



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 5th February 2024
Term 1 Week 2

P.O. Box 2027
Ballarat East VIC 3354
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Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 1 (9 weeks)

Mon 29th Jan – Thu 28th Mar

Friday 9th February

2pm Mass in the Gym

Tuesday 20th February

9.30am Open Day

Friday 23rd February

Athletics Day at Llanberris
for all Year 3-6 students

Monday 26th February

School photo day

Tuesday 27th February

9.30am Open Day

Friday 1st March

2.40pm Assembly led by 6PB

Wednesday 6th March

9.30am Open Day

Friday 8th March

2.40pm Assembly led by 5CC

Friday 15th March

2.40pm Assembly led by 4GH

Friday 22nd March

2.40pm Assembly led by 3JV

Wednesday 27th March

9.30am & 6pm Open Day

Term 2 (11 weeks)

Mon 15th Apr – Fri 28th Jun

Monday 15th April

Student Free Day

Friday 26th April

Student Free Day

Term 3 (10 weeks)

Mon 15th Jul – Fri 20th Sep

Mon 15th July

Student Free Day

Tuesday 16th July

Student Free Day

Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 7th Oct – Fri 20th Dec

Monday 4th November

Student Free Day

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Welcome to the 2024 school year! We commenced the term last week with just three days for students so hopefully a gentle start has allowed everyone to ease back in to school life. Our staff were certainly busy from Monday as they met to plan ahead for the year and to prepare for all the learning that is about to happen.

If this is your first encounter with primary school for your child, I would like to wish you a very special welcome and I look forward to getting to know you and your children in due course. If you are a returning family, we are delighted to have you back with us for another year of learning and growing together.

The start of each term is always busy, especially when it is the first term at school. I encourage you to keep a lookout for the newsletter each week which is our main form of communication. You might also like to follow us on Facebook where we like to share the good news stories on a regular basis. Of course, there is always a friendly staff member ready and waiting to assist you with any information you may require so please don't be afraid to ask.

Like you, I am looking forward to a great year ahead. We never know what the future holds for us but by committing to work together in both word and action we can set ourselves up for a positive year together. At Saint Francis Xavier Primary School we are totally committed to educating all students in the mercy values of *Respect, Care, Excellence, Hospitality and Compassion*. With this in mind I look forward to continuing to build on the strengths of this great community. Let's have a great year together!

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



A Prayer for a New School Year

Lord of all,

You created for us a world of plenty, Help us to be caretakers of this land.

You provided for us a school where children are honored, Help us to work together in faith.

You created for us a community where all are valued, Help us to be instruments of your peace.

You provided for us a context to frame our beliefs, Help us to be the change we need to see.

Bless us as we enter a new school year...

Bless our actions.

Bless our endeavours.

Bless our school and community.

In Your name,

Amen.



Welcome to our Staff for 2024

We are delighted to be able to introduce to you our staff for the 2024 school year. With a mixture of new and existing staff we are confident that our children will be well cared for in so many ways. We wish all our staff a very happy year ahead:

Classroom Teachers

Foundation: Ms. Lindy Harty, Mr. Tom Willmott, Ms. Megan Mullane. Ms. Gemma Johnson

Year 1: Ms. Jessie Simpson, Ms. Estelle McLean, Ms. Mikhaela Vranesic

Year 2: Ms. Rose Russell, Ms. Caitlin Keogh, Ms. Jacqui Stahl

Year 3: Ms. Jess Van Gaans, Mr. Jesse Walsh, Ms. Bec Warr, Ms. Stephanie Downey

Year 4: Mr. Michael Lawlor, Ms. Georgia Hudson, Ms. Bianca O'Keefe

Year 5: Ms. Cynthia Cook, Mr. Mathew Manzl, Ms. Julia Walker

Year 6: Ms. Petra Barclay, Mr. Michael Marshall, Ms. Zoe Astbury

Specialist Teachers

Visual Arts: Ms. Jacinta Molloy

Performing Arts: Mr. Dan West

Physical Education: Mr. Neville Down

Environmental Education: Ms. Olivia Hayward

Technology: Mr. Jack Ferguson

Auslan: Ms. Chantelle Stacey

Support Teachers: Ms. Elisha Martin, Mr. Peter Mullane, Ms. Nicki McGannon

Learning Support Officers

Ms. Nicole Arnel, Mr. Tom Bosworth, Ms. Kath Boyd, Mr. Liam Canny, Mr. Shaun Carroll, Ms. Maree Dodd,

Ms. Jocelyn Goldsworthy, Ms. Andrea Grant, Ms. Leah Hanrahan, Ms. Karen Nunn, Ms. Zoe Polkinghorne,

Ms. Angela Staley, Ms. Laura Stevens, Ms. Bianca Tocchet, Ms. Grace Turner, Ms. Brooke Van Hamond,

Ms. Jacinta Waller.

