



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 18th March 2024
Term 1 Week 8

P.O. Box 2027
Ballarat East VIC 3354
Phone: 5331 6311
Fax: 5331 8337

Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 1 (9 weeks)

Mon 29th Jan – Thu 28th Mar

Wednesday 20th March
Student Led Conferences

Friday 22nd March
12.40pm Assembly led by
3JV

1.45pm-3.15pm
Colour Explosion Run 4 Fun

7pm Mix and Mingle
at The North Star

Monday 25th March
9am Holy Week Assembly

Wednesday 27th March
9.30am & 6pm Open Day

Student Led Conferences

Thursday 28th March
Last day of Term 1
2.20pm finish

Term 2 (11 weeks)
Mon 15th Apr – Fri 28th Jun

Monday 15th April
Student Free Day

Tuesday 16th April
First day of Term 2 for
students

Thursday 18th April
10.30am & 6pm
First Eucharist Compulsory
Parent Information Sessions
at St. Alipius Church

Tues 23rd-Wed 24th April
Year 4 Camp

Thursday 25th April
Public Holiday ANZAC Day

Friday 26th April
Student Free Day

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Our Year 3 and Year 5 students have been participating in the national assessment program for literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN) over the past week along with all students in Years 3, 5, 7 & 9 across Australia. The testing program finishes this week which marks an important time for our students to formally explore their learning and to celebrate their academic progression as learners.

Throughout the year all students are assessed in many different ways. Our staff assess students for prior knowledge, during the learning process and of course, at the completion of a learning cycle. Even daily observations help the teachers to alter programs according to student needs. Differentiation takes many forms too. Sometimes extra assistance may be required to help master skills or understandings. Sometimes extension will be required when a student has mastered the necessary skills and is able to take their understandings further. By knowing each individual learner, our staff can cater for their needs each day.

Do you remember what learning was like for you at school? Perhaps you recall mastering a concept quickly or needing some extra help to learn what was required. Learning is just about as individual as the learner but when we build positive learning relationships, our students feel safe to challenge and be challenged at school. Feeling confident and safe to learn is what school is all about.

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



Colour Run

Are you ready for our Super SFX Colour Run this Friday? The children are very excited and we are too! Children will need to wear casual clothes on the day including a white or light coloured shirt which can be coated in Colour. We also ask for bus travelers to have an over shirt to wear on the bus after school so that we are respectful of the bus companies who look after us so well. This year we are hoping to raise enough money to replace the Adventure Playground and include shade as well. It's a mighty goal but a worthy one for all students to enjoy.



Mon 29th Apr-Thurs 2nd May

Book Fair Sales before and after school

Friday 3rd May

2.40pm Assembly led by 2RR

Friday 10th May

Mothers/Special Friends Day
Liturgy

Friday 17th May

2.40pm Assembly led by 1JS

Wed 22nd-Fri 24th May

Year 6 Camp

Friday 24th May

2.40pm Assembly led by FLH

Friday 31st May

2.40pm Assembly led by
6MM

Friday 7th June

2.40pm Assembly led by
5MM

Monday 10th June

Public Holiday
King's Birthday

Friday 14th June

2.40pm Assembly led by
4ML

Friday 21st June

2.40pm Assembly led by
3JW

Friday 28th June

Assembly led by FMM

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

Tuesday 5th November

Public Holiday
Melbourne Cup Day

Sacrament of Reconciliation



Congratulations to the many students in our school who received the sacrament of Reconciliation last Thursday evening. Your time of preparation has led you to gain deeper understandings of what it means to ask for forgiveness and to forgive. We say a special thank you to Fr. Con and the visiting Priests of the Diocese who assisted on the night. Thanks also to Mrs. Meneely and staff who supported this important program.

Thoughts & Prayers

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all involved in the disappearance of Ms. Samantha Murphy. Recent events have added to our sense of sadness and despair at this time. 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 for the families of all involved.

