



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 17th November 2025
Term 4 Week 7

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 21st November
Interschool Sport with
Emmaus – Yr 5 @ SFX,
Yr 6 @ Emmaus

No Assembly

Mon 24th – Wed 26th Nov
Year 5 Camp

Tuesday 25th November
6.30pm Foundation
information night in gym

Friday 28th November
Casual Dress Day - *Gold coin
donation for St Vinnies*

Last day for Book Club
Issue 8 orders

Monday 1st December
Last day for Reverse Advent
Calendar donations

Tuesday 2nd December
Pop Up Uniform Shop

Moving up day for whole
school

Friday 5th December
9.30am End of Year Mass
in our Gym

Tuesday 9th December
5pm Christmas Carols Night

Friday 12th December
Yr 6 Students v Staff annual
netball match

Tuesday 16th December
5.30pm Yr 6 Graduation
Liturgy

Thursday 18th December
Final 2025 day for students

On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Our teachers are very busy this week as they begin assessing student learning for the second semester. Although we still have five weeks left in the term and plenty of learning and teaching yet to happen, the process of reviewing and reflecting on progress is already well underway.

We know that each child is the master of their own learning journey. What comes easily to one student may take more time for another. Every learner has unique interests, strengths, and approaches — and that's what makes our classrooms such vibrant and dynamic places. What matters most is that every child is supported to achieve success, and that time often plays a big part in that process.

Schools are fascinating places. They're one of the few times in our lives when we move through a system alongside people our own age, guided by bells, timetables, and structured routines. That's why getting it right matters so much. Our commitment to direct and explicit instruction, complemented by open-ended and inquiry-based learning, ensures we meet curriculum demands while still allowing our students to flourish.

As we look back on the semester, it's wonderful to see how far our students have come. Teachers take great pride in the progress of every child — in their daily practice, consistent attendance, class participation, and the joy of mastering new skills. At Saint Francis Xavier, we are proud of all our students' achievements, and we hope you are too!



God bless,

Mark Hogbin



Helping Families Prepare for the New Social Media Age Restrictions

The Australian Government is introducing new age restrictions for social media, meaning young people under 16 years old will no longer be able to create or maintain accounts on most major platforms, including TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, X (Twitter), and YouTube.

These changes are designed to make online spaces safer and more age-appropriate for children and teenagers. The goal is to give young people time to develop the digital literacy, emotional resilience, and social skills they need before engaging in social media use.

What This Means for Families

For many families, this shift may feel significant. Social media has become a common way for young people to connect with friends, follow interests, and express themselves creatively. The upcoming restrictions may mean young people lose access to some of the platforms they currