



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Newsletter

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025  
Term 2 Week 4

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

### Term 2 (11 weeks)

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

#### Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May

Full winter uniform required from today

Division Cross Country at Fed Uni for selected Yr 3, 4, 5 and 6 students

Yr 1 & 6 Swimming Lessons

Last day for Book Club  
Issue 3 orders

#### Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May

10am Final 2025 Open Day  
School Alive Tour

#### Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May

Yr 3 & 4 Swimming Lessons

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

2.40pm Assembly led by 6ZA

#### Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May

Yr 1 & 6 Swimming Lessons

#### Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May

Yr 3 & 4 Swimming Lessons

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

Foundation/Prep 2026  
applications close

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

2.40pm Assembly led by  
5QM

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

Catholic Education Week

Yr 1 & 6 Swimming Lessons

Regional Cross Country @  
Warrnambool for Division  
XC qualifiers

#### Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May

Division Soccer @ Ballarat  
Region Soccer Facility for  
selected Yr 5/6 students

Yr 3 & 4 Swimming Lessons

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

2.40pm Assembly led by 4LK

### In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear Families,

We hope you all enjoyed a truly special Mother's Day over the weekend. It was a beautiful chance to pause, celebrate, and say thank you to the wonderful mums, grandmothers, and mother figures who bring so much love, care, and strength to our lives and school community.

Whether it was a homemade card, a warm hug, or a quiet moment shared together, we hope the day was filled with joy, gratitude, and a little bit of pampering

We also remember those in our community for whom Mother's Day may have been a time of reflection or a reminder of lost loved ones.

We'd also like to extend a big thank you to the families who joined us for our Mother's Day Liturgy last Friday. It was a touching and meaningful celebration, and having you there made it all the more special.

Now, with hearts full and smiles wide, we're ready for another exciting week of learning and growing together.



### Our New Pope

We are also excited to share some news from the wider Church — the election of our new Pope, Pope Leo XIV! As the newly elected leader of the Catholic Church, Pope Leo brings with him a message of hope, compassion, and unity. His commitment to social justice, care for the poor, and building a more inclusive Church deeply echoes the values we hold close in our school community.

Pope Leo chose his name in honour of Pope Leo the Great, a leader, known for unifying the Church and standing firm in faith during turbulent times. In his first message to the world, Pope Leo offered this beautiful encouragement:

"May we be known not by our power, but by our mercy."

Pope Leo's early words and actions remind us of Catherine McAuley, the inspiring founder of the Sisters of Mercy. Just like Catherine, Pope Leo speaks of mercy, kindness, and the importance of putting our faith into action by caring for others, especially those most in need.

As a Mercy school, we are proud to walk in their footsteps — guided by the values of hospitality, compassion, justice, respect, and excellence. These values are the backbone of our Villa Way - a living part of who we are, every day.

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**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June**  
Yr 2 & 5 Swimming Lessons

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June**  
2.40pm Assembly led by  
3DGS

Division Netball @ Selkirk  
Stadium for selected Yr 5/6  
students

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June/  
Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June**  
Year 4 Sacrament of  
Eucharist

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June**  
King's Birthday Public  
Holiday  
Student free day

**Tues 10<sup>th</sup> – Wed 11<sup>th</sup> June**  
Year 4 Lady Northcote Camp

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June**  
Yr 2 & 5 Swimming Lessons

**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  
Year 5/6 Interschool Sport

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June/  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June**  
Year 4 Sacrament of  
Eucharist

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June**  
Yr 2 & 5 Swimming Lessons

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June**  
2.40pm Assembly led by  
1EM

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June/  
Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**  
Year 4 Sacrament of  
Eucharist

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June**  
Yr 2 & 5 Swimming Lessons

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June**  
2.40pm Assembly led by FGJ

**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July**  
School Music Showcase  
FGJ, 1GT, 2RR, 3GD, 4LK,  
5CC and 6PB

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July**  
Yr 2 & 5 Swimming Lessons

School Music Showcase  
FTW, 1EM, 2MH, 3JT, 4KB,  
5QM and 6MM

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July**  
School Music Showcase  
FLP, FBO, 1JS, 2TS, 3LL, 4JS,  
5ZP and 6ZA

## **Congratulations Alex!!**

A huge congratulations to Alexander Ponsonby, one of our talented Year 6 students, who has been selected to play in an international basketball tournament in LA! What an incredible achievement! We are so proud of your hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship. We know you'll represent yourself, your family, and your community with pride. Best of luck — we're all cheering you on and can't wait to hear all about your trip.



