

# The Catholic Parish of Sacred Heart & St Columba

Our Parish is a Christian community which welcomes all to walk together in a spirit of compassion, justice and hope.

## PARISH NEWSLETTER 14 / 15 DECEMBER 2024 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



### St Columba Church

cnr Glenhuntly & Normandy Rds  
Elwood 3184

### Sacred Heart Church

83 Grey Street, St Kilda West 3182

### St Columba Primary School

24 Glenhuntly Road Elwood 3184  
9531 6560;  
[www.stcolumbasprimary.org](http://www.stcolumbasprimary.org)

### Sacred Heart Mission

87 Grey Street, St Kilda West 3182  
9537 1166;  
[www.sacredheartmission.org](http://www.sacredheartmission.org)

### PARISH HOUSE

2 Normandy Road, Elwood 3184  
03 9531 6120; [shsc@shscparish.org.au](mailto:shsc@shscparish.org.au)  
[www.shscparish.org.au](http://www.shscparish.org.au)

**Parish Priest:** Fr John Petrus  
[john@shscparish.org.au](mailto:john@shscparish.org.au)

**Pastoral Ministry Leader:** Christine Mitchell  
[christine@shscparish.org.au](mailto:christine@shscparish.org.au)

**Office Manager:** Jane Hearnese  
[jane@shscparish.org.au](mailto:jane@shscparish.org.au)

### SHM Pastoral Care Worker

### St Columba Principal / REC:

Daniella Maddalena  
[dmaddalena@scelwood.catholic.edu.au](mailto:dmaddalena@scelwood.catholic.edu.au)

**Deputy Principal:** Bern Bradley  
[bernb@scelwood.catholic.edu.au](mailto:bernb@scelwood.catholic.edu.au)

### Parish Safeguarding Committee:

Fr John Petrus, Christine Mitchell,  
Daniella Maddalena, Jane Hearnese

**Parish Visiting Team:** Lay Pastoral Care Group; Legion of Mary Groups  
Call or email the Parish Office.

**St Vincent de Paul President:** Dominic Tesoriero  
[domtess1@gmail.com](mailto:domtess1@gmail.com)

**Elwood and St Kilda Legion of Mary**  
Please contact the parish office.

### Rejoice The Lord is Near by Chester Yacub SJ

[An extract from a homily delivered to a gathering of overseas Jesuits in formation. Source Think Faith, [thinkfaith.org](http://thinkfaith.org)]

On the third Sunday of Advent, the Church commemorates 'Gaudete Sunday', where 'Gaudete'... translates to 'Rejoice'. In our second reading, we are also exhorted by Paul to 'rejoice' - and not just for now, mind you, but always! However, on Gaudete Sunday it is crucial to recognise that the jubilant atmosphere within the Church may not resonate with everyone. The burdens of the past year, laden with trials and tribulations, may cast a shadow over the impending Christmas festivities. The sorrow of familial loss, anxiety about personal health, strained relationships, papers to submit or projects to complete right after the new year, can overshadow the joyous occasion for some. Across the fraught global landscape, conflicts entangled in historical, political, economic, socio-cultural and environmental complexities inflict profound human suffering. In more developed countries, societies grapple with a migration crisis, intertwining human lives seeking safety with the delicate balance of national interests, security concerns and humanitarian imperatives. In light of the recent Synod, disparities in the Church may lead to divisions, requiring careful discernment of diverse perspectives. In the face of these challenges and more, a valid, grounded and honest question emerges: is there reason to rejoice in prevailing adversities?

Contemplating the challenge of rejoicing amid world and personal disorder is already daunting but consider the Herculean task of inspiring others to find joy in such circumstances. Rejoicing, in this sense, is not just an inward action to gladden our hearts, but an outward deed directed towards another person to encourage and inspire them to experience great delight.

A poignant illustration of this struggle is found in the narrative of John the Baptist, whose journey exemplifies the difficulty of encouraging rejoicing, especially when confronted with personal existential dilemmas. Entrusted with the profound responsibility of bearing witness to the light, John could have grappled with the unique challenge of not being the light himself. Imagine the internal conflict he must have faced, relegated to the role of number two - he's just John, anywhere else, he'd be number one - an experience that undoubtedly tested his ego and sense of significance. Yet, John embraced his calling as a witness, tasked with vocalising the message of the light rather than embodying it. His humility in accepting the role of a herald, not the luminary, speaks volumes about his character... Within this narrative, there lies a profound lesson - that embracing one's role, even when not in the spotlight, can contribute to a greater narrative of joy and purpose. Amid doubts and darkness, the call to rejoice, and the call to call others to rejoice, remain.

