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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 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.

**Tea and Coffee after Mass every first Sunday of the month at St. Columba's** Looking forward to having a cuppa and catch up with you next month,  
**6th of April.** Keep well!

**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 3, 2024.** You may attend either the 10.00 am or the 5.30 pm session.



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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](http://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 10am –2pm (**St Columba's**)  
Thu 10am-2pm (**Cathedral Office**)  
Fri 10am-2pm (**Cathedral Office**)

**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**  
Exodus 3: 1-8, 13-15  
Ps 102: 1-4, 6-8, 11, R.v.8  
1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12  
Luke 13: 1-9



**16th March 2025 ~ Second Sunday of Lent Year C**

**Focus on the Scriptures**

**The Caress of God** Last week, the wilderness was a character in the gospel reading. This week, we find a mountain and a cloud featuring as characters in the narrative. These other-than-human characters and the prophets of old (Moses and Elijah) link Luke's story of Jesus to the Israelites' covenant relationship with God. Wilderness, mountain and cloud also remind us that God's Earth is the locus of mystery where human and other-than-human Earth beings are transformed through encounter with the divine. For Pope Francis, "[s]oil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God" (Laudato Si' 84).

For Jesus, the mountain is already a place of encounter with God, a place of prayer. Luke has Jesus spending a night in prayer on an unidentified mountain before he chooses the Twelve. Jesus now takes three of his closest friends up another unidentified mountain where the aspect of his face changes and his clothing becomes dazzling white. Elijah and Moses, the key prophetic figures of Israel, "appear" and enter into dialogue with Jesus, God's definitive prophet.

This episode seems to point to a time in Jesus' ministry when he accepts his likely fate: if he continues to challenge oppression and injustice, he is certain to encounter opposition, even death. He struggles with this realisation in the wilderness and comes to terms with what it involves on the mountain. The voice of God reaffirms the identity of Jesus and calls for a response: "Listen to him". These words are reminiscent of Moses' instruction to the Israelites: "Your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet" (Deut 18:15). For Luke, Jesus is the prophet-like-Moses whom they must heed. Peter wants to hold on to the experience of glory, to "make tents" and settle down. He prefers not to face the difficulties involved in fidelity to the mission. But that is not the way of discipleship. The tents evoke once more the Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness.

Like Jesus and his companions, we too need the occasional glimpse of glory. We also need the good sense to follow through on the path that brings life, despite the pain. We can feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenges facing us and by the opposition we sometimes experience. If we are to hear the prophet-like-Moses in our times, we have to come to terms with the personal costs involved. Some of us actually need to go alone or together to a mountain top or to a place of extraordinary beauty in order to discover again the strength that comes from encountering the divine. I grew up in the shadow of Geboor (Mount Macedon), a "caress of God". I once climbed within view of Everest. I have climbed Mount Buninyong and Mount Warrenheip. At such times of "attunement", I know the wonder of God revealed in the beauty of the earth itself even as I sense its fragility and susceptibility to destruction.

-Veronica Lawson RSM

**Responsorial Psalm:** (R.) The Lord is my light and my salvation.  
**Gospel Acclamation:** Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!  
From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

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

**Anniversaries: We remember:** Graeme Beaston, Sr Joan Dalglish RSM, Brian Dooley, Bernie Klein, Anne Cheesman, Annie Sullivan, John McNamara, Brian Troy, Connie Vincent

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

**Parish Merge and St Columba's Sacramental Program** As we continue to move onwards and forwards as one ministry district, St Columba's Parish will prepare for and celebrate Sacraments alongside the St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat's timeline of celebrations. Presentation of candidates continue this weekend at Masses on **15th of March/16th of March** and **22nd March/23rd March**. Presentations will take place at St Patrick's Cathedral Saturday & Sunday masses and at **St Columba's Church 10:00 am Sunday masses**.

**A warm welcome to all the children, along with their families, as they prepare for the Sacraments. The St Columba's Sacramental Program begins this year with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please keep the children and their families in your prayers. God bless!**

**Change in Parish Office Hours** As part of our move towards amalgamation as one Ministry District, the St Columba's Office will remain open on **Wednesdays from 10:00am to 2:00pm**. Lia Andanar Yu, St Columba's Parish Coordinator, will hold office 10am to 2pm at the St Patrick's Cathedral Office on Thursdays (with Tony Beggs) and Fridays.

**Choir for Mass of the Oils 2025** Singers and musicians in the diocese are invited to join the music group which is being formed for the Mass of the Oils on Monday, April 14, 2025 at 1.00pm, St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Afternoon tea will follow in the Hall. Practice times are Sundays, March 30, April 6 and April 13 at 6.15 pm (following 5.00pm Mass). Please contact Julie Boyd in the Pastoral Ministry Office to register your interest [julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7159.

