



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Newsletter

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Term 1 Week 9

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### Term 1 (9 weeks)

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

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

9.30am & 6pm Open Day

Student Led Conferences

#### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

Last day of Term 1

2.20pm finish

### 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

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

First day of Term 2 for students

#### Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April

10.30am & 6pm

First Eucharist Compulsory  
Parent Information Sessions  
at St. Alipius Church

#### Tues 23<sup>rd</sup>-Wed 24<sup>th</sup> April

Year 4 Camp

#### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April

Public Holiday ANZAC Day

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

Student Free Day

#### Mon 29<sup>th</sup> Apr-Thurs 2<sup>nd</sup> May

Book Fair Sales before and  
after school

#### Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May

2.40pm Assembly led by 2RR

#### Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May

Mothers/Special Friends Day  
Liturgy

#### Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May

2.40pm Assembly led by 1JS

#### Wed 22<sup>nd</sup>-Fri 24<sup>th</sup> May

Year 6 Camp

### In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Lent seems to have taken on an extra meaning this year. Our time for fasting, prayer and almsgiving have also been impacted by events in our community which seem to cause us all to wonder what is going on. I know that I have had moments over recent weeks when I have wondered what is happening in our local Ballarat community.

If Lent is the time of preparation, Holy Week is our time of reflection. Yesterday we celebrated Palm Sunday when Jesus entered the walled city of Jerusalem. At this time, word had spread and Jesus was acclaimed as a Holy man, a Healer and the Son of the Creator. Just a few days later Jesus was mocked and punished. He was tried and treated as a criminal. Ultimately he would suffer the death of humiliation on the cross. In the darkest of hours Jesus would wonder what was happening to his world and why he had been abandoned.

The story doesn't end there. The gospel writers tell us that after three days Jesus would rise again. His message would spread far and wide. This new faith with its message of love and forgiveness would grow to the point where more than 2000 years later we still carry the story and the message. We are called to be the Easter people, the ones who live a life based on the message of the risen Christ. Let's look forward to Easter with its promise of new beginnings.

Happy Easter everyone,



Mark Hogbin



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**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May**  
2.40pm Assembly led by FLH

**Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May**  
2.40pm Assembly led by  
6MM

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June**  
2.40pm Assembly led by  
5MM

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June**  
Public Holiday  
King's Birthday

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June**  
2.40pm Assembly led by  
4ML

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June**  
2.40pm Assembly led by  
3JW

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June**  
Assembly led by FMM

**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

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November**  
Public Holiday  
Melbourne Cup Day

### 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!



### Colour Run!

What a colourful day we had last Friday! The children certainly enjoyed all the action of our Colour Run. We would like to thank our Parents & Friends Committee led by Stephanie Nunn who made this event happen. With a goal this year of raising enough money to replace our aged adventure playground and provide sun shelter we have certainly aimed high! As soon as the tallies have been taken we will announce how much money we have raised. Thank you to all students, Parent & Friends, and of course, our very special staff.

### Parent & Friends Mix & Mingle

Last Friday evening saw an enthusiastic gathering of parents and friends from our school community coming together to enjoy each other's company. We had a terrific evening together and we thank our organising team for making this happen. We would also like to congratulate our raffle winners who can enjoy their prizes as we enter into the Easter break.

<b>1st PRIZE</b>	Anne White, Ticket Number: #566
<b>2nd PRIZE</b>	Billy Toohey, Ticket Number: #168
<b>3rd PRIZE</b>	Felicity Trigg, Ticket Number: #143
<b>4th PRIZE</b>	Identity withheld, Ticket Number: #686
<b>5th PRIZE</b>	Melinda Firth, Ticket Number: #123
<b>6th PRIZE</b>	Faith White, Ticket Number: #948
<b>7th PRIZE</b>	Jacinta Mauava, Ticket Number: #388
<b>8th PRIZE</b>	Anita Houlihan, Ticket Number: #546
<b>9th PRIZE</b>	Tarsh Van Langevelde, Ticket Number: #872
<b>10th PRIZE</b>	Tori Walter, Ticket Number: #1036
<b>11th PRIZE</b>	Felicity Trigg, Ticket Number: #151
<b>12th PRIZE</b>	Sarah Kersley, Ticket Number: #73
<b>13th PRIZE</b>	Melinda Firth, Ticket Number: #115
<b>14th PRIZE</b>	Zephyr Swanson, Ticket Number: #380
<b>15th PRIZE</b>	Kathryn Pearce, Ticket Number: #807

### Student Led Conferences

Our Student Led Conferences continue this week. This is a great opportunity for parents to learn about how your child is progressing with their learning at school. Thanks to all families who have shown your support and thanks also to our dedicated staff who have worked so hard to make this happen.

