

St Francis Xavier Primary School



Newsletter

Monday 24th March 2025
Term 1 Week 9

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

Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 1 (10 weeks)

Tue 28th Jan – Fri 4th Apr

Wednesday 26th March
8.30-9.30am Secondhand
Uniform Pop Up Shop

Student Led Conferences
3.30-7.00pm

Friday 28th March
2.40pm Assembly led by 2RR

Monday 31st March
9am Holy Week Liturgy led
by 6PB with Foundation
sharing a special song

Tuesday 1st April
Student Led Conferences
3.30-7.00pm

Friday 4th April
12.40pm Assembly led by
1JS

Villa's Big Water Walk
for Project Compassion

1.45pm Holy Week Liturgy
led by 6ZA

Last day of Term 1
2.20pm finish

Term 2 (11 weeks)
Mon 21st Apr – Fri 4th Jul

Monday 21st April
Easter Monday Public
Holiday - Pupil free day

Tuesday 22nd April
Pupil free day

Wednesday 23rd April
Pupil free day

Thursday 24th April
Pupil free day

Friday 25th April
ANZAC Day Public Holiday
Pupil free day

Friday 2nd May
Term 2 Mass

Friday 9th May
Mothers'/Special Friends'
Day Liturgy

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear Families,

How is your Lenten journey going? Yesterday marked the third Sunday of Lent—the halfway point. This is a perfect time to pause, reflect on our efforts so far, and renew our commitment for the weeks ahead.

Lent is a season of reflection, sacrifice, and compassion. It calls us to step outside our comfort zones and consider the perspectives of those who challenge our thinking, values, and beliefs. It's not meant to be easy—it's meant to transform us. By opening our hearts and minds to others in our community, we take meaningful steps toward true peace of mind and a deeper understanding of our faith.

Lent reminds us that sacrifice and selflessness bring us closer to the true meaning of Easter. Without making space in our busy lives to think of those less fortunate, we risk missing its profound lessons. We often tell our students that Easter is something we must prepare for—it is something we must *earn*.

As we move into the second half of Lent, let's renew our efforts, embrace the challenge, and make the most of this season of growth and grace.

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



A Prayer for the Third Week of Lent

Lord,
My world is small.
My world is filled with my doubts and fears.
My hurts, my anger and my sorrow.
Your world Lord is large.
Your world is full of wonder and awe,
Of possibility and freedom.
Of hope, of love and of peace.
Open my eyes, Lord.
Show me the infinite possibilities of your world.
Help me to live large, to be full of life.
This is where I'd rather be.
Amen.



Friday 16th May
2.40pm Assembly led by 6ZA

Thursday 22nd May
Foundation/Prep 2026
applications close

Friday 23rd May
2.40pm Assembly led by
5SMC

Friday 30th May
2.40pm Assembly led by
4ML

Friday 6th June
2.40pm Assembly led by
3DGS

Monday 9th June
King's Birthday Public
Holiday
Pupil free day

Wed 11th – Fri 13th June
Year 6 Urban Camp

Friday 13th June
2.40pm Assembly led by 2TS

Friday 20th June
2.40pm Assembly led by
1EM

Friday 27th June
2.40pm Assembly led by FGJ

Friday 4th July
No Assembly

Term 3 (9 weeks)
Mon 21st Jul – Fri 19th Sep

Friday 25th July
Start of Term Mass

Friday 1st August
2.40pm Assembly led by FLP

Friday 8th August
2.40pm Assembly led by
1GT

Friday 15th August
2.40pm Assembly led by
2MH

Mon 18th – Fri 22nd Aug
Book Week

Friday 22nd August
2.40pm Assembly led by 3LL

Friday 29th August
2.40pm Assembly led by 4JS

Friday 5th September
Fathers' Day/Special
Friends' Liturgy

Friday 12th September
2.40pm Assembly led by 5ZP

Friday 19th September
12.40pm Assembly led by
FBOK

End of Term – Start of Term



Classes conclude for first-term holidays on Friday 4 April at 2.20pm. Please note that second term commences for students on Monday 28 April and concludes on Friday 4 July. The week preceding the 28 April consists of Easter Monday which is a public holiday and ANZAC Day on Friday 25 April. The Director of Catholic Education has granted schools professional development time on Tuesday 22, Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 April. This means that while the staff are working, our families can enjoy an extra few days of holidays.