**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.**

Administration Staff: Ms. Maureen McLean, Ms. Anita Houlihan, Ms. Jodie Butler, Ms. Sue Shuttleworth

Business Manager: Ms. Kerrie McTigue

Buildings Maintenance: Mr. Jim Houlihan

Religious Education Leader: Ms. Christine Meneely

Structured Literacy Leader: Ms. Emma Egan

Learning Diversity Leader / Deputy Principal: Ms. Jayne Mohr

Learning Enhancement Leader / Deputy Principal: Ms. Jane Clark

Principal: Mr. Mark Hogbin

School Hours

Please note that our school gates open at 8.15 each morning and classes cease each afternoon at 3.15pm. Classrooms open at 8.45am and children may be collected at the end of the day from the undercover area where they are supervised by staff. This amendment to our school hours reflects changes to the working conditions for teachers across the state of Victoria. We are also aware that the new hours allows for an easier drop of and collection for families who may have multiple school drop offs each day.

Foundation Rest Days

We are so proud of our newest Foundation students who are settling in to school life so bravely. Our Foundation students commence their Wednesday rest days this week and these will continue throughout the month of February. Enjoy the rest children!

School Closure Days 2024

It is a condition of employment in schools across the nation that Professional Development and training is provided for staff at various times throughout the school year. With this in mind, at Saint Francis Xavier Primary school we are committed to providing the best training for our staff so that in turn, our students continue to receive the best education possible. Please note that our school will be closed for Professional Development on the following dates in 2024: Monday 15th April, Friday 26th April, Monday 15th July, Tuesday 16th July, and Monday 4th November.



Wedding congratulations

It is with great excitement that we announce a special event that took place over the holidays!

Miss Emma Hancock was married to her new husband, Mr Chris Egan. The special day took place on January 6th at the beautiful Cave Hill Creek (which our Year Four students know very well). Miss Emma describes the celebration like a "real life fairytale" and is excited about her new name, Emma Egan!

We wish Miss Emma and Chris a lifetime of lasting love, happiness, and wedded bliss.

School parking Reminders for us at St Francis Xavier Primary School:

- When turning at the top of Fortune Street - please go to the 2nd group of trees, opposite the golf club (marked with a LARGE X).
- Please go up to the cross in a single line and cross to come back down Fortune Street.
- As a pedestrian only ever cross Fortune Street at the School Crossing.
- Please observe all 'No Standing,' 'No U-Turns,' 'One Way' and 'Bus Zone' signs.
- Please use the designated areas for parking and follow the rules.



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Engagement congratulations

Congratulations to Ms. Jess Van Gaans and Mr. Dan Toohey who became engaged on Christmas Eve.

We wish them all the very best for their future together.



Religious Education News

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday February 4, 2024 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)

Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

As soon as Jesus left the synagogue with James and John, they went home with Simon and Andrew. When they got there, Jesus was told that Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with fever. Jesus went to her. He took hold of her hand and helped her up. The fever left her, and she served them a meal.

That evening after sunset, all who were sick or had demons in them were brought to Jesus. In fact, the whole town gathered around the door of the house. Jesus healed all kinds of terrible diseases and forced out a lot of demons. But the demons knew who he was, and he did not let them speak.

Very early the next morning before daylight, Jesus got up and went to a place where he could be alone and pray. Simon and the others started looking for him and when they found him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you!"

Jesus replied, "We must go to the nearby towns, so that I can tell the good news to those people. This is why I have come." Then Jesus went to their synagogues everywhere in Galilee, where he preached and forced out demons.

(Gospel passage taken from Contemporary English Version®)

Gospel reflection:

When was the last time that you were sick? How did you feel? Who helped you and made you feel better? What did they do to make you feel better? Sometimes when we are sick we have to see a doctor or go to the hospital. How long does it take to get from your house to the doctors?

In some countries it is hard for people to get the health care that they need. There are very few health services available, so families have to travel long distances and the poorest families can't afford the cost of healthcare. Agencies such as Caritas and CAFOD support these communities to set up health clinics and train health workers. They look after pregnant women, babies and children to keep them safe and healthy.