## Easter Art in Ballarat



Wow! Have you seen our amazing Easter Art in Ballarat? Our very own Ms. Bec Warr created the huge Easter eggs which you can see along Sturt Street. What a talented artist you are Ms. Warr!



## Damascus Evening of Prayer & Reflection

Damascus College warmly invites the community



## Lenten Prayer and Reflection Service

Please join us for a special service to provide an opportunity for reflection, prayer, and communal support as we acknowledge the grief and loss faced by the Ballarat community, and to prepare our hearts for Easter.

Date: **Tuesday 26 March**

Time: **7pm**

please arrive at the College by 6.50pm for commencement at 7pm

Location: **Damascus Events Centre, Damascus College**

RSVP: **Monday 25 March 2024**

Please book your seat at: [trybooking.com/CQHZY](https://www.trybooking.com/CQHZY)

1412 Geelong Road, Mt Clear VIC 3350  
[damascus.vic.edu.au](http://damascus.vic.edu.au)



Dear parents and carers,

As we journey through the holy season of Lent, you are invited to join us for a special Lenten Prayer and Reflection Service on Tuesday 26 March, 7pm. This gathering will provide an opportunity for reflection, prayer, and communal support as we prepare our hearts for Easter. It is also a time when we can acknowledge the grief and loss faced by the Ballarat community.

**Event: Lenten Prayer and Reflection Service**

**Date: Tuesday 26 March**

**Time: 7pm**

**Location: Damascus Events Centre, Damascus College**

In particular, we would like to acknowledge the significant hardships, tragedy, grief and loss faced by families in our wider community, the Ballarat mining community, and those affected by the bushfires.

As people of hope, we are called to support each other and gather in prayer and solidarity. We call on the light of Christ in times of hardship to give us strength, comfort, and a resting place for our personal and shared grief.

Whether you are a student, parent, teacher, family member or part of our wider community, you are warmly invited to participate.

Let us come together as community, seeking God's grace and mercy during this Lenten season. Together, we can create a hope-filled atmosphere of prayer, unity, and healing.

RSVP: Monday 25 March 2024. Please book your seat at: <https://www.trybooking.com/CQHZY>

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# Holy Week

**THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday March 24, 2024 Palm Sunday (Year B)**

**Gospel:** Mark 11:1-10

As they approached Jerusalem, near the towns of Bethphage and Bethany, they came to the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of his disciples ahead with these instructions: "Go to the village there ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. And if someone asks you why you are doing that, say that the Master needs it and will send it back at once."

So they went and found a colt out in the street, tied to the door of a house. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders asked them, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"

They answered just as Jesus had told them, and the crowd let them go. They brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches in the field and spread them on the road. The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, "Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the coming kingdom of King David, our father! Praise be to God!" (*Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation*)

**Gospel reflection:**

Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem by crowds of people. They waved palm branches and shouted "hosanna". How would you welcome Jesus if he arrived here today?

**Our Challenge:** How can we welcome Jesus into our lives this Holy Week and Easter?





### 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/](http://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.

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(please complete and return to the school office)

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

Survey completed on: (date) \_\_\_\_\_



Christine Meneely, **Religious Education Leader**

### Curriculum News



What a great night we had last Wednesday with our first of 2 Student Led Conferences nights.

The teachers were so very proud of how the children were able to articulate their learning to their families. This Wednesday 27th march is our second night.

**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.

### 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 2024 is now finished. Once again many thanks to the children who completed these tests in a positive, exciting and purposeful manner. Looking forward to gaining our results in the not too distant future.



Happy Easter to all. Enjoy your break and I am looking forward to working with you all in term 2, 2024.

Have a wonderful week.

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



## Wellbeing News

Welcome to Week 9, the last week of Term 1!

It was enchanting to meet so many Parents and Friends and speak on a social level at the recent Colour Run. It's always a delicate balance to learn names and faces and connect what we have heard as 'The Best Day' to family members - I hope those of you who were a part of the fun had an enjoyable afternoon too!

Friendships are everything, especially in the story of you as parents at St Francis Xavier Primary School. Having supportive friends is like dancing in a dream, leading to a 'State of Grace' where life satisfaction, happiness and both physical and mental health are beginning to be at the forefront of our minds again. Taking a break from the long hustle of parenting is crucial for your own wellbeing and self-care.

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Sharing your stories with other parents, discussing the joys and challenges of child raising can be a safe haven - where friends offer their own shared experiences and understandings. Connecting with other parents gives you a chance to normalise the 'ages and stages' with those who are also experiencing it. These relationships can help you maintain balance in your life, encourage you and give you a different perspective on things. These friendships don't have to be 'soul-level deep' - sometimes they simply make us feel in the loop and part of a larger community.

