

# St Francis Xavier Primary School



## Newsletter

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025  
Term 1 Week 6

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

Email: [principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au)

### Term 1 (10 weeks)

Tue 28<sup>th</sup> Jan – Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Apr

#### Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March

6pm P&F meeting  
in staff room

#### Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March

Ctrl Your Scroll Parent  
Information Session  
5-6pm in the gym

#### Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March

Foundation Rest Day

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

10.30am or 6pm at  
St Alipius Church  
Compulsory information  
session for parents of those  
Year 4 or older students  
wishing to make their  
Sacrament of Reconciliation  
this year.

#### Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by SCC

#### Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March

Labour Day Public Holiday  
Pupil Free Day

#### Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March

Pupil Free Day

#### Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March

Foundation at School

#### Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by 4KB

7-11pm SFX Mix & Mingle  
on lower oval

#### Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly led by 3JT

#### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March

10am-1pm  
Garden Working Bee

#### Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March

Student Led Conferences  
3.30-7.00pm

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

2.40pm Assembly led by 2RR

#### Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April

Student Led Conferences  
3.30-7.00pm

### In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear Families,

This week, we enter an important season in the Catholic Church. On Wednesday at 9:00 AM, our students will gather in the gym to observe Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of Lent. We warmly invite you to join us in prayer as we begin this sacred journey together.

Lent is a significant time in the Church calendar, spanning 40 days of reflection and preparation for Easter. During this season, we focus on three key practices: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These invite us to grow spiritually by deepening our faith, making small sacrifices, and extending kindness to others.

Through prayer, we seek guidance and open our hearts to God's presence. Fasting encourages us to give up something meaningful as a way to practice self-discipline and gratitude. Almsgiving calls us to support those in need, reminding us of the importance of generosity and compassion. Though Lent may seem like a quiet time, it is actually a season of profound personal and spiritual challenge.

As we receive ashes on our foreheads this Wednesday, we are reminded that Lent is a time for renewal. It is an opportunity to look beyond ourselves so that when Easter arrives, we can celebrate with joyful and open hearts.

We warmly invite you to join us on this meaningful journey.

God bless,



Mark Hogbin

### A Prayer for Ash Wednesday



God our Father,

You formed us from the dust of the Earth. You brought us to new life by the work of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. As we journey through these forty days of Lent, help us to see Jesus in everyone we meet. Help us to serve Him in all persons, especially the poor, sick, and lonely. Amen.

*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.*

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April**

12.40pm Assembly led by  
1JS

Last day of Term 1

**Term 2 (11 weeks)**

Mon 21<sup>st</sup> Apr – Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Jul

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April**

Easter Monday Public  
Holiday - Pupil free day

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

Pupil free day

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

Pupil free day

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April**

Pupil free day

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April**

ANZAC Day Public Holiday  
Pupil free day

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**

Term 2 Mass

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May**

Mothers'/Special Friends'  
Day Liturgy

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May**

2.40pm Assembly led by 6ZA

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**

Foundation/Prep 2026  
applications close.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

2.40pm Assembly led by  
5SMC

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May**

2.40pm Assembly led by  
4ML

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June**

2.40pm Assembly led by  
3DGS

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June**

King's Birthday Public  
Holiday  
Pupil free day

**Wed 11<sup>th</sup> – Fri 13<sup>th</sup> June**

Year 6 Urban Camp

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June**

2.40pm Assembly led by 2TS

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June**

2.40pm Assembly led by  
1EM

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June**

2.40pm Assembly led by FGJ

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July**

No Assembly

**Term 3 (9 weeks)**

Mon 21<sup>st</sup> Jul – Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Sep

**Control Your Scroll**

Our senior students will have a great opportunity to learn from the experts from **Control Your Scroll** this week. This team works with schools across the state to educate about how to use technology safely by developing life long digital habits which can improve wellbeing and digital health. As part of this event, the team will be offering a free parent's session from 5.00-6.00pm in the library on Tuesday. Please join us as we learn together about how to survive and thrive in a digital world.