**Running to God: A Collection of Prayers for Sport** The National Centre for Evangelisation has produced this free book, "Running to God: A Collection of Prayers for Sport", designed to help incorporate faith and prayer into the practice of sport at all levels. It features prayers written for and by athletes, officials, coaches, parents and spectators - as well as short testimonies of faith from Australian athletes. Access the book and a range of resources at <https://nce.catholic.org.au/culture/sports/prayer>

| St Columba's Mar 23  | (next week) | Sunday 10.00 am   |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| LEADER OF SONG       |             | Terry Ranger      |
| COMMENTATOR          |             | Colleen Wakefield |
| MINISTER OF THE WORD |             | Bruce Chapman     |
| COMMUNION MINISTER   |             | Judy Brown        |
| DIGITAL PROJECTOR    |             | Vicki Moroney     |
| SACRISTAN            |             | Barb Brown        |

**Collections last week** Thank you for your contributions  
 Presbytery: \$ 414.10 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 538.70

### 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.*

**Plenary Indulgence for the Jubilee Year 2025** During this Jubilee Year, which represents a time of grace and spiritual renewal for the entire Church, is the gift of the plenary indulgence. Among the conditions required to receive a plenary indulgence is prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, a gesture of deep communion with the Successor of Peter and with the universal mission of the Church.

To foster and encourage this dimension of prayer, **pilgrims are invited to join the Holy Father in prayer through, "Click To Pray"**, the Vatican's official prayer app. This digital platform is a true spiritual tool that accompanies the faithful with moments of prayer and reflection throughout the day. Furthermore, the app includes the official profile of the Holy Father, where all his prayer intentions are published, allowing the faithful to concretely unite with the intentions the Pope entrusts to the universal Church. Go to [www.clicktopray.org](http://www.clicktopray.org) to join in prayer with the universal Church.

### Project Compassion 2025 Week 2: Unite against poverty this Lent

This week through Project Compassion, we learn about Toefuata'iga from Samoa. Toefuata'iga, a 13-year-old student in Samoa, faced severe challenges and disruptions to her learning due to water scarcity. After Caritas Australia's partner Caritas Samoa installed a 10,000 litre water tank at her school, Toefuata'iga and her classmates saw improved health and more consistent class attendance. "I would like to become a good teacher. To teach the children so they will have a brighter future," Toefuata'iga said.

Watch Toefuata'iga's story here: <https://vimeo.com/1051027125> Support Project Compassion [www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion) Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes are available for you to collect at the church foyer. Thank you. Your donation counts.

**Harmony Week: March 17-23, 2025** Harmony Week is the celebration that recognises our diversity and brings together Australians from all different backgrounds. It's about inclusiveness, respect and coming together to celebrate the cultural diversity in your area and spread the message of "everyone belongs". The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is during this week on Friday, March 21. While Harmony Week celebrates Australia's rich cultural diversity, it is also important to focus on the urgency of combatting racism wherever and whenever it arises <https://www.harmony.gov.au/>

**Pope Francis' message for Lent** "Let Us Journey Together in Hope" is Pope Francis' message for Lent 2025. He reminds us that we cannot stay where it is comfortable, that we must always accompany others, and that we must always do everything with the hope that never disappoints. The Dicastery for Integral Human Development have provided resources for Lent. To read the Pope's message and access the resources, scan or click the QR code.



**St Patrick's Cathedral Choral Scholarships** St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat provides Choral Scholarships for Years 3-6 students with musical interest and aptitude. The Scholarships provide \$1,000 per annum towards students' education and/or musical tuition. Choral Scholars sing and rehearse regularly at St Patrick's Cathedral and occasionally at community events. The Choral Scholarships are modelled on the Melbourne, Sydney and Perth Cathedrals, with children being taught an exciting range of repertoire, including traditional styles of sacred music and contemporary church hymns. There are opportunities for musical, vocal and personal development in a safe, fun environment. Children audition for a place in the choir. If they are successful, they join the Cathedral's Cantate Domino Choir, which is currently made up of 25 adults and children. Auditions are held by arrangement with applicants. For more information and to request an application form, please contact the Choir Director, Mr Vincent Sully: [cantatedomino@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:cantatedomino@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or on 0407 310 115.

**Laudato Si': Everything is connected** In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis reminds us that everything is connected. Our relationship with nature is not separate from our relationship with God and others. This concept of integral ecology encourages us to care for the Earth and each other. It calls us to action. This year is a moment of profound significance, as we celebrate two extraordinary milestones: the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'*, and 800 years since Saint Francis of Assisi composed "The Canticle of the Creatures," his timeless hymn of praise for creation. As we step into this hopeful new chapter, let us reflect with joy on seven reasons to be hopeful, each rooted in the transformative spirit of the *Laudato Si'* Goals (taken from <https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/welcoming-2025-with-joy-and-hope/>.)

**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.

**Pope's Prayer for March - for families in crisis** Let us pray that broken families might discover the cure for their wounds through forgiveness, rediscovering each other's gifts, even in their differences. Lord, hear us.