Jesus healed all those who came to him for help. Although we cannot heal people the way Jesus did, we can help them by making sure that wherever they are in the world, they are able to reach a doctor and that they can access the medicine that they need.

We can also show people in our community who are sick that we care about them by looking after them, taking them some food, by sending them a card, by phoning them or by going to the shops for them if they can't get out.

Our Challenge: How will you show someone who is sick that you care this week?



Beginning of Year School Mass

A warm invitation is extended to all our families, friends and parish members who would like to join us in celebrating our Beginning of the Year School Mass. We have a beautiful tradition at St Francis Xavier whereby our Year Six children accompany our new Foundation children into Mass and lead a special blessing as a welcome to our school community. (At the End of Year Mass our Foundation children reciprocate and lead the blessing as our Year Six children go forward to high school).

We also look forward to welcoming our new Parish Priest, Father Con.

Time: 2:00pm **Date:** Friday February 9th, 2024 **Venue:** SFX Gymnasium



Christine Meneely, **Religious Education Leader**

Curriculum News

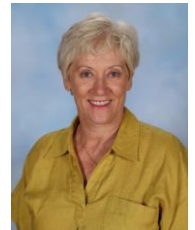


Hello and welcome to the 2024 school year. What a great start we have all made to the school year. From our newest Foundation children to our Year Six Leaders. My name is Jane Clark and I have the privilege and pleasure to hold the position of Deputy Principal / Learning Enhancement here at school.

Learning Enhancement is all about learning. Learning is the process of acquiring new understanding, knowledge, behaviours, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences and Enhancement is an increase or improvement in quality, so therefore that is what I will be striving to do this year. Combining both.

I look forward to the year ahead and I wish everyone a happy and learning-filled year.

Kind Regards,



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



Getting to Know your Child as a Learner Coming up in week 4 and 5 of this term will be our Getting to Know your Child as a Learner. These sessions will be held on:

Tuesday 20th February from 3:30- 5:15pm

Wednesday 28th February from 3:30- 5:15pm

Bookings for these sessions will open on PAM from **Wednesday 7th February at 4:00pm.**



Issue 1 catalogues will be sent home this week for you to view and discuss with your children.

Orders from the Issue 1 catalogue close **Thursday 15th February.** Parents/Carers can order online and pay by credit card. If you order via the school, please return the order form to us with the correct cash to the office.

Book Club helps to keep our children reading and learning. Of course you do not need to purchase anything. Please contact Sue Shuttleworth in the Library (sshuttle@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au) if you have any queries.

Please go to <https://www.scholastic.com.au/book-club/book-club-parents/book-club/> for further details and to view the catalogue online.

1 CREDIT CARD – Visit [scholastic.com.au/LOOP](https://www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP) OR download the **LOOP** app.
Your order will be electronically linked to the rest of your school's order.
You do not need to complete the order form.

2 CASH – If your school **accepts** cash payments, please enclose cash with completed order form and return to your school.

3 CREDIT VOUCHER – Please enter details on **LOOP** or return to your school with your cash order.

Welcome to the 2024 school year! How wonderful it is each morning to feel such positive energy and to see our children so excited about another year of learning.



With new beginnings comes the opportunity to introduce our new Wellbeing Leader for 2024- our amazing Foundation Teacher Ms Gemma Johnson. After three years in this role I felt it was important to have a fresh perspective and Gemma was an outstanding candidate. Gemma brings great ideas and new initiatives - we are very fortunate at St Francis Xavier that mental health and wellbeing is prioritised as a means of ensuring holistic educational outcomes for all children. Each week Gemma will share articles of interest in the newsletter about strengthening families and wellbeing, as a way of supporting you in your very important role as parents and caregivers.

Gemma and I will work closely and collaborate on projects throughout the year ahead. We will also introduce our student wellbeing leaders because it is important to us that children have a voice in issues that affect them and the opportunity to be a part of the solution.

Watch this space!

School Counselling

I am thrilled with the way the school counselling service has been embraced by the school community and particularly the children with whom I work. Many of my referrals have come from children talking to their friends, parents speaking to other parents or teachers suggesting when a child may benefit from some support. Over the next couple of weeks I will spend some time catching up with the children who worked with me last year. I look forward to hearing how their year has started and their goals for the year ahead.

As in 2023, I will be working in the dual role of Religious Education Leader/ School Counsellor. Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries or concerns, as I value our partnership in working towards the best outcomes for your child.

Kind regards,

Christine Meneely, **Wellbeing Leader**

Sport/Physical Education News

I hope that you all had a wonderful preseason break and welcome back to another huge 2024 year of Sport. I know that many of you like to plan the year out so we have supplied a list of some of the events we have received dates for.

Midlands District Primary Schools Swimming Sports - 9 yrs & Under 25m Encouragement Meet

After a few years break, the 9yr and under encouragement swim meet will be held on Wednesday Feb 28th. Please see PAM notification for more details

Yr3 - 6 Athletics Day

It doesn't seem that long ago we had our 2023 Athletics Day! 2024 sees us revert to our planned beginning of the Year Athletics Day. This day is always a fantastic day and is enjoyed by all.

Please see the PAM notification for more information

2024 Sport Dates

Please see below a list of the dates we currently have for various sporting events throughout the year.

Term 1:

- Week 3 - Wednesday Feb 14th - District Tennis @ BRTC (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 4 - Friday Feb 23rd - SFX Athletics Day @ Llanberris (ALL Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 students)

- Week 5 - Wednesday Feb 28th - Midlands District Primary Schools Swimming Sports - 9 yrs & Under 25m Encouragement Meet
- Week 5 - Friday Mar 1st - District Swimming @ Eureka Outdoor Pool (nominated students from Yr 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 6 - Friday Mar 8th - Regional Swimming @ Horsham (qualifiers from District swimming)
- Week 8 - Friday Mar 22nd - Interschool Sport ALL Yr 5/6 v STM/ST AL @SFX

Term 2:

- Week 3 - Mon Apr 29th - Division Cross Country @ Fed Uni (selected students from Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 5 - Friday May 17th - Division AFL @ Sebastopol (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 6 - Wednesday May 22nd - Division Soccer @ Wendouree Rec Reserve (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 7 - Monday May 27th - Regional Cross Country @ Warrnambool (qualifiers from Division XC)
- Week 7 - Friday May 31st - Interschool Sport ALL Yr 5/6 @ EMMAUS
- Week 8 - Friday Jun 7th - Division Netball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)

Term 3:

- Week 4 - Monday Aug 5th - Ballarat Catholic Primary Schools Athletics @ Llanberris (selected students from Yr 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 6 - Friday Aug 23rd - Division Basketball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 8 - Friday Sep 6th - Interschool Sport ALL Yr 5/6 @ St James
- Week 9 - Thursday Sep 12th - Division Athletics @ Llanberris (qualifiers from BCPS Aths - Yr 4, 5 & 6)

Term 4:

- Week 1 - Friday Oct 11th - Regional Athletics @ Llanberris (Qualifiers from Division Aths - Yr 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 6 - Friday Nov 15th - Interschool Sport ALL Yr 5/6 v St Alipius

Have a marvellous week everyone.



Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**

Performing Arts News

Dear families,

We are very pleased to announce that we have appointed a new guitar tutor and an additional voice and piano tutor, both of whom will be joining the St Francis Xavier learning community in the coming weeks.

Our new tutors are **Chris Ruddick** and **Lauren Evans**. Chris will be replacing Tim (who is heading to India), and offering guitar lessons on Wednesdays and Fridays. Due to high demand, Lauren will be working alongside Hattie Frdelja and offering voice and piano lessons on Thursdays. (please note that Hattie will be continuing with her current voice and piano students and our two choirs on a Monday and Tuesday).

A little about our new tutors;

Chris Ruddick is an experienced music educator with over twenty years of experience. As a qualified and registered teacher, Chris has taught VET Music and instrumental music programs in high school, primary school and independent settings. As a musician, Chris has released several albums with various bands and has toured, recorded and performed live for many decades. Chris comes highly recommended from Tim Smolenaers (our previous guitar tutor), and we are very excited to welcome Chris to the music program at SFX.



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Lauren Evans is a professional singer, musician and educator. Lauren will be known to many as the lead vocalist in Ballarat's highly successful 10 piece Motown Band, 'Motor City Sounds' and as a resident vocalist at both Ballarat and Geelong's Piano Bar. As a music educator Lauren coordinated the Ballarat Specialist School's successful music program, offering an enriching program to preschool, primary and secondary school students. Lauren has also led choirs and drum groups, and is an experienced guitar, piano, voice, dance and sound engineering tutor. We welcome Lauren to the SFX community!

