



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 23rd October 2023
Term 4 Week 4

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Term 4 (12 weeks)

Mon 2nd Oct - Wed 20th Dec

Monday 23rd October

Last day for Issue 7 Book
Club Orders

Thursday 26th October

SFX Disco Night

Friday 27th October

12.40pm 2CJ Assembly

Free Dress Day – raising
money for Mercy Works

2024 Foundation Transition

Wednesday 1st November

Division Cricket

State Athletics at Lakeside
Stadium

Thursday 2nd November

6pm & 7pm in Library
Guitar Showcase

Friday 3rd November

12.40pm 3NM Assembly

F-2 Junior Sports Day at
Russell Square

Monday 6th November

Reporting & Assessment
Day – Pupil Free Day

Tuesday 7th November

Melbourne Cup Public
Holiday – Pupil Free Day

Friday 10th November

12.40pm 4CP Assembly

Friday 17th November

12.40pm F MM Assembly

Yr 3-6 Athletics Day
at Llanberris

Tuesday 21st November

2024 Foundation
Information Night

Wed 22nd – Friday 24th Nov

Year 5 Kangaroo Camp

Friday 24th November

12.40pm F GJ Assembly

Tuesday 28th November

2024 Foundation Transition

Wednesday 29th November

Yr 1 Camp Experience

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

On Sunday I was reminded of the fragility of humankind in an unexpected way, and one which has caused me to stop and reflect on our place in a broken world.

At Mass on Sunday morning we prayed the communal prayers as usual. This week however, the psalm called on us to let our faith shine like the stars as we work together to bring about the reign of God. *Let your faith shine like the stars* is an interesting prayer in troubled times. It made me think of Abraham when God told him that his descendants would multiply like the stars across the evening sky. So vast would the line of Abraham be in the years to come. Yet for the people who live today in the lands of Abraham, a light shining across the sky in the evening might be a missile or a burning building on the horizon. For these people, it must be hard to imagine how or when they might look to the stars in peace.

We don't know how or when there will be any form of conclusion to the war that rages in these ancient lands. We don't know that reconciliation can even be possible. We do know however that our prayers can help in the most difficult of situations. Perhaps we can be the holders of faith for those who are suffering so much. Perhaps then, and with faith, we might begin to see small signs of peace begin to emerge.

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



We Pray for Peace

God of mercy and compassion,
of grace and reconciliation,
pour your power upon all your children in the Middle East:
Jews, Muslims and Christians,
Palestinians and Israelis.

Let hatred be turned into love, fear to trust, despair to hope,
oppression to freedom, occupation to liberation,
that violent encounters may be replaced by loving embraces,
and peace and justice could be experienced by all.
Amen.

Rabbi Herbert Bronstein



*St. Francis Xavier Primary School is a Child Safe School called to action through Gospel values and Mercy tradition.
Through the mission of Jesus within the Mercy tradition, we are called to action in pursuing fullness of life for all.*

Thursday 30th November

Yr 1 Camp Experience

6pm Community Christmas Gathering

Friday 1st December

12.40pm 2GH Assembly

St Francis Xavier Feast Day celebrations

Tues 5th & Wed 6th Dec

Year 4 Cave Hill Creek Camp

Monday 11th December

9.30am Mass in the Gym

Wednesday 13th December

6pm Year 6 Graduation
In the Gym

Friday 15th December

Last 2023 student day
Normal finish time.

Casual Clothes for Mercy Works

We have a strong tradition of supporting our Friends the Mercy Religious Order in their mission to support others. With this in mind we will dedicate our Casual Clothes Day this Friday to Mercy Works. If each child could bring a gold coin donation then we will be able to support this very important outreach of the Sisters of Mercy.

Grandparents & Special People Day

Thanks to all members of our community who were able to support our special Grandparents & Special People Day on Friday. It was tremendous to see so many people involved in our liturgy and touring our school. Thanks for your support as we work together to build on the strengths of our wonderful community.

School Disco

Don't forget to come along to our super school Disco this Thursday. Our Parents & Friends committee has planned a great evening of entertainment for the children. Brush off the Disco shoes, gel the hair and get ready to rock the night away!

