



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 27th October 2025
Term 4 Week 4

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

Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 6th Oct – Fri 19th Dec

Friday 31st October

Junior Sports Day for all
Foundation-Year 2 students
and Yr 6 Sports Captains

Casual Dress Day - *Gold coin
donation for MercyWorks*

Monday 3rd November

Pupil free day

Tuesday 4th November

Melbourne Cup Public
Holiday - Pupil free day

Wednesday 5th November

Eureka Division Cricket
at Alfredton Reserve
(selected Yr 5 & 6 students)

Thursday 6th November

Victorian State Track & Field
@ Lakeside Stadium (for
qualifiers from Regional
event)

Friday 7th November

No Assembly

Friday 14th November

No Assembly

Colour Run

Friday 21st November

Interschool Sport with
Emmaus – Yr 5 @ SFX,
Yr 6 @ Emmaus

No Assembly

Mon 24th – Wed 26th Nov

Year 5 Camp

Friday 28th November

Casual Dress Day - *Gold coin
donation for St Vinnies*

Friday 5th December

9.30am End of Year Mass

Tuesday 16th December

5.30pm Yr 6 Graduation
Liturgy

Thursday 18th December

Final 2025 day for students

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

We had the last of our Friday class assemblies last week. This really confirms for us that we are in the final stages of the year. While it isn't time to count down the days yet, we are certainly making the most of every moment.

Throughout the year, we take every opportunity to celebrate learning. Class assemblies are always a highlight—moments when children share their learning with confidence and pride. Their enthusiasm is contagious, and it's wonderful to see our community come together to acknowledge their achievements. If you've been one of the many parents or friends who have attended an assembly, I'm sure you would agree.

We still have many weeks ahead before we bring our school year to a close. The children are working hard at school to achieve their learning goals, and we can see the results of all their hard work. Don't be afraid to ask your children about their learning time at school. Every day brings a new learning adventure, and that really is something to be proud of!

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



**TOGETHER
WE LEARN**

Thank You!

Thanks to all families for your support of our school closure day. We spent the day working with the Structured Literacy team from Catholic Education. We have been working diligently to provide direct and explicit instruction to our students, and it was great to be able to delve deeper into the best learning strategies to enhance learning opportunities for all. Our final school closure day for the year will be held on Monday 3 November.

Congratulations to Our Basketball Teams!



Congratulations to Alex, Eli, Noah, Chloe, Minti, Emily, Amelia, Elizabeth and Sophie from our school who have been selected to represent Ballarat in the Victorian Junior Basketball League for the 2025/2026 season. These children are training weekly for the big competitions which begin on 6 March 2026. Well done children!

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Through the mission of Jesus within the Mercy tradition, we are called to action in pursuing fullness of life for all.*

Classes for 2026 As we approach the end of the year, planning is already underway for class placements for 2026. This is a thoughtful and detailed process that involves careful consideration of many factors to ensure the best possible learning environment for every child. Once this work is complete, classes will be finalised and shared in mid-December. While we will not be seeking parent input into class placements, please be assured that our teachers bring a wealth of experience and deep knowledge of their students to this process. They work collaboratively to create well-balanced classes that support the learning and wellbeing of all students.



News from our Staff

- Congratulations to Ms. Rose who was married on the weekend. We wish Rose and Andreus a life of fun and many blessings together.
- Congratulations to Ms. Caitie who is expecting the birth of her second baby next year. We wish Caitlyn and Pat all the best as they prepare for a new addition to the family.



St. Francis Xavier Primary School

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

100 Fortune Street Ballarat East, VIC 3350

Phone: 03 5331 6311

office@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

27 October, 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: SIMONEverywhere and Parent Access Module (PAM) Offline - Update

On Friday 24 October, the SIMON service, including access to the Parent Access Module (PAM) and SIMONEverywhere mobile application were taken offline after some unusual login attempts were detected. This involved the unauthorised use of student and staff user credentials to create fake accounts.