Arranging Lessons;

Initially, Chris will offer guitar lessons to students who were learning with Tim in 2023, followed by families on our waiting list. Please note that Tim was only available one day per week, whilst Chris is available two days per week.

Lauren will be in contact with families on the waiting list for piano and voice lessons.

Please note, we will advise families in due course if either tutor has additional vacancies.

We would like to remind families of the following;

All music tutors at SFX have been selected by the school and adhere to our Code of Conduct and Child Safety policies.

All tutors are freelance educators and lesson payment arrangements are made directly between the tutor and the family. SFX does not handle the financial component of this learning partnership.

Lessons are half an hour in length, occur once a week during the school day and are on a rotating timetable. For example, if your child learns from Lauren, you can expect that your child will receive their music lesson on a Thursday, and the lesson time will change from week to week so as to minimise disruptions to learning routines.

Timetable Overview;

Monday - Hattie Frdjela - Voice, Piano, Choir

Tuesday - Hattie Frdjela - Voice, Piano, Choir

Wednesday - Chris Ruddick - Guitar

Thursday - Lauren Evans - Voice, Piano

Friday - Chris Ruddick - Guitar

We welcome Lauren Evans and Chris Ruddick to the St Francis Xavier community. We are very excited to see what the future holds for our students with our three wonderful music tutors!

If you have any questions whatsoever please feel free to email me or contact me via seesaw.

Many thanks, Dan West



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/ballarata-east/

4 February 2024

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

He cured many who were suffering

St Alipius parish

MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Tuesday – Thursday 9:30 AM

Saturday 9:30 AM, 6:00 PM

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

10:30 AM (2nd & 4th)

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 2

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: Brian O'Neill

Unwell: Socorro De Chavez, Peter McLachlan, Sarah McLachlan, Eleanor McMahon, Shelley Pawang, Carole Simmons

PARISH TEAM

Parish Administrator
Fr Concord Bagoisan, 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.

**Word of God
Sunday**



ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday this year is on 14 February. Mass will be held at St Alipius at 9:30 AM and 7:00 PM. The masses will include the distribution of the ashes.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Ash Wednesday masses 9:30 AM and 7:00 PM, Wed 14 February, St Alipius
Holy Thursday – Mass of the Last Supper 7:00 PM, Thursday 28 March, St Alipius
Holy Thursday – Altar of Repose 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM, Thu 28 March St Alipius Hall
Good Friday – Passion of the Lord 3:00 PM, Friday 29 March, St Alipius
Easter Vigil 9:00 AM or 7:00 PM, Saturday 30, St Alipius

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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

Supporting our parish priests	\$1,250
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$653.40

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

COMMISSIONING MASSES

On Pentecost Sunday, the Parish will commission new and recommission existing liturgical ministers, including readers, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, PowerPoint operators, musicians, sacristans, and welcomers. Information on how to sign up to continue or start volunteering in one or more of these ministries, and what the tasks involve, will be provided in the coming weeks, starting this week with the welcoming ministry.

WELCOMING MINISTRY

Of the many liturgical ministries that parishioners at St Alipius and Ss Peter and Paul's fulfil, the one with the least number of volunteers is the welcoming ministry, which is strange because as a person who helps in several ministries recently commented, it is the most enjoyable, because you get to say hello to everyone as they arrive for mass. The purpose of this ministry is to make everyone, especially newcomers or visitors, feel welcome. Welcomers arrive about 20 minutes before the start of mass and greet people as they enter the church, offering them a notice sheet, and perhaps answering questions such as where the bathrooms are located, or who is celebrating mass. It's the warm smiles and friendly greetings that welcomers receive in return that make this such a pleasant and rewarding ministry. Anyone can be a welcomer – you aren't expected to remember everyone's names or engage in lengthy conversations. If you arrive at mass early and notice that there isn't a welcomer, you can step in and help until the rostered person arrives. If you would like to join the liturgy roster as a welcomer at either church, please let the parish office know what mass you regularly attend.