School Traffic Reminder

I wish to remind everyone that the management of traffic flow at the beginning and end of the day is always a concern. We are fortunate that there is very little non-school traffic in the mix at these times. If the road signage and markings are adhered to with a good level of patience a safe environment can be maintained. We remind drivers to pull off to the left around the trees where the buses travel and U-turn to return down Fortune Street rather than cross directly across the traffic. (This is illegal!).

Our staff carpark is not to be used as a pathway to either drop your children at school or pick them up. Car spaces are limited and the onsite carpark is for **staff cars only**. Many thanks for your assistance with these matters.



Please find at the end of this newsletter: Parish Bulletin;
Body safety and consent.

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THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday October 22, 2023 Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A)

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21

The Pharisees went off and made a plan to trap Jesus with questions. Then they sent to him some of their disciples and some members of Herod's party. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you tell the truth. You teach the truth about God's will for people, without worrying about what others think, because you pay no attention to anyone's status. Tell us, then, what do you think? Is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?"

Jesus, however, was aware of their evil plan, and so he said, "You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin for paying the tax!"

They brought him the coin, and he asked them, "Whose face and name are these?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

So Jesus said to them, "Well, then, pay the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay God what belongs to God."
(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation)

Gospel reflection: The Pharisees didn't like Jesus and so they tried to find a way to trick him. At the time the Romans ruled the area where Jesus lived. The people did not like the Romans and they did not want to have to pay money to them. The Pharisees knew that if Jesus said this out loud, he would get into trouble.

In this story, when Jesus tells them to "pay the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor – and God what belongs to God," Jesus is reminding us that we have two main responsibilities. One is to love God and to try to live our lives the way God wants us to.

The other responsibility is to care for each other and to make sure that everyone gets their fair share of the good things that God has given us.

God has given us a world filled with good things. While some of us have all that we could wish for, others of us do not have a house to live in, enough food to eat, clean water to drink. We can help each other and try to make sure that all people around the world have their fair share of the things that God has given us. We can all play our part to make the world a fairer place.

Our Challenge: How can we share what we have so that everyone has their fair share of what God has given us?

(Adapted from CAFOD website)

Grandparent and Grandfriends Thanks:

There was a very special energy around the school last Friday and it was fantastic to see so many Grandparents and Grandfriends with us to celebrate our liturgy.

The children were so excited to share in a special prayer time, show their special guests around our school and to introduce their friends and teachers.

So many of our visitors remarked on how wonderful it was to be invited to school and the respectful behaviour and kindness shown by our children to each other.

Many thanks to all the children and their teachers for their contagious enthusiasm and for the efforts of our Grandparents and Grandfriends to share this time with us.





Christine Meneely, Religious Education Leader

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Curriculum News



Welcome to week 4.

Great news is always worth shouting about.

Earlier this year children in Years 3 and 5 sat their NAPLAN tests. At last week's professional learning session our staff discussed and viewed our data. It was a session full of interest, discussion, celebration and questioning of what are we doing to gain these results and what can we do better.

Here are some facts about our NAPLAN data 2023:

- Our NAPLAN results across both year levels are **very** strong
- Year 3 mean scores for Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy are all **above** both State and Australian mean scores
- Year 5 mean scores for Writing, Spelling and Numeracy are **above** both State and Australian mean scores
- Year 3 Numeracy 82% of the cohort are strong or exceeding
- Year 5 Numeracy 89% of the cohort are strong or exceeding
- Our 6 year trend 2017- 2023 (COVID year 2020 no NAPLAN tests) for Numeracy Year 3 and Year 5 continues to outshine Victorian and Australian schools

Children this week will also begin their PAT (Progressive Achievement Tests) for our end of year collection of data. PAT tests are one way we use assessment data to target teaching and monitor growth.

Enjoy your week,



Jane Clark, **Deputy Principal – Learning Enhancement**

Wellbeing News

Last week we were fortunate to have Bravehearts present their personal safety education program Ditto's Keep Safe Adventure Show to our children in Foundation, Year One and Two classes.

