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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 (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 [Anointing]
[Reconciliation 10.30am]

Beaufort
2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am

Readings for Next Weekend
Joshua 5: 9-12
Ps 33: 2-7, R.v.9
2 Corinthians 5: 17-21
Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32



23rd March 2025 ~ Third Sunday of Lent Year C

Focus on the Scriptures

Our Faithful Gardener God 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.

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) The Lord is kind and merciful.
Gospel Acclamation: Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
Repent, says the Lord; the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

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

Anniversaries: We remember: Nola Jones, Peter Reidy, Alice Westbrook, Basil Clark, Peter Molloy, Nell Molloy, Kaylene Jarvis, Bill Walsh, Julianne Spice, Adele Byrne

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 **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 mass.

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 or ph. 5337 7159.

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 Columba's Mar 30 | (next week) | Sunday 10.00 am |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| LEADER OF SONG | | Mark Lacey |
| COMMENTATOR | | Fiona Newton |
| MINISTER OF THE WORD | | Mitch Chalmers |
| COMMUNION MINISTER | | Colleen Wakefield |
| DIGITAL PROJECTOR | | Bruce Chapman |
| SACRISTAN | | Barb Brown |

Collections last week Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 406.00 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 701.25

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.

St Columba's Anointing Mass:

26th March 2025, Wednesday at 10:00 am, St Columba's Church

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 to join in prayer with the universal Church.

PROJECT COMPASSION FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS **Project Compassion 2025 Week 3: Unite against poverty this Lent** Our next Project Compassion story features Lam from Vietnam. Lam, a young man from rural Vietnam with a passion for graphic design, faced limited career prospects due to his disability. With support from the I-SHINE program, he pursued IT training and now runs a successful freelance graphic design business. "When I got the chance to be a part of this program, I was over the moon - just bursting with excitement and joy," Lam said. Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes are available for you to collect at the church foyer. Thank you for your generosity.

Garrett Publishing Lent Calendar 2025 This year, the Garratt Publishing Lent Calendar is taking inspiration from the Year of Jubilee 2025 - Pilgrims of Hope. Created for Jubilee 2025 are four Jubilee Journeys that take pilgrims on a tour of Rome's Basilicas and Churches from the comfort of your home. Each day also includes a brief reflection selected from one of our popular Lenten titles. To download this free calendar, scan or click the QR code.



Harmony Week: March 17-23, 2025 Harmony Week is the celebration that recognises our diversity and brings together Australians from all different backgrounds. **Prayer for Harmony Week:** Lord, give us courage to follow your ways. Help us to make thoughtful decisions and kind actions, so that we may live in loving harmony with others. We ask this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Baptism This weekend we welcome to our Parish through the Sacrament of Baptism: **Emilia Grace Burgess and Charlotte Elouise Burgess**, children of Adam and Alana.

"The Church gives the faith to your children through Baptism and you have the task to make it grow...." - Pope Francis

May Emilia and Charlotte grow in faith with the support of their family and our Catholic Community.



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 or on 0407 310 115.

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.

24 Hours for the Lord: March 28, 2025 The "24 Hours for the Lord" was introduced by Pope Francis in 2014 and has been held every year since. It is a Lenten initiative of prayer and reconciliation. It is celebrated on the eve of the Fourth Sunday of Lent each year. Its intention is to put the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the centre of the pastoral life of the Church. Parishes and communities can implement this initiative taking care to adapt it according to local needs and customs. Further resources for 24 Hours for the Lord is available from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/pastoral/liturgy-sacraments/jubilee-year-2025-pilgrims-of-hope/>