Book of Condolences

We have a book of Condolences set up in the front office area of the school for any people who would like to write a message to members of the Murphy family. We thank the Rush family who have provided a thoughtful book for us to document a message in before delivering it to the family at the end of term.

End of Term – Start of Term

Classes cease for Term One on Thursday 28 March at 2.20pm. We will commence Second Term on Tuesday 16 April. Happy holidays everyone!



Arrivaderci Mrs. Barclay

We say farewell to Mrs. Barclay who is heading off for a family holiday to Italy this week. We will miss you Mrs. Barclay and we look forward to hearing of your adventures. Mrs. Huber will teach Yr. 6 PB until we can welcome Mrs. Barclay back next term. Welcome Mrs. Huber!

Religious Education News

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year B)

Gospel: John 12:20-33

Some Greeks were among those who had gone to Jerusalem to worship during the festival. They went to Philip (he was from Bethsaida in Galilee) and said, "Sir, we want to see Jesus."

Philip went and told Andrew, and the two of them went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has now come for the Son of Man to receive great glory. I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains. Those who love their own life will lose it; those who hate their own life in this world will keep it for life eternal. Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honour anyone who serves me" (*Good News Translation*)

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.

Gospel reflection: Just like the song lyrics “From Little Things, Big Things Grow” -one single seed can grow lots of food. Think about how tiny an apple seed is inside your apple, which you can plant and grow into an apple tree that will produce lots of other apples. Can you think of some other foods that can be grown from a single seed?

Just like a seed, our actions, even if we do just one little thing, can also grow into something big, especially if we join together with others. For example if I want to make the world a fairer place, on my own I am easy to ignore. but if all of us come together and get our friends and our families to join in too, we are much harder to ignore! Through his death and resurrection, Jesus showed us one person can start a movement to change the world and in community we are strongest. Jesus calls us all to follow him, in all that we do and be the best people we can be.

Our Challenge: What will you do this week to make a difference to someone else?



COMPLETE YOUR PARENT ECSI SURVEY

The Enhancing Catholic School Identity Survey which will assist us in better understanding how our Catholic identity is expressed in work and practice here at St Francis Xavier Primary School.

Please follow these instructions to access ECSI survey:

Access the survey at: www.ecsi.site/au/user/

Enter the case-sensitive password Ghj654 (and click login)

Select New User

After you have logged in, you will be asked for the Survey Access Code.

Enter Survey Access Code: g66y6y

As an extra incentive, fill in the raffle ticket at the bottom of this note after completing your survey for your chance to win \$250 off your school fees! Entries must be received by March 27th and will be drawn March 28th, 2024.

(please complete and return to the school office)

Family name: _____

Contact number: _____

Survey completed on: (date) _____

YEAR FOUR RECONCILIATION

We congratulate the Year Four children who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time last week. They have been looking forward to this Sacrament and presented themselves beautifully at the liturgy. Many thanks to their families and to Ms Hudson, Mr Lalor and Ms O’Keefe for preparing and supporting these children at this special time.

A big thank you to our Parish Priest Fr. Con and many thanks also to Frs. Eladio, Eugene and Francis for giving up their time to join us.

We look forward now to joining these children as they receive their First Eucharist in June. Please keep them in your prayers.



Christine Meneely, Religious Education Leader



Curriculum News



Student - Led Conferences at SFX: Your child(ren) will be showcasing their schoolwork and discussing learning goals with you through Student-Led Conferences this week and next. During Student – Led Conferences, your child will lead the discussion with you about their school work, while teachers will help direct conversation and answer questions you may have.

Bookings for these conferences are open on PAM now! If you haven't already done so please go in and book.

These meetings will last for 15 minutes, and we encourage all families to attend. Children must attend these meetings!

We have several goals for holding conferences using this format:

- For parents/carers – we hope that you will get to see rather than simply being told about your child's progress
- For students – we hope students will take more responsibility for their learning
- For teachers – we want teachers to have more meaningful and impactful conferences with you
- For all – we want to maximise our time together, create ways to partner with one another to support student success.