It was an energy filled presentation with lots of empowering messages and it focused upon following six principles of personal safety:

- Differentiating 'yes' and 'no' feelings
- Recognising the bodies 'warning signs'
- Identifying 'private parts' and 'privacy'
- Helping children identify language and feelings associated with secrets
- Reinforcing that there is no secret that children cannot tell someone

We teach water safety and road safety to the children in our care, let's not forget about body safety and consent!

Attached is a great article by Jayneen Sander providing you with age appropriate body safety and consent skills you can cover with your child. Her books on Body Safety, consent, gender equality, emotional and social intelligence and many free resources including 'My Body Safety Rules' poster can be found at www.e2epublishing.info.

Kind regards,

Christine Meneely, **Wellbeing Leader**

Golf Tournament

Perfect conditions greeted 38 students at last Wednesday's Division Golf Tournament at Mt Xavier Golf Club. All of the students (many playing a round of golf for the first time) had a great day and played well. Congratulations to Leo Thorp and Rhys Bell who finished in the Top 8 and have qualified for the Regional Tournament later in the term. A big thank you to the parents, grandparents and Mr Marshall for their support and assistance during the day.

Junior Sports Day

On Friday November 3rd (Week 5), we look forward to the Foundation - Yr 2 Junior Sports Day. This event is a wonderful day filled with excitement, fun and lots of great activities. Once again our Yr 6 Sports Captains will take on leadership and teaching roles and will conduct various activities for the students. Please check the PAM note for further details.

Sporting Schools - after school program

Thankyou to all of those that registered interest for the Sporting Schools - after school sports programs for Term 4. The amount of interest was unbelievable but unfortunately we are limited with the number of students that can participate.

The students participating in Term 4:

Monday - Badminton

Lilly & Harley Bye, Levi & Chelsea Crowe, James & Mitchell Cyples, Gabe Dunne, Daulat Gill, Nicholas, Olivia & Thomas Green, Sam Hill, Maebh & Mollie Arnts, Lucinda Leaoard, Harriet & Emma Locke, Harry Logan, Frederick & Audrey Lynch, Thiago Motta Crespo, Rahui Munokoa, Lenny Owins, Marco Pietrantuono, Lilly Rice, Evangeline Spiers, Sofia St Louis, Savee Thuse & Xavier Uljanic.

Thursday - Soccer

Ted Answer, Alfie Brennan, Hazel, Lachlan & Josie De Lorenzo, Louis Evans, River Fedke, Xavier Foster, Edward Giblett, Edie & Bonnie Giles, Ted Glesson, Winnie & Monty Harrison, Jax Lodge, Augie Mason, Murphy Noonan, Wilson & Jack Quinlan, Nevon Thuse, Ella Uljanic, Jagger, Cruise & Tilly Van Langevelde, Sophie, Connor & Lachie White.

2023 Sports Dates

Term 4:

- Week 5 - Wednesday Nov 1st - Division Cricket
- Week 5 - Wednesday Nov 1st - State Athletics @ Lakeside Stadium
- Week 5 - Friday Nov 3rd - F - 2 Junior Sports Day @ Russell Square
- Week 6 - Friday Nov 10th - Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6) v Emmaus @SFX
- Week 7 - Friday Nov 17th - SFX Yr 3 -6 Athletics Day @ Llanberris

If your child has achieved recent sporting success or a significant sporting achievement, please feel free to contact myself, Nev Down or your child's classroom teacher so that we can celebrate and commend their efforts.

SFX Football Jumpers, Singlets & Netball dresses/bibs

If you have any SFX Football jumpers, singlets or netball dresses/bibs at home could you please return them to either Mr Down or Mr Carroll.

Have a great week.



Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**



**GUITAR
SHOWCASE**

**SFX LIBRARY
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 2**

6PM	7PM
PADDY LUDBROOK	MALO HANSEN
EDDIE ANDERSON	MITCHELL BONE
BERTIE STANLEY	THOMAS HISCOCK
FREDDY LYNCH	TED NUNN
NOAH CHIBNALL	SAM NORRIS
NIC GREEN	HARRY HATT
ED LLOYD	GEORGE PEARCE
EMERSON ROLFE	COOPER MANNING
OSCAR TRIGG	REUBEN MOLLOY
MONTY HARRISON	MURPHY NOONAN
LACHLAN PATTERSON	COOPER DOWNES
BEAU HANSEN	HENRY ROBB
CAMPBELL DELAHUNTY	JACK GERTZ
TOM ANDERSON	JENSEN MCCARTIN
	ISAAC HATT

Our next music event is only two weeks away!

