

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter



Monday 14th December 2020
Term 4 Week 11

PO Box 2027
Ballarat East VIC 3354
Phone: 5331 6311
Fax: 5331 8337

Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

2020 Key Dates

Term 4
Oct 7 – Dec 16

Term 4 Week 11

Wednesday 16th December
Last Day of Term 4

All other Calendar Dates
for 2020 have been
updated and can be
accessed live on the
Skoolbag App or by visiting
the School Website.

2021 Key Dates

Term 1
Jan 28 – March 31

Term 1 Week 1

Monday 25th January
School Office Opens

Tuesday 26th January
Australia Day Public Holiday

Wednesday 27th January
First Day for Teachers

Thursday 28th January
English Testing Day 1

Friday 29th January
English Testing Day 2

Term 1 Week 2

Monday 1st February
First Day for Students

Tuesday 2nd February
P&F Meeting

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to our last newsletter of the school year!

Please note that school finishes on Wednesday 16th December at normal end of the day school times eg. 3.15pm. Buses continue to run as normal.

Deputy Principal at St Alipius Catholic School



I write to inform you that Jaci Commons (Class Teacher 5JC) has been successful in her application for a promotion position at St. Alipius Catholic School Ballarat East, as Deputy Principal.

We thank Jaci for her wonderful service at SFX and congratulate her on her appointment to St. Alipius. We wish her every blessing as she makes the transition into a new school community. A process is currently in place to recruit a teacher for Year 5. We hope to be in a position to make an announcement shortly.

St. Francis Xavier End of School Prayer

On Wednesday 16th December at 9:30am we will celebrate our school year with a school gathering and prayer. This is our way to formally reflect upon and celebrate all we have achieved this year and to say farewell to our Year 6 students. We are sorry that families cannot attend this gathering because of COVID19 restrictions. We look forward to a time when things return to normal and we can welcome families back to our whole school gatherings!

2021 St. Francis Xavier Primary School Captains

Congratulations to the following children who have been elected as 2021 St. Francis Xavier Primary School Captains:



Ky Geljon



Emme Geljon



Levi Hynes



Eliza Trigg

I am sure that you join me in congratulating our Captains on their appointments!

Wednesday 3rd February

Foundation Children at
Home

Friday 5th February

Beginning of School Year
Mass

Term 1 Week 3**Monday 8th February**

Year Ahead Meetings

Tuesday 9th February

School Board Meeting

Wednesday 10th February

Foundation Children at
Home

Term 1 Week 4**Monday, 17th February**

Enrolment Applications
Open

Tuesday 16th February

School Open Day #1

Getting to Know Your Child
as Person and a Learner
Meeting #1

Wednesday 17th February

Foundation Children at
Home

Term 1 Week 5**Tuesday 23rd February**

School Open Day #2

Wednesday 24th February

Foundation Children at
Home

School Open Day #2

Getting to Know Your Child
as Person and a Learner
Meeting #1

Friday 26th February

Casual Clothes Day

Term 1 Week 6**Monday 1st March**

School Photos

Year 5 Cyber Safety and
Chromebook Boot camp -
Parent Meeting

Tuesday 2nd March

P&F Meeting

Wednesday 4th March

Foundation Children at
Home

Christmas Mass Times at St. Alipius – Ballarat East**Christmas Eve Thursday 24th December**

- 6:00pm St. Alipius - Ballarat East
- 7:00pm Ss. Peter & Paul's - Bunninyong
- 8:00pm St. Alipius - Ballarat East
- 12:00am St. Alipius - Ballarat East (Midnight)

Christmas Day Friday 25th December

- 8:00am St. Alipius - Ballarat East
- 9:30am Ss. Peter & Paul's - Bunninyong

Beginning of Year English Testing 2021

Our school interviews website will be
open from 9.00am on Tuesday 1st



Book School Interviews Online

December for you to log a time for your
child's **Beginning of Year English Testing**. You can logon yourself and choose your preferred
time or alternatively contact the office and we can do this for you. The allocated time is 40
mins per test.

St. Francis Xavier **Beginning of Year Testing** will be held at:

8.30am – 4:30 pm on **Thursday 28th January 2021**

8.30am – 4:30 pm On **Friday 29th January 2021**

The web address for booking is <http://www.schoolinterviews.com.au> and the new logon
code is : **qn4zj**

Remember if you are keen on a particular time you will need to be speedy as time slots are
taken quickly. You will receive a confirmation email informing you of your child's testing
time once you have selected a time. Please keep this close by so that you are reminded of
this commitment you have made. We expect to see all our students at the **Beginning of Year
English Testing**.