St Francis Xavier Primary School and SIMONSchools take cyber security very seriously. External experts have been engaged to help ensure we take all appropriate action in response to this activity.

From our investigation to date, we do not have any evidence to suggest that any user information held on the platform has been affected, or that any other systems are involved. Should this position change, we will notify relevant parties as required.

Students will be able to access SIMON whilst logged in on-campus, however we will be keeping SIMONEverywhere and the Parent Access Module (PAM) offline until further notice. This precaution is being taken to ensure the safety and security of all users while we work to further understand this unusual activity and resolve the situation.

If you need to log a student absence during this period, update important medical information or provide consent for an excursion, please contact your school directly via office@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au or 53 316 311.

We understand this may cause some inconvenience and appreciate your patience and support as we work to restore full service.

We will be in touch with a further update regarding access to PAM and SIMONEverywhere as soon as we can. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Kind regards,

Mark Hogbin

Principal

'All with God'

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THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday October 26, 2025 Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Gospel: Luke 18: 9-14 Jesus also told this parable to people who were sure of their own goodness and despised everybody else. "Once there were two men who went up to the Temple to pray: one was a Pharisee, the other a tax collector.

The Pharisee stood apart by himself and prayed, 'I thank you, God, that I am not greedy, dishonest, or an adulterer, like everybody else. I thank you that I am not like that tax collector over there. I fast two days a week, and I give you a tenth of all my income.'

But the tax collector stood at a distance and would not even raise his face to heaven, but beat on his breast and said, 'God, have pity on me, a sinner!' I tell you," said Jesus, "the tax collector and not the Pharisee, was in the right with God when he went home. For those who make themselves great will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be made great." (*Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation*)

Gospel reflection: The Pharisee is full of pride. He thinks he's brilliant, that he's done everything right and that God must love him very much. The tax collector is humble and sorry- he knows that and is asking for forgiveness. The two men behaved very differently in the temple that day, didn't they? The Pharisee was proud and thought he knew better than other people. The tax collector knew that he was no better than anyone else and that only God could give him the forgiveness and mercy he needed. The Pharisee judged the tax collector. He thought the tax collector wasn't as good as he was.

No matter who we are, where we come from, the colour of our skin, whether we are rich or poor, tall or short, we are special to God. God loves us all very much. We are all equal and special in the eyes of God, who loves us all. Think about the things that you could do better, say sorry to God for the times you get things wrong and ask God to help you to get them right next time. God is always ready to listen and to forgive us when we say sorry.

Our Challenge: This week try not to judge others because they are different to you. Try to treat all people you meet with kindness and respect. (*Adapted from CAFOD website*)



Free Dress Day Reminder: NO COSTUMES PLEASE

This **Friday** October 31st, students are invited to wear **free dress** in support of **MercyWorks**, an organisation that helps people build brighter futures through education, health care and community development. Please bring a **gold coin donation** to support the important work of the Sisters of Mercy and their partners across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Let's show our **Mercy spirit** by helping to make a difference!

What is MercyWorks?



MercyWorks
SISTERS OF MERCY IN AUSTRALIA & PAPUA NEW GUINEA

*Mercy -
Walking Together.
Changing Lives.*

MercyWorks is a not-for-profit charity organisation supporting long term development projects in Australia and the South-East Asia Pacific region, including Papua New Guinea, The Philippines and Timor-Leste. MercyWorks run world-class programs that engage in partnership with challenged communities to enjoy the right to basic resources, such as education, healthcare and social services.

From providing education support to refugee and Indigenous students in Australia, to providing agricultural training in remote communities in Papua New Guinea, to reducing the rates of malnutrition in Timor-Leste, to walking with young women and girls who have experienced human trafficking in the Philippines, MercyWorks help improve the

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lives of vulnerable people.

Why do we ask the children to share what they have?