SFX Working Bee



We had an amazingly productive Working Bee on Sunday morning. With an attendance of more than 20 families represented we were able to achieve so much! Thank you to everyone who was able to lend a hand. Our



garden beds are freshly mulched, weeded, tidied and trimmed ready for the autumn season. Our Parents & Friends did a sterling job at organizing this event and we are very grateful. Thanks one and all!



The Big Water Walk

As part of our commitment to Project Compassion during Lent we are inviting members of our school community to become involved in the Big Water Walk. This is an initiative of Caritas Australia who are working to assist communities across the region and the world. On Friday 4 April (last day of term 1) the students will work in relay teams to carry water around the oval as a symbol of their recognition of students their age in Samoa who have to carry water long distances each day. As part of their learning the students have been asked to collect a few small donations to support the establishment of a well in a village in Samoa which will cost \$4000. We realise that this is a lot of money, but through their learning we also hope to teach the children the value of contributing towards the welfare of others. How fortunate we are to live in a Country where we can take for granted fresh running water. Be on the lookout for sponsorship forms coming home this week and feel free to explore the Caritas website for more information about this worthy cause.



Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 6th Oct – Fri 19th Dec

Friday 10th October

Start of Term/Mercy Day
Mass

Friday 17th October

2.40pm Assembly led by
FTW

Friday 24th October

2.40pm Assembly led by
6MM

Friday 31st October

Junior Sports Day
All Foundation-Year 2
students

Monday 3rd November

Pupil free day

Tuesday 4th November

Melbourne Cup Public
Holiday
Pupil free day

Friday 7th November

No Assembly

Friday 14th November

No Assembly

Friday 21st November

No Assembly

Mon 24th – Wed 26th Nov

Year 5 Camp

Thursday 18th December

Final 2025 day for students

Foundation/Prep Enrolment 2026 – Existing Families

Enrolments for children of **existing** and **new families** who start Foundation/Prep in 2026 are open.

Parents of **existing** and **new families** who have a child to start in 2026 - must complete the 'Enrolment Application Form' form by clicking on the following link to submit your application:

<https://dobcel.catholic.edu.au/our-schools/enrolments-application-form/>

Please note this is an essential step for existing families in ensuring you child is enrolled in Foundation/Prep 2026.

Enrolments close 22nd May 2025

Religious Education News

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday March 23, 2025 Third Sunday of Lent (Year C)

Gospel: Luke 13:4-9 Then Jesus told them this parable: "There was once a man who had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. He went looking for figs on it but found none. So he said to his gardener, 'Look, for three years I have been coming here looking for figs on this fig tree, and I haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it go on using up the soil?' But the gardener answered, 'Leave it alone, sir, just one more year; I will dig round it and put in some manure. Then if the tree bears figs next year, so much the better; if not, then you can have it cut down.'" (*Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation*)

Gospel reflection:

Jesus told a parable- this is a story which teaches us something. Jesus liked to use stories to explain things that were complicated. The parable Jesus told is about a fig tree. The man who had planted the fig tree came out to pick some fruit, but there wasn't any. The man had been waiting for three years for the tree to give him some fruit, but because there was no fruit he asked his gardener to cut down the tree.

The gardener didn't want to give up so he asked for one more year to look after the tree – he knew plants and trees need the right conditions to grow and the gardener hopes that by doing this, the tree will grow fruit.

People need the right conditions to live their lives well too. Everyone needs enough food and water to stay healthy and strong. The fig tree in Jesus' story is supposed to share its fruit with the man who planted it, but it is not doing what it is supposed to. Sometimes we are a bit like the fig tree. We do not share as well as we could.

The gardener is like God. The gardener never gives up on the fig tree and gives it all the things it needs to live. God gives us the chance to change, to share what we have and to do all that we can to make sure that all people have the things that they need to live.

Our Challenge: What will you do this Lent, to help build a better world? (Adapted from CAFOD)



Holy Week

All our parents, friends and community members are warmly invited to join us as we remember the events of Holy Week. For Catholic Christians, this is a most sacred time when we remember Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Our Year Six PB class will lead us on **Monday March 31st at 9am**, with our Foundation classes excited to be sharing a special song.

On **Friday April 4 at 1:45pm**, we will conclude our term with liturgy led by Year Six ZA.