On Thursday November 2 we are hosting a small, supportive and informal evening to showcase the emerging musical skills of children who learn guitar with Tim Smolenaers at St Francis Xavier.

There will be two short performances, one commencing at 6pm and another at 7pm. Families that have children involved in this event have been contacted via seesaw with confirmed times.

With 29 children involved in this event, we hope you can join us at either 6pm or 7pm on November 2 to celebrate your child's learning in music!



Dan West, **Performing Arts Specialist**



▶ **SS PETER & PAULS**
701 FISKEN ST
BUNINYONG 3357



▶ **ST ALIPIUS**
82 VICTORIA ST
BALLARAT EAST 3350



▶ **PARISH OFFICE**
84 VICTORIA ST
BALLARAT EAST 3350
PH 5332 6611
OPEN TUE – FRI
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarat-east/

22 October 2023

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Give the Lord glory and honour

St Alipius parish

MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Monday – Friday 9:30 AM

Saturday 9:30 AM, 6:00 PM

Sunday 9:00 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th weeks)

10:30 AM (2nd & 4th)

Rosary – Tuesday 6:30 PM

Ss Peter and Paul's

Sunday 9:00 AM (2nd & 4th)

10:30 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th)

Rosary – Thursday 11:00 AM

Mass and prayer resources

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Counting team 5 this week – 9:30 AM

Our Parish is committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land and pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging.

WE PRAY FOR

Faithfully departed:

Anniversaries: Eileen Power

Unwell: Peter McLachlan, Sarah McLachlan, Eleanor McMahon, Patricia Murry, Shelley Pawang, Carole Simmons

PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest

Fr Jorge Jr De Chavez, OSJ

Visiting Priest

Fr Barry Ryan

Sacramental and Parish

Coordinator

Cathy Prunty

Administrative Assistant

Natalie Shannon

Finance Officer

Bernadette Prestwood

Child Safety Officer

Emily Clarke



PARISH VISION

The combined communities of St Alipius Parish reach out in the spirit of faith, hope, love, and acceptance, as God calls us to in the gospels.

PARISH MISSION

Our mission in the Parish of St Alipius is to actively engage and serve our combined communities, embodying the teachings of the Gospel. Strengthened in the spirit of faith, hope, love acceptance and Mercy, we strive to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. Guided by God's call to service, we aim to build strong connections, provide spiritual nourishment, promote social justice, and offer support to individuals and families in their journey of faith. Through our dedicated interactions, we seek to deepen our relationships with God, inspire transformation, and make a positive impact in the lives of those we encounter, spreading God's love and compassion to all.

MASS OF REMEMBRANCE

Our annual Remembrance Mass, celebrating the lives of those who have passed away in the last 12 months will be next weekend at 6:00 PM on Saturday 28 October at St Alipius. These people will be remembered at all masses that weekend. If you have lost a loved one in the past twelve months, but they weren't buried from our parish, please contact the parish office to have them remembered at this mass. A cuppa will follow the 6:00 PM mass at St. Alipius and the 10:30 AM mass at Buninyong.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mass of Remembrance
6:00 PM, Saturday 28 October, Parish Hall

Filipino Community All Saints Day Mass
4:00 PM, Wednesday 1 November, St Alipius

Melbourne Cup Luncheon
11:00 AM, Tuesday 7 November, Parish Hall

MELBOURNE CUP LUNCH

After the great success and fun that was had at last year's Melbourne Cup Luncheon, we have decided to hold the event again. You are invited to join us for a luncheon to celebrate the Melbourne Cup on Tuesday 7 November from 11:00 AM in St Alipius Hall. Tickets are \$20 per person. Lunch of chicken, salad and dessert will be supplied. BYO alcohol. Soft drinks will be supplied. Please confirm numbers with the parish office by 31 October. Prizes for the best male and female fascinators. Sweeps will be available. If anyone can bring a salad or a dessert, please let the office know.

MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

National Mental Health Month is an initiative of the Mental Health Foundation Australia (MHFA) to advocate for and raise awareness of Australian mental health. It is an important time when the Australian community comes together to raise awareness and promote better mental health for all. Mental Health Australia invites organisations to participate in the "Look after your mental health, Australia" campaign which will run throughout October. Scan or click the QR code for more information.



NATIONAL CHILDREN'S WEEK

Children's Week is an annual event in Australia to celebrate the right of children to enjoy childhood. The theme for 2023 is based on UNCRC Article 31: Children have the right to relax, play and take part in activities they enjoy. The Children's Week Council of Australia have developed a range of activities and tip sheets to celebrate the week and promote children's rights awareness. Scan or click the QR code for more information.



ALL SAINTS DAY MASS

The Filipino community of Ballarat invites everyone to All Saints Day mass at St Alipius at 4:00 PM on Wednesday 1 November. Hope to see you all there.

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Thank you to all parishioners who contribute to our stewardship program. Your generosity is appreciated.

Supporting our parish priests	\$1,029
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$261.20

We invite anybody who would like to join the program to please contact the parish office.

REMEMBRANCE BOOKS

Remembrance books have been placed in the foyers of both churches to allow parishioners to record the names of loved ones who have passed away at any stage. People whose names are recorded in these books will be prayed for during masses throughout November.

FR ROBERT MCCULLOCH

Fr McCulloch will celebrate mass and give a presentation on the Columban's work in Pakistan, titled "Dungeon, fire and sword – keeping the faith in Pakistan for 1200 years" on Wednesday, 25 October in St Anne's Chapel at 6:30 PM. The presentation will be in the Nazareth Hall at 7:00 PM. Entry by donation and envelopes will be available on the night. Please bring a plate of supper. Enquiries to Carmel, ph. 0401175045 or annekav1234@gmail.com.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for the love, support, condolences, and prayers on the passing of Gary. We appreciate everyone who attended and helped us celebrate his life. A special thank you to Fr Eladio, Fr Jorge, Fr Concord, and the bereavement team. God bless. Betty, James, Emma, Daniel, and grandchildren.

VINNIES BREAD RUN

Each Monday night between 7:00 PM and 7:30 PM, Vinnies volunteers can be found in the St. Alipius Church Hall providing bread to those in need. If this would benefit you, or someone you know, please call into the hall, and bring a bag to put the bread in.

BAPTISMS

Edith Mae Ford
Child of Jenna and Richard Ford

The church gives faith to your children through Baptism, and you have the task to make it grow.

Pope Francis

CEMETERY MASSES

All are welcome to celebrate mass at Pootilla Cemetery on Sunday, 12 November at 9:30 AM and Gordon Cemetery on Sunday, 19 November at 11:00 AM.

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

Inspired by the Pope's message for World Mission Sunday, this year Catholic Mission is raising awareness of the life-giving work of lay and religious missionaries around the world with the theme "Hearts on Fire, Feet on the Move." In his message, Pope Francis reflects on the resilience that everyday missionaries demonstrate in their life-giving work and the burning passion for God and people that inspires their hearts. Dedicating their lives to others, in partnership with communities, missionaries aim to create a positive change through spiritual care and the implementation of grassroots projects, such as healthcare and education, reaching far beyond Catholic communities. To support missionaries or for information visit: www.catholicmission.org.au/wearestillhere

MARIST HOUSE FOR STUDENTS

Marist House is a residential program for university students studying in Melbourne. It provides a safe, stable, and supportive environment. It is hosted by a resident community of Brothers. Situated in Fitzroy it is very accessible to many universities and tertiary colleges. Enquiries for 2024 are most welcome by contacting Br Frank, ph. 0407943473. For more information scan or click the QR code.



PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES

Lord, fill the hearts of your missionaries with the Holy Spirit. Guide their steps with your mighty arm and with the power of your grace. Strengthen them in spirit so that they will not falter through weariness. Look kindly on your servants, who you have sent forth as messengers of salvation and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ST BRENDAN'S DUNNSTOWN

All are invited to celebrate the 'End of an Era' at St Brendan's Primary School, Dunnstown from 2:00 PM on Saturday, 25 November. Please feel free to pass this invitation on to anyone that you think may be interested.

