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to us on 1800 134 135. * Interest rates subject to change. View current rates on the CDF website.

Centralized Baptism



Preparation Session

Parents planning to have their child baptised are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session. The next session is at MacKillop and Glowrey Rooms of St. Patrick's Cathedral Hall, 3 Lyons St South, Ballarat. Thursday March 5th 2026 at either 10:00 am or 5:30 pm

Bushfire Relief Donations.

St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies) is receiving donations for those communities suffering the aftermath of the recent bushfires. Although not running a specific bushfire appeal, if you wish to contribute to support the work of Vinnies supporting communities affected by the bushfires financial contributions are welcomed. **How to make a financial donation**

- Call our Victorian Fundraising Donation Line on 03 9895 5959
- Donate in-store at any Vinnies retail shop.

Staff will be able to allocate the donation to bushfires via the **Special Purpose Appeals** option at the register. All donations received will help St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria respond where need is greatest for communities affected by the bushfire when it is appropriate to do so.

Thank you for your generosity, care and compassion for others during this time.



OLHC Carpark Garden

All who are interested in how they would like the OLHC carpark garden look are invited to a meeting on Monday 23rd February at 4pm at the Parish Presbytery (this not asking for volunteers for gardening works) any thoughts Sandra 0438 448 942

BB BUSY BOOKKEEPING
Ed Browne

Busy Bookkeeping
Phone 5364 2922
ballarat@busybookkeeping.com.au

BALLARAT MEAT COMPANY
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Wendouree Industrial Park
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Praying with the Holy Father

For children with incurable diseases:
Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope. Lord, hear us



Ministry District of Wendouree, Creswick & Daylesford

Our Lady Help of Christians
480a Gillies Street, Wendouree
Wendouree Office
Office Hours: Wednesday—Friday 9am—1pm
P: 5339 2302
wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

St Augustine's
117 Napier St, Creswick
Creswick/ Daylesford Office
13 Duke St Daylesford P: 0448 220 685
daylesford@ballarat.catholic.org.au

St Peter's
13 Duke Street Daylesford
Office hours -
Thursday 8:30am — 4:00 pm
Friday 8:30am — 4:00 pm

Our parishes are committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which our Parish communities meet: the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation of first peoples.

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time (A) - 15th February 2026

Launch of the Bishop's Social Justice Statement

Since 1940, the Australian Catholic Bishops have released a Social Justice Statement addressing social, economic and ecological issues. Previously Social Justice Sunday celebrated the launch of the Statement. In 2026 there are two Social Justice statements, the first launched earlier this week with the Ballarat launch webinar held Thursday 12th February. The statement, *The Cost of our Living: Economic and Social Justice for the Common Good*, is an invitation to "listen to human stories of struggle and resilience and support those in need". It invites us to reflect upon how we might respond with practical action. The second statement will be released in August 2026. "Both statements are an invitation to us to reflect on the challenges that affect Australians today and to consider how we can respond with justice, compassion and love to those in need within our country" (quote Most Rev. Timothy Harris, Bishop of Townsville).

During the Ballarat launch Thursday 12th February, Bishop Paul Bird advised that the statement raises issues about people who are struggling. That issues raised are not just about economic figures, they are about Individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet.

Guest Speaker Michael Ryan OAM, President of the Ballarat region of the St Vincent de Paul Society, shared a little about the work of "Vinnies". He stated that in the Ballarat region some parts are designated as a poverty zone such as Creswick and Daylesford. In the Corangamite Council region, the major areas are Colac, Camperdown and Terang, In the Glenelg Regional Council areas of activity are Hamilton, Warrnambool and Casterton. Sunraysia's hotspots are Mildura, Robinvale and Ouyen. In the Wimmera Avoca area the busiest areas are Horsham and Ararat. The Society broadly assists with food, household supplies, some educational expenses, utilities, some medical and para-medical costs and essential travel costs. In recent times numbers requiring support has significantly increased asking for everyday necessities. There is also an increase of desperation and loss of independence and dignity. The cost of living and lack of housing has seen teenagers and singles women living in tents, cars and isolated potentially unsafe areas. One companion in Western Victoria is living in a horse float. These people are often fleeing violent situations in their home environment. In Ballarat, there has been an increase in released prisoners who have no reliable means of support or accommodation and are seeking assistance from the society. In addition, is the impact of drought and fires on our communities yet to be assessed.