REPLACEMENT CARPET IN ST. ALIPIUS CHURCH

In recent times, you may have noticed that the carpet in the centre aisle of St. Alipius Church has stretched and developed ripples. This is a safety issue and after much discussion the finance committee made the decision to replace the carpet in the centre aisle. This decision has been made in consultation with the supplier of the carpet. Unfortunately, the color of the previous carpet has been discontinued and there is nothing similar available. For this reason, the new carpet has been chosen as a contrast to the current carpet rather than a match. The new carpet is a grey shade with flecks in it that we believe pick up the color of the current carpet, most of which will remain. While it would seem ideal to replace all of the carpet in the church, this was going to be too expensive. The new carpet will be laid on Monday and we look forward to seeing the updated look in the church, which will provide a safer walking space for everyone. Parishioners are always welcome to contribute to such purchases, if this is something they would like to do.

PROJECT COMPASSION

Mass to launch Project Compassion 2024 will be held at 5:00 PM on Sunday, 11 February at St Patrick's Cathedral. Bishop Paul Bird CSsR will be the main celebrant and will commission student leaders as 2024 Ambassadors for Caritas. All are welcome to attend.

MASS OF THE OILS

The Mass of the Oils will incorporate an acknowledgement of the 150th anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat. The mass will be held at 11:30 AM on Monday 25 March at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Lunch and displays will follow in the hall. All welcome.

BAPTISMS

Avah Patricia Isla Hiscock
Child of Dwayne and Theresa Hiscock

Hugh Rocco Wilson
Child of Jordan and Danielle Wilson

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

Pope Francis

LITURGY ROSTER

The new roster for February and March has been emailed out this week. Printed copies can be collected in the St Alipius church foyer this weekend.

RITE OF ELECTION

The Rite of Election will be held at 12:30 PM on Saturday 17 February in St Patrick's Cathedral. The Rite is an opportunity for adult catechumens and candidates to meet the bishop before being baptised/received into the Church at Easter. Lunch will follow in the hall.

CATHOLIC PARISH PROFILES

Profiles of 1230 Catholic parishes across Australia have been published, offering a wealth of insight they can use to better serve the needs of their local communities. The parish "social profiles" draw on data captured in the 2021 Australian Census and examine the Catholic and local population within parish boundaries. Profiles for the Diocese of Ballarat, including Ballarat East, are available from www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/australian-catholic-parish-profiles/

LENT WITH BRUCE DOWNES

Lent is a time when we can grow closer to God and prepare our hearts for the true meaning of Easter. Be inspired. Be refreshed. Be renewed! Sign up to Bruce Downes' free Lenten Program and for 40 days you will receive a short, practical, and inspiring video in your inbox every morning to help you make this Lenten journey more powerful and prayerful.

<https://BruceDownes.org/Lent>

COMMUNION UPDATE

Last year Bishop Paul issued information for the people of the diocese regarding COVID-19 and the reception of communion. The bishop received advice from the medical profession, including the Chief Executive Officer of the Southern Grampians Health Service and the Head of the Infectious Diseases Department at the Alfred Hospital, as well as the Diocesan Liturgical Commission. These consultations highlighted that COVID-19 infections are still a serious concern and that we can reduce the risk of infections by continuing the present provisions regarding Holy Communion. The bishop concluded that out of consideration for the health of all parishioners, it is not yet time to reintroduce the sharing of the chalice. Regarding receiving the host, the bishop still recommends the reverent reception of the host in the hand rather than the reception on the tongue.

OUR DIOCESE TURNS 150

The Diocese of Ballarat will turn 150 on 30 March. During the year there will be many events to acknowledge this significant anniversary. Keep up-to-date at the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/our-diocese/150th-anniversary-of-the-diocese-of-ballarat/

PRAYING WITH THE POPE

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer) is an international movement that is more than 170 years old. Each month, the Pope puts forward a prayer intention and asks Catholics around the world to join him in prayer. These intentions cover all areas of life, encouraging faith, renewing hope, and calling us to loving service. 'The Pope Video' forms part of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network – www.thepopevideo.org.

Pope's intention for February – For the terminally ill: Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment.

WISDOM AT THE CATHEDRAL

All are welcome to the first talk for the year in the Cathedral parish's series Wisdom at the Cathedral. Fr Bill Lowry from the Warmambool parish, will speak on *Discerning God's Will in Your Life*. Learn about the processes employed by the saints and the Lord himself in discerning the Father's will for their lives. The talk and discussion time will go for an hour and will be followed by a cup of tea. 7pm sharp, Thursday 29 February in the MacKillop/Glowrey rooms. Entry by donation. For all enquiries please contact Fiona Bradley on fionalouisebradley@gmail.com.