**Labour Day Holiday**

No classes will be held at school on Monday 10 March due to the long weekend. **A reminder that our school will also be closed on Tuesday 11 March for Staff Professional Development.** We hope that all families can enjoy some special time together next Monday and Tuesday.

**Basketball Courts Update**



Our repairs to the basketball courts are now complete. Some of our wonderful Year 6 children gave them a test run for us last Friday and we are told that they are a vast improvement on what we had! From today all students are free to play in this area at break times. We are looking at resurfacing the courts in time, but we are hoping to schedule this over a holiday period.



**School Drop Off & Pick Up**

Our school is very busy at drop off and pick up times each day. Please be mindful of young children and families if you are parked anywhere near the school especially if reversing out of parking spaces. If we all work together, we can help to make times of heavy congestion a little easier for everybody.

**Foundation 2026**


Do you have a child to enroll in our school for 2026? If so, please notify the office so that you can be included in our class lists. Places are filling fast!

## Ctrl Your Scroll – Parent Information Session

Our Year 5 and 6 students are in the Ctrl Your Scroll program, learning how to build healthier digital habits. Now, it's your turn!

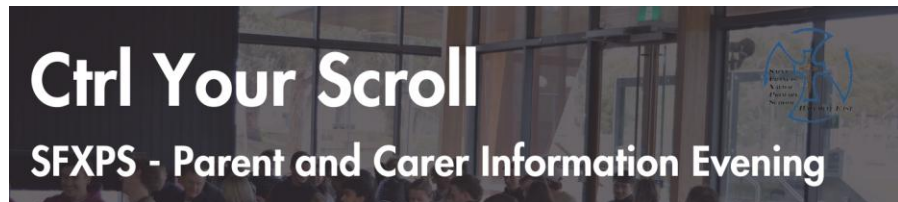
Join us for an important discussion on managing screen time and fostering healthy digital habits for children. Learn practical strategies from the Ctrl Your Scroll program and discover how you can support your child in navigating the digital world. While the program focuses on our senior students, all parents are welcome. Let's work together to support mindful and balanced screen use for all children.

**14** Tuesday 4th March

 5:00pm - 6:00pm

 In the SFX gym

- Friday 25<sup>th</sup> July**  
Start of Term Mass
- Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly led by FLP
- Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly led by 1GT
- Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly led by 2MH
- Mon 18<sup>th</sup> – Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug**  
Book Week
- Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly led by 3LL
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly led by 4JS
- Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September**  
Fathers' Day/Special  
Friends' Liturgy
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September**  
2.40pm Assembly led by 5ZP
- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**  
12.40pm Assembly led by FBOOK
- Term 4 (11 weeks)**  
Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Oct – Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Dec
- Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October**  
Start of Term/Mercy Day  
Mass
- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October**  
2.40pm Assembly led by FTW
- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October**  
2.40pm Assembly led by 6MM
- Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October**  
Junior Sports Day  
All Foundation-Year 2  
students
- Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**  
Pupil free day
- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November**  
Melbourne Cup Public  
Holiday  
Pupil free day
- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November**  
No Assembly
- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November**  
No Assembly
- Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November**  
No Assembly
- Mon 24<sup>th</sup> – Wed 26<sup>th</sup> Nov**  
Year 5 Camp
- Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December**  
Final 2025 day for students



### What is Ctrl Your Scroll?

Ctrl Your Scroll is a research based, youth-led program that explores the impact which our technological devices are having on our wellbeing. Our workshop facilitators draw from personal experience and evidence based research to work with participants to develop a greater understanding of these effects, whilst also providing real-life effective strategies to reduce screen time, improve wellbeing and navigate the digital world safely

### What do we cover in our Parents and Carers session?



We explore how young people are using social media and their devices. We'll break down the most popular apps, how they work, the potential risks involved, and practical steps you can take to help keep your kids safe online



All of our insights, education, and strategies are built on a foundation of collaboration. We empower and help parents/guardians to initiate meaningful conversations within their families, fostering a cooperative approach to devices in the household



Research indicates that demonstrating digital habits and behaviors has a significant impact. We provide caregivers and parents with up-to-date and practical information to support their children, whilst also offering strategies for them to take control of their own device usage and set positive examples



