



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Newsletter

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024  
Term 1 Week 3

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### Term 1 (9 weeks)

Mon 29<sup>th</sup> Jan – Thu 28<sup>th</sup> Mar

#### Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February

Last day for Book Club  
Orders

#### Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February

9.30am Open Day

#### Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Athletics Day at Llanberris  
for all Year 3-6 students

#### Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February

School photo day

#### Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February

9.30am Open Day

#### Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by 6PB

#### Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March

9.30am Open Day

#### Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by 5CC

#### Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by 4GH

#### Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by 3JV

Mix and Mingle

*More details to come*

#### Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March

9.30am & 6pm Open Day

### Term 2 (11 weeks)

Mon 15<sup>th</sup> Apr – Fri 28<sup>th</sup> Jun

#### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April

Student Free Day

#### Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April

Student Free Day

### Term 3 (10 weeks)

Mon 15<sup>th</sup> Jul – Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Sep

#### Mon 15<sup>th</sup> July

Student Free Day

#### Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July

Student Free Day

### Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 7<sup>th</sup> Oct – Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Dec

#### Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November

Student Free Day

### In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

It has been great to see our students, new and not so new, settling in to their classes this week. The teachers are reporting that the students have returned to school ready to learn and eager to do their best. This is such a great way to commence the school year.

I am sure that you would be aware by now that our school curriculum is growing and changing. The phrase often used by those who work in schools is that the only constant in education is change! This is certainly true, and so it should be. As we learn more we build on our knowledge and seek deeper understandings of the world in which we live. We can then use this knowledge to improve learning for our students, and building connections with learning leaders such as LaTrobe University has been a strength in this area.

Another change to the curriculum this year has been in the area of Technology. Knowing that our students are called to interact with technology every day we have committed to running Digi-Tech as a specialist subject throughout the year. This means that along with Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education and Environmental Studies our students will now have a lesson with Mr. Ferguson each week learning to explore technology beyond general classroom use. While this is a new program for our students, Mr. Ferguson is well prepared and looking forward to leading learning in this area. He will follow the Technology program developed at the school some time ago and until now, taught by classroom teachers in their classrooms throughout the year.

The curriculum that we use at Saint Francis Xavier School is taken from the Victorian Curriculum. This follows students through the compulsory years of education and is consistent across all schools in the state of Victoria. In turn, it matches the standards of the national curriculum which is our guide for all curriculum development. This links to assessment as students progress through their learning at school. In turn, this is monitored by the State and Federal governments through NAPLAN as well as through our own assessment regimes at school.

There is a lot more to school than the traditional 3R's! Our students are very fortunate to have such a rich learning program, and I know that they appreciate it. When we match evidence based learning programs with expert personnel we know that we are on a winning team, and our teachers and staff are certainly leading the way when it comes to providing a rich education for all students in our care.

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



## Prayers for the Murphy family and school support services

We know that this continues to be a deeply distressing time for many in our school community as Ms. Samantha Murphy remains missing. Sam, Mick and the children have been much valued members of our community over many years, and great supporters and contributors to St Francis Xavier School.

Our classes and school community continue to offer prayerful support for the Murphy family as the search and investigation continues. I again encourage any family who believe they or their child would benefit from additional support services at this time to contact the school on Ph 5331 6311. Please also continue to feel welcome to call in at school and visit the Chapel at any time if you would like to spend a moment or two in prayerful support of Sam and her family.

We again acknowledge the staff and community contribution through ongoing search efforts as we hope and pray for positive news. Please contact me if you need more information and/or have ongoing concerns.



### Did You Know?

Did you know that we have a school canteen service available every Friday? We sure do! If you can spare a couple of hours a couple of times a term or even a year then we would love to hear from you. Please let Anita or Maureen in the office know if you can assist us. We really depend on volunteers to make the lunches happen each week and we would love to have a few more helpers.