## **School Winter Uniform Reminder**

As the cooler weather settles in, a reminder that full winter uniform is required from Monday, May 12th. This gives families a transition period to prepare and adjust as temperatures continue to drop. A full description of our winter uniform can be found on the school website, and uniform items are available for purchase from Crockers and Beleza. Thank you for your support.

Enjoy your week everybody, we continue to be spoiled with this glorious Autumn weather



Jayne Mohr, Deputy Principal

## **Foundation/Prep Enrolment 2026 – Existing Families**

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

## **A Reminder About Our Parent Code of Conduct**

As part of the DOBCEL school community, St Francis Xavier Primary School follows important guidelines designed to keep our students safe and supported. One of these is our Parent Code of Conduct, which outlines expectations for all members of our school community. A recent update to this document includes guidelines around photographing children at school events. In line with our Child Safety Standards, parents are now asked to only photograph or film their own child. If you'd like to include other children in any photos or videos, you must first gain consent from their families.

We understand this may be a change from past practice, but it reflects best practice for keeping all our students safe.

This will particularly apply to assemblies, excursions, and camps, where group photography has been common in the past. We kindly ask all families to support this approach and help us maintain a safe and respectful environment for every child.

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July**  
**No Assembly**

Last day of term 2  
3.15pm finish (tbc)

**Term 3 (9 weeks)**

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

**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  
FBOK

**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**

This is a slide which we will be using as a reminder.



Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

### Religious Education News

**THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday May 11, 2025      Fourth Sunday of Easter (Year C)**

**Gospel: John 10:27-30**

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never die. No one can snatch them away from me. What my Father has given me is greater than everything, and no one can snatch them away from the Father's care. The Father and I are one. *(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation)*

#### Gospel reflection

Today Jesus talks about sheep. Jesus didn't spend his time looking after sheep out in the fields, so who do you think Jesus' sheep are? Who is he talking about? Jesus is a shepherd of people. He shows us the way to live our lives. He looks after us and cares for us, just as a shepherd looks after their sheep. Jesus says that his sheep listen to his voice. Jesus cares for every one of us. No matter who we are or from where we come. We are all different from each other, but we are also very alike. We all need enough food and water to live. We all like to have fun with our friends. We are all part of the same global family and so we are all very special and important. Jesus loves and cares for us all. Jesus asks us to treat other people as we would wish to be treated.

**Our Challenge:** Let's listen to what Jesus is saying to us, and share the love that he has for us all with others *(Adapted from CAFOD website)*



It was wonderful to see so many Mothers and Special Friends joining us last Friday for our afternoon tea and liturgy. The children were very excited to join with their family groups; and I thank our amazing teachers for inviting and welcoming everyone to celebrate in their learning space. The smiles on everyone's faces said it all!

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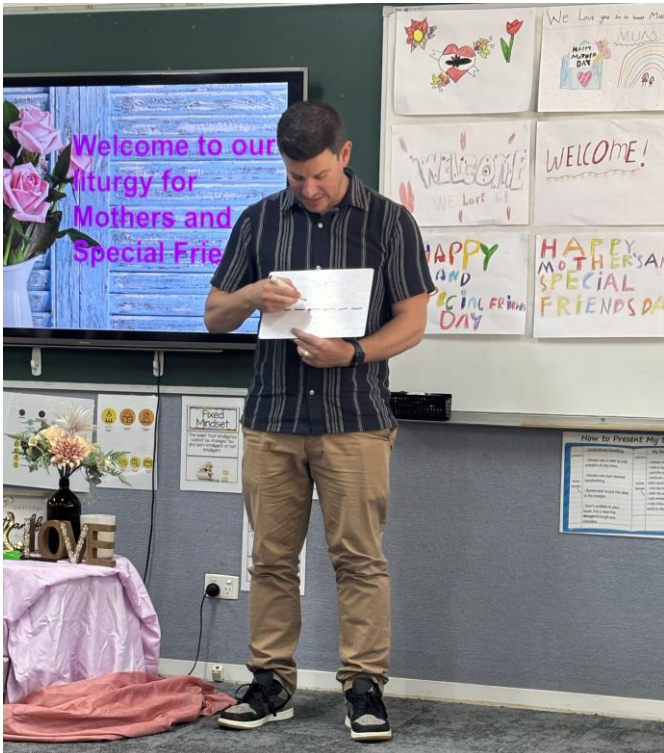