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Questions to ask your child at Student - Led Conferences

Here are some questions for you to ask your child during their Student – Led Conference. These are suggestions, so please look them over and pick a few that you may like to ask!

1. What are you most proud of?
2. It makes me proud to see that
3. Can you tell me more about ...
4. I can tell that you improved in
5. What did you find challenging this term?
6. Did you reach your goals? Why/Why not?
7. What can we do together at home to support your learning?

We have deliberately formed them as Student – Led and not 3 – Way Conferences. Highly Effective Catholic Primary Schools promote Student Voice. Student – Led Conferences are identified as a significant way of developing Student Voice. The latest research and evidence around Assessment as Learning supports this.

If a parent/carer needs to have a conversation with the teacher not in the presence of the child in regards to other matters, this needs to take place at another time. Contact can be made with the class teacher requesting further time if needed.



NAPLAN: Our NAPLAN tests are well under way. All children have applied themselves to each test and we are really proud of their efforts. The photo shows you how we administered these tests in our gym.

Well Done to our children in Years 3 and 5. NAPLAN is how governments, education authorities and schools determine whether young Australians are reaching important educational goals. Once our results are delivered we will unpack them as a staff.

Book Fair:

Early next term we will once again be running our Book Fair. Purchasing days will be Week 3 Monday 29th April - Thursday 2nd May. More details to follow.

Have a wonderful week.

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



All of the way back in Week 3 I introduced you to our Year Six Wellbeing Leaders! If you need another little reminder, they are Flynn, Charlotte, Lyla, Mylo and Rahui.

In this story of student wellness, the SFX journey unfolds, recognising the need for authentic student voices. Empowering children involves shaking off the bad days and speaking with each other to create solutions, weaving a melody of empowerment into the fabric of education at school.

In the symphony of a child's life, we are done with neglecting student wellbeing. It's clear that nurturing their wellness is not overlooking its significance. It helps to harmonise their ability to get back into their learning and build relationships that are appealing.

We will have our first 'proper' Wellbeing Leader meeting this Friday where I am hoping there will be so many great ideas presented and so much enthusiasm!

I am hoping to talk to the team about how 'belonging' is essential for positive mental health and wellbeing. We will discuss ways we can look after one another and how we can enhance our warm and positive school climate. We will focus on how activities such as the 'Builders and Traders Club' can support a wide range of students and how our Buddies program helps foster leadership, mentoring and responsibility, particularly in the older year levels.

We will discuss inviting children from all year levels to contribute and meet together! Encourage your child to speak to a Student Wellbeing Leader or tell me if they are inspired with ideas to elevate wellbeing at St Francis Xavier. Their voice could be the spark that ignites positive change and transformation in our community.

As always, SchoolTV is packed with some handy wellbeing strategies for parents, just so the kids don't have all the fun!

Sending cheers your way,



Gemma Johnson, Wellbeing Leader

Swimming

We wish Amelia in Year 5 all the best as she will be competing in this Friday's Regional Swimming event in Horsham. Good luck Amelia from all of us here at SFX.

Well done to Indi N, Ivy D, Lyla N & Lenny R who participated in last week's MDASA Under 9 Swimming Event. All students swam extremely well and should be very proud of their efforts. A big thank you to the families for attending and supporting the children.

Term 2 After School Netball

St Francis Xavier is planning on entering team/s into the Darroch Afterschool Netball Competition at Llanberris Netball Stadium. These games will be run on Tuesday or Wednesday afternoons (game times expected to be 4pm, 4:50pm & 5:40pm) commencing April 23/24. The competition will run for 9 weeks (no finals in T2). Teams are entered under the SFX name and coached/managed by parents. There is a Yr 3/4 and a Yr 5/6 competition for each night.

For more information and to register your child/s interest please refer to notification on PAM.

Kilometre Club

All students are invited to join our Kilometre Club which will continue this Wednesday. The Kilometre Club will be conducted every Wednesday morning, during the first break. Students and teachers meet outside the gym on the top oval for an 11:05am start. The Kilometre Club will consist of a continuous 15 minute walk, jog or run around a 250m loop.