St Francis Xavier Primary School is a Catholic school and a Mercy school-this means that we teach Catholic Christian values to our students. These values are inspired by the behaviour of Jesus, who healed the sick, taught people, helped those in need and cared for all people no matter their nationality or religion. These are also the values that Catherine McAuley followed when she began the Sisters of Mercy in the 1800s.



Christine Meneely, **Religious Education Leader**
MHiPS Leader (Mental Health in Primary School Leader)

Wellbeing News

Child Safe Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

At St Francis Xavier Primary School, we are committed to nurturing students who are kind, confident and respectful of others. Through our Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships program, students learn about empathy, fairness and the importance of treating everyone with respect - both in the classroom and beyond.

Recently, a regional initiative called the Ballarat Saturation Model has been gaining momentum. Developed through Women's Health Grampians, it aims to create communities that are safe, equal and free from gender-based violence. The model highlights that teaching and modelling respect early in life helps prevent future harm and strengthens the wellbeing of all people.

A key message from this work is that gender equality benefits everyone. When children are encouraged to be themselves - free from rigid ideas about what they "should" do - they grow up with stronger confidence, better mental health and healthier relationships. It's also a reminder that everyday actions make a big difference. The language we use, how we share roles and how we respond to disrespectful comments all shape the kind of community our children see and experience.

As part of the Ballarat Saturation Model, local organisations, schools and families are encouraged to become "active bystanders" -people who speak up or act when they see unfair or disrespectful behaviour. Whether it's challenging a stereotype, encouraging fairness in play, or simply showing kindness and inclusion, each small action contributes to a safer and more respectful culture for everyone.

By working together - at home, at school and across our community - we can continue to build a generation of young people who value equality, celebrate diversity and treat others with genuine respect.

SchoolTV have released a book review for a book titled 'You, Me and Empathy' by Jayneen Sanders which fits in lovely with the beliefs presented in the Ballarat Saturation Model. To read the review and/or purchase the book please click the following link: <https://sfxballarat.catholic.schooltv.me/newsletter-external-resource/you-me-and-empathy-jayneen-sanders>

Sending cheers your way,



Gemma Johnson, **Wellbeing Leader**

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Division Golf

Well done to the wonderful group of students that participated in last Friday's Division Golf tournament at Mt Xavier Golf Club. The weather looked a bit sketchy at the start but turned into a magnificent day for golf. All students did their best and should be proud of the way they played and their attitude. Congratulations to Rhys and Levi who have qualified for the Regional event later in the term. A special shout out to all of the adults that gave up their time and helped on the day.





SFX Junior Sports Day The excitement is building as we edge closer to the Junior Sports Day which will once again be conducted at Russell Square on Friday October 31st. Students in Foundation, Yr 1 & Yr 2 will participate in a variety of fun activities as well as running and relay races. Our Yr 6 Sports Captains will manage the day and this is a wonderful opportunity for them to engage with the younger students and show their leadership skills. All information regarding the day can be found on the PAM notification.

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.

Term 4:

- Week 4 - Friday Oct 31st - SFX Junior Sports Day - (all students in F-2 + Yr 6 Sports Captains)
- Week 5 - Wednesday Nov 5th - Eureka Division Cricket @ Alfredton Reserve (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 5 - Thursday Nov 6th - Victorian State Track & Field @ Lakeside Stadium (qualifiers from Regional event)
- Week 7 - Friday November 21st - Interschool Sport with Emmaus - Yr 5 @ SFX, Yr 6 @ Emmaus

Have a great week.



Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**

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- **Santa Photos!!!**

The P&F are excited to bring you an opportunity to meet Santa & capture your own magical memories – this is your opportunity to have Santa photos without it costing a fortune – for a gold coin donation come and meet Santa, use your own phone or camera and capture your own photos – perfect to use on your Christmas cards – Sunday 9th November (See flyer for more details) – bookings essential – reserve your time slot in the office – spots are limited – book early to avoid disappointment!

