

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

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent (C)

30<sup>th</sup> March 2025

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday Apr 1 <sup>st</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Wednesday Apr 2 <sup>nd</sup>	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
Thursday Apr 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Friday Apr 4 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
	9.30 am	St. Michael’s Bungaree	
Saturday Apr 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses			
Saturday Apr 5 <sup>th</sup> - Vigil		Sunday Apr 6 <sup>th</sup>	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Ballarat East Gordon
6.30 pm	Dunnstown	10.30 am	Buninyong Ballan

**WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:**

**THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED**

Nina (Anne) Micallef

**THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME**

Mommie Forbes

**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

### Caring Group afternoon tea

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April – 2pm – St Alipius Hall

### Baptism Preparation Sessions

April 3<sup>rd</sup> 10.00 am or 5.30 pm

Mary Glowrey Room – Cathedral precinct

## CELEBRATING 125 YEARS AT ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH SPRINGBANK

This weekend the Springbank community will gather with Bishop Paul to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of St Michael's Church. *In God's Hands*, Joe Donegan's history of the Parish of Gordon, states that the first St Michael's Church in Springbank was erected in 1865 (on the eastern side of the existing church) when the district was known as Ormond and was part of the parish of Ballarat. When the parish of Gordon was created 150 years ago in 1875, Springbank became part of the parish, which was in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. On March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1900, Archbishop Thomas Carr laid the foundation stone for the existing St Michael's Church which was then blessed and opened on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1900, by Dean Phelan of Melbourne. In 1961 further additions of a sanctuary and sacristy were completed and blessed by Bishop Arthur Fox. In 1980 the parish of Gordon with the church and Catholic school communities of Ballan, Gordon and Springbank were welcomed into the Diocese of Ballarat. Amidst all of the anniversaries of buildings, it is the People of God, past and present, who are the Church, 'the living stones' for whom we give thanks at the anniversary celebrations this weekend.

## FIRST RECONCILIATION

During the coming week, we will welcome 120 children from across our parish who will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. These liturgies will be held Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at 6pm in our parish church. Please pray for these children and their families who will then move to preparing for Eucharist during second term.

## 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:info@lifestyletravel.com.au) or Fr Justin Driscoll [justin.driscoll@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:justin.driscoll@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

## 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

## CARING GROUP

The Caring Group will meet on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm in St. Alipius Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please bring a small plate to share.

## BAPTISMS

### Sage and Bowie Buenen

Children of Robert and Selegna Buenen

GET OUR SEAL OF APPROVAL  
THIS EASTER AND BEYOND!



Treat yourself with responsibly sourced chocolate this Easter, supporting brands committed to eliminating slavery from their supply chain.

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS – BUNINYONG

This Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> of April, Stations of the Cross will take place at Ss Peter and Paul’s Church Buninyong at 6pm followed by fish and chips. All welcome to attend in preparation for Easter.

## LITURGICAL MUSIC SYMPOSIUM WITH TONY ALONSO

From across the eight faith communities of the three parishes of our ministry district, the musicians, and those whose prepare and select the music at our Sunday liturgies are invited to a day with Tony Alonso, Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> at St Patrick’s Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons Street Sth, Ballarat. The day is hosted by the Ballarat Diocesan Liturgical Commission, and up to five people from each of our three parishes are invited to attend thanks to the sponsorship available. **Tony Alonso** works at the intersection of theology and culture, with a particular focus on worship and ritual practices, This is an opportunity for 15 people who are engaged in music ministry in our parishes to participate in this wonderful formation opportunity. Contact Fr Justin or the Parish Office to register your expression of interest. [More information here](#)

## CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

CTC invites you to “Engaging Your Faith” online presentations from \$25.00 per session. For more information and to register go to <https://ctc.edu.au/news-and-events/engaging-your-faith/>

## PARISH BULLETIN DISTRIBUTION

In recent weeks our parish has changed the system we use for storing data electronically. With the migration to the new system we will be changing the way that we distribute the parish bulletin each week. As a result of this you will now be need to be a ‘subscriber’ to our bulletin and at any time you will have the option to ‘unsubscribe’. In order to subscribe you can use the following link or QR code and from there it is very straightforward. If you need help doing this you are most welcome to call into the presbytery during office hours and we will be happy to provide the support you need.

<https://www.catholicparish.app/subscription?id=0010l00000Eh7RBIaZ&req=subscribe>



When you go into the link you will need to put in your first and last names, your email address twice and tick the box to say that you want to go on the mailing list for St. Alipius Parish Bulletin. Having done this push the ‘subscribe’ button and you will then receive your bulletin each week from ‘St. Alipius Catholic Church’.

## HOLY WEEK IN OUR MINISTRY DISTRICT

Monday April 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mass of the Oils	1.00 pm	St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Ballarat
Holy Thursday April 17 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	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 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Vigil fire and Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm	St. Brendan’s, Dunnstown St. Alipius, Ballarat East
Easter Sunday April 20 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Sunday Masses	9.00 am	St. Patrick’s, Gordon
		9.00 am	St. Alipius, Ballarat East
		10.30 am 10.30 am	St. Brigid’s, Ballan Ss. Peter & Paul’s, Buninyong

# The Expansive Heart of a Compassionate Parent

Reflection on the Gospel-4th Sunday of Lent Year C  
(Luke 15:1-3, 11-32)

Veronica M. Lawson RSM

Unfailing forgiveness and arms wide open to welcome back wayward sons and daughters is a key motif in today's gospel story. There is no room in the hearts of Jesus' critics for such forgiveness. From their perspective, law-abiding people should exclude "sinners" from their company. In a first-century Jewish context, it was easy enough to be a sinner. Whole groups of people, depending upon their occupation, fell into that category simply because they failed to observe one or more of the 618 prescriptions of the law. Jesus' response to his critics is the story of a parent whose adult children lose their way. One son finds his way back to the centre of family life and the support of the wider community while the other more law-abiding son seems to place himself outside the family circle, holding on to the resentment he feels at his sibling's return.

We need to attend to the gaps in the story: there may be daughters as well as sons in the family; there is surely another parent, a mother who shares the heartache of her husband when their younger son requests his share of the estate. To make such a request in this context is tantamount to wishing his parents dead. The older brother is in no way disadvantaged: he is assured of a two-thirds share according to the law as well as the ongoing love and support of his family, as his father makes clear.

The contrast between the young man's acquisitive nature and his parents' capacity to relinquish substantial property in the interests of relationship is striking. No motive is offered for the son's readiness to break all his ties and get as far away as he can. In the distant country, he squanders both his inheritance and his identity. A "severe famine" becomes the catalyst for his change of direction. Famine in any age means devastation of the earth that can lead to displacement, to broken relationships and even to global conflicts. In turning back, the young man shows no real interest in a restored relationship with his family or ancestral lands. Rather, he devises a plan that will put food in his belly. He composes a speech about having sinned against his father and against God and about being prepared to share the status of the servants. Thanks to the expansive heart of an extraordinarily compassionate parent, he does not have to deliver the speech he has prepared. Famine becomes feast and so it is with our merciful God. We abandon, we even betray. We waste the bounty of Earth. Our motives for returning to the sources of love and community are very mixed, and yet our merciful God is ever ready, with our cooperation, to turn famine or flood into feast. For that to happen in our times, we must turn away from our acquisitive, wasteful ways and respond as one to the pain of our planetary home.

## THIS WEEK'S READINGS

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

## NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent  
Isaiah 43:16-21  
Philippians 3:8-14  
John 8:1-11