How amazing were our Year Three Children and our Mercy Leaders in launching our Big Water Walk last week? Their enthusiasm and passion for this project is contagious! All donations and sponsorship, no matter how small or large, are truly appreciated as we try to meet our goal of raising \$4000. Here's the link to our fundraising page if you'd like to check out how we are progressing!

[St Francis Xavier Fundraising Page](#)



Christine Meneely, Religious Education Leader



Student - Led Conferences at SFX:

Wednesday 26th March & Tuesday 1st April 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.

Bookings are open on PAM

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

We have several goals for holding conferences using this format:

- **For parents/carers** – we hope that you will get to see rather than simply be told about your child’s progress
- **For students** – we hope students will take more responsibility for their learning and can articulate what they can do
- **For teachers** – we want teachers to have more meaningful and impactful conferences with you building Home / School connections
- **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 starters 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.

Looking forward to positive Student Led Conferences which highlights and celebrates children's achievements.

Have a happy week.

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



Daily Review -

Strengthening Learning Through Revisiting and Reviewing

At SFX we are committed to ensuring that our students not only learn new information but also retain and apply it effectively. A key strategy in achieving this is the practice of regularly revisiting and reviewing previously taught material. At our school, the Daily Review occurs during the Literacy Block, providing students with opportunities to consolidate their learning. This approach reinforces understanding, aids in memory retention, and builds a solid foundation for future learning.

Research indicates that without regular review, students' ability to recall information diminishes over time—a phenomenon known as the "forgetting curve." By revisiting material at spaced intervals, we can strengthen memory retention and help students apply their knowledge more effectively.

Regular review includes both recent learning (such as from the last lesson) and knowledge from previous weeks, months, or even years. This process ensures that students retain key concepts and provides opportunities for reteaching if needed. It is especially beneficial for students who require additional instruction or practice to address learning gaps.

Our teachers employ various engaging strategies to revisit and review content, such as:

- Responding on whiteboards to check understanding – This allows teachers to quickly assess students' grasp of key concepts.
- Interactive quizzes and games – These make review sessions enjoyable and promote active participation.
- Group discussions and collaborative activities – These encourage students to articulate their understanding and learn from peers.

By integrating these practices, we aim to enhance students' learning experiences, ensuring they build confidence in their abilities and achieve academic success.

We encourage families to support this approach at home by discussing school topics, asking children to explain what they've learned, and engaging in activities that reinforce classroom learning.

Source: Australian Education Research Organisation's Practice Guide on Revisit and Review.



Lindy Harty, **Literacy Leader**

Did you know that at St Francis Xavier Primary School every child and teacher is learning Auslan? Throughout term 1 we have been developing our understanding of Auslan sentence structures by retrieving signs from previous units and using these signs to explore and build new sentences.

We have extended our learning by looking at how we can modify signs to show plurals, along with formal and informal sign variations. We have also considered how we can incorporate numbers and questions into sentences!

We are very fortunate to be learning Auslan at St Francis Xavier Primary School!



THANK YOU



Dan West, **TCL Language Leader - Auslan**

Sport/Physical Education News

Term 2 - Ballarat Netball Association - After School Netball

SFX is looking forward to entering teams in the BNA Primary School after school netball season in Term 2. - Season is 8 wks long starting Tuesday 6th and Wednesday 7th May - Teams are entered under the SFX name and coached by parents - There is a Yr 3/4 and a Yr 5/6 competition - Competitions are Tuesday's or Wednesday's - Term 2 is participation only, no finals - Game times 4pm / 4:50pm / 5:40pm - Great for beginners or for those with experience Please see PAM notification for options. Expressions of interest close Friday April 18

SFX AFL Football Team tryouts

Thank you to the many students that attended the tryouts for our SFX AFL Football teams. Due to the many numbers that attended, we will be conducting tryout sessions again this week.

This year's competition is AFL 9's based and we will have a Girls and a Boys team so we will begin the tryouts process this week during the following break times:

Girls - 2nd break Wednesday

Boys - 1st break Thursday



Regional Swimming

We wish Amelia Sordello (Yr 6) all the very best for this Wednesday as she participates in the Greater Western Region Regional Swimming event in Horsham. We know that you will do your best and represent our school with pride.

MDASA Swimming

This Thursday we have 12 students participating in the MDASA Under 9's Encouragement swimming carnival. We wish Ted A, Pippa B, Ivy D, Shirley D, Paityn G, Harriet H, Sahesi K, Harvey K, Imogen S, Tom S, Fergus T & Violet T all the very best for their events.