At SFX, we want all children and families to feel that strong sense of belonging. Psychologists Goodnow and Grady (1993) describe school belonging as "the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included and supported by others in the school social environment".

SchoolTV has a fantastic article titled 'Friendship and Belonging' about teaching your child to be a good friend - I am sure there will also be a few takeaways for us as adults as well!

Sending cheers your way,



Gemma Johnson, **Wellbeing Leader**

## Sport/Physical Education News

### Swimming

Congratulations to Amelia in Year 5 for her swim in last Friday's Regional Swimming event in Horsham. This is a great achievement and we are all proud of you

### 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 Term 2.

#### 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 great week everyone.



Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator

Community News

**KELLY SPORTS** *Easter*  
**HOLIDAY PROGRAMME**  
**Tue 2nd to Fri 12th April 2024**

**What To Bring:**  
 - Suitable clothing  
 - A refillable drink bottle  
 - A hat & sunscreen  
 - Big packed lunch!

**JOIN US!**  
**For a Fun-Filled Holiday Program!**  
 EASTWOOD LEISURE CENTRE BALLARAT  
 8am-5pm Weekdays  
 Kinder to Grade 6  
 \$60 per child per day

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[www.kellysports.com.au/greater-ballarat](http://www.kellysports.com.au/greater-ballarat)

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# Foster Care

Information Sessions On Now



Foster Care is about creating a safe space for children in our community. Take the next step in becoming a foster carer with Cafs. Register to attend one of our upcoming carer information sessions today.

## Foster Care

Respite Care • Short-term • Long-term • Emergency Care

## Other Types of Care

Permanent Care • Kinship Care • Adoption



**REGISTER YOUR INTEREST**

Visit [cafs.org.au](https://cafs.org.au) or call 1800 692 237



## Attachments

**ASSEMBLY AWARDS 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 Hosted by 3JV** Theme: Excellence  
 We show our personal best. Excellence means being the best person we can be.  
 We always try our hardest, even when it's difficult, just like Jesus did.

FLH	Maya L and Jasper G	4GH	Mollie A and Joe T
FGJ	Hadley C and Murphy D	4ML	Ella U and James B
FTW	Rex O and Audrey G	4BO	Jet R and Isla J
FMM	Stella H and Aria S	5CC	Elizabeth B and Zara T
1JS	Annie L and Theo M	5MA	Asha T and Liam F
1EM	Penny C and Frankie R	5JW	Ava V and Amelia S
1MV	Lance H and Mayomikun B	6PB	Emily H and Oscar T
2RR	Pippa B and Rory D	6ZA	Campbell D and Mannix T
2CK	Violet T and Freddy D	6MM	Monty H and Matilda W
2JS	Mila Q and Oskar O		
3JE	Edith Y and Thomas H	PA	Everyone in 2CK for showing excellence for their whole music class!
3JV	Archie G and Isabella C	VA	Hudson R, Beatrice H and Henri G (5CC)
3DW	Baxter S and Milla R	PE	Nellie C and Archer S
		Tech	George P and Margot C

24 March 2024

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

*He humbled himself to become like us*



▶ **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

# St Alipius parish

[ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

[www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballar-at-east/](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parish/ballar-at-east/)

## MASS TIMES

### St Alipius

Tues – Anointing mass 9:30 AM

Wednesday 9:30 AM

Saturday 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 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:

Kathleen Delaney, Julie Wilkinson

### Anniversaries: Molly

Forbes

### Unwell: Socorro De

Chavez, Luka Fletcher-Leskarac, 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.

PALM  
SUNDAY





## 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 Ss Peter and Paul's, Buninyong.

10:30 AM – Mass at St Alipius.

### 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. Several 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.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Mass of the Oils

11:00 AM, Mon 25 March, St Patrick's Cathedral

## STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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

Supporting our parish priests	\$995
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$323.20

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

## ANOINTING MASS

The 9.30 AM Mass on Tuesday will be an anointing Mass. Please alert anyone you know who may wish to attend. If you or someone you know requires transport, please contact the parish office and we will organise it.

## PARISH BBQ

Our parish BBQ on the weekend was a very social occasion, with people gathering under the trees between the church and the presbytery on a beautiful evening. Good food and good conversation are always the highlight of our social events, and this was no exception. In addition to socialising, we were also pleased to raise \$100 for Project Compassion which goes halfway to providing the construction of toilets in houses in the Philippines. Thanks to all who attended on the evening.



## SAFETRAC ONLINE COURSE

The email addresses of all volunteers required to do the Safetrac course on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults will be sent to the diocese this week. An email from the diocese will be sent containing your username and password. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call the parish office and we will provide whatever support we can. We are assured that this version of Safetrac is more accessible than the previous one.