## Notifying the School Office of Illness

There are students in our Year Four cohort that, within the last 12 months, have received medical treatment at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne. As a result of the treatment these children have received, they are at a high level of risk and infection. One of our students has Cystic Fibrosis, whereby if they catch a virus or bacterial infection, their recovery period is very lengthy. Exposure to simple colds and flus are significant and can have serious implications, including hospitalisation. Children with Cystic Fibrosis are most vulnerable to catching germs from others who are sick. Colds and flus can present serious complications to people with Cystic Fibrosis and can cause permanent damage to their lungs. To minimise the spread of germs and keep everyone healthy, we ask you to keep your child/ren home if they are unwell. Teaching good hygiene such as hand washing is also essential. Please contact the school if have any questions. We appreciate your support and consideration.

## Student Leadership at SFX ~ Ms. Petra Barclay

What does being a great leader mean to you? This is one question we have explored over the first few weeks of Year 6. Our Year 6 students have unpacked leadership in action and begun the initial stages of demonstrating quality leadership in all areas of our school. We can't wait to see the positive impact our 2024 leaders will make. Expect big things!

Here are some thoughts about leadership from some of our Year 6 students:

*"Helping out, caring for others, taking the time to do something that is right and sharing work ideas." Chelsea*

*"Taking responsibility for your actions, and showing others what's right." Noah*

*"It doesn't mean that you get to do what you want. It's about doing what's right." Flynn*

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**Through the mission of Jesus within the Mercy tradition, we are called to action in pursuing fullness of life for all.**





**2024 School Captains**



**Mercy Leaders**



**Wellbeing & RAP Leaders**



**Creative Art Leaders**

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**Auslan Leaders**



**Library Leaders**



**Environmental Education Leaders**



**Performing Art Leaders**

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**Yellow Sport Leaders**



**Green Sport Leaders**



**Blue Sport Leaders**



**Red Sport Leaders**

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PR Leaders



ICT Leaders

### Religious Education News

#### **THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday February 11, 2024 Children's liturgy – Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)**

##### **Gospel:** Mark 1:40-45

A man suffering from a dreaded skin disease came to Jesus, knelt down, and begged him for help. "If you want to," he said, "you can make me clean."

Jesus was filled with pity, and reached out his hand and touched him. "I do want to," he answered. "Be clean!" At once the disease left the man, and he was clean. Then Jesus spoke sternly to him and sent him away at once, after saying to him, "Listen, don't tell anyone about this. But go straight to the priest and let him examine you; then in order to prove to everyone that you are cured, offer the sacrifice that Moses ordered."

But the man went away and began to spread the news everywhere. Indeed, he talked so much that Jesus could not go into a town publicly. Instead, he stayed out in lonely places, and people came to him from everywhere.

**Gospel reflection:** Jesus makes the man better but asks that he not tell anyone what has happened. Instead, he asks the man to visit the priest and give thanks to God for his cure. The man does not do as Jesus asks; instead, he goes round telling everyone the story. Why do you think he does this? Perhaps it was because he was just so happy to be well again and wanted everyone to know about it.

We try to be like Jesus today in our world, by caring for others, and helping them when they are ill or finding things difficult. It is just as important to help people to stay healthy.

There are lots of ways to keep healthy- eating the right food, making sure we get enough exercise and washing our hands, especially after going to the toilet and before eating.

Toma is a teacher in a school in Sierra Leone. Without a toilet in the school, the children had to go in the bushes instead and risked getting sick every time they needed the toilet. Toma was worried about her students and started appealing for support.

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With the work of organisations like CARITAS, poor communities are helped to build wells for fresh water and toilets for sanitation. We support these organisations when we donate money during their Lenten appeal.

**Our Challenge:** What will you do this week to try and stay healthy? How can we help others to stay healthy too?

🤖 Support Project Compassion today: [www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion) #projectcompassion

# Thank You



A special thank you to our new Parish Priest Fr Con who celebrated our Beginning of Year Mass with us last Friday. 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. It was lovely to see so many little faces looking so proud with their buddies! Many thanks to all the family members, friends and community members who joined us for our Eucharist (please know you do not have to be Catholic or a regular churchgoer to attend these celebrations) - everyone is always welcome here at St Francis Xavier!