**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November**  
**No Assembly**  
**Mon 24<sup>th</sup> – Wed 26<sup>th</sup> Nov**  
**Year 5 Camp**  
**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December**  
**Final 2025 day for students**



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Last week we were delighted to see white smoke coming from the Vatican Conclave. A new Pope has been elected to lead the global Catholic community! Let us welcome **Pope Leo XIV** with joy, prayer, and open hearts. As the spiritual leader of over a billion Catholics worldwide, the Pope helps guide us in faith, kindness, and service to others. This is a wonderful moment in history, and we encourage our students to learn about the Pope's important role and the message of love and hope he brings to the world. Please join the catholic community in saying a special prayer for Pope Leo, that God grants him wisdom, courage, and peace in his new role.



Christine Meneely, **Religious Education Leader**

### Sport/Physical Education News

#### Division AFL

In true football weather, SFX was represented by 4 outstanding teams at last week's Division AFL competition at Sebastopol. Displaying SFX pride, all students played with determination and teamwork and were part of some memorable moments. All 4 teams showed improved teamwork as the day progressed and achieved some great results. Congratulations to the Villa 2 Boys team that held on for a win in the Final to progress to the Regional Finals later this term. A huge thank you to all of the families that braved the conditions and supported the students. Finally thank you Ms Rose, Jack, Flynn and Mr Marshall for your support and coaching expertise on the day.





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### **Cross Country**

Good luck to our very strong squad of students that are participating at the Eureka Division Cross Country at Fed Uni this Monday. Hopefully the weather remains fine and we have great running conditions.

### **Netball Tryouts**

This Wednesday there will be tryouts for the SFX Netball Girls and Boys teams for the upcoming Division tournament. Tryouts will be conducted in the gym during break time - Girls 1st break, Boys 2nd break.

### **MDASA Swimming**

Congratulations to Harriet Howard and Imogen Sordello for winning a medal at last Term's U/9 Encouragement swim meet, they have bright futures in the sport.

## **2025 SFX SPORTS DATES**

### **Term 2:**

- 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)
- Week 10 - Wednesday June 25th - GWR Football @ TBC

### **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 News**

### **Zooper Doopers**

This coming Friday will be our last Friday having Zooper Doopers until term 4 - \$1  
Thank you Camille Bell for running this each week & Grade 6's

### **Hot Chocolates**

Commencing Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May at first break the P&F will run Hot Chocolates – every Monday for the remainder for Term 2 & Term 3. \$1.50 for a Hot Chocolate & Marshmallow.

We are looking for anyone who would like to learn how to be one of our Hot Chocolate co-ordinators on a Monday between 10am & 12pm in Term 2 & 3 – if you would like to learn the process, please contact Lisa Clark on 0412 647 737.

We will also be looking for Volunteers each week to assist in handing out the Hot Chocolates & cleaning up at the end – please look out for the sign up in your class chat.

**Uniform Shop**

Our Second Hand Uniform shop is always open, please see the office staff if you wish to have a look at any items in our Second Hand Uniform shop, or reach out to a member of our P&F to help you with any of your Uniform needs.

**Mother's Day Stall**

Thank you to all of our wonderful Volunteers for helping run our annual Mother's Day Stall, and a big Thank you to Faith White for co-ordinating the Mother's Day stall – we hope all of our SFX Mums & Special Friends had a wonderful day.



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

# Ministry District Newsletter

Priests Frs Justin Driscoll & Shaiju Mathew

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

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter (C)

11<sup>th</sup> May 2025

| MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES   |               |   |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---|---------------------|
| Weekday Masses                 |               |   |                     |
| Tuesday May 13 <sup>th</sup>   | 5.30 pm       | St. Alipius Ballarat East                             |                     |
| Wednesday May 14 <sup>th</sup> | 11.00 am      | Mercy Place (All Welcome)                             |                     |
|                                | 1.30 pm       | Funeral prayers for Dr Norman Abjorensen – St Alipius |                     |
| Thursday May 15 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.30 am      | St Brigid's Ballan                                    |                     |
| Friday May 16 <sup>th</sup>    | 9.30 am       | St Alipius Ballarat East                              |                     |
| Saturday May 17 <sup>th</sup>  | 9.30 am       | St Alipius Ballarat East                              |                     |
| Weekend Masses                 |               |   |                     |
| Saturday May 17 <sup>th</sup>  |               | Sunday May 18 <sup>th</sup>                           |                     |
| 6.00 pm                        | Ballarat East | 9.00 am   | Ballarat East       |
| 6.30 pm                        | Dunnstown     | 10.30 am  | Buninyong<br>Gordon |

### WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

#### THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Dr Norman Abjorensen, Bill Kleynjans,  
Maree Matthews, Sr. Marie Vagg RSM

#### THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Arthur Gore, Mary Bettes

#### THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Troy Watson (Steenhuis family), Elaine Conlan,  
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).