Please make sure you book the interview with your child's 2021 Class Teacher!
Instructions are attached.

School Fee Schedule for 2021

Last Monday the School Fee Schedule for 2021 was sent home to all families. A copy of the
schedule for 2021 is also attached. These fees were set by the St Francis Xavier Finance
Committee then ratified by the St Francis Xavier Primary School Board at their November
meeting. If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Overdue School Fees 2020

We have a number of school fee accounts that are now overdue. Payment of accounts were
due at the end of third term (unless alternative arrangements were made).

For those that haven't settled their accounts could they please do so as a matter of urgency
or alternatively contact Gabrielle to make another arrangement.

Bus Transport for 2021

If there are any changes with regard to your child's transport from school for 2021 could you
kindly fill in a Transportation From School form or contact the office with the relevant
changes.

If you are a new family starting in 2021 and intend for your child to travel from school,
please find attached the Transportation Form for you to complete and return back to the
office.

Thursday 4th March
School Open Day #3

Friday 5th March
SFX Junior School Athletics
Day (F - Year 2) Russell
Square Sports Ground
North

Term 1 Week 7

Monday 8th March
Labour Day Public Holiday

Tuesday 9th March
Year 6 Camp - Melbourne

Term 1 Week 8

Term 1 Week 9

Monday 22nd March
SFX Middle-Senior School
Athletics Day (Year 3 - 6)
Llanberris Athletics Reserve

Friday 26th March
Casual Dress Day

Term 1 Week 10

Wednesday 31st March
Last Day of Term 1

Thursday 1st April
Holy Thursday
Friday 2nd April
Good Friday

Sunday 4th April
Easter Sunday

Term 2
April 19 – June 25

Term 2 Week 1

Monday 19th April
First Day for Students

Operoo (formerly CareMonkey) for school parents....

As you know we take the health and safety of your children very seriously. As such will continue with our use of **Operoo** as a health and safety program. It has been very well received by families again this year!



Operoo is an innovative parent controlled electronic medical form for schools, clubs and other groups with a duty of care. It's an electronic version of the paper based forms you're always having to fill in for excursions, camps, enrolments, etc.

As a parent you will shortly receive an email or SMS from the **Operoo** system inviting you to enter the details for your child in an electronic medical form. Should you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Lost Property

Our Lost Property baskets are overflowing at the moment with the main item being jumpers, the majority of them unnamed. I urge you to come and search through these baskets and take what might look like your child's item of clothing. I also ask that you make sure all items of clothing are named. We understand that children put them down and forget about them so it is much easier to return them when there is a name.

Farewell

We say farewell to our families who are leaving us after many years of dedication to the St. Francis Xavier School Community. I thank them on your behalf for their contribution to the school, for their commitment to the life of the school and for their hard work in ensuring that St. Francis Xavier is a nurturing, supportive, welcoming place for all our children to be part of during their early years. I thank them and wish them much happiness and good fortune in their futures.

Also leaving St. Francis Xavier at the end of the year are a number of very important members of our staff:

- **Mrs. Jaci Commons (St. Alipius)**
- **Ms. Beth Ferguson (Yarrawonga)**
- **Mrs. Majella Muller (ACU Nursing)Ms. Maddy Halouvas (Queensland)**

We thank them for their significant contributions to St. Francis Xavier over the years and we wish them all well in their future endeavours. We will recognise and farewell these much loved staff at our End of Year Prayer Gathering this Wednesday 16th December.

Thank you to your staff

I commend all staff members to you; each have their roles that have an effect on your child's life in the school, whether it be the teacher in the classroom, the support from our office staff, the specialist teachers or the teacher aides who offer support throughout the rooms. I commend them all for their passion for your children, for their commitment to ensuring that what is vital in your child's education is catered for, for their discernment of the educational agendas that affect your children and most importantly, for the nurturing relationships they build with all the children within St. Francis Xavier. I am often humbled by the way they honour your children in the way they speak about them and in the way they go about their work with them.

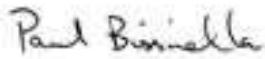
The children are all showing signs of tiredness after a very busy year. Their resilience and positivity has remained with them throughout the year and they have been an inspiration for all the staff. Hopefully they will have fun days ahead with times for rest and relaxation.

On behalf of Sr. Berenice, Fr. Kevin, David Beaver and the Staff of St. Francis Xavier, I wish you and your loved ones the Peace, Joy and Loving Spirit that is Christmas and hope that you are able to spend a little time reflecting on its meaning within your lives.....the real gift of Christmas / the baby Jesus born to bring hope to us all.