- **We are super excited to announce that the SFX COLOUR RUN is back for 2025 - Friday 14th November 2025**

Make sure you have signed your child up with their own fundraising page – not just to collect donations, but to be in the running for our spot prizes throughout the campaign – prizes drawn every day!

<https://stfrancisxavierballarateast.goraiseit.com.au/>

We will be looking for volunteers for to help on the day of the Colour Run to ensure it runs smoothly – please reach out to Lisa Clark on 0412 647 737 if you are able to help – you will need a Working With Children card.

There will also be consent forms sent out on PAM in the coming weeks

Happy Fundraising!

- **CHRISTMAS RAFFLE DONATIONS** – We are seeking donations for our Christmas Raffle – if you would like to make a donation, or know someone or a Business who would like to make a donation – please reach out to Lisa Clark 0412 647 737 – or drop your donation into the office

- **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 – **We will be holding another Pop Up Shop on Tuesday 2nd December – we would love if anyone who has uniforms that no longer fit be donated prior to this date!**

- **RYANS IGA COMMUNITY REWARDS Program**

For the months of September & October 2025 – St Francis Xavier Primary School has been selected to participate in the **Ryan's IGA Community Rewards program** at the **Northway store** – corner Doveton & Norman St.

If you are in the area, pop in and collect your groceries and put you tokens in our token box.



- **Hot Lunches**

Please note, Flexischools have updated when you are placing your child's Lunch order, you are now able to select if your child has any allergies and it will print on your child's lunch bag label, we ask that you are selecting if they have any allergies as it makes it smoother process when it comes to packing lunch orders on a Friday. Also please note cut off for lunch orders is strictly 10am Thursday mornings.

Thank you to our Co-ordinators & Volunteers who come and pack all of the children's lunch orders on a Friday!

- **Zooper Doopers - every FRIDAY in Term 4 - \$1 each available at 2nd break**



SFX Christmas raffle

DONATIONS

SFX Parents & Friends association are
seeking your support for donations
for our Christmas raffle

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO OWNS A BUSINESS THAT
COULD OFFER A SERVICE OR WOULD DONATE AN ITEM FOR
OUR SFX CHRISTMAS RAFFLE?

DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A DONATION BUT ARE UNSURE
HOW YOU CAN HELP?

PURCHASE A GIFT VOUCHER, DONATE A HAMPER,
PURCHASE AN ITEM TO DONATE

ALL BUSINESSES & FAMILIES WHO MAKE DONATIONS WILL
BE PROMOTED IN ORDER FOR OUR SFX COMMUNITY TO
CONTINUE SUPPORTING THEM IN THE SAME MANNER THAT
THEY HAVE SUPPORTED OUR SCHOOL

Please drop any donations into the
front office, or if you have any
questions contact Lisa Clark

0412 647 737





Santa Photos

The P&F invites you and your family to meet Santa and capture your own magical Christmas memories!

When: Sunday 9th November 10am- 4pm

Where : SFX Staff Room

Cost: Gold Coin Donation

All money raised will be used to purchase items for Reverse Advent Boxes

What's Included:

- A 5-minute personal time slot with Santa
- A festive backdrop
- Bring your Phone or your camera & take your own photos - perfect for Christmas cards or keepsakes - we will have members of the P&F who can assist in taking photos of your whole family on the day



Bookings essential - reserve your time slot in the office!

Spots are limited - book early to avoid disappointment!