2025 SFX SPORTS DATES

Term 1:

- 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)

Term 2:

- Week 3 - Wed May 7th - Division AFL @ Marty Busch, Sebastopol - (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 4 - Mon May 12th - Division Cross Country @ Fed Uni (selected students from Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 6 - Monday May 26th - Regional Cross Country @ Warrnambool (qualifiers from Division XC)
- Week 6 - Wednesday May 28th - Division Soccer @ Ballarat Region Soccer Facility (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 7 - Friday June 6th - Division Netball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 8 - Friday June 13th - Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)

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 fantastic week.



Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**

Waste Super Sorting Competition

Last week, ten of our students had the exciting opportunity to represent our school at the Waste Super Sorting Competition, held at the Ballarat City Oval and run by the City of Ballarat Council.

The event was a fantastic hands-on learning experience about waste management and sustainability. Our team participated in a waste sorting challenge, where they had to correctly sort different types of rubbish into the right bins. While we didn't take home first place, we proved that we know a lot about waste and recycling!

Students also had the chance to learn about worms and their important role in breaking down kitchen waste to improve soil health. Another highlight of the day was planting seeds, helping to create a greener future.

It was a fun and educational day for everyone involved, and our students did a fantastic job representing our school. A big thank you to the City of Ballarat Council for organising such a valuable event!

Check out some of the great photos from the day below.





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Olivia Hayward, Environmental Education Teacher

Secondhand Uniform Pop up shop – Wednesday 26th March 8.30-9.30am

Easter Raffle to be drawn Monday 31st March

Last chance to purchase raffle tickets for the Easter raffle – to be drawn next Monday 31st March and announced at Monday morning assembly – see attached flyer with QR code to purchase tickets



The flyer features a yellow background with the text 'SFX Easter Raffle' in a large, black, cursive font. Below this, the text 'SCAN HERE AND BUY TICKETS NOW' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A QR code is positioned to the left of a white circular callout box containing the following ticket prices: '1 ticket \$2', '3 tickets for \$5', '7 tickets for \$10', and '16 tickets for \$20'. To the left of the QR code is a colorful illustration of a bunny-shaped Easter egg. Below the QR code, the URL 'https://rafflelink.com.au/villa2025-easter' is printed. At the bottom of the flyer, there are three large, colorful Easter eggs (pink, blue, and orange) and a small yellow chick emerging from a cracked egg. The text '*drawn Monday 31st March' is located at the very bottom of the flyer.

SFX
Easter Raffle

SCAN HERE AND BUY TICKETS NOW



1 ticket \$2
3 tickets for \$5
7 tickets for \$10
16 tickets for \$20

<https://rafflelink.com.au/villa2025-easter>

*drawn Monday 31st March

Attachments

ASSEMBLY AWARDS 21st March Hosted by 3JT 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.

FLP	Elliott Evans and Stevie Smith	4JS	Austin Roberts and Oliver Downes
FGJ	Maeve Williams and Kenzie Wilson	4ML	Jett Raine and Maeve Tongs
FBO'K	Louis Dreyer and Elsie.A	4KB	Mitchell Bone & Sophie Knowles
FTW	Harriet Maher and Johnny Faull	5CC	Sadie Buntsma and Macklin Smith
1JS	Mya Troon & Harry Mchannon	5ZP	Sadie Ruxton & Sibella Moore
1EM	Max Yates and Scottie Toohey	5SM	James Bosworth and Miah Cooper
1GT	Tommy Just and Harper Fedke	6PB	Reuben Molloy and Isla Tongs
2RR	Harriet Howard and Charlie Ryan	6ZA	Michelle-May Lunn & Jed Hynes
2MH	Daisy Whittlam and Marco Pietrantuono	6MM	Charlie Kersley and Haddie Morley
2TS	Will Allan & Ruby Plover	EE	Levi Dreher and Willow Prato
3LL	Tex Brown & Nathalia Abraham	PA	Harley Bye and Rhys Bell
3JT	Harvey Kersley and Cooper Roberts	VA	Indi Nestor and Oscar Martin (2RR)
3DG	Sahesi Kariyawasam and Ted Answer	PE	Ned Kersley and Birdie Toohey
		Tch	Maya Skewes and Abbey Williams
Principal's Award: Edward Lloyd & Ryker Kermeen			