Students who wish to participate are reminded to bring their runners and a drink bottle each Wednesday.

We look forward to seeing lots of students there.

2024 Sport Dates

Please see below a list of the dates we currently have for various sporting events for Terms 1 and 2.

Term 1:

- Week 8 - Friday Mar 22nd - Regional Swimming @ Horsham (qualifiers from District swimming)

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)

Have a wonderful week everyone.



Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**



Basketball Ballarat Junior Miners Holiday Camp

Power FM's Junior Miners Holiday Camps are held during each school holidays for children aged 5-14 years old of all genders and abilities. Improve your skills, develop techniques, enhance your game, meet new friends and ultimately have fun! Our camps cater for the beginner who has never picked up a basketball to the most experience 14-year-old in the land!

All participants can expect:

- Meet your favourite Miners players
- Expert instructions from professional coaches including Miners player and coaches
- Develop new basketball skills and training methods
- Fun and inclusive learning environment
- Structured session content including great games and prizes at every camp
- Learn how to be a great team mate and help others succeed

Registrations for the Autumn Holidays are now open, with the camp being held on Tuesday April 2nd, Wednesday April 3rd, Wednesday April 10th and Thursday April 11th from 9:00am till 3:00pm at Selkirk Stadium.

For more information and to register: <https://www.ballaratbasketball.com/holiday-camp/>

For further details please contact Zack Cummins via email programs@ballaratbasketball.com or for urgent enquiries call reception on (03) 5338 1220.

Futsal Ballarat are running school holiday clinics at Woodman's Hill Secondary School over the upcoming school holidays.

Week 1 & 2 - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 9am to 3pm

Woodmans Hill Rec Centre

\$70.00 per child per day

<https://www.futsalballarat.com.au/programs/school-holidays>

TERM 1 SCHOOL HOLIDAY CLINICS		
TUES 2ND APRIL	WED 3RD APRIL	THURS 4TH APRIL
TUES 9TH APRIL	WED 10TH APRIL	THURS 11TH APRIL



ROYAL SOUTH STREET SOCIETY
BALLARAT EISTEDDFOD

*new
non-competitive
sections*

- INSTRUMENTAL BANDS AND SOLOS
- CHORAL
- DANCE
- CALISTHENICS

*masterclass
opportunities*

2024

EVENTS

- DEBATING
- PIANOFORTE
- VOCAL
- SPEECH AND DRAMA
- ALL ABILITIES

*Great
prizes*

- ENTRIES OPEN 1ST MARCH
- ENTRIES CLOSE 30TH APRIL
- TIMETABLES TO SCHOOLS BY 31ST MAY

admin@royalsouthstreet.com.au



5332 1054





**MELBOURNE
RENEGADES**

SCHOOL HOLIDAY CAMPS

Our school holiday camps are designed for kids aged 7 to 10 who are interested in starting their journey as a cricketer.

With lots of fun, fully supervised cricket-based activities and games, we will take you through the skills and drills to be a Gade!

BALLARAT | THUR 11 APRIL 2024

Venue: To be advised. Time: 9.00am - 3.00pm (Renegades 2023-24 Members get a discount!)

[Register for Ballarat now!](#)

Please note that we do not operate waiting lists for these events - it is first in, best dressed until the camp is sold out!

For other locations throughout Victoria: <https://www.melbournerenegades.com.au/holidayprograms>

*****Parents/guardians do not have to stay for the entire day. Any Renegades player appearances are subject to availability*****

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Attachments

ASSEMBLY AWARDS 15th March 2024 Hosted by 4GH Theme: Hospitality

We welcome and include others. Hospitality means welcoming other people to a home, business or school.

We show hospitality because Jesus teaches us to include everyone and show them they are welcome.