More information is available from this website:

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/pnews/celebrating-the-end-of-an-era-at-st-brendans-primary-school-dunnstown/

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Catholic Theological College online information session at 7:30 PM Monday, 30 October. Register via <https://ctc.edu.au/information-session>.

ACRATH 2024 CALENDAR

The calendar features stories and education on modern slavery and human trafficking, links to raise awareness, yearly projects, and advocacy work. It is an education tool for schools, parishes, workplaces, and families and helps raise funds to support ACRATH's work. Order at <https://acrath.org.au/2024-acrath-calendar/>

DIOCESAN YOUTH BOOKLET

The Ballarat Diocese Youth Booklet outlines opportunities to assist young people on their faith journey with information about a variety of youth ministry and young adult activities, as well as details on faith formation, social justice, and outreach initiatives. A range of social media networks and online forums offering choices for young people to connect with the wider Catholic community is also included. In addition, there are links to resources to support young people in prayer and spirituality, such as information about reflection days, festivals, immersions, and pilgrimage experiences for them to take part in to grow in their faith, and qualifications available in theology, ministry formation, training and much more. With the support of Bishop Paul Bird CSsR, the booklet has been distributed to all secondary schools for Year 12 students and senior school leavers. If you have any questions or would like more copies, please contact the Pastoral Ministry Office pastoralministry@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Give to God what Belongs to God

Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

29th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Matthew 22:1–103

The emergence of a common enemy is often the catalyst for sworn enemies to unite.

In first-century Palestine, Pharisees were the respected religious teachers of the law and Herodians represented secular Jewish power and wealth. They despised each other on both religious and political grounds. When faced with a perceived threat to their authority, however, they united in opposition.

Jesus of Nazareth becomes the threat that unites them. His teaching and healing draw the crowds and threaten their authority.

They come together and try to set a trap for him. In attempting to set him up, they ironically pay him the greatest of tributes: addressing him as “teacher”, they acknowledge his sincerity and admit that he teaches the way of God in accordance with the truth. They witness to his lack of concern with status and hierarchical division.

The question of these traditional enemies is intended to put Jesus in a “no win” position: “Is it lawful to pay tribute to the emperor or not?”

Jesus turns the question back upon them. He lets them know that he is aware of their malicious intent and

asks them to produce the coin used for the tax. He thus makes the issue one of images, a sensitive issue for all Jews, rather than of tribute.

The Roman denarius that they produce bears the bust of the Roman emperor and the Latin inscription, “Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus, High Priest”.

They ironically pay him the greatest of tributes

Jesus’ response, “Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God”, can be interpreted in several ways.

Is Jesus simply exposing their hypocrisy as bearers of images?

From a Jewish perspective, everything belongs to God, the earth and all its riches. The disciples of the Pharisees and the Herodians are Jews, even if the sympathies of the latter lean towards the Roman occupiers.

Is he telling them to pay the tax while still recognising God’s prior claim? Is he telling them not to pay the tax precisely because the emperor has no claim on what belongs to God? Is he



critiquing the Roman occupation or legitimising it? Or is he saying something else? They are left to interpret his response as they wish.

One thing is clear: Jesus’ words have nothing to do with the modern distinction between Church and secular state.

There are good reasons for paying taxes in a secular state and for contributing financially to the life of the Church, something we may need to revisit in the light of decreased post-pandemic participation.

It is quite anachronistic, however, to invoke this text in support of paying state taxes or of supporting the Church financially. The story is more about sincerity and truth in our relationships with each other and with the God of all truth. That is the key criterion for any personal or global alliance.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS
29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
ISAIAH 45:1, 4–6
THESSALONIANS 1:1–5
MATTHEW 22:15–21

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS
30TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
EXODUS 22:20–26
THESSALONIANS 1:5–10
MATTHEW 22:34–40

INSIGHTS

Body safety and consent



We teach water safety and road safety to the children in our care, but too often 'Body Safety' is left in the 'too-hard basket'. And yes, it is a difficult topic to discuss but our fear of this topic could be placing our children at risk. Below are 8 Body Safety and Consent Skills you can cover with your child formally and informally as your child grows. They're applicable (in different ways) for children at all ages.