The good news is that the level of support via donations of cash and living necessities eg. food, toiletries and other things has been very encouraging, especially in the lead up to Christmas. The support has come from across the broader regional community including very generous secular foundations, the Victorian Court System and local business houses and individuals. Before Christmas a first Advent Day was held at the Church of Christ in York St Ballarat where over 1,000 hampers were distributed to needy families in our community. Across the region other food based areas were set up. In addition, the ongoing support we receive from the Ballarat Diocese, Bishop Paul, our parishes and schools is very generous and vital to our work. In the words of Pope Francis, "we must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, ... "

Copies of the Statement can be accessed here: <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/SocialJusticeStatementFEB2026FINAL.pdf>

Staffing
Parish Priest: Fr Marcello Colasante
Finance Officer:
 Jackie Wrigglesworth
OLHC Parish Co-ord & Safeguarding Officer: (tba)
MASS TIMES
 Saturday: **6:00 pm** Vigil Wendouree
 Sunday 9.00 am Creswick
 10.30am Daylesford
Waubra
 1st Sun of the month 8:30 am
Weekday Mass
 Tues 5.30 pm Creswick (Ash Wed)
Ash Wednesday
 Daylesford 9.30 am
 Wendouree 12.00 noon (Ash Wed)
 Thursday 11.00 am Kelaston
 Friday 10:30 am Creswick
Readings for Next Weekend:
1st Sunday of Lent
 1st Reading: Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7
 Ps. Ps 50:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. see v.3
 2nd Reading: Romans 5:12-19
 Gospel: Matthew 4:4

Contact Information
 Our Lady Help of Christians
 Communities of Learmonth, Lexton,
 Miners Rest, Waubra, Wendouree
Parish Office: 480a Gillies Street,
 Wendouree
Phone: 5339 2302
P O Box 192, Wendouree
Email:
 wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Prayer Line: 5339 2302
School Principal: Jaci Commons
School Phone: 5339 4726
www.olhcwendouree.catholic.edu.au
Email:
 enquiries@olhcwendouree.catholic.edu.au
St Valentines Day
 It is believed St Valentine, a 3rd Century Roman priest, he helped couples secretly get married. Emperor Claudius II of Rome - who reigned from the year 268 A.D. to 270 A.D.- banned marriage because he thought unmarried men made better soldiers. Valentine thought this was unfair and decided to break the rules and perform marriages anyway. He kept the ceremonies quiet, but he was eventually caught and later killed on February 14 of the year 270 for defying the emperor. Later, in the 5th century, Pope Gelasius I declared the day of his death as St. Valentine's Day.

Responsorial Psalm Happy are they who follow the law of the Lord!
Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, Alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. Alleluia!

Recently Deceased: Jim O'Keefe, Ann Mossop
Anniversaries: Lewis Howard
We pray: for peace in all in areas of conflict, war and natural disasters, , and for all those in need of prayers.

21st February, 2026	(next week)	Saturday 6.00 pm
LEADER OF SONG		Sue Searls
MINISTER OF THE WORD		Trish Pora, Laureen Rhodes
COMMUNION MINISTERS		Bev Hayward
SACRISTAN		Maureen McAloon, Maureen McAloon
Waubra Church cleaning	February	Kerryn & Lawrence Gallagher

Collections: Thank you for your contributions
 Presbytery: \$374.95 Parish: \$555.00



“Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices.” (LS n 211)

we are called to protect our common home and the most vulnerable among us

Liturgy Dates + Easter Triduum	
Ash Wednesday	February 18, 12 noon OLHC School & Parish Comm'ty
March 2, 8.00 pm	Mass of Thanksgiving for Bishop Paul Bird
March 19, 11.00 am	The Episcopal Ordination and Installation of Fr. Mark Freeman.
Mass of Oils	1.00 pm March 30th, St Patrickk's Cathedral
Reconciliation	7.00 pm March 31st OLHC Wendouree
Holy Thursday	5.30 pm April 2, Creswick - 7.00 pm Daylesford
Good Friday	3.00 pm April 3, OLHC Wendouree & Creswick (Lay Leaders). 3.00 pm Daylesford (Fr. Marcello)
Easter Saturday	7.00 pm Easter Vigil OLHC Wendouree
Easter Sunday	8.30 am Waubra. 10.30 am Daylesford