FLH	Huxson B and Sadie P	4GH	Finya N and Alby S
FGJ	Ava S and Hugo B	4ML	Hannah F and Olivia F
FTW	Mille Ryan and Teddy B	4BO	Sam N and Violet W
FMM	Tex O and Georgie D	5CC	Lois C and Beatrice H
1JS	Amaiyah M and Indi N	5MA	Leni B and Maddie M
1EM	Tilly V and Alfie B	5JW	Mia H and Margot C
1MV	Meredith B and Daulat S	6PB	Morgan M and Noah S
2RR	Finn B and Evie L	6ZA	Tom A and Sofia S
2CK	Sutton A and Max E	6MM	Beau H and Sophie K
2JS	Mathias T and Hughey R	Environmental Education	Billy C and Kit B
3JE	Max M and Edith B	Performing Arts	
3JV	Jameson and Charlize S	Visual Arts	All of 1JS!
3DW	Indie S and James B	Physical Education	Macie L and Levi C
		Technology	Chloe F and Henry W
Principal's Award: <i>Nick Hyland for willingly assisting a teacher on yard duty this week. Great leadership!</i>			



▶ **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
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

17 March 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent

It yields a rich harvest

St Alipius parish

ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

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

MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Monday Funeral mass for Sr Joan
Dalglish 10:30 AM

Tuesday – Friday 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 1

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: Sr
Joan Dalglish RSM

Anniversaries: Noelene
Fletcher, Carmel Doherty

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.

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**



SOCIAL GATHERING

The Parish Pastoral Council invites all parishioners to a BBQ after 6:00 PM mass on Saturday 16 March. We hope to gather on the lawn between the church and presbytery but can adjourn to the hall if the weather is inclement. Meat provided. Please bring a salad to share if you'd like to. A Project Compassion box will be available for attendees to donate a few coins if you can.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parish BBQ

After 6:00 PM Mass, Sat 16 March, St Alipius Hall

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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

Supporting our parish priests	\$1080
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$258

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

PROJECT COMPASSION



As the eldest child in a low-income farming family in rural Malawi, Memory faced many barriers to her education. But, with the support of Caritas Australia, she enrolled in a technical school and became the first female carpenter in her village. You can donate through

Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes, by calling 1800 024 41, visiting www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion, or scanning this QR code.



MASS OF THE OILS

The Mass of the Oils will be held at 11:30 AM on Monday 25 March at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. Lunch, displays and music afterwards in the Hall. All welcome. This year the Mass of the Oils will be live-streamed at <https://youtube.com/live/SdivlKiHSs?feature=share>

HOLY WEEK LITURGIES

Palm Sunday Vigil – 23 March

6:00 PM – Weather permitting, the mass will commence outside the church and process inside.

Palm Sunday – 24 March

9:00 AM – Mass at St Alipius.

10:30 AM – Mass at Ss Peter and Paul's, Buninyong.

Holy Thursday – 28 March

7:00 PM – Mass of the Last Supper at St Alipius, including the ceremonial Washing of the Feet, followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the Altar of Repose in Parish Hall until 10:00 PM.

Good Friday – 29 March

10:00 AM – Stations of the Cross at St Alipius.

3:00 PM – Passion of the Lord, Veneration of the Cross, and Holy Communion.

Easter Vigil – 30 March

6:00 PM – Weather permitting, the vigil will commence on the lawn on the eastern side of St Alipius where the fire and Easter Candle will be blessed, followed by a candlelit procession into the church. Six children who have been preparing for their sacraments through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for Children of Catechetical Age will be baptised and some will also be Confirmed and receive their First Eucharist.

Easter Sunday – 31 March

9:00 AM – Mass St Alipius.

10:30 AM – Mass at Ss Peter and Paul's.

CHURCH PREPARATION

To help prepare our churches for the Easter season, parishioners are invited to help clean the churches after Sunday masses this weekend.

Volunteers are also required to set up the Altar of Repose in the Parish Hall for Holy Thursday. If you would like to help, please contact the parish office.