1. Encourage your child to talk about their feelings

From the earliest of years, encourage your child to talk about their **feelings**. This way they will learn from a young age how to express, manage and understand their emotions. Allow time for them to tell you exactly how they are feeling, and listen with empathy and intent. Provide a ready bank of 'feelings' words beyond 'happy' and 'sad'. (see www.e2epublishing.info for free posters on feelings)

2. Talk about feeling 'safe' and 'unsafe'

Children find it hard to distinguish between the two. It is important they understand what it is to feel 'unsafe', so if ever they are feeling this way at any time, they can talk to you or another trusted adult straightaway. Explain that our body is amazing, and when it feels 'unsafe' it always lets us know. For example, we might feel sick in the stomach or our heart might beat really fast. Tell your child that these are called their **Early Warning Signs**. Reiterate that if your child does feel any of their Early Warning Signs, they need to tell a trusted adult straightaway. Draw a body shape with your child and label their Early Warning Signs and discuss.

3. Allocate time for your child to choose 3 to 5 trusted adults

Your child can tell anything to these adults and they would be believed. These people are part of their **Safety Network**. One should not be a family member and all should be easily accessible by your child. For younger children, draw a large outline of a hand and have your child draw a picture of each person on their Safety Network. Add labels and phone numbers. Note: ensure you talk to these adults and let them know your child has chosen them and it is an honour.

4. Explain to your child that everyone has a body boundary

A **body boundary** is an invisible space around their body. No one should come inside their body boundary without them saying it's okay (consent). Your child has the right to say 'No' to kisses and hugs if they want to. They can always give a hi-five or blow a kiss instead. Have your child outline their body boundary.

5. Teach your child to respect another person's body boundary also, and that they need to ask for consent before entering it

That means, for example, if they want to hold another child's hand, they need to ask permission. And if that child says 'No', they need to respect and accept that child's wishes. Explain also that just because a person may say 'Yes' to handholding or a hug, consent can be withdrawn at any time.

6. Have your child practise the empowering 'pirate stance'

The 'pirate stance' is, hands on hips, legs slightly apart, shoulders thrown back and head held high. This is a very empowering stance and should be practised regularly. Once in the stance, your child can also practise saying 'No' or 'Stop! I don't like that!' Both these phrases are useful in bullying situations and also if anyone does try to touch their private parts. If your child can do this at 4 or 5 years old, then there is a good chance they will be able to do this at 13 or 14, and into adulthood.

7. From day one, call your child's genitals by their correct names

Ensure your child knows that their **private parts** (including the mouth) are private. Explain that private means 'just for you'. Tell your child that if anyone touches their private parts, asks them to touch their private parts or shows them pictures of private parts, they need to tell a trusted adult straightaway. They also have the right to say 'No!' or 'Stop' before alerting an adult on their Safety Network. At this point, talk about 'public' and 'private' places, for example, the kitchen is a public space, but the bathroom is a private space. Ensure your child knows the difference. Let them know that it is perfectly okay for them to touch their own private parts in a private place such as their bedroom.

8. Talk about the difference between secrets and surprises

Secrets can be asked to be kept indefinitely, whereas surprises will always be told and are only kept for a short time. Discourage the keeping of secrets in your family. Explain that your family has 'happy surprises' instead of secrets because happy surprises will **always** be told. Explain that if someone does ask them to keep a secret, they should tell that person that they don't keep secrets. Reinforce that if someone does ask your child to keep a secret that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable, they **must** tell an adult on their Safety Network straightaway!

In closing

In a perfect world, our kids would be safe. Full stop. End of story. But we know it's not a perfect world. We need to have the conversations. We must talk. These ideas will help.



Jayneen Sanders

Jayneen Sanders is an author, teacher, mother of three and an advocate for the empowerment of children. Her books on Body Safety, consent, gender equality, emotional and social intelligence and many free resources including 'My Body Safety Rules' poster can be found at www.e2epublishing.info.