simple phone call will usually find someone ready to do a swap. Two people or a couple are rostered on each occasion. If you would be interested in joining the roster please see Geraldine White after Mass or email her at thewhites25@bigpond.com

ANOINTING MASSES DURING LENT

St. Brigid's Ballan	April 10, 10.30 am
St. Michael's Bungaree	April 11, 9.30 am
St. Alipius Ballarat East	April 11, 11.00 am
Mercy Place Ballarat East	April 16, 11.00 am
Ballan Mecwacare Aged Care	April 17, 10.00 am

LENTEN REFLECTIONS IN THE MINISTRY DISTRICT

Following 10.30am Mass at Ballan on Thursdays March 13th, March 20th, March 27th, April 3rd and April 10th. 10.30am. Facilitated by Dr. Rosemary Canavan, the Lenten Reflection will be guided by the framework of the *Conversation in the Spirit*. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on the Gospel and readings of the week as we come together as one ministry district. All are welcome to attend.

AGED CARE PASTORAL CARE INFORMATION SESSION

This coming Thursday, March 27th there will be an information session for those who would be interested in finding out more about support the pastoral care of residents in our local aged care facilities. If you are interested in attending this session please email Fr. Matt.

matt.restall@ballarat.catholic.org.au

BAPTISMS

Ella Kate & Ava Grace Ralston

Children of Shaun Ralston and Melissa Domaschenz

Angus Mark Bourke

Child of Luke and Abby Bourke

PILGRIMAGE WITH ST PAUL - MISSIONARY OF HOPE

In this Jubilee year, dedicated to becoming Pilgrims of Hope, pilgrims are invited to experience the world of the early Christian communities. The Acts of the Apostles will come alive as we go out with St Paul and his companions to rediscover the faith and struggles of the early Christian communities. The proposed itinerary departs Melbourne on Sunday, September 21st 2025 with the pilgrims arriving in Istanbul and proceeding to Adana, Tarsus, Antioch, Ephesus, Troas, Kavala, Philippi, Thessalonica and Athens with the possibility of an extension to Rome. For further information please contact Lifestyle Travel, 11 Armstrong Street North (PO Box 740), Ballarat, 3350, ph. 03 5331 8077, email info@lifestyletravel.com.au or Fr Justin Driscoll justin.driscoll@ballarat.catholic.org.au

PARISH SACRAMENTAL STATISTICS

2024 Sacramental Statistics

Each calendar year parishes of the diocese are asked to submit their sacramental statistics. The following are for the three parishes of **Ballarat East** and Buninyong, **Bungaree**, Clarkes Hill and Dunnstown, **Gordon**, Ballan and Springbank for the baptisms, confirmations, first communions, marriages and funerals celebrated in 2024. The funerals and weddings include those celebrated in places other than churches, such as funerals celebrated at the chapel of the funeral director. Each parish is required to keep sacramental registers for baptism, confirmation, marriage and funerals.

PARISH	BALLARAT EAST	BUNGAREE	GORDON
Rite of Christian Initiation			
Baptized up to 1 yr of age	40	6	20
Baptized 1-7 yrs of age	59	6	26
Over 7 yrs	8	1	8
Catechumens	0	0	0
Confirmation	119	Not held in 2024	28
First Communion	106	Not held in 2024	19
Marriage	3	1	1
Catechists	1	0	0
Funerals	29	0	7

DAMASCUS COLLEGE BALLARAT 2025 REUNIONS

Damascus College warmly welcomes the Classes of 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2015 to celebrate the 2025 Reunion Day! Join us as we reconnect, reminisce, and honour these milestone anniversaries on Saturday, March 29, 2025 at Damascus College, 1412 Geelong Road, Mt Clear. The day will begin with a free welcome reception from 2.00pm – 4:00pm (doors open at 1.30pm for registration). Enjoy light refreshments, drinks, a campus tour, and some simple formalities during this shared gathering, followed by a group photo. The after party for each cohort will continue at their own private individual locations from 7:00pm onwards. Full event details and tickets at

<https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/community/alumni/alumni-reunions-events>

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION SESSIONS

Please note that there has been a change in times for the Christian Mediation sessions. These sessions are now held on Monday evenings at 5pm in the Parish Hall. All welcome.