As Christians, our call extends beyond merely experiencing joy ourselves; it beckons us to become heralds of joy, inviting and inspiring those around us to partake in the celebration of life. Whether you find yourself in the role of a parent or guardian or caregiver, a teacher shaping young minds, a community leader guiding your neighbours or, like some of my fellow Jesuits, assigned to further apostolic training to be a competent shepherd of God's flock - the essence of our shared calling remains consistent. In the face of personal struggles, our duty is to be companions, encouragers and beacons of faith for those navigating their challenges.

(cont.)

## WARM WELCOME

Welcome to all who celebrate the Eucharist with us today, to the church communities across our parish and a special welcome to all who happen to be visiting our Parish.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Today we stand in footsteps millennia old. May we acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the Kulin Nations, who are the traditional custodians of our parish land, whose cultures and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture, this land since men and women awoke from the great dream.

We acknowledge their continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

## SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Our Parish supports the recommendations of the Royal Commission and all endeavours to bring healing to and justice for the victims of abuse. Our Parish Leadership & Development Team and Safeguarding Committee work proactively to ensure the safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults in our community.

There are a range of important and interesting resources on the Church noticeboards and on our website supporting and highlighting Safeguarding. Please feel free to contact a member of the Safeguarding Committee if you have any concerns or ideas.

## BRIGIDINE ASYLUM SEEKERS PROJECT (BASP)

### Newsletter 118 December 2024

We have placed copies of the latest newsletter at the back of the churches. In there you will find news on the recent legislation regarding asylum seekers, the current work of BASP, some stories on those whose lives they have touched and a huge 'thank you' to all who have given so much support to their work. Let us continue to support BASP materially, with volunteering efforts and in prayer.

## COLUMBAN CALENDERS AVAILABLE FOR \$10

The Columban Art Calendar is an iconic Catholic Calendar, well-known for its traditional religious paintings and liturgical information and is a major fundraiser for Columban Missionaries. 2025 marks the 103rd edition.

These are a great gift for Christmas and can be purchased from Anne at Sacred Heart or Christine at St Columba.

## SIGN UP SHEET FOR VOLUNTEERING AT THE CHRISTMAS MASSES

Please sign up on these sheets, which are located at the back of the Church, and Christine will get back to you in the coming week.

## REJOICE THE LORD IS NEAR (CONT.)

Congregating in fellowship, engaging in collective prayer and extending mutual support creates a nurturing environment where believers can find solace and strength. In the face of a fractured world, the power of communal bonds becomes a light guiding individuals through adversity.

The call to rejoice then takes on a nuanced meaning. It invites us not to dismiss the challenges but to find resilience and hope. Rejoicing, in this context, becomes an act of defiance against despair, a commitment to enduring joy that transcends circumstances. It is a testament to the human spirit's capacity to find light in the darkest moments and to work collectively towards a world where joy is not an elusive concept but a shared reality.

'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.'

## PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

### The Beloved is near

The Beloved is not near in the future, but near to our hearts, now.

The Beloved, born into danger and conflict, dead and raised from all meanness, has our back, guards our joy and shows us the way.

Dare to be gentle in a rough world.

In such a manger the child comes. Amen.

Source: Steve Garnaas-Holmes, *Unfolding Light*  
[www.unfoldinglight.net](http://www.unfoldinglight.net)

## VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2024

Thank you very much to everyone who donated to the Christmas Appeal. Your generosity will go a long way to help people in our local area who need our support.

*A huge thank you to our Vinnies team from our parish community. Your ongoing support and time is greatly appreciated.*

## DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- **Thursday 19 December:** Communal Reconciliation, 7.00pm at Sacred Heart Church. The theme is 'Anchored in Hope'
- **Saturday 21 December:** First Rite of Reconciliation, 9.00am at St Columba and 11.00am at Sacred Heart.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to those who came to assist Fr John empty the garage into the skip and move some furniture elsewhere. Your helping hands and strong muscles were deeply appreciated!