Word of God Sunday

Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Mark 1:29–39

In Australia, Word of God Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday in February. It comes at a time when our planetary community yearns for deep healing. It invites us to bring the distress of the Earth community into dialogue with the gospel.

In the first-century Mediterranean world, sickness was attributed to social rather than to physical causes. The corollary of this was that healing focussed principally on restoration of the person to her or his place or status in the society or community. Healing of an individual brought not only the person but the community itself to wholeness.

Last Sunday, we reflected on the “healing” of a man with an “unclean spirit”. Jesus, healer, and teacher expelled the unclean spirit and thus restored health to the man as well as to the worshipping community. The healing took place in the Capernaum synagogue on the Sabbath.

This story marked the beginning of Mark’s account of a typical day in Jesus’ ministry. Today’s gospel passage continues that account.

Jesus leaves the synagogue and moves, in the company of two of his new disciples, to the house of Simon and Andrew. In other words, he shifts from a long-established gathering

place for God’s people to a prospective new locus of communal engagement, the house church.

This new locus does not preclude the older locus: Jesus continues to teach and heal in the synagogues throughout Galilee.

In this new place of encounter with God, Jesus heals a woman with a “fever” who is identified only in relation to her son-in-law, Simon. Jesus takes her by the hand and raises her up.

Jesus takes her by the hand and raises her up

She is the first human character in the Markan gospel story who is said to “minister”. In other words, the love of God working through Jesus draws her beyond herself to engage in a ministry of leadership in the community of God’s people.

Earlier in Mark’s gospel we heard that angels “ministered” to Jesus in the desert. In other words, God looked after Jesus as he began his mission of bringing God’s love into a broken world. Jesus will later insist that he also came “to minister” (10:45).



This woman is caught up in the same mission as Jesus of bringing the community to health and wholeness.

That same evening, Simon’s house becomes a magnet for “the whole city”.

Jesus heals their sick and afflicted and, early in the morning, seeks the solitude of a “desert” place for prayer.

The disciples seek him out, as everyone is looking for him. Jesus makes it clear that he must move on and bring God’s word and healing beyond the city to the neighbouring Galilean towns.

God’s word in this gospel story is for us as well as for those early disciples. Amid all the troubles besetting our world, we too must search out the solitude of a “desert” place for prayer and engage with renewed energy and insight in whatever each new day brings.

THIS WEEK’S READINGS
FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
JOB 7:1–4, 6–7
1 CORINTHIANS 9:16–19, 22–23
MARK 1:29–39

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS
SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
LEVITICUS 13:1–2, 44–46
1 CORINTHIANS 10:31–11:1
MARK 1:40–45

Helping your child become the best student they can be



The new school year is full of excitement and possibility for students and parents. Regardless of how a child or young person has previously performed, this year offers a chance to set a new course.

While it's tempting as a parent to make the attainment of good academic results the main priority, this is a narrow view that may be incompatible with long-term success. It's wiser to broaden your view and focus on helping your child or young person become the best student they can be. Here's how.

Encourage learning

The rapidly changing world and workforce that your child will enter requires that they have a willingness to continually learn and adapt. The concept of a lifelong learner, previously lauded by educators with an eye to the future, has now become a reality. Learning and continual improvement should be embedded in each child's psyche so that school life is just a starting point to a lifetime of learning, growth and development. Help your child see themselves as successful learners who achieve results through hard work and application, and that nothing is beyond them if they apply themselves.

Promote leadership

Leadership is required in all walks of life including at school, at work, in families and in the wider community. Help your child see themselves as a leader by focusing on personal leadership capacities such as planning ahead, communicating clearly, being accountable for their behaviour, developing emotional awareness and fostering good relationships with siblings and peers. Personal leadership development provides a strong foundation for the development of leadership skills in more public forums in later life.

Applaud independence

The school years are critical for the development of independence, which can easily be closed down by the roadblocks of impatience, overindulgence, fear and lack of time. Alternatively, independence is promoted when we show patience, provide opportunity, display confidence and teach students how.

Embed wellbeing

If there is one difference that modern schooling is making to the next generation it's in the leadership they have shown in recent years to the maintenance of mental health and wellbeing practises. Parents can support their child's long term wellbeing by embedding wellbeing habits including healthy eating, exercise, sleep, relaxation techniques, regular time in nature, gratitude and mindfulness.