Our presenters Tom and Xavier present a **relatable, engaging and informative** workshop designed to help families navigate the increasingly difficult online world

### You are invited to the SFXPS Parent/Carer Information Evening

**When:** Tuesday 4 March 5:00pm - 6:00pm

**Where:** St Francis Xavier PS 100 Fortune St, Ballarat East VIC 3350

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

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**THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday March 2, 2025 Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)**

**Gospel:** Luke 6:39-45

And Jesus told them this parable: "One blind man cannot lead another one; if he does, both will fall into a ditch. No pupil is greater than his teacher; but every pupil, when he has completed his training, will be like his teacher.

"Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but pay no attention to the log in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Please, brother, let me take that speck out of your eye,' yet cannot even see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will be able to see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

"A healthy tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a poor tree bear good fruit. Every tree is known by the fruit it bears; you do not pick figs from thorn bushes or gather grapes from bramble bushes. A good person brings good out of the treasure of good things in his heart; a bad person brings bad out of his treasure of bad things. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. *(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation)*

**Gospel reflection:** Jesus is talking to his friends and is saying it is much easier to notice the mistakes that others make, than it is to realise when we have made a mistake or done something wrong ourselves. He is saying we must change the way we act before we can expect anyone else to change. If we cannot be good and do what is right, how can we ask other people to do the same?

Think quietly for a moment about something you might have done wrong. How could you change that? Could you share more? Be kinder or more helpful to others? Could you stop teasing a brother, sister or friend? Could you keep your room tidy? Or switch off lights when they're not needed?

This year is a special Jubilee Year and we are called to be "Pilgrims of Hope". There are all kinds of problems in our world, like poverty and hunger and climate change, but through our actions and the way we speak to others we can share hope as we all work together for a better world.

**Our Challenge:** How will you speak out and make changes to be the best person you can be and make the world a better place for others? *(Adapted from CAFOD website)*



**Sacrament of Reconciliation Reminder**

For all children in Year Four or older, there is a compulsory parish meeting on Thursday March 6th for the parents of children wishing to make 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 53326611.



**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 Catholic 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 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](#)



**Ash Wednesday Liturgy:** 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 on 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, no matter what your faith tradition.*



Christine Meneely, **Religious Education Leader**

### Curriculum News

Dear Families of children in Yrs 3&5 who will be completing their NAPLAN tests soon. Please visit this website which answers most asked questions about NAPLAN.



<https://www.nap.edu.au/.../naplan-information-brochure...>

- Why do students do NAPLAN?
- How will my child complete the NAPLAN tests?
- What does NAPLAN assess?
- Who participates in NAPLAN?
- What if my child is absent from school on NAPLAN test days?
- What can I do to support my child?
- How is my child's performance reported?
- How are NAPLAN results used?
- NAPLAN timetable

Teachers have been uploading pieces of great work which children have completed so far this term. These uploads give you an insight to your child's learning. Please take some time and visit Seesaw and we encourage you to reply with a comment about what you have seen. Thank you for your support with this. Just another way of building strong communication relationships.

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## Week of February 23 - March 2 at St Francis Xavier Primary School - Ballarat East



**526**  
New Student Posts



**84**  
Comments

Looking forward to a great NAPLAN experience for all.

Many thanks,



Jane Clark, Deputy Principal/Learning Enhancement

### Sport/Physical Education News

#### Term 1 - Sporting Schools

Please note that there will be NO Sporting Schools (tennis) this Thursday March 6. A catch up session will be held on Thursday March 27.

#### Yr 3 - 6 Athletics Day

After collating all of the results from the Yr 3 - 6 Athletics Day, I can happily announce the final scores from the day.