### Shrove Tuesday:

In Australia the day preceding Ash Wednesday is popularly known as Shrove Tuesday. With the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, it was the day when Christians were encouraged to go to confession in preparation for the penitential season that would end 40 days and 40 nights later with Easter Sunday.

Dating back to 1000 AD, Shrove Tuesday not only became a day for confession but a time for Catholics to feast on eggs, sugar and dairy



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which were restricted during the Lenten fast. Shrove Tuesday became a way to use up these foods before the fast began.

To celebrate Shrove Tuesday you may like to make up a batch of pancakes. Here's my favourite recipe!

### **Ms Meneely's No-Fail Fluffy Pancakes**

- 2 cups all purpose | plain flour, (290 g)
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar or sweetener, (60g)
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 3/4 cups milk, (440ml)
- 1/4 cup butter, (60g)
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1 large egg

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Combine together the flour, sugar (or sweetener), baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large-sized bowl. Make a well in the centre and add the milk, slightly cooled melted butter, vanilla and egg.
2. Use a wire whisk to mix together until smooth (there may be a couple of lumps but that's okay).
3. Set the batter aside and allow it to rest while heating up your pan or griddle. The batter will be thick and creamy in consistency. If you find the batter too thick -- if it doesn't pour off the ladle or out of the measuring cup smoothly -- fold a couple tablespoons of extra milk into the batter at a time until reaching desired consistency).
4. Preheat your pan on medium heat first. Once it's hot, lower the heat down to low-medium heat then wait about two minutes (this part is crucial and so worth it).
5. Lightly grease the pan with a small amount of butter (yes, even on non stick pans).
6. Pour ¼ cup of batter onto the pan and spread out gently into a round shape with the back of your ladle or measuring cup.
7. When the underside is golden and bubbles begin to appear on the surface, flip with a spatula and cook until golden. Repeat with remaining batter.
8. Serve with butter, honey, maple syrup, fruit, Nutella, ice cream or enjoy plain!



**Ash Wednesday:** This week our children will participate in an Ash Wednesday liturgy in the Gym at 9am to signify the beginning of the Catholic Church Season of Lent.

Lent is the 40 days of prayer, penance and almsgiving as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Lent for Christians is a time to focus not so much on ourselves but for those less fortunate and those in need both near and far away.

As always, parents and friends are more than welcome to join us in our prayer time.

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### Sacrament of Reconciliation Reminder



For all children in Year Four or older, there is a compulsory parish meeting on Thursday February 15th for the parents of children making their Sacrament of Reconciliation this year.

There are two meetings for you to choose from, either 10:30am or 6pm at St Alipius Church. Children are not required to attend. If you have any queries or concerns please contact Natalie or Cathy at the Parish Office on 5332 6611.



Christine Meneely, **Religious Education Leader**

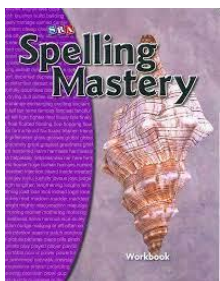
### Curriculum News

**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 are open on PAM now.



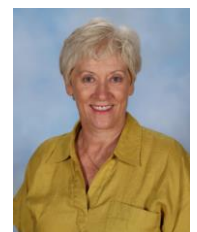
### **Spelling Mastery**

This week children in Years 3-6 will begin the **Spelling Mastery** program. Spelling Mastery is an effective, research-based program that presents spelling strategies, patterns, and reliable rules for children to learn sequentially.

**Benefits:** Spelling Mastery interweaves three spelling strategies according to students' skill development.

**phonemic, morphemic, and whole-word** instruction to make spelling easier to learn, leading the way to more effective writing. We looked forward to this beginning on Thursday.