For those of you that are travelling to love ones I hope that you arrive and return safely.

Happy Christmas and take care over the holiday season!

Yours sincerely,



Paul Bissinella

Principal

Catherine McAuley

We have one solid comfort amidst this little tripping about: our hearts can always be in the same place, centered in God, for whom alone we go forward or stay back.

Letter to de Sales White December 20, 1840

Religious Education News



Sacraments For Year 3 & 4 Students - Postponed Until 2021

As yet we have had no indication of when Masses will resume or when COVID 19 restrictions will be lifted for larger gatherings. We have no information for you about when the children will be able to receive the sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation. As soon as we know, you will know. Thank you for your patience during this difficult time. Please continue to complete the booklets which were sent home at the beginning of Term 3. Those families who have handed in their child's Baptism certificate, rest assured that they are safe and will not go missing.



Connecting With The Eucharist During COVID 19 Closures

Many people are missing the opportunity to attend Sunday Mass during this time. If you wanted to gather and participate in Mass online, try one of the following websites. It is not the same as the real thing, and you can't receive Eucharist, but it may be of comfort to you to hear the Gospel and pray.

[St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat](#) * [Melbourne Catholic's Live Mass Streaming Sites](#) * [Sydney Live Streaming Mass Sites](#)

Baptism

If your child has been baptised since he/she started at St Francis Xavier Primary School, make sure you have informed us and you have sent a copy of the Baptism certificate to the school office. Your child will not be listed as Catholic in our school records and you may miss out on sacrament information. If you are seeking Baptism for your child, please call the St Alipius parish office on 53326611. If you wish to convert to Catholicism from another Christian faith, also call the parish office.

Bernadette Luckman
Religious Education Leader

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL - Sunday 20th December 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT YEAR B

Gospel

Lk 1:26-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

You will conceive and bear a son.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

The Gospel of the Lord

REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

Gospel Reflection

We have reached the final Sunday in the season of Advent – a time of preparing ourselves to recognise and celebrate Christ's presence in the world, both historically and in an ongoing, timeless way. This week's gospel account of the Annunciation is an ideal culmination to this season as we recall Mary's emphatic 'Yes' to all that was being asked of her. At the end of the Advent season of reflection and preparation to recognise Christ's presence in the world and in our lives, what better response could there be than to simply say, 'Yes'?

In a world that is driven by selfishness and the drive to push one's self ahead of others, Mary's selfless act stands as a challenge to our modern society. Even in her own time, Mary's decision must have been an enormously difficult one – one that had the potential to bring great shame on herself and Joseph. Yet, her decision is made swiftly and in faith. She trusts God absolutely and gives her life over into God's hands. That is perhaps the supreme act of faith; to say 'Yes' to God so completely that you are prepared to hand over direction and control of your own life.

Few of us tend to be visited by angels who lay out God's plan for us as clearly as Gabriel did for Mary. For most of us, it is a challenge to discern God's desire for us; to realise what it is that we are called to do and then give ourselves fully to that call. In the hustle and bustle of life, it is difficult to hear anything that God may be trying to ask of us. Perhaps the example of Mary's 'Yes' is a reminder to be still enough to hear the question in the first place!

Scriptural context

Throughout the gospel of Luke, great importance is placed on the people in society who were regarded as the 'lesser ones'. The mission of Jesus, as described in Luke's gospel, is directed towards those who were unimportant in the eyes of society. In first century society, women were regarded as much less in status than men. So it is significant that the first revelation of Jesus is made to a woman, Mary. The angel Gabriel announces that Mary has won God's favour. For a woman to win God's favour would have been unimaginable to many Jews at the time, yet, through this woman God was revealed in human form.

Have you thought? What about Joseph?

Luke's account of the Annunciation (and indeed much of the infancy narrative) focuses its attention on Mary. But what of Joseph? How does he react to the news that his betrothed wife is pregnant? By Jewish Law and tradition, Mary could well have been stoned to death if Joseph had denounced her. Even if Joseph allowed people to think that he was the father of her child, this would have caused an enormous scandal – a breach of the sanctity of the betrothal vow. However, foreshadowing the compassion of Jesus himself, Joseph acts purely out of compassion and continues with his marriage to Mary.

Different View – Virgin births

Some critics of Christian tradition argue that the account of the virgin conception and birth of Jesus is merely a literary device used to give status to Jesus' birth. At the time, it was not an uncommon device to accord a significant figure a heroic or even virginal birth. In Greek, Egyptian and even Roman legend, several characters are credited with virgin births. Some authors point to the fact that it is only the gospels of Matthew and Luke and none of the earlier writings that portray Mary as a virgin. The argument suggests that assigning Jesus a virgin birth was an attempt to place Jesus alongside other historical and legendary figures as a person of great status.