150 ANNIVERSARY PRAYER

Copies of the anniversary prayer, written in acknowledgement of the 150 years of the Ballarat Diocese, are available in the church foyers.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

Congratulations to the 100+ children who have received the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time this week. Our thanks to the families and the staff of our local Catholic schools who have supported them in their preparation. These children will now prepare to receive Eucharist for the first time in May. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

DIOCESAN E-NEWS

The latest edition of e-News is available to view at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/. You can subscribe to be emailed future editions.

BAPTISMS

Anika May Martin
Child of Jonel Martin and Maydalen Occenola

Lenny Harry Jack Ryan
Child of Joseph and Karen Ryan

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

Pope Francis

SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT

A copy of the annual report from the Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission is available from the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/welfare/social-justice/

PRIEST APPOINTMENTS

Bishop Paul has announced the allocation of priests throughout our local parishes. Effective Wednesday 10 April, Fr Justin Driscoll will be joining us as parish priest of Ballarat East, Bungaree, and Gordon. He will be supported by Fr Matthew Renstall as assistant priest. Fr Concord Bagaoisan will be moving to the Redan, Sebastopol, and Linton parishes, with Fr Eladio Lizada as assistant priest. Fr Marcello Colasante will be the parish priest at Wendouree, Creswick, and Daylesford. At the cathedral, Ballarat North, and Beaufort, Fr Ed Moloney will be the administrator, with Fr James McKay, and Fr Francis Kureckal as assistant priests. We thank Fr Con for his time with us and look forward to welcoming Fr Justin and Fr Matthew in April.

PALM SUNDAY RALLY & WALK

At 2:00 PM on Sunday 24 March, a 90-minute Palm Sunday Rally and Walk will commence at the McDonald Bandstand, opposite the floral clock, between Pipers and the playground at Lake Wendouree. Guest speakers include Sr Brigid Arthur, co-founder of the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, and a person who was a refugee. The talks will be followed by a short, loop walk to and from the Olympic Rings with a stop at the Peace Mile marker to reflect upon world peace.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Every relationship is a journey, and the grind of everyday life can easily cause you to lose touch with your spouse. A Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend gives married couples time to nurture their relationship and some tools to keep passion alive in a gentle, supportive environment, away from the pressures and distractions of daily living. The weekend is based around Catholic values and couples of all faiths are welcome. 12–14 April in Melbourne. Website: www.wmme.org.au. Information and bookings: phone Mercy & James at 0409 183 676 or email vicbookings@wmme.org.au.

MARY WARD FOR SAINT

Mary Ward supporters are seeking support for their cause for the canonisation of the foundress of the Loreto Sisters (IBVM). To sign the petition, scan or click the QR code.



MERCY PLACE VOLUNTEERS

Mercy Place is seeking volunteers for a range of roles. Volunteers might spend time one-on-one with residents, taking them for walks in the garden, going on bus trips, reading a book or newspaper, helping them in the garden, or just having a chat. The hours are organised to suit the volunteer. If interested, please see the flyer in the church foyer for more information.

CDF COMMUNITY FUND

By opening a personal account with CDF Community Fund, not only will you receive a competitive financial return, but your savings will also help build parishes, classrooms, hospital wings, aged care homes and social service facilities.



With competitive interest rates available across a range of accounts, including 5.55% p.a.* on a 12-month Term Investment, it's a way to save while doing good. To find out more, email the CDF Team at csq@melbdcdf.org.au or phone 1800 134 135, or visit: www.catholicdevelopmentfund.org.au/communityfund/off er. *Interest rates are subject to change. View current rates on the CDF website.

WALSH REUNION AND BOOK

Save the date – the weekend of 10–12 October 2025 – for a Walsh Clans of Horsham family reunion and book launch. The descendants of William and Bridget (nee Shea) Walsh of Tatyoon and McKenzie Creek, and Edward and Julia (nee Ryan) Walsh of Vectis and Remshaw will gather in Horsham over that weekend. For information and to register, please email walshreunion2025@gmail.com.

And I Will Draw All to Myself

Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

5th Sunday in Lent: John 3:14–21

Today's gospel tells us that among those who go up to Jerusalem to worship at the feast of Passover are some "Greeks".