Enjoy your week,



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

## 2024: Term 1, Week 3

Here at SFX, we are incredibly blessed to partner with some of the most highly-skilled and well-researched educators in the country throughout our Structured Literacy change process. Professor Pamela Snow and Associate Professor Tanya Serry describe learning to read as a profoundly important achievement for children in the early years of school. Early reading skills strongly predict children's educational and vocational trajectories and their chances of being part of the social and economic mainstream in adulthood. Snow and Serry's Science of Language and Reading (SOLAR) Lab, founded in 2020, is helping schools to adopt well-established, scientific approaches to improve how they teach children to read. This dynamic collaboration between researchers, teachers, school leaders and allied health professionals aims to integrate evidence-based approaches into classroom practice to promote success in reading, writing, and spelling – and create uplift across all subject areas.



Snow and Serry observe that while “talking and listening are biologically natural acts, reading and writing are biologically unnatural processes that require specific and well sequenced instruction at school.” Extracting meaning from text, Snow explains, is based on decoding words, together with applying knowledge of language (such as vocabulary, grammatical structures, and inferencing) to extract meaning from text. While some children will learn to read relatively easily, a significant proportion will struggle without a systematic teaching approach. Many of these children go on to develop emotional, social, and behavioural difficulties in the context of school, because of their inability to engage with text across the curriculum. The work of the SunLit Structured Literacy project ensures “all children are taught to decode by matching letters with sounds in an explicit, structured and sequenced way. This instruction is paired with ongoing support in developing oral language, vocabulary and background knowledge.”

Last week, families received a letter regarding our exciting involvement in the SunLit Structured Literacy project. This letter specifically highlighted our collaborative relationship with La Trobe University. Over the course of the next few years, La Trobe university will collate our de-identified student data to:

- determine whether an explicitly taught Structured Literacy approach results in measurable gains in students' reading, writing, and spelling skills, as against our routine practices in recent years
- examine changes in teacher knowledge and confidence in the teaching of literacy, and to understand teacher views about this new way of teaching
- explore the perspectives and experiences of teachers and school leaders where an explicitly taught Structured Literacy approach has been implemented
- explore the perspectives and experiences of parents of children being taught at schools where an explicitly taught Structured Literacy approach is in place, but whose older children were not taught in the same way

As outlined in the circulated letter, participation is de-identified and on a voluntary basis. Should you wish for your child to be excluded from the three-year project, please complete the form attached to the letter or pop into our school office.

Warmly,

Emma Egan  
**Literacy Leader**





## Wellbeing News

Welcome to a new 'Era' of Wellbeing at SFX in 2024! That's a shout out to all of my fellow Swifties who enjoy using that term just as much as me! What a gorgeous start to the 2024 school year it's been! I hope you and your little darlings are navigating the new routines with ease. Let's begin again and embrace the journey ahead, with grace and excitement!

At St. Francis Xavier, we shake off the old ways and embrace the swift changes making mental health and wellbeing our top hit! We prioritise holistic educational outcomes for all children, ensuring they sparkle and shine.

This year, I've got an all-star squad of Year 6 Wellbeing Leaders by my side, ready to support our children in every way possible! They're like the "Squad Goals" of the school, spreading positivity and lending a helping hand. They are Flynn, Charlotte, Lyla, Mylo and Rahui.

Our Student Wellbeing Leaders are going to be our fearless champions, who ensure our children's voices are heard loud and clear! They will be the sparks that ignite change, giving our children a space to express themselves and be a part of the solution to any issues they face.

In 2024, if you've got any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out. I value partnering with families to create the best outcomes for your child or children, ensuring they're shining bright!