Episcopal Ordination and Installation of the Ninth Bishop of Ballarat updated notice

The ordination and installation of Fr Mark Freeman as the next Bishop of Ballarat will be at held on Thursday March 19, 2026 at 11.00am at St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat. Due to limited seating capacity in St Patrick's Cathedral, attendance at the Mass is via invitation and Entry Card. Entry to the Cathedral will be via Entry Card only. The Mass will be livestreamed – link to be advised. There is the opportunity to view the livestream in St Patrick's Cathedral Hall. Please register your interest to attend the livestream in the Hall by providing your name and email address to Julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au

2026 Roundtable Ecological Theology Sessions
 Venue: Mercy Centre Ballarat East (Gent Street entrance). Dates: February 24, March 24, April 21, May 18, June 18, August 19, September 15, October 13, November 17. Times: Afternoon sessions: 1.30pm - 3.00pm; Evening sessions: 7.00pm -8.30pm. To register, text Sr Veronica Lawson on 0408392297 or email veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au

Palm Sunday Rally
 The Ballarat Rural Australians for Refugees invites you to support the Refugee Advocacy Network's Palm Sunday Rally in Melbourne on Sunday, March 29, 2026. Program for the day: 1.00 pm - gather on Princes Bridge with banners and placards; 1.30pm - Solidarity walk to Birrarung Marr Lower Terrace (Angel statue); 2.00 pm – 3.30 pm - a full program of speakers and music. More information available at <https://refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au/>

A Charter for Reconciliation and Forgiveness
Reflection on the Gospel-6th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
(Matthew 5:17-37)

- Veronica Lawson RSM

We sometimes forget that Jesus was a faithful Jew who observed the Law handed down within Israel from generation to generation. Today's gospel is from Matthew's Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus, the faithful Jewish teacher, addresses his Jewish disciples and the Jewish crowds who gather to hear his words.

The mission of Jesus is to fulfill the law ("I have come to..."), not to do away with it, and fulfilling the law is a question of "righteousness". The Greek term for righteousness, *dikaiousunē*, translates both the Hebrew *sedeqah* meaning "right relationship" and *mishpat* meaning "justice". The righteousness of the official teachers of the Law, the scribes and Pharisees, their manner of relating to others and their notions of justice, are judged to be quite inadequate for those who are part of God's reign, the kin-dom "of heaven" in Matthew's terminology. The righteousness of Jesus' followers is to "exceed" such minimalist interpretations and expressions of the Law.

Jesus, authentic teacher and interpreter of the Law, offers six examples of the righteousness that "fulfills" the Law. Four of these examples are included in today's reading. What was heard "of old" is contrasted with what Jesus wants to say to his hearers. In the first instance, they all know that the Law forbids murder. They may not have considered the connection between unrestrained anger or murderous thoughts and murder itself. In a series of cascading sentences, Jesus presents a charter for reconciliation and forgiveness. He reminds his audience that true worship demands a forgiving heart expressed in action. He includes a fairly pragmatic reason for settling out of court: you may otherwise find yourself in prison. There may be an implicit criticism here of the increasingly punitive legal system of the time, a reminder to us of the futility of incarceration of children and the incarceration of anyone for minor crimes.

The second example puts "lustful looking" on a par with adultery. In an age of easy access to internet pornography, this example has a particular resonance: any form of sexual depravity is destructive of right relationship. The third example on divorce is complicated by the exceptive clause, "except in the case of *porneia*". *Porneia* referred to any illicit sexual activity. Here it probably means marriages within degrees of kinship prohibited by Jews but not prohibited by Gentiles. The question seems to have arisen as to whether couples in such unions could stay together on becoming Christian. While Jesus presents the ideal (no divorce), we have to put this teaching into a broader context. Writing to the people of Corinth on this subject, Paul allows for exceptions, since "God has called us to peace". The fourth example is about swearing on oath. Righteousness eschews "fake news" and calls for honesty and transparency in everyday dealings. If the words we use are congruent with the intentions of our heart, we should not have to invoke God as a witness to the veracity of our claims.