1st - Gargan (Green) - 1184

2nd - McAuley (Yellow) - 1117

3rd - Xavier (Red) - 1098

4th - Villa (Blue) - 1073



The following students have been awarded Year Level Athletics Champions for 2025 for their determination, effort and excellence:

Year 3 Girls - Milla Nicholson

Year 4 Girls - Edith Brennan

Year 5 Girls - Nellie Cheeseman

Year 6 Girls - Zara Thorp

Year 3 Boys - Noah McGregor

Year 4 Boys - Lawrence Wilson

Year 5 Boys - Eli Jones

Year 6 Boys - Sidney Porter

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### **MDASA U/9 Encouragement Swimming Sports**

This event is available to all students that will be 9 years old and under as at 31/12/2025. It is being held in the 25m pool at the Ballarat Aquatic Lifestyle Centre on Thursday March 27 from 7pm. For further information and details on how to enter please refer to the PAM notification

### **2025 SFX SPORTS DATES**

#### **Term 1:**

- Week 8 - Friday Mar 21st - Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6) - TBC
- Week 9 - Wednesday Mar 26th - Regional Swimming @ Horsham (qualifiers from Division swimming)
- Week 9 - Thursday Mar 27th - MDASA U9 Primary Schools Swim Sports (nominated students from F - Yr 3)

### **SFX Football Jumpers, Singlets & Netball dresses/bibs**

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

Have a tremendous week.

Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator



**P&F Meeting:** 6pm Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March in the staff room.

**Mix & Mingle** – Join us for a night under the stars, mingle with fellow parents & make new friends

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025

SFX Lower Oval

Tickets can be purchased on Flexi Schools

Any questions please speak to Lisa Clark from the Parents & Friends or

email [sfxpsc@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sfxpsc@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au)

# SFX Mix & Mingle

*Join us for a fun night out under the stars! Meet fellow parents and make new friends!*

**Friday 14th March 2025**

**SFX Lower Oval**

**7pm - 11pm**



*Tickets: \$25*

includes drink on arrival, grazing table/fingerfood & live music

Purchase your tickets on Flexi schools

**Easter raffle donations welcome** – please drop them into the office



**Tuition Raffle** - \$1500 off your school fees

To be drawn at mix & mingle

Purchase tickets via QR code or <https://rafflelink.com.au/villa2025fees>

Any questions please speak to Lisa Clark from the Parents & Friends or email [sfxpsc@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sfxpsc@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au)



The poster features a light grey background with a large white speech bubble in the center. At the top, the text '2025 SFX TUITION RAFFLE' is written in a bold, dark red font. Two blue-outlined dollar bills are positioned on either side of the speech bubble. Inside the speech bubble, the text 'Win \$1500 off your school fees' is written in a bold, blue font. Below the speech bubble, on the left, is the text 'Buy tickets NOW' above a QR code. On the right, a white rounded rectangle contains a list of ticket prices: '1 ticket \$10', '3 tickets \$25', '5 tickets \$35', and '8 tickets \$50'.

**2025 SFX TUITION RAFFLE**

Win \$1500 off  
your school fees

Buy tickets NOW

1 ticket \$10  
3 tickets \$25  
5 tickets \$35  
8 tickets \$50

**Hot Lunches Reminder**

Hot lunches every Friday, order on Flexi Schools before 10am on a Thursday.

**Zooper Doopers** – Fridays at 2<sup>nd</sup> break \$1

**Working Bee** – join us for SFX working bee  
Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025  
Followed by a sausage sizzle  
BYO gloves, shovels, rakes & wheel barrows  
Any questions please speak to Lisa Clark from the Parents & Friends or  
email [sfxpsc@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sfxpsc@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au)

# SFX

# Working Bee

Come and help tidy up our school & mulch the garden beds

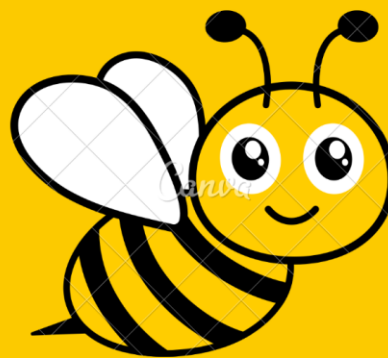
**Sunday 23rd March 2025**  
**10am - 1pm**

Followed by a sausage sizzle

Please bring gloves, shovels, rakes & wheelbarrows

Everyone welcome!  
More hands make light work

Any questions,  
Please contact Lisa on 0412 647 737  
or  
[sfxpsc@sfxballarat.edu.au](mailto:sfxpsc@sfxballarat.edu.au)