Sending cheers your way,

Gemma Johnson  
**Wellbeing Leader**



## Sport/Physical Education News

### Tennis Tournament

Sport in Term 1 kicks off this week with our SFX tennis team competing in the Ballarat Primary Schools Tennis Tournament. We wish our students - Lachlan Patterson, Mannix Treacy, Mitch Kane, Hugh Farrell, Milla Shillito, Harriet Le Grand, Chloe Flynn, Lily Rice, Lois Cummins & Ivy Miles all the best.

### 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. For those that have indicated YES, could you please let me know which particular events your child would like to compete in.

### 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.

Once again the day will run from 9:30am - 2:30pm. 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 for Term 1.

#### 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)

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- 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

Kelly Sports are conducting after school sport programs at SFX on Mondays and Wednesdays in T1. These are not the same ones we have offered in the past and all bookings must be completed online through Kelly Sports. Please see the attached flyer for more information

Have a tremendous week everyone.



Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator

### Community News

QUERIES: CALL DOM 0417 967 621

**KELLY SPORTS**

**SIZZLING SUMMER SPORTS!**

**ST FRANCIS XAVIER PS**

**STARTS WED 31ST JAN!**

**\$17-\$23 + GST PER SESSION**

**AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAMS**  
 MONDAYS: SOCCER SUPERSTARS 3:25PM-4:25PM  
 WEDNESDAYS: MULTI-SPORTS 3:25PM-4:55PM  
 (TENNIS, CRICKET, FOOTY & BASKETBALL)  
 PREPS TO GRADE 6

**OUR SESSIONS RUN AT SFX PS  
PARENTS PICK-UP AT THE SCHOOL**

**BOOK ONLINE NOW AT**  
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**WWW.KELLYSPORTS.COM.AU/GREATER-BALLARAT**

**25 YEARS**  
FOR THE LOVE OF SPORT

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▶ **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

**11 February 2024**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
*God has visited his people*

# St Alipius *parish*

[ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au)  
[www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarat-east/](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballarat-east/)

### MASS TIMES

**St Alipius**  
Tuesday – Friday 9:30 AM  
Saturday 9:30 AM, 6:00 PM  
Sunday 9:00 AM (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> weeks)  
10:30 AM (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)

**Ss Peter and Paul's**  
Sunday 9:00 AM (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)  
10:30 AM (1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>)  
Rosary – Thursday 11:00 AM

**Mass and prayer resources**  
[www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au)

Counting team 3

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

### PARISH TEAM

**Parish Administrator**  
Fr Concord Bagaoisan, 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.



**World Day of the Sick**

## ASH WEDNESDAY

If anyone has any remaining blessed palm from last year we would appreciate it, if it can be dropped off to the presbytery by Tuesday lunch time. That would be appreciated. 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

#### Reconciliation Parent Information Sessions

10:30 AM or 6:00 PM, Thursday 15 Feb, St Alipius

#### Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

6:30 PM, Thursday 22 February

## BAPTISM PREPARATION

As you would be aware, children are baptised regularly in our parish, following the 10.30 AM masses. Before children are baptised in our parish, their parents need to attend an information session. The next baptism information session will be on Thursday 7 March at 10 AM or 5.30 PM. These sessions are held in the small hall at St. Patrick's Cathedral. No registration is required. For further information please call the parish office. This information only applies to children who are under the age of 7 years, older children must participate in a different program to prepare for baptism.

## POPE'S MESSAGE FOR LENT

Pope Francis' Lenten message is focused on God's call to leave behind the bonds of slavery with the title, "Through the Desert God Leads us to Freedom", which is from the Book of Exodus (20:2). Read the message at [www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/len/ documents/20231203-messaggio-quaresima2024.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/len/ documents/20231203-messaggio-quaresima2024.html) or view it at <https://youtu.be/zXPPVtpHBM?t=408>

## 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.

## CHURCH CARPET

The carpet in the centre aisle of the church was replaced last Monday, removing safety issues that the bubbling of the old carpet may have caused. A huge thank you to all those who stayed behind after mass on Saturday night to move the pews to the side so that the church would be ready for Monday morning. This weekend after the 6 PM mass we would again appreciate any help to ensure that the pews are nicely lined up. Thank you in anticipation.