2025 SFX Colour Run Fundraiser



**Sign up to begin fundraising
today - scan on the QR code**

Friday 14th November

- **Spot Prizes drawn every school day of the campaign**
- **Opportunity to slime the teachers**
- **Free Sunglasses for every child**
- **Free Zooper Dooper at the end**
- **Don't forget to wear a white t-shirt for the best effect**

**Volunteers needed to make the
day run smoothly - Please
contact Lisa 0412 647 737**

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
0437 505 517

ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au
bungaree@ballarat.catholic.org.au
gordon@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Tuesday – Friday 9:00 AM – 12:00PM

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 – Cathy Prunty

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year C 26th October, 2025

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday October 28 th	5.00 pm	St Pat's Cathedral (Clergy Jubilarians)	
Wednesday October 29 th	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
Thursday October 30 th	10.30 am	St Brigid's Ballan	
Friday October 31 st	9.30am	St Alipius' Ballarat East	
Saturday November 1 st	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses			
Saturday November 1 st		Sunday November 2 nd	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Ballarat East Gordon
6.30 pm	Dunnstown	10.30 am	Buninyong Ballan

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME
 Kevin Cummins, Bill Hall, Brenda McTigue, Dorothy Conlan, Carmen Duca, Anne Rutledge, Reg Mullane, Desmond Joseph Kane, Anne Carey, Leo Crough, Kathleen Kennedy, Bronislaw Blazek, Martain Seiger

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Irene D'Arcy, Troy Watson (Steenhuis family), Elaine Conlan, Evelyn Farrugia, Patricia (Patty) Gannon, Michelle Hall, (baby) Mia Hanrahan, John Healy, Sarah McLachlan, Thelma Keating, Carole Simmons, Owen Widdison, Simon Murillo.

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).

We acknowledge this land's traditional owners and custodians and pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging.

COLLECTIONS

The figures below are for last weekend.

Supporting our priests: \$1071

Supporting our parish: \$ 353

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

MINISTRIES OF PROCLAIMING GOD'S

WORD: WHY ARE THEY SO IMPORTANT?

Bishop Paul has prepared some reflections on the importance of the ministry of proclaiming God's Word. The reflections are available from the diocesan website - scan or click the QR code.



PASTORAL LETTER TO THE CATHOLICS OF VICTORIA ON EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE

The State Government is seeking to amend Victoria's euthanasia and assisted suicide laws. If passed, the Government's Bill would further weaken protections for vulnerable patients and reduce protections for medical practitioners who conscientiously object to euthanasia and assisted suicide. In response the Bishops of Victoria have written a pastoral letter to asking that we contact our local Members of Parliament to urge them to vote against the proposed laws. A copy of this availability in the foyers of our churches or via this link: www.bit.ly/EuthanasiaBill

VIT REGISTRATION

As part of the safeguarding in our parish, we ask teachers who volunteer to provide their updated VIT registration to the parish on an annual basis. If you are a volunteer who needs to do this, can we ask that you do so as soon as possible please.

PRAYING WITH THE HOLY FATHER

Each month the Pope puts forward a prayer intention and asks Catholics around the world to join him in prayer. "The Pope Video" forms part of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network www.thepopevideo.org.

Prayer for October - For collaboration between different religious traditions: Let us pray that believers in different religious traditions might work together to defend and promote peace, justice and human fraternity. Lord, hear us.

MASS OF REMEMBRANCE

Our annual Remembrance Mass, celebrating the lives of those who have passed away in the past 12 months will be held at 6:00 pm on Saturday November 8th at St Alipius. A second Remembrance Mass will be celebrated at Ss. Peter and Paul's Buninyong on Sunday November 16th at 10.30 am. If you have lost a loved one in the past twelve months, but they weren't buried from our parish, please contact the parish office to have them remembered at this Mass.

GORDON REMEMBRANCE MASS

The cemetery Mass will be held on Sunday 16th November, at 11.00am, at the Gordon Cemetery, Old Western Highway, Gordon. All welcome.

RCIA FOR CHILDREN

The parish currently has several families who have expressed interest in the RCIA for children. This program will run in the first term of 2026. If you know of anyone who would be interested in finding out more about this process, please encourage them to contact the parish office. An information meeting will be held in late November, early December.