## ALL WELCOME FOR THE JOURNEY

### Christmas Eve

Tuesday 24 December

5.30pm Carols and

6.00pm Family Mass, St Columba Church

Children are encouraged to dress in nativity costumes

AND

10.30pm Carols and

11.00pm Mass, Sacred Heart Church

**Christmas Day: Wednesday 25 December**

9.00am Mass, St Columba Church

11.00am Mass, Sacred Heart Church

**New Years Day: Wednesday 1 January**

10.00am Mass, Sacred Heart Church

Parish House  
2 Normandy Road, Elwood

Sacred Heart Church  
83 Grey Street, St  
Kilda West

St Columba Church  
26 Glenhuntly Road,  
Elwood

## ST COLUMBA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The final assembly for 2024 was held on Friday. The Grade Six students ran the assembly and reflected on their years at St Columba. The students also thanked the staff and provided heartfelt and insightful snippets about their



class teachers, LSOs and specialist teachers. They also thanked Principal Daniella Maddalena, Deputy Principal Bern Bradley and Fr John for their leadership. Rosie spoke of Fr John...

"Fr John has this amazing way of making everyone feel welcome, whether it's through his warm smile, a kind word or just the way he listens. But what really makes him stand out is his storytelling. When Fr John reads to us or shares a story, it's like being transported to another world. Father John, thank you for reminding us that kindness, faith and a little bit of imagination can make the world a better place. We're so lucky to have you in our school!"

Congratulations to the Grade Six students and their teachers, Jane and Belle. We wish them well for the End of Year and Graduation Mass on Monday night.

## PARISH CHRISTMAS BBQ IS HERE: WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

The social and fundraising committee anticipated about 80 people will attending our BBQ this year, an increase from 67 last year, which was an increase from the previous year. At the time of writing, we had 85 registrants! This is wonderful news, and we hope that all enjoy the good food and the fellowship of one another. Regarding some 'housekeeping' matters:

1. Please enter the school hall via the school carpark on Normandy Road, and then through the Parish Centre.
2. Those bringing desserts, leave those on the tables in the Parish Centre.
3. Those bringing salads, please place those on the allotted tables in the hall.
4. The meat will be cooked outside and brought into and served from the hall. We are asked not to congregate around the cooking area.
5. The toilets are through the hall and are sign-posted.
6. Please do not open the glass doors into the general school area as this will activate alarms.
7. The parish has decided **not** to provide alcohol, and we ask people not to bring any either as we do have a responsibility to care for those who are vulnerable to alcohol in our midst. We will provide some soft drinks and water and ask people to also bring some along.
8. Children are welcome to play in the school playground but **must** be supervised by an adult known to them at all times.
9. The Committee and volunteers will begin to set-up at 11.00 a.m. and would appreciate hands to help in this matter and in packing up after the event.

A heartfelt thanks to the Social/Fundraising Committee and our Brazilian friends for their work in the preparation and execution of this wonderful Parish events.

Let us celebrate the joy of belonging to a supportive, diverse, inclusive and caring community.



## RECYCLING OLD CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christina Siciliano from Sacred Heart is a volunteer with Stella Maris Seafarers Centre. Christina and her fellow volunteers are seeking old Christmas cards to recycle and reuse for seafarers. If you have any old Christmas cards please give them to Christina or leave them at the back of either church. In 2025, when you are putting your Christmas cards away, you are welcome to leave them at the back of church to use for next Christmas. Thank you!

## BREAK OPEN THE WORD 2025

We have ordered copies of **Break Open the Word 2025**. If any parishioners, especially readers at Mass, would like a copy please let Jane or Christine know. We ask for \$15 to cover costs.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

**First Reading:** Zephaniah 3: 14-18

**Responsorial Psalm:**

Cry out with joy and gladness:  
for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.

**Second Reading:** Philippians 4: 4-7

**Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

Alleluia!

**Gospel:** Luke 3: 10-18

## OUR LITURGICAL CALENDAR

### MONDAY 16 December - SUNDAY 22 December 2024

**MONDAY** 11.00am MASS at Sacred Heart Community,  
101 Grey Street, St Kilda (WWCC required)

**THURSDAY** 11.00am MASS at Sacred Heart Church

**FRIDAY** 9.00am MASS in Parish House, Elwood

**SATURDAY** 6.00pm MASS at Columba Church

**SUNDAY** 9.00am MASS at St Columba Church  
11.00am MASS at Sacred Heart Church  
(this mass is also live streamed)  
Gospel: Luke 1: 39-44

### COLLECTIONS: Last weekend

Church Account Collection	Presbytery Account Collection	
Envelopes	\$30.00	Total \$300.85
Loose cash	\$310.65	
Total	\$340.65	
Average for 46 weeks	\$401.51	Average for 46 weeks \$233.02

## PARISH SERVICE AND SUPPORT PROGRAM

Fr John and the parish team are so grateful for the wonderful support that continues to be given to him and the parish.