## RCIA FOR CHILDREN

Last week we began working with a group of children who will prepare to receive their sacraments of Initiation in the coming months. These children are older and will work with their families and the parish regularly to learn more about the Catholic faith and the sacraments that they are asking to receive. We look forward to having these families join us for masses and we ask that you pray for them as they journey towards full initiation.

## STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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

Supporting our parish priests	\$1,187
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$453.20

## RECONCILIATION PREPARATION

Reconciliation preparation for children in Year 4 and older, who have received the sacrament of Confirmation, will begin this coming Thursday with a parent information session in the church. This is a compulsory session for parents and provides them with the details/information they need to proceed with the preparation. If you know of anyone who should be attending one of these meetings, can you please remind them that they need to register by calling the parish office as soon as possible.

## WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

In his message to mark the 32nd World Day of the Sick on February 11, Pope Francis reflected on the way serious illness could cause vulnerability, uncertainty, and insecurity. For resources and to read Pope Francis' message, visit [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au). We pray for the sick, the vulnerable and the poor. May they be at the heart of our human concern and pastoral attention. We pray to Mary Most Holy, that she may intercede for those most in need.



## OUR DIOCESE TURNS 150

This year the Diocese of Ballarat will mark its 150th anniversary. Beginning with the season of Lent the Diocese acknowledges historic sinfulness and asks God's forgiveness for failing to be the people God called us to be. We pray for help to recognise our need for forgiveness and reconciliation with God and with our brothers and sisters.

## PROJECT COMPASSION

Caritas Australia is the international aid and development agency of the Catholic Church in Australia and works with people living in the most vulnerable situations around the world, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, or political beliefs. This year, Caritas Australia celebrates 60 years of service. Project Compassion is Caritas Australia's annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal. During the six weeks of Project Compassion, millions of Australians unite to help end poverty, promote justice, and uphold dignity.

### BAPTISMS

**Darcy Leonard Snow**  
Child of Leonard Arnold and Kate Snow

**Cooper Edward Leman**  
Child of Joel and Abbey Leman

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

## 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 for 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>

## 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 welcomeers. Information on how to sign up to continue or start volunteering in one or more of these ministries.

## MINISTRY OF THE WORD

The Vatican II document Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy affirmed that the sacred scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy, and it is from the scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning. Ministers of the Word serve by proclaiming the Good News to feed and nourish us from the table of the Word. They don't just read, but proclaim the first and second readings, the responsorial psalm and gospel acclamation, unless they are sung, and the prayers of the faithful. By using their proclaiming skills, they lead us to full and active participation in the liturgy of the Word. To be a Minister of the Word requires the confidence and skill to proclaim clearly, meaningfully, and reverently. Readers need to thoughtfully prepare and practice in advance so that they understand the meaning and structure of the liturgy. Please consider joining this ministry or receiving some additional and training.

## OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

The Ballarat diocesan publication *Our Diocesan Community* (ODC) is published three times a year. ODC aims to share news about things taking place in parishes, schools, and agencies around the diocese. Contributors are the people of the diocese, who are invited to contribute articles for the first issue by Friday 23 February. The focus for this year will be the 150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Ballarat with the theme Community – Remember, Revitalise & Hope, which reflects various aspects of the anniversary, along with the scripture passage, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12) that considers diverse elements of our vocation as a Christian community. Please share your stories with these concepts in mind. Articles should be approximately 250 words maximum in length and accompanied by photos where possible. Photos should be sent as separate JPEG files (not inserted into the article). When sending in photos, permission should be sought from those in the pictures. These photos may also be used in other diocesan publications. Material can be sent to [odc@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:odc@ballarat.catholic.org.au).