Teach socialisation

If you want your child to be liked by others, it's essential to spend time and effort developing the skills and attitudes needed to succeed. Develop in them an awareness of how their behaviour impacts on others, instil manners and community-mindedness and develop a broad range of friendship skills that will assist them to relate well to others.

Foster resilience

2020 showed us life is unpredictable, full of ups and downs, straight balls and curve balls. It's the unpredictability, the downs and the curve balls that develop kids' resilience. How parents and teachers react to the hardships, frustrations and difficulties kids face either hamper or foster resilience. Spoil, overprotect or pamper and growth opportunities are wasted. Support, encourage and teach kids to cope and you'll be helping them develop a real sense of psychological hardiness and resilience that's essential for long term happiness and success.

Make this year a memorable one by helping your child grow and develop into the best student they can be. Keep the focus broad and do all you can to ensure that your child sees themselves as a confident and continuous learner.



Michael Grose

Michael Grose, founder of Parenting Ideas, is one of Australia's leading parenting educators. He's an award-winning speaker and the author of 12 books for parents including *Spoonfed Generation*, and the bestselling *Why First Borns Rule the World and Last Borns Want to Change It*. Michael is a former teacher with 15 years experience, and has 30 years experience in parenting education. He also holds a Master of Educational Studies from Monash University specialising in parenting education.

P&F News

Zooper Doopers for sale at second break on Mondays, commencing 5th February.
50 cents each.

Volunteer helpers needed:

If you are able to assist, please go to <https://signup.com/go/CEdCHSb>
or scan the code below with your smartphone camera. Thank you.



DAMASCUS IN TOUCH

TERM 1 – February 2024

For Year 7 2025 Commencement

Open Morning

ATTENTION GRADE 6 2024 STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

If you are interested in learning more about Damascus College and have a child in Grade 6, then don't miss the opportunity to attend the last Open Morning event at Damascus College.

Open Morning

Thursday 1 February, 9am – 11am

The Feb Open Morning event provides an opportunity for prospective families to take a guided tour of the College led by staff, and is an opportunity to experience Damascus during school hours. Open Mornings commence at 9am and conclude at 11am with light refreshments.

REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE NOW AT
<https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/enrolment/visit-us>

Please note that Year 7 2025 Enrolments close on Friday 2 February



Bright Futures Scholarship – closing soon!

For Year 7 2025 commencement

The Bright Futures Scholarship is currently open to Grade 6 2024 families and **closes soon on Friday 2 February 2024.**

This scholarship is for the purpose of supporting students and families who are experiencing financial or personal disadvantage, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to social justice activities and contribute to their local community but may not otherwise be able to afford a Catholic education.

This scholarship is awarded annually to one incoming Year 7 2025 student for **50% tuition relief** and is awarded for the duration of a student's enrolment at Damascus College (maximum of 6 years).

To be considered for this scholarship, applicants must be seeking to attend Damascus for Year 7 2025. Applicants must also have submitted an Enrolment Application Form to Damascus College by the advertised deadline, and applicants are selected based on the selection criteria on the website.

Further info on the scholarship and to download the application form, go to:

<https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/enrolment/scholarships>



damascus.vic.edu.au



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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.

A Taste of Competition Encouragement Meet (\$15/swimmer – includes 2 strokes)

Fun events for any swimmer looking to try competitive swimming and experience racing before their School's Swimming Carnival.

Events to choose from:

- 50m Freestyle
- 50m Backstroke
- 50m Breaststroke
- 50m Butterfly



You can choose to swim any number of strokes from only 1 race to all 4 Events. The entry fee includes your choice of 2 strokes. Additional Events cost \$5.50/event. All participants will be awarded a participation certificate.

No requirement to be registered with a club.

Suitable for "Swim School" and new, inexperienced club swimmers.

All Events will be 50m (1 length of the pool).

Swimmer must be able to swim 50m without stopping.

Events will be split into Age Groups based on swimmer's age on 18th February 2024.

Events with only 1 competitor may be combined with the next nearest age group.

Entry fees are not refundable.

[Enter Encouragement Meet Online](#) through TryBooking.

Event name: "2024 BALLARAT GOLD ENCOURAGEMENT SWIM MEET"

Check out our [Guide for Swim Meet Newbies](#)

Program, timeline and athlete roster available no later than two days prior to competition from Swim Central and [Ballarat Gold Website](#)

Free spectator entry. BYO Chairs & Picnic Blankets.



All enquiries to Jo Peters, entries@ballaratgold.org.au, 0438 823 965