Faith communities of Ballan, Ballarat East, Bungaree, Buninyong, Clarkes Hill, Dunnstown, Gordon and Springbank

# Ministry District Newsletter

**Priests** Frs Justin Driscoll & Matt Restall

**Ballarat East Parish**  
Cathy Prunty and Natalie Gleeson  
03 5332 6611  
ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
Tuesday – Friday 9:00 AM – 12:00PM

**Bungaree and Gordon Parishes**  
Aileen Toohey  
0492 903 409  
bungaree@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
gordon@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
Tuesday – Thursday 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Our parishes are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults  
**Child Safety Officers: Ballarat East Parish – Emily Clarke; Bungaree & Gordon Parishes – Aileen Toohey**

## 8<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year (C)

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday Mar 4 <sup>th</sup>	5.30 pm	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
	6.30 pm	St. Brendan’s Dunnstown (Ash Wednesday Vigil)	
Ash Wednesday Mar 5 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 am	St. Patrick’s Cathedral	
	9:15 am	St. Patrick’s Gordon	
	9:30 am	St Alipius Ballarat East	
	10:30 am	St. Brigid’s Ballan	
	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
	6:00 pm	Ss Peter and Paul’s Buninyong	
Thursday Mar 6 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Friday Mar 7 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Saturday Mar 8 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses			
Saturday Mar 8 <sup>th</sup> - Vigil		Sunday Mar 9 <sup>th</sup>	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Buninyong Bungaree
6.30 pm	Springbank	10.30 am	Ballarat East Ballan

### WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

#### THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Marko Mihaljevic, Patricia Briody (Lexton)

#### THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Barry Ridsdale

#### THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Megan Dunn (McGuigan), Pat Burvill, Elaine Conlan, Socorro De Chavez, Joan Egan, Evelyn Farrugia, Patricia (Patty) Gannon, Lyla Geary, Michelle Hall, (baby) Mia Hanrahan, John Healy, Sarah McLachlan, Thelma Keating, Carole Simmons, Owen Widdison

### PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAMS

#### Ballarat East Parish:

Rose Consignado, Judith Glaubitz, Martin McGettigan, Dianne McKeegan, Claire Stewart.

#### Bungaree Parish:

Damian Ryan & Chris Frawley (Bungaree), Barry Sheehan & Dianne Reynolds (Dunnstown), Dom Prendergast, Maurice Mahar & Marty Forbes (Clarkes Hill).

#### Gordon Parish:

Sue Daly & Brendan Maher (Springbank), Joan Bourke & Shane Carey (Gordon), Mark Conlan & Jim Leahy (Ballan).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Baptism Preparation

March 6<sup>th</sup> 10.00 am or 5.30 pm  
Mary Glowrey Hall – St. Patrick's Cathedral

### Reconciliation Information Sessions

March 6<sup>th</sup> 10.30 am or 6pm  
St. Alipius Parish Hall

### Caring Group Gathering

March 7<sup>th</sup> @ 2pm  
St. Alipius Hall – All Welcome

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Rite of Reconciliation

March 18<sup>th</sup> following the 5.30 pm Mass

## PRAYER FOR POPE FRANCIS

Please pray for health and healing for Pope Francis, entrusting him to the healing care of our Lord.

*O God, shepherd and ruler of all the faithful, look favourably on your servant Francis, whom you have set at the head of your Church as her shepherd.*

*Grant, we pray, that by word and example he may be of service to those over whom he presides so that, together with the flock entrusted to his care, he may come to everlasting life.*

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

Source: [USCCB](#).

## DIOCESAN E-NEWS

The latest edition of e-News has been published and is available to view at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/> or you can subscribe on this page to receive future editions straight to your email address.

## RECONCILIATION PREPARATION

Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will begin in the parish with a Parent Information Session on Thursday March 6<sup>th</sup>. These meetings are compulsory for parents wishing to have their child receive the sacrament for the first time. Meetings will be held in the parish hall at 10.30 am and 6pm on this day. This sacrament precedes the preparation for the Sacrament of Eucharist which will in Term Two. If you are aware of anyone who would like to know more about this program, please ask them to contact the parish office.

