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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/>

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.



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
[Reconciliation 10.30am]

Beaufort
2nd & 4th Sunday 8.30 am

Readings for Next Weekend
Isaiah 43: 16-21
Ps 125 R. v. 3
Philippians 3: 8-14
John 8: 1-11



30th March 2025 ~ Fourth Sunday of Lent Year C

Focus on the Scriptures

The Expansive Heart of a Compassionate Parent 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.

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Responsorial Psalm: (R.) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.
Gospel Acclamation: Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
I will rise and go to my Father and tell him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

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

Anniversaries: We remember: Tony McDonald, Brendan Love, Bill Eddy, Eleanor Eddy, Monica Eddy

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 took place over the past month and children will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation on the first week of April. Please keep the children and their families in your prayers.

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-updated notice 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. Practice times are Sundays April 6 and April 13 at 6.15pm (following 5.00pm Mass)- **please note that the rehearsal date for March 30 has been cancelled**. Please contact Julie Boyd in the Pastoral Ministry Office julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph. 5337 7159 to register your interest.

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.



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.

St Columba's Apr 6	(next week)	Sunday 10.00 am
LEADER OF SONG		Terry Ranger
COMMENTATOR		Colleen Wakefield
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Vicki Moroney
COMMUNION MINISTER		Gina Hinchey
DIGITAL PROJECTOR		Bruce Chapman
SACRISTAN		Josie Crowe

Collections last week Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$ 418.10 Parish: (Env, loose, DD, CC etc) \$ 651.00

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 to join in prayer with the universal Church.



PROJECT COMPASSION Project Compassion 2025 Week 4: Unite against poverty this Lent



In the fourth week of Lent we meet Irene. Irene lives in the Kongolo Region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and faced immense challenges after losing her father to war and raising her children in poverty. With support from Caritas Australia, Irene received vocational training in sewing and farming and can now support her whole family. Watch the Introduction to Project Compassion video <https://vimeo.com/1034878113> Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes are available for you at the church foyer or you may support Project Compassion by calling 1800 024 413 or online at www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion. Thank you for your generosity.

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, 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 info 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

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.

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/>.)

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis calls us to undergo an **ecological conversion**. But what is an ecological conversion? *Laudato Si'* Movement defines ecological conversion as the "transformation of hearts and minds toward greater love of God, each other, and creation. It is a process of acknowledging our contribution to the social and ecological crisis and acting in ways that nurture communion: healing and renewing our common home." At its most basic level, an ecological conversion involves four steps.

In March, we look at **step 1. Recognising that we have harmed creation** - "...we must examine our lives and acknowledge the ways in which we have harmed God's creation through our actions and our failure to act" (LS 218). How to do this? By reading scientific reports, such as a Living Planet Report - <https://livingplanet.panda.org/>; IPCC Reports on Climate Change - <https://www.ipcc.ch/>; by going through an ecological examen, checking our own carbon footprint - <https://www.carbonfootprint.com/measure.html>, conducting an energy audit, reviewing our consumption habits looking for food/water/energy waste.