### UPCOMING EVENTS

150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Gordon Parish  
18<sup>th</sup> May from 10.30 am

Parish Council Meeting  
22<sup>nd</sup> May 6.30 pm

Liturgy Meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> May 5 pm

Funeral Ministry Formation  
1<sup>st</sup> June 10.30

### 150<sup>TH</sup> GORDON PARISH ANNIVERSARY

Mass to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Gordon Parish. Will be held on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2025, at St Patrick's Catholic Church. Old Melbourne Road, Gordon at 10:30am.

Refreshments will follow at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. All Welcome.

Old Photographs and Memorabilia: The Organising Committee for 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Gordon Parish plans to hold a photographic display of past parish events and activities after the anniversary Mass on Sunday, May 18, 2025. If you have old photographs or other memorabilia that you think may be of interest, please contact Joan Burke at [kandibourke@gmail.com](mailto:kandibourke@gmail.com) or [kandibourke@icloud.com](mailto:kandibourke@icloud.com)

### PRAYER FOR MOTHER'S DAY

Loving God, we pray for our mothers, who have given us life and love, that we may show them reverence and love, and others who show us a mother's love.

We pray for adoptive mothers and for the women who wish to give birth but experience challenges, that they know your care.

We pray for mothers who have lost a child through death that their faith may give them hope, and their family and friends support and console them.

We pray for those who wish to serve as mothers, but are not able to do so, that they know your comfort.

We pray for mothers who have died, that God may bring them into the joy of his kingdom. Amen.

### PARISH BULLETIN DISTRIBUTION

In recent weeks our parish has changed the system we use for storing data electronically. With the migration to the new system we will be changing the way that we distribute the parish bulletin each week. As a result of this you will now be need to be a 'subscriber' to our bulletin and at any time you will have the option to 'unsubscribe'. In order to subscribe you can use the following link or QR code and from there it is very straightforward. If you need help doing this you are most welcome to call into the presbytery during office hours and we will be happy to provide the support you need. Please note that we will no longer be sending emails from our previous email distribution list after this weekend.



### OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

The March edition of the ODC is now available in the foyers of each church. Pick up your copy to learn more about last year's Diocesan assembly.

### BAPTISMS

Charlie & Alby Ryan-Owens  
Children of Corey Owens and Penelope Ryan

Lincoln Oscar Polmear  
Child of Luke and Emma Polmear

### COLLECTIONS

|                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Supporting our priests: | \$933.50  |
| Supporting our parish:  | \$ 408.60 |

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Project Compassion 2025: | \$2,979 |
|--------------------------|---------|

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

## HAPPY 50<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY SHAIJU



### **FUNERAL MINISTRY FORMATION**

On Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup>, Bishop Paul and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission will offer formation for those engaged in parish funeral ministry – accompanying families in the preparation and celebration of funerals. We are blessed to have parishioners who currently undertake this ministry and they, together with others who are interested in growing in understanding of this pastoral ministry are invited to gather at Buninyong. The day will commence with 10.30am Mass and will continue through to mid-afternoon with lunch included. Expressions of interest can be made through the Parish office.

### **HOW DOES GOD WANT US TO LEAD AND GOVERN FOR A MISSIONARY AND SYNODAL CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF BALLARAT – SYNODAL CONVERSATIONS**

The Assembly confirmed that there is strong support for adopting Synodal Conversations as the process moving forward. This collaborative and reflective approach resonates with the Diocese's shared commitment to listening, discerning and walking together as a community. The Diocesan Assembly provided us with an opportunity to engage in our mission as the People of God of the Diocese of Ballarat. Delegates brought ideas, experiences and gifts to the table and greatly contributed to the discernment of the focus of the Assembly – Leadership and Governance for a Missionary Synodal Church. The depth of data provided by the delegates at the Assembly reflected an overwhelming sense of hope for the future of the diocese, as well as a significant understanding of challenges. Delegates presented a wide array of information drawn from the diverse perspectives, encompassing theological insights, pastoral experiences and the lived realities of faith communities. Their contributions included stories and experiences on issues faced in their own local situations and the wider diocesan community such as an aged community, participation/inclusivity of women, young people and the marginalised, sustainability, distrust and who is going to lead in the future. However, the contributions also included the sense of preparedness to embark on a synodal journey with or without clarity and this is exciting and hopeful.