## RCIC

At our Easter Vigil this year we have several children receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. These children and their families have been a lovely group to work with. We have had some great conversations and have heard some very thoughtful answers. It is lovely to sit with these children and experience their inquisitive nature about the Catholic Church. We ask you to continue to pray for Ruby, Joe, Luka, Conor, Ella, Ruby, and James in their final days of preparation.

## UPDATING YOUR WWCC

There are several parishioners whose Working with Children Checks (WWCC) will expire in 2024. Please check the date of yours to ensure that it is still current. Please provide a copy of your new WWCC to the parish office. Anybody needing to renew or apply for a WWCC is very welcome to book a time to come into the office where we can help you through the process. Teachers are asked to please provide copies of their current VIT registration card. Please contact the parish office if you have any questions. We appreciate your efforts to ensure that our parish is complying with child safety guidelines.

## 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.

## 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/SdivllKiHs2?feature=share>

## BUNINYONG "WAY OF THE CROSS"

Meet at the Town Hall steps at 8.30am.

A great opportunity for the Churches of Buninyong to get together, and be a witness to the wider community of our faith in Jesus. For young and old alike. It goes for about 30 minutes and covers less than one km. More details from Reverend Mark Schnerring of Buninyong Anglican Church (0401 022 107)

## HOLY LAND COLLECTION

The annual collection for the support of the church in the Holy Land will take place on Good Friday. For 800 years, the Franciscan Friars have shared the difficult lives of Christians in the countries that make up the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land: Israel and Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Rhodes, and Cyprus. The people of these countries face many difficulties, particularly Christians due to their minority status. Among them, the friars have never ceased offering their pastoral care. Two years ago, the pandemic was causing havoc for the people in the Holy Land (as it was in the rest of the world), but now there is a new and more dangerous threat through the ongoing conflict which may last for quite some time. Just when pilgrims were starting to return, the Sacred Places of our Christian Faith are once again closed to pilgrims. Pilgrims are vital because they generate income that allows the friars and the local Church to fulfil their mission of caring for the Holy Places, which also giving work to local people, as well as running parishes, schools and caring for orphans, refugees, the homeless, and more.

## EASTER CHOCOLATE

Catholic Earthcare asks us to purchase brands that use sustainably sourced cocoa. Look for logos like these on the packaging.



## 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.



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## 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.

# She Has Done What She Could

## Gospel reflection by Veronica Lawson RSM

Passion/Palm Sunday: Mark 11:1–10; 14:1–15:47

### Mark 11:1-10

Mark's account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is more restrained and less victorious in tone than the other gospel accounts.

In keeping with Mark's gospel as a whole, it forms part of the relentless journey of Jesus the suffering Messiah towards Jerusalem, the place of his death.

The longed-for liberation will come about in Jerusalem, through powerlessness, suffering and death rather than through the exercise of might and power.

### Mark 14:1-15:47

The gospel account of the suffering and death of Jesus opens with the story of an insightful but unnamed woman who pours out healing ointment on the head of Jesus.

We might reflect on the Eucharistic character of her actions of breaking and pouring and of Jesus' assurance that what she has done will be told in memory of her. She did "what she could".

The story of her support for Jesus is sandwiched between two stories of opposition: an assassination plot on the part of the religious authorities, and the foreshadowing of Jesus' betrayal at the hands of a close

follower. Status does not guarantee goodness or insight.

As the story unfolds, we hear that despite his earlier instruction to "stay awake", Jesus' closest followers fall asleep when he most needs them. Worse than that, they betray, deny, and abandon him.

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### *Some Galilean women remain faithful*

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Some Galilean women remain faithful. They have followed him and looked after him on the long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. They become witnesses to his death and burial.

These women will also discover the empty tomb and take the message of the resurrection to the male disciples.

A foreign passer-by, Simon, whose sons are known to Mark's community, shoulders part of the burden. An ordinary Roman soldier realises and proclaims that Jesus is of God.

The story has come full circle: the first verse of the gospel announced the beginning of the good news of Jesus, the Christ, and the Son of God. Now the reader understands what it means to make such a proclamation.



The final chapter is to be celebrated next weekend. The mystery is to be lived every day of every week.

As we enter into the holiest week of the liturgical year, we might consider our call to bring the power of Christ's redeeming love to those who suffer crucifixion in our own times: those enduring the ravages of war; the more-than-human Earth community affected by climate change; asylum seekers and refugees who look for justice.

For stories of hope in the face of despair, you may like to visit the Mercy Works website [mercyworks.org.au](http://mercyworks.org.au).

It is all too easy to deny, betray, and abandon the suffering others. Like the woman who poured out the healing ointment on the head of Jesus, we also must do what we can.

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

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS  
SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION  
ACTS 10:34, 37–43  
CORINTHIANS 5:6–8  
MARK 16:1–7