## WISDOM AT THE CATHEDRAL

You are invited to a one-hour session in the Wisdom at the Cathedral series at 7:00 PM on Thursday 29 February. Fr Bill Lowry will discuss *Discerning God's Will in Your Life*, including the processes employed by the saints and the Lord himself in discerning the Father's will for their lives. The venue is the MacKillop/Glowrey rooms and entry is by donation. A cuppa will follow.

# Gather in the Excluded

## Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time: Mark 1:40–45

Today's gospel about a person with leprosy invites us to reflect on the pain of exclusion.

We are social beings who need to engage with others and with our environment so that we all seek to be part of family and community. Some are deprived of choice in this respect.

Repeated name-calling and labelling are age-old strategies of exclusion. "Illegals" is a label that excludes some of the most vulnerable people in today's world. "Leper" is a label that is used metaphorically of those who are not welcome, of those deemed to be "infectious".

To be a leper in the world of early Judaism was to have some sort of skin disease that excluded a person from community and in particular from public worship.

There were strict regulations regarding such lepers (see today's first reading from Leviticus, dating from several centuries before the time of Jesus). Their condition required ritual cleansing by a priest and an offering that cost money. That seems horrifying from our perspective, and it was.

In Mark's story, the man with leprosy approaches Jesus of Nazareth who is not one of the priests. This afflicted

person thus cuts across the established procedures.

Jesus is "moved with compassion", literally "moved in his gut, or in the depths of his being". In other words, Jesus empathises deeply with the suffering person. He has a physical reaction in the face of suffering.

Some manuscripts have "moved with anger". A later scribe probably considered that expression too harsh as an emotion for Jesus and softened the text.

Jesus speaks and acts. He declares that he wills the cure of the man. He actually reaches out and touches him: a bodily encounter brings healing.

### *Jesus empathises deeply with the suffering person*

He then sends the man back to tell the priests "as a proof to them". The verb used for "send back" suggests that the priests had already been approached without success.

Jesus, the Galilean healer, succeeds in mediating the power of the God of Israel and so restores this outcast person to life in the community and the community itself to greater wholeness through this healing.



The widespread report of Jesus' healing activity will incur the anger of some of the authorities.

For our part, as followers of Jesus, we might reflect on the fact that sickness and disability are not only physical phenomena. They also have social and emotional impacts on individuals and the communities to which they belong.

Healing enables people to live again, to be with others and do the things they want to do. It brings new life and integrity to community.

Jesus demonstrates that the combination of a compassionate word and a healing touch can work wonders. This was true in the ancient world. It is equally true for us today in the face of a virulent pandemic that continues to take lives and to disrupt family and social engagement.

Healing must be all-embracing if it is to restore life.

#### THIS WEEK'S READINGS SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LEVITICUS 13:1–2, 44–46  
1 CORINTHIANS 10:31–11:1  
MARK 1:40–45

#### NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

GENESIS 9:8–15  
1 PETER 3:18–22  
MARK 1:12–15



# PHOTO DAY IS COMING



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[www.msp.com.au](http://www.msp.com.au)

## ST FRANCIS XAVIER PS

### PHOTO DAY: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024

## HOW TO ORDER

Ordering online is quick and easy using the steps below!

#### Step 1

Click **on the link below** to access your ordering portal.

<https://stfrancisxavierballarateast-vic.msp.photos>

#### Step 2

Click 'Sign in with Student Details'

[Sign in with Student Details](#)

Enter your child's surname and date of birth. You will be prompted to create an account. If you have an existing account, please use those login details. Once logged in, you will be able to add additional children and place sibling photo orders. Please note that sibling photo orders must be placed by **Midnight on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2024**.

The portal does not have a cut off ordering date, however once the job has gone to the lab for printing, any late orders will incur a later order charge.



**Zooper Doopers** for sale at second break on Mondays.  
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.



The cut off for orders is 10am on Thursday.

If you are a new parent, please make sure to download the Flexi Schools app to ensure you can access and manage your child's lunch preferences.