125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT SPRINGBANK

St Michael's Church, Springbank, will celebrate its 125th Anniversary with Bishop Paul Bird at a Vigil Mass on Saturday, March 29, 2025 commencing at 6.30pm with a light supper to follow. All welcome.

HOLY WEEK IN OUR MINISTRY DISTRICT

Monday April 14 th	Mass of the Oils	1.00 pm	St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat
Holy Thursday April 17 th	Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper	6.30 pm 7.00 pm	St. Michael's, Bungaree St. Alipius, Ballarat East
Good Friday April 18 th	Buninyong Churches Way of the Cross Ballan Stations of the Cross	8.30 am 10.00 am	Meet at the Town Hall steps
	Celebrations of the Lord's Passion	3.00 pm 3.00 pm	St. Alipius, Ballarat East St. Michael's, Springbank
Holy Saturday April 19 th	Easter Vigil fire and Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm	St. Brendan's, Dunnstown St. Alipius, Ballarat East
Easter Sunday April 20 th	Easter Sunday Masses	9.00 am	St. Patrick's, Gordon
		9.00 am	St. Alipius, Ballarat East
		10.30 am	St. Brigid's, Ballan
		10.30 am	Ss. Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Our Faithful Gardener God

Reflection on the Gospel-3rd Sunday of Lent Year C (Luke 13:1-9)

Veronica M. Lawson RSM

Today's gospel begins with two warnings about the need for repentance. It ends with a parable about an unproductive fig tree and a faithful "gardener God". The warnings include two examples of untimely deaths, one reported to Jesus and then used by him to illustrate the urgent need for repentance, the other reported by Jesus as a further illustration of his point. With respect to the first example, Jewish history recounts instances of Pilate's cruelty, but makes no mention of his execution of Galileans and the mingling of their blood with their sacrifices. Neither is there any other record of the collapse of the Siloam tower and the resultant death of eighteen people. Jesus insists that those killed are no more sinful and no more deserving of death than any of their fellow Galileans or Jerusalemites. They are certainly not being punished for their sins and those who make such a link between suffering and sin have got it all wrong.

So why does Jesus twice assert, "If you do not repent you will all perish in the same way" or "you will all perish as they did"? The answer seems to lie in the constant need for self-reflection and the missed opportunity for conversion or reconciliation in the case of sudden and unexpected death. In other words, Jesus is telling his listeners, "Don't be caught unawares; turn your life around in the direction of the gospel while you are alive and well".

The Greek verb "to repent" means literally to think again. It can have the sense of expanding one's vision or one's horizons, to think beyond the narrow confines of one's own interests and one's own little world. In the context of Jesus' teaching, it is a call to take seriously the message of God's empire or reign which embraces the whole Earth community.

The parable of the unproductive fig tree in the vineyard approaches the same topic from another angle. The owner of the vineyard wants to get rid of a fig tree that fails to bear fruit after three years. From an economic perspective, his position is perfectly reasonable: why should a non-fruiting fig tree continue to sap the goodness of the soil? Why not go for more vines, more grapes, more wine, and forget about the fig tree? The faithful or constant gardener is, however, like the womb-compassionate God of Israel who cares about the soil itself and wants to give the fig tree another chance, to turn it around and assist it to bear fruit, if the owner will only relent. At this mid-point in our Lenten journey, we might get in closer touch with our compassionate "gardener" God and open ourselves to a more expansive "attunement" to planetary wonder on the one hand and to planetary pain on the other. We might ponder the goodness of the soil and the water and all the elements that combine to nourish the creatures of the earth.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

3rd Sunday of Lent
Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15
1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
Luke 13:1-9

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

4th Sunday of Lent
Joshua 5:9-12
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32