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 – 12:00 PM

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

3rd Sunday of Lent (C)

23rd March 2025

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday Mar 25 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Wednesday Mar 26 th	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
Thursday Mar 27 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
	10.30 am	St. Brigid's Ballan	
Friday Mar 28 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
	9.30 am	St. Michael's Bungaree	
Saturday Mar 29 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses			
Saturday Mar 29 th - Vigil		Sunday Mar 30 th	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Ballarat East Bungaree
6.30 pm	Springbank	10.30 am	Buninyong Ballan

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Megan Dunn (McGuigan), Merinda Payne, Dorothy Pearson, Carmel Quigley, Jim Watson, Herman Ruyg

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Carmel Doherty

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

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

Aged Care Pastoral Care Information Session
Thursday March 27th

125th Anniversary Celebrations
St. Michael's Springbank
Saturday March 29th @ 6.30 pm

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

We are currently considering the reintroduction of Children's Liturgy within the parish. This program has been quite successful in the past and we would love to be able to offer it again. To run Children's Liturgy we would require two adults for each session, so we are asking for an indication from anyone who may like to know more about what is involved. At this stage we would plan to have the program on Saturday evenings where children would leave the church after the opening prayer and return during the Procession of Gifts. While our children participate in a program, hearing scripture and discussing it at a level which is appropriate to them. If you would be interested in finding out more, please contact Cathy at the parish office.

MORNING TEA BUNINYONG

Morning tea is held at Buninyong after every 10:30 Mass. This has provided a great opportunity for the community to come together on an informal, social basis. We are seeking more people prepared to coordinate morning tea. The tasks are simple and only required two to three times per year. Tasks involve bringing milk turning on the urn serving tea and coffee and contributing something simple to eat. Others in attendance tend to assist with washing dishes and cleaning up afterwards. If you are unable to do your rostered day a simple phone call will usually find someone ready to do a swap. Two people or a couple are rostered on each occasion. If you would be interested in joining the roster please see Geraldine White after Mass or email her at thewhites25@bigpond.com

ANOINTING MASSES DURING LENT

St. Brigid's Ballan	April 10, 10.30 am
St. Michael's Bungaree	April 11, 9.30 am
St. Alipius Ballarat East	April 11, 11.00 am
Mercy Place Ballarat East	April 16, 11.00 am
Ballan Mecwacare Aged Care	April 17, 10.00 am

LENTEN REFLECTIONS IN THE MINISTRY DISTRICT

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

AGED CARE PASTORAL CARE INFORMATION SESSION

This coming Thursday, March 27th 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

BAPTISMS

Ella Kate & Ava Grace Ralston
Children of Shaun Ralston and Melissa
Domaschenz

Angus Mark Bourke
Child of Luke and Abby Bourke

PILGRIMAGE WITH ST PAUL - MISSIONARY OF HOPE

In this Jubilee year, dedicated to becoming Pilgrims of Hope, pilgrims are invited to experience the world of the early Christian communities. The Acts of the Apostles will come alive as we go out with St Paul and his companions to rediscover the faith and struggles of the early Christian communities. The proposed itinerary departs Melbourne on Sunday, September 21st 2025 with the pilgrims arriving in Istanbul and proceeding to Adana, Tarsus, Antioch, Ephesus, Troas, Kavala, Philippi, Thessalonica and Athens with the possibility of an extension to Rome. For further information please contact Lifestyle Travel, 11 Armstrong Street North (PO Box 740), Ballarat, 3350, ph. 03 5331 8077, email info@lifestyletravel.com.au or Fr Justin Driscoll justin.driscoll@ballarat.catholic.org.au

PARISH SACRAMENTAL STATISTICS

2024 Sacramental Statistics

Each calendar year parishes of the diocese are asked to submit their sacramental statistics. The following are for the three parishes of **Ballarat East** and **Buninyong**, **Bungaree**, **Clarkes Hill** and **Dunnstown**, **Gordon**, **Ballan** and **Springbank** for the baptisms, confirmations, first communions, marriages and funerals celebrated in 2024. The funerals and weddings include those celebrated in places other than churches, such as funerals celebrated at the chapel of the funeral director. Each parish is required to keep sacramental registers for baptism, confirmation, marriage and funerals.