JUBILEE CONGRATULATIONS

Mass to celebrate the 2025 Clergy Jubilarians will be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 5.00pm. All are welcome to attend. We congratulate and pray for the 2025 clergy Jubilarians: 65 years - Fr Pat Flangan; 50 years - Bishop Paul Bird CSsR, Fr Eugene McKinnon, Fr Wally Tudor.

INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS 2028 THEME ANNOUNCED

Pope Leo XIV has chosen "This is My Body, Given for You" as the theme for the International Eucharistic Congress to be held in Sydney in 2028. Read more at the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

PLANNED GIVING STATEMENTS

Please take your planned giving statement from the back of the church this weekend. After this statements will need to be sent out and we would like to save postage where we can. Thank you.

LITURGICAL MUSIC WORKSHOP IN BALLARAT WITH BR MICHAEL HERRY FMS

This workshop will feature special music for Advent and the Christmas season, how to sing the Responsorial Psalms each Sunday and beautiful music for prayer and worship from Marist Music on Thursday, November 20, 2025 at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, 480A Gillies Street, Wendouree at 7.00pm. Please register your attendance at the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/liturgical-music-workshop-with-br-michael-herry-fms/> or scan or click the QR code.

UPCOMING DATES

Tuesday 28th October

5.00pm Mass at the Cathedral for clergy jubilees - Bishop Paul, Frs. Eugene McKinnon & Wally Tudor

Thursday 6th November

Baptism Information Session
Mary Glowrey Room (Cathedral)
10 am & 5.30 pm

BALLARAT DIOCESE LAY PASTORAL MINISTRY PROGRAM – ONLINE STUDY

The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) is a growing initiative to offer adult religious education and faith formation anytime and anywhere, online. This low-cost (\$50usd) online study and formation for employed or volunteer lay workers in parishes is available through our partner, Dayton University. The Cycle 7 begins October 27. Registration are now open. There are 35 subjects to choose from – find one that interests you! Scan the QR code for more information or email djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph. 5337 7121.



BAPTISM

George William Shaddock
Son of Matthew Shaddock & Stephanie Esposito

Isla May Murdock
Daughter of Drew Murdock & Samantha Goodrick

Messer George D'Arcy
Son of Mark & Tess D'Arcy

OCTOBER IS CATHOLIC MISSION MONTH

We would like to thank you for your generosity supporting the Church in Zambia and missionaries like Sr Jane and Kayula. Thanks to your kindness, women like Sharon will have the skills to provide for their families, and mothers like Grace can give birth with dignity. Your gift will also support a variety of Church programs around the world. To learn more about the impact your support is making, please visit catholicmission.org.au/our-work. Here, you can also sign up to our regular newsletter to keep up to date with the latest news. If you have not yet had the opportunity to give, please do so at catholicmission.org.au/mission. Your action will make a profound change on people's lives. www.catholicmission.org.au/mission. Free Call: 1800257296

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC MAGAZINE

The Australian Catholics Magazine is available in the foyers of our churches. Pick up your copy today, it always contains a series of interesting articles to reflect on.

ADVENT REFLECTIONS

There are a variety of materials currently available which support people to pray and reflect during the Advent period. If you would like a copy of some of this material, please contact the parish office and leave you name with Nat or Cathy and we will place an order.

MELBOURNE CUP LUNCHEON CANCELLED

Please note that the Melbourne Cup Luncheon has been cancelled due to a lack of interest in this year's event.

No Place for Self-Righteousness in a Gospel Way of Life

Reflection on the Gospel-30th Sunday in Ordinary Time C
(Luke 18:9-14) Veronica Lawson RSM

The parable of the Pharisee and the toll collector follows that of the courageous widow and the unjust judge. Luke frames the parable with comments about being just or in right relationship (translated “virtuous”) and justified (translated “at rights with God”). It is addressed to “certain people” who might find a mirror image of themselves in the first of the characters, the Pharisee. Historically, the Pharisees were honorable people, well-versed in Jewish religious traditions and faithful in observing the Law, who made up a very small percentage of the population. In the gospels, they often appear as code for religious leadership that is self-focused, contemptuous of others and out of touch with the struggle of ordinary people’s lives. In Luke, some of the Jesus’ harshest condemnation is reserved for the Pharisees of the gospel.

The Pharisee goes up to the Jerusalem Temple to pray. That is what Pharisees do. More surprising is the identification of the other person who also heads for the Temple to pray, a collector of tolls and customs. Toll collectors were required to pay the occupying forces up front and then recoup the money. They were therefore very susceptible to fraud, so not exactly to be trusted and certainly not connected with true worship. The Pharisee prays “to himself” or “by himself” or “about himself”: any one of these translations is possible.

He prays with his eyes cast sideways towards his thieving prayer companion. He prides himself on going beyond the prescriptions of the Law. The toll

collector, in contrast, stands at a distance, eyes cast down, beating his breast, acknowledging his need for God’s mercy and recognizing God as the source of compassion and forgiveness. For listeners who “have confidence in themselves that they are righteous”, this portrait of the toll collector in right relationship with God is confronting.

The language of the toll collector’s prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner”, evokes the prayer of a young man of Judah who, almost two centuries before, had seen his brothers die for their faith and who was himself facing death. The young man acknowledged the waywardness of his people, praying that God would be merciful to them and deliver them from persecution (2 Maccabees 7:37). The toll collector of the Lukan parable is more in tune with the faith tradition of his people than is its respected guardian, the Pharisee. Once again, right relationship with God and others is less a matter of who we are or what we do than the spirit in which we do it. There is no room for self-righteousness in a gospel way of life. We all need to admit our failings with humility, turn to God for forgiveness, and change our ways. Right now, this is what we are called to do as a human community that has failed to respect the integrity of the natural world and has exploited it for our own selfish ends. We might learn from the toll collector.

THIS WEEK’S READINGS

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sirach: 35: 12-14

2 Timothy: 4: 6-8

Gospel: Luke: 18: 9-14

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS

The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed

2 Maccabees: 12:43-45

Romans: 5:17-21

Gospel: Luke: 7:11-17

ASSEMBLY AWARDS 24th October Hosted by 6MM Theme: Justice

Justice means being the best person we can be.

We always try our hardest, even when it's difficult, just like Jesus did.

FLP	Laila Jennings and Flynn Warr	4JS	Ella Wilson, Austin Roberts, Milla Kingston
FGJ	Marley Gull and Olli McGregor	4LK	Keeva Humphries and Percy Veal
FBO'K	Riley Smith and George Ellis	4KB	Mackenzie Donnelly, Ailbe Kirby & Freddie Lynch
FTW	Noah Stewart and Amelia Toohey	5CC	Logan Psimaris and Alexis Toohey
1JS	Jimmy Robinson & Audrey Giles	5ZP	Milla Richardson & Sibella Moore
1EM	Lola Troon and Elsie Howe	5QM	Hannah Firth & Evie Spiers
1GT	Ava Kelishadi and Charlie Johnson	6PB	Mila Knowles and Lyla Harney
2RR	Connor Allan and Ruby Miles	6ZA	Asha Toohey, Ivy Miles & Claudia Cochrane
2MH	Matilda Walshe and Alex O'Reilly	6MM	Alex Ponsonby and Haddie Morley
2TS	Tom Green & Polly O'Loughlin	EE	
3LL	Hazel De Lorenzo & Noah McGregor	PA	Alex Ponsonby, Charlie Kersley and Sidney Porter
3JT	Ollie Rumble and Oakley Smith	VA	No awards this week as Mrs Molloy is away.
3DG	Damilare Baruwa and Violet Toohey	PE	
		Tch	Jimmy Faull (3LL) & Charlie Ryan (2RR)
Principal's Award: Ella Uljanic, Elizabeth Baruwa, Lily Martin			