The reference is probably to a group known in the early church as "God-fearers", although that designation is found only in Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles.

These people were, in relation to Judaism, a bit like RCIA candidates in the Catholic tradition. They were certainly interested in Judaism and, because of their active interest in the Jewish faith, were possibly better informed about many of the Jewish traditions than those who had been members of the Jewish community all their lives.

God-fearers seem to have been among the first Gentiles (non-Jews) to join the early Christian Jewish movement, i.e., the Jews who accepted Jesus as Messiah (or Christ).

For Jesus, the arrival of these God-fearing Greeks signals his "hour".

Earlier in John's gospel, Jesus has insisted that his "hour" had not yet come. Now that his message receives global acknowledgement, or in the words of the Pharisees, now that "the

world has gone after him" (John 20:19), he can announce that the hour of his glorification has come.

Characteristically, Jesus uses a potent agricultural image to capture the transformative nature of his imminent death: like the grain of wheat, he must go into the earth and die in order to bear fruit.

The same is true for his followers: to be concerned only with self-preservation is to "lose" one's life; to give one's life is to "keep it for eternal life".

He must die to bear fruit

Although the language is more explicit in John, the grain of wheat image echoes some aspects of the first reading from the prophet Jeremiah (31:31–34).

Jeremiah presents the God of Israel as One who forgives and who is even prepared to forget the sins of the past.

The people will be God's garden: the seed planted within them is God's Law. They will be God's own billboard: the law of forgiveness and mercy will be written in their hearts.



John uses the "eternal life" metaphor in much the same way as the other gospel writers use the "reign of God" or "kin-dom" image. To keep one's life for "eternal life" has to do with living God's transformative vision for creation in the present so that it might one day be fully realised.

In John's gospel, Jesus' death is also his being lifted up in glory. The moment of his death becomes the moment of drawing "all" to himself.

The "all" includes all people but is not restricted to the human community. It also allows for an ecological interpretation: in his death and exaltation, Jesus gathers the whole Earth community into the mystery of God's redemptive and transforming love.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS
FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
JEREMIAH 31:31–34
HEBREWS 5:7–9
JOHN 12:20–30

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS
PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION
ISAIAH 50:4–7
PHILIPPIANS 2:6–11
MARK 14:1–15:47

Mix and Mingle Night: Lock in your babysitters Friday the 22nd of March at The North Star starting at 7pm. Tickets are \$25 which includes finger food, music and entry into the door prize.

Tickets will be available on the Flexischools this week so keep an eye out. Always a great night out and a chance to meet our teachers and other parents at the school.

Easter raffle donations: A reminder that we're organising an Easter Egg Raffle. But to make this event a cracking success, we're kindly asking for your egg-cellent donations!

Whether you're able to spare a few chocolate eggs, Easter treats, or even some festive goodies, every donation makes a huge difference! Simply drop off your donations at the school office during regular hours.

Easter Egg Raffle Tickets: Hop into the Easter spirit with St. Francis Xavier Primary School's egg-citing raffle! Grab your tickets via the QR code or the link below.



Fundraising Raffle to Support St Francis Xavier
Ballarat East
rafflelink.com.au

Tuition Raffle Tickets: Unlock the chance to save big on school fees!

Enter the 2024 SFX Tuition Raffle for a shot at winning \$1500 off your fees!

Grab your tickets at the links below.



Fundraising Raffle to Support St Francis Xavier
Primary School
rafflelink.com.au

Colour Run: Did you hear the exciting news? We are hosting a Colour Explosion School Run 4 Fun with @Australian

Fundraising! 🏃💡 FRIDAY March 22nd. Our fundraiser is NOW open. Make sure you keep an eye out for your child's sponsorship booklet in their diary to get started. Here's to a

colourful 2024 🌈! There are many wonderful

prizes students can earn through their individual fundraising. If your child makes a profile before Wednesday

they WIN a Monty scented pencil 🙌.



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.

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.