PARISH	BALLARAT EAST	BUNGAREE	GORDON
Rite of Christian Initiation			
Baptized up to 1 yr of age	40	6	20
Baptized 1-7 yrs of age	59	6	26
Over 7 yrs	8	1	8
Catechumens	0	0	0
Confirmation	119	Not held in 2024	28
First Communion	106	Not held in 2024	19
Marriage	3	1	1
Catechists	1	0	0
Funerals	29	0	7

DAMASCUS COLLEGE BALLARAT 2025 REUNIONS

Damascus College warmly welcomes the Classes of 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2015 to celebrate the 2025 Reunion Day! Join us as we reconnect, reminisce, and honour these milestone anniversaries on Saturday, March 29, 2025 at Damascus College, 1412 Geelong Road, Mt Clear. The day will begin with a free welcome reception from 2.00pm – 4:00pm (doors open at 1.30pm for registration). Enjoy light refreshments, drinks, a campus tour, and some simple formalities during this shared gathering, followed by a group photo. The after party for each cohort will continue at their own private individual locations from 7:00pm onwards. Full event details and tickets at

<https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/community/alumni/alumni-reunions-events>

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION SESSIONS

Please note that there has been a change in times for the Christian Meditation sessions. These sessions are now held on Monday evenings at 5pm in the Parish Hall. All welcome.

125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT SPRINGBANK

St Michael's Church, Springbank, will celebrate its 125th Anniversary with Bishop Paul Bird at a Vigil Mass on Saturday, March 29, 2025 commencing at 6.30pm with a light supper to follow. All welcome.

HOLY WEEK IN OUR MINISTRY DISTRICT

Monday April 14 th	Mass of the Oils	1.00 pm	St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat
Holy Thursday April 17 th	Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper	6.30 pm 7.00 pm	St. Michael's, Bungaree St. Alipius, Ballarat East
Good Friday April 18 th	Buninyong Churches Way of the Cross Ballan Stations of the Cross	8.30 am 10.00 am	Meet at the Town Hall steps
	Celebrations of the Lord's Passion	3.00 pm 3.00 pm	St. Alipius, Ballarat East St. Michael's, Springbank
Holy Saturday April 19 th	Easter Vigil fire and Mass	6.30 pm 7.00 pm	St. Brendan's, Dunnstown St. Alipius, Ballarat East
Easter Sunday April 20 th	Easter Sunday Masses	9.00 am	St. Patrick's, Gordon
		9.00 am	St. Alipius, Ballarat East
		10.30 am	St. Brigid's, Ballan
		10.30 am	Ss. Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Our Faithful Gardener God

Reflection on the Gospel-3rd Sunday of Lent Year C
(Luke 13:1-9)

Veronica M. Lawson RSM

Today's gospel begins with two warnings about the need for repentance. It ends with a parable about an unproductive fig tree and a faithful "gardener God". The warnings include two examples of untimely deaths, one reported to Jesus and then used by him to illustrate the urgent need for repentance, the other reported by Jesus as a further illustration of his point. With respect to the first example, Jewish history recounts instances of Pilate's cruelty, but makes no mention of his execution of Galileans and the mingling of their blood with their sacrifices. Neither is there any other record of the collapse of the Siloam tower and the resultant death of eighteen people. Jesus insists that those killed are no more sinful and no more deserving of death than any of their fellow Galileans or Jerusalemites. They are certainly not being punished for their sins and those who make such a link between suffering and sin have got it all wrong.

So why does Jesus twice assert, "If you do not repent you will all perish in the same way" or "you will all perish as they did"? The answer seems to lie in the constant need for self-reflection and the missed opportunity for conversion or reconciliation in the case of sudden and unexpected death. In other words, Jesus is telling his listeners, "Don't be caught unawares; turn your life around in the direction of the gospel while you are alive and well".

The Greek verb "to repent" means literally to think again. It can have the sense of expanding one's vision or one's horizons, to think beyond the narrow confines of one's own interests and one's own little world. In the context of Jesus' teaching, it is a call to take seriously the message of God's empire or reign which embraces the whole Earth community.