You can contribute to the collections through [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) - click this link - <https://tithe.ly/give?c=911524>

for once off or regular giving using your credit card or download the [tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) app. You can also contact Jane in the office to set up giving.

Just a reminder that our First Collection at mass supports the running of the parish, such as pastoral support & various ministries and administration costs - phones, utilities etc. Our Second Collection supports Fr John and covers his stipend and living expenses."



## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

"Prayer is what keeps the faith, without it, faith wavers"

*Pope Francis*

**All Recently Deceased:** Kathy Marshall (Anne's daughter)

**1st Month Anniversary:** Michael Cavaliere

**1st Anniversaries:** Enda Czermak 23.12, Gerard McCarthy, Gerard Dowling, Wilma Ryan, Monty Sultana, Conor Riordan

**9th Anniversary:** Thérèse Mitchell 6.12.2015

**Anniversaries:** Mak Czermak 28.12.10, Mark Watkins 13.12, Carole Bilton 15.12, Helena Szeffler 17.12, D. Graham Bilton 29.12, Graeme Corners, Mary Conney, Sean Deville, Bernadette Jennings, Ethan Carmichael, Stephen Keegan Ondrej Soukup, Roger Graham, Maurice Kay, Karl Roberts, Jason Curran, Ernie O'Keeffe 3.12.2019, Dorothy Corcoran, Raphael Ruske, Mrs Amad, Bob Collins Anthony Ellul, Merrill Lees, Pamela Pimento, Merrill Lees, Eva Bebjewsky, Norman Garland, Naser Azari, Lucas Santos Fraga, Robin Wheatley, Leslie Korosztos, Barry Scanlan, Bill Waucope, Rolando Chan, Bridie Spierings, Bartolo Canestra, Maria Terzita Canestra, Angelo Marcon 5.12.69, Mark Samuel-King, Peter Cescato, Royce Hagen, Stuart & Beryl Melville 5.12, Stephen Phillips, Domenico Cerasuolo, Millie Walker, Esther Dempsey 19.12, Julie Lyons-Vague, Rita Briglia, Rachel West, Maria Cafarella 26.12.11, Augusto Strangis 2.12.01, Bob Alexander, Agnes Castellano 8.12.10, Darryl Shand 16.12.10, Frank Ruberto 26.12.10, Charlotte Cooper 12.12.73, Clare O'Connor 29.12.05, Maria Basile, Mara Dale, Jackie Everett, Sandra Aerche, Gary Munari, Dorothy McEwan, Kolja and Peter Kovacevic, Pashko and Lena Djelovic, Michele Pescatore, Maria Pescatore, Maria Duca, Nicola Duca, Nicola & Maria Panella, Paolo & Maria Duca, Nunziata Panettieri, Denise McAlorum 24.12.03, Gavin Curran 23.12.11

**Sick:** Lol Patten (UK), Jackie Pyster, Ramon Lopez, Colin Meanwell, Luke Dennis, Eddie, Alison Barry-Jones (Qld), Chail and her husband Callum, Patrick McCaffrey, Seamus Quinn, Sue McLennan, Fr Terry Kean, Peter Nicholson, Mark Weinberg, Sophia, Ned Connors, Jean Cropley, Rose Fonti, Alexander, Felipe and Anne, Pat Ficcaro, Seamus Quinn, Lyn Crossly, Petra Dreischaerf, Nichole Garnaut, Francesca Shelton.

## ROSTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

### 21 / 22 December: 4th Sunday of Advent

#### St Columba Welcomes

6pm Mass:

M: Volunteer needed

C / L: Karen Ramanair, Caroline Price

Set up: Karen Ramanair & Sree Chelvakumaran

9am Mass:

M: Ada Nardella

C / L: Volunteers needed

Set up: Trevor Fletcher, Marcelle Garnier & Priscilla No

Hospitality Roster: Michael & Lulu

#### Sacred Heart Welcomes

11am Mass:

M: Anne Dexter

C / L: Nancye Edwards, Anna Griffiths

Set up: Anzel & Chella

**Prayer of the Faithful:** Daniel O'Connor