A beginning point for discussion of this week's Gospel with children:

- Q. What was Mary's initial reaction to the appearance of the angel?
- Q. Why do you think Mary accepted God's will so readily?
- Q. Who do you know who has tried to live their life in response to God?
- Q. In what ways does God communicate a call or challenge to people today?

Greg Sunter has worked in Catholic Education (Brisbane) for many years, most recently as a member of the Religious Education team and Mission and Formation team. He has extensive experience of praying with young people and forming others to lead prayer with young people. He is the author of books on adolescent faith, is a regular speaker at youth and evangelisation conferences, and is a retreat and reflection facilitator and presenter. His areas of interest include religious education, theology, scripture, spirituality, Catholic ethos, prayer, and ministry with young people.

Curriculum News



Assessment and Reporting

This term we have continued to use Digital Portfolios to assist with reporting on student achievement. Throughout this term, key assessment tasks will continue to be uploaded to Seesaw. The assessment tasks include a Learning Intention, authentic feedback from the teacher and where appropriate, a student reflection. This enables parents and families to develop a real-time understanding of how their children are progressing towards key curriculum objectives and assist children (with support from teachers) in identifying future direction in their learning.

Digital Portfolios via the platform of Seesaw will again sit alongside formal reporting that will occur this Semester. You will receive a formal report for your child towards the end of this term via the Parent Access Module (PAM).

Formal reports will include:

1. Work habits

2. General curriculum overview statements for the following learning areas:

- Religious Education
- English
 - o Reading and Viewing
 - o Writing
 - o Speaking and Listening
- Mathematics
 - o Number and Algebra
 - o Measurement and Geometry
 - o Statistics and Probability

3. Personalised comment for the following learning area:

Called to action through Gospel values and Mercy tradition we will enrich thinking, expand horizons and pursue excellence!

- Personal and Social Learning

4. *Level of attainment in the form of a dot on a continuum for the following learning areas in accordance with our whole school teaching and learning plan:*

- Religious Education
- English
- Mathematics
- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Languages - Japanese
- Science- Environmental Education
- Physical Education

Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) Testing

PAT testing continues for our Year 1 to Year 6 students over the next two weeks.

PAT provides objective, norm-referenced information to teachers about their students' skills and understandings in a range of key areas. Each PAT has its own proficiency scale with descriptors outlining the content and skills students are consolidating at any given point on that scale.

PAT provides quantitative and qualitative data on student performance, making the PAT ideal for understanding students' current strengths and areas for improvement, informing teaching and learning, and monitoring progress over time. We hope to share these results with you at the beginning of 2021.

Jayne Bosworth

Deputy Principal - Learning Enhancement

Wellbeing News



Merry Christmas

Merry Christmas to everyone and may this festive season be full of health, happiness and being with those you love!

The attached comes from our Seasons for Growth program - A mindful guide to looking after yourself this Christmas. I hope it may just help when needed.

Happy Days and Happy Holidays. See you in 2021.

Jane Clark

Wellbeing Leader



DECEMBER SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Thursday 10th of December to Wednesday the 23rd of December 2020

(excluding weekends and public holiday)

Eastwood Leisure Centre, Ballarat

8am to 5pm each day

Pre-School to Grade 6, boys & girls

\$45 per day (\$40 per day for 5+ days)

Enrol online www.kellysports.com.au/greater-ballarat

Any queries call Dominic on 0417 967 621 or Paul on 0423 335 616

OR

JANUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Monday 4th of January to Friday the 29th of January 2021

(excluding weekends and public holiday)

Eastwood Leisure Centre, Ballarat

8am to 5pm each day

Pre-School to Grade 6, boys & girls

\$45 per day (\$40 per day for 5+ days)

Enrol online www.kellysports.com.au/greater-ballarat

Any queries call Dominic on 0417 967 621 or Paul on 0423 335 616



Help support local Scouts with our 2020 Christmas tree fundraiser!

3rd Ballarat Scout Group are again joining forces with 7th Ballarat-Sebastopol to sell live Christmas trees. Please help us raise much needed funds for our group by sharing this information in person and on social media. Below are the dates and prices along with a QR code which directs you straight to our Facebook tree sales page.

Pop over to the Facebook page to pre-order your tree today!

<https://www.facebook.com/3rdand7thballaratchristmastreesales>

Go to our St. Francis Xavier Facebook page for more photos:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Francis-Xavier-Primary-School/273229632859103?ref=hl>