The parable of the unproductive fig tree in the vineyard approaches the same topic from another angle. The owner of the vineyard wants to get rid of a fig tree that fails to bear fruit after three years. From an economic perspective, his position is perfectly reasonable: why should a non-fruiting fig tree continue to sap the goodness of the soil? Why not go for more vines, more grapes, more wine, and forget about the fig tree? The faithful or constant gardener is, however, like the womb-compassionate God of Israel who cares about the soil itself and wants to give the fig tree another chance, to turn it around and assist it to bear fruit, if the owner will only relent. At this mid-point in our Lenten journey, we might get in closer touch with our compassionate "gardener" God and open ourselves to a more expansive "attunement" to planetary wonder on the one hand and to planetary pain on the other. We might ponder the goodness of the soil and the water and all the elements that combine to nourish the creatures of the earth.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

3rd Sunday of Lent
Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15
1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
Luke 13:1-9

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

4th Sunday of Lent
Joshua 5:9-12
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

BALLARAT NORTH UNITED SOCCER CLUB

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Lucas Hockey Club is inviting new and experienced players to join us for the 2025 season Juniors, Men & Women



Do you like to have fun?

Training is Monday nights at Prince of Wales Park

Juniors: 5:30 – 6:30pm

Seniors: 6:30 – 7:30pm

Contact us via email, Facebook or call Scott 0403 811 595 for more info.



<p>Facebook www.facebook.com/LucasHockeyClub</p>	<p>More Information admin@lucashockey.com.au</p>
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SEEKING COMMUNITY KINSHIP CARERS



COULD YOU OFFER A SAFE SPACE WITHIN YOUR HOME FOR A CHILD FROM OUR COMMUNITY?

BADAC and DFFH are currently working together to build a network of Kinship carers within the BADAC community. This will ensure our children remain connected to Culture and Community.

If you have ever considered helping provide care for one of our children, please reach out to us on the numbers provided or come along to our Community Kinship Carer Information night!

Kinship Care is about:

- Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people have a positive and nurturing family life experience that will support their cultural, social and emotional development.
- Providing a culturally safe home for children who cannot live with their birth families.
- Maintaining the child or young persons' connections with their families and communities.
- Recognising and maintaining the child or young persons' Aboriginal identity and place in the community.

Families come in all shapes and sizes; large families, couples and single adults can all offer something different to meet the needs of specific children. We currently need Kinship carers for all types of care; long term, short term and respite, and want to work with you to discover what would best suit your circumstances.

There is immediate and ongoing financial support available for all placements to ensure that caring for children does not have a negative financial impact on your family.

CARERS INFORMATION NIGHT

WHEN? 7th May, 2025 at 6:00pm

WHERE? Tree Room, BADAC
106-108 Armstrong St,
Ballarat Central VIC
3350

**To register your interest,
please contact:**

Caitlin (BADAC) - 0427 274 663 or
Linda (DFFH) - 0448 111 325





Cross-Country Information

Our cross-country program can be viewed on the club website www.ballaratycw.com.au

You can also follow us on Facebook [Ballarat YCW](#) for the most up to date information.

Age Groups

Our Cross-Country age groups are U/6, U/8, U/10, U/12, U/14 & U/16 Girls and Boys.

U/18, U/20, Open, 40+, 50+ & 60+ Male & Female.

Age group is determined by age on the April 1st 2025.

(Example if they turn 6 on March 30th 2025, they will be in U/8 for the season. If they turn 6 on April 4th 2025, they will be in U/6 for the season.)

Racing Distances

The distances run each week depend on your age group and are as follows:

U/6: 300m most weeks with some 400m

U/8: 600m most weeks with some 700m or 800m

U/10: 1000m or 1200m

U/12: 1200m or longer runs with U/14's

U/14-U/16 normally 3-4 km with the shortest 1500m and longest a 6km Lap of the Lake

U/18 – 60+ distances from 3km up to 10km.

Handicaps

Most events are handicapped. This is an important feature of our races as it gives everyone a chance to win. Over the season the handicapper attempts to give all boys and girls a chance to win or place.

Points are awarded for the handicap finishing order. The aggregate is a tally of points earned over the season.

Championship races

Ballarat YCW also conducts championship races at regular intervals. There are three Club Championship Saturdays throughout the season with gold, silver and bronze medals awarded to placegetters in each of these races.

First week of competition Saturday 29th March 2025 – Victoria Park (near BBQ's) – 12.00pm.



2025 Program

Ballarat YCW Athletics Club

Fitness, family, fun and the thrill of competition. That's a great way to describe Ballarat YCW Harriers.

Of course, there's more than just competition at Ballarat YCW. As well as an opportunity to compete at club, regional or state level, we offer:

- Chance to rub shoulders with some of Australia's elite athletes
- Friendship
- Accredited coaching
- A healthy lifestyle