### **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL**

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) will be held in Melbourne from Sunday, November 30 - Tuesday, December 2, 2025. ACYF is a national gathering of Catholic young people, established by the Australian Bishops more than a decade ago. This three-day event offers young people from across Australia the opportunity to connect, deepen their relationship with Jesus, and be empowered to live their faith in the world. It also provides a unique chance to experience the diversity of the Church in Australia. The Festival will include prayer, Mass, workshops, talks, live concerts, games, justice issues and an interactive expo. It will also offer opportunities for engagement with peers, school and youth groups, Bishops, musicians and speakers. Bishop Paul will be attending the event. Participants are young people aged Year 9 – 25 years. If you are interested in attending, please contact your parish office. Sponsorship may be available from the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Foundation to help offset costs. For more details, scan or click the QR code.

### **NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK AUSTRALIA: MAY 12-18, 2025**

National Families Week is Australia's annual celebration of families. The aim of National Families Week is to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society. The week is celebrated to coincide with the United Nations International Day of Families on May 15. CatholicCare's theme this year is "Building thriving communities, where everyone belongs." Family and community are two sides of the same coin. Families, whatever form they take, play a vital role in shaping our sense of connection, care and responsibility for one another and are an essential foundation to thriving schools and our future leaders. CatholicCare invites you to support their mission. All donations will go towards essential CCV programs and services for families facing a variety of challenges. Your kindness and generosity will help the most vulnerable members of our community  
<https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/family-week-donations/>.

# A Call to Divine "Care-fulness"

## Reflection on the Gospel-Easter 4C

(John 10:27-30)

Veronica M. Lawson RSM



Today's gospel is wonderfully reassuring for those who truly hear the voice of Jesus. He "knows" them. These are the ones who "follow" him, the ones who live as he lived, caring for the "flock". There is a sense of mutuality in hearing and in being known. The inheritance of the "known" ones is eternal or never-ending life. In other words, they participate in God's way of being in the world. Just as the shepherds of the ancient world protected their flocks, so the followers of Jesus are secure in his "hand", secure in the "hand" of God. Later in John's gospel, Mary Magdalene will hear Jesus' voice and recognise him when he calls her by name. She is one whom Jesus of Nazareth "knows". Her faithful following of Jesus will find expression in her presence at the foot of the cross and her visit to the empty tomb.

Sisters of the Good Shepherd, founded in post-revolution France with a mission to shepherd God's people, especially young women at risk, take their inspiration from the gospel image of Jesus as shepherd. They continue to shepherd God's people, including women who have been trafficked as sexual slaves. They have expanded their mission and, together with their associates and partners in ministry, have decided "to shepherd God's creation". Their foundress, Sr. Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, understood the ways of shepherds in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century rural France: "How, in fact, do good shepherds act? They forget themselves and often have to endure hunger and thirst. They are crushed by fatigue and difficulties—no matter! They are happy if their sheep do not suffer and if they find those that are lost.

What trouble they take to lead their sheep to good pastures! In summer they seek out places where there is water and shade; in winter they lead them to where the cold is less biting and the grass more abundant. If they notice poisonous plants near the little lambs they hasten to pull them up. Day and night they are on guard against wolves—they never completely relax." The same respectful stance is needed as we seek to care for our threatened Earth community.

For the earliest readers of John's gospel, the term "good shepherd" was a contradiction in terms. Shepherds were known to trespass on the property of others in their search for feed. A positive image of the shepherd is nonetheless part of Israel's prophetic tradition. John's gospel evokes that tradition. It also evokes the figure of David, the shepherd boy who was destined to become king and to shepherd God's people. For biblical scholar Margaret Daly-Denton, the Israelite understanding of kingship is "shepherding done in the name of the true Shepherd of Israel (Ps. 80.1), the kind of care that reveals the divine 'care-fulness'" (*John: An Earth Bible Commentary*, T&T Clark, 2017, 144). Those who hear the voice of Jesus are called to that kind of care for one another and for our planetary home.

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 13:14, 43-52

Revelation 7:9, 14-17

John 10:27-30

### NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 14:21-27

Revelation 21:1-5

John 13:31-35





# AUSSIE HOOPS

## JOIN IN ALL THE FUN

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