## 2<sup>ND</sup> RITE OF RECONCILIATION

A 2<sup>nd</sup> Rite of Reconciliation Service will follow the 5.30 pm Mass on Tuesday March 18<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome to attend.

## LENT

### POPE FRANCIS MESSAGE FOR LENT



“Let Us Journey Together in Hope” is Pope Francis’ message for Lent 2025. He reminds us that we cannot stay where it is comfortable, that we must always accompany others, and that we must always do everything with the hope that never disappoints. To read the message scan or click the QR code.

### THOUGHTS & PRAYERS FOR LENT

Michael Leunig

*On this day (at this time), your gift to us O God, help us to move simply: To look softly: To allow emptiness: To let the heart create for us.*

Jim Quillinan (*Along the Track*)

Lent is not just a time for penance, or self-denial, it also offers us the gift of time to reassess, to think again, so that we can become more sensitive and aware of the invitation of God to friendship. As Boris Pasternak put it: When God knocks on the door of your life, it is often no louder than the beating of your heart and so it is very easy to miss it. Lent is offered to help us not to miss it.

### LENTEN REFLECTIONS IN THE MINISTRY DISTRICT



Following 10.30am Mass at Ballan on Thursdays March 13<sup>th</sup>, March 20<sup>th</sup>, March 27<sup>th</sup>, April 3<sup>rd</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>. 10.30am.

Facilitated by Dr. Rosemary Canavan, the Lenten Reflection will be guided by the framework of the *Conversation in the Spirit*. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on the Gospel and readings of the week as we come together as one ministry district. All are welcome to attend.

Fr Matt will be guiding a Lenten and Easter reflection group at St Alipius every Saturday during March and April between 10.15am and 11.00am. To join, email Fr Matt at: [matt.restall@ballarat.catholic.edu.au](mailto:matt.restall@ballarat.catholic.edu.au)

### INTRODUCTION TO THE IGNATIAN WORKOUT FOR LENT RETREAT

This Lent, become a spiritual athlete and join Tim for *The Ignatian Workout for Lent*. Each Monday he'll share audio reflections accompanied by suggestions for prayer and action. The online retreat begins this week and continues through Easter Week.

[The Ignatian Workout for Lent: An Online Retreat with Tim Muldoon](#)

## EMAIL ACCOUNTS

Last weekend we sent emails to all those who usually receive the bulletin in this manner. Unfortunately when we returned to the office on Tuesday we found that many of them had 'bounced'. If you did not receive your email we apologise but unfortunately it is beyond our control. The issue only relates to gmail addresses so we hope that everyone else is receiving their bulletin. We will try again this weekend, as at this point we have no other options. If you have an email address that is not gmail, please feel free to pass it on as that would solve our issue to some degree.

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & AT RISK ADULTS

The parishes within our ministry district are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults. As part of our commitment volunteers are asked to have a Working with Children Check (WWCC), which lasts for five years before needing to be updated. Along with the WWCC, we also ask our volunteers to complete a Safeguarding module. This module is different to the WWCC in that its aim is to educate volunteers so that they might recognise people who are at risk. We also have nominated Child Safety Officers within our parishes. At Ballarat East this is Emily Clarke, Principal at St. Alipius' School. Emily can be contacted through the school office. In the parishes of Bungaree and Gordon the Child Safety Officer is the Parish Co-ordinator, Aileen Toohey.

## AGED CARE PASTORAL CARE INFORMATION SESSION

On Thursday March 27<sup>th</sup> there will be an information session for those who would be interested in finding out more about support the pastoral care of residents in our local aged care facilities. If you are interested in attending this session please email Fr. Matt. [matt.restall@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:matt.restall@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

## CARITAS AUSTRALIA PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY – MARCH 8, 2025

God, whose love and goodness gathers us in: we pray for women all over the world, especially those challenged by poverty and other injustice. Stir us to know women's dignity. Quieten us to listen to women's voices. Awaken us to see women's realities. Strengthen us to stand for women's rights. Fill us with hope to make a better future together. Amen.

<https://www.caritas.org.au/resources/parish-materials/international-womens-day-reflection/>

## CARING GROUP GATHERING

The Caring Group will be in the parish hall next Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. All are welcome to attend for a cuppa and a chat. Please bring a small plate.



## Project Compassion Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2025

This Lent, we are called to *Unite Against Poverty* through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion.

Your generous support this Lenten Season will enable Caritas Australia to provide life-changing support to vulnerable communities in need.



**UNITE**   
**AGAINST**  
**POVERTY**  
this Lent

Please donate today.

You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code above.

Or online at: [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](https://caritas.org.au/project-compassion)

Or by calling: 1800 024 413

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.

## ECUMENICAL WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, FRIDAY MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>

St Paul's Uniting Church Ballan, 10.00am

Brown Hill Uniting Church, 10.00am

Skipton St Uniting Church Redan, 2.00pm

Ballarat Central Uniting Church, 5.00pm

## PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

Supporting our priests: \$1000

Maintenance of parish buildings: \$478

Thank you to all pa

rishioners who contribute to our parish. Your generosity is appreciated.

Counting team this week: No. 3

# On Being Like the Teacher

Reflection on the Gospel –

8<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time C (Luke 6:39-45)

-Veronica M. Lawson RSM



“Everyone who is *fully qualified* will be like the teacher,” says the Lukan Jesus. What might it mean to become “fully qualified” for discipleship? For Jesus, being fully qualified in the ways of discipleship is not so much a matter of acquiring book knowledge as it is a question of being like the teacher. This is not to discount the importance of acquiring a deep knowledge of the tradition. Jesus certainly knew his own tradition well. Luke presents him as literate, as capable of reading from the sacred scriptures in the Nazareth synagogue and of interpreting the prophetic texts for the assembled congregation. In today’s gospel selection, Luke also presents Jesus as familiar with the secular wisdom of his age. The sayings about the blind leading the blind and the log and speck have clear parallels in ancient literature. Jesus’ closest followers were educated business people with an appreciation of and commitment to their traditions. They were fully qualified in the sense that they had the personal resources to make a difference in the lives of those on the edge. The primary qualification for the disciple is, however, to be “like the teacher”. Jesus wants his followers to live out in their lives the pattern of his life of attentiveness to the pain of the world, his life of compassion and justice and mercy. Seeing with clarity (without a log in one’s eye) is at the heart of the gospel way of life that he proclaims. This theme of

“seeing” permeates Luke’s writings. Seeing and understanding one’s own self is part of that, as is the capacity to see and to understand the rhythm of the forms of life that constitute one’s habitat. The recurrence of agricultural images in Jesus’ sayings is quite remarkable. Jesus grew up in Nazareth, a Jewish village in Lower Galilee, home to vines and olive trees, to goats and sheep and some four hundred human inhabitants. From early childhood, Jesus saw the processes involved in ensuring that the vines produced grapes. He knew the importance of the water from the spring for nurturing the grain crops in the valley close to his home. He knew that brambles and thorns did not yield any edible fruit. It would seem that being “like the teacher” includes the virtue of “attunement” to the natural world, a concept I am learning about from friend and moral theologian Richard Wade.

Finally, to be a disciple is to be a “good person”, one who produces “good treasure” out of the abundance of one’s heart. In the Jewish tradition, the heart was the seat of wisdom and knowledge as well as the seat of emotions. In 1 Kings 12:3, for instance, God is said to give Solomon a wise and discerning heart/mind. The Hebrew word for heart (*lev*) is often translated into English as “mind”. Heart and mind are as one-so must it be for us as we strive to be good disciples.

**THIS WEEK’S READINGS**  
**Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
Sirach 27:4-7  
Corinthians 15:54-58  
Luke 6:39-45

**NEXT WEEK’S READINGS**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent**  
Deuteronomy 26:4-10  
Romans 10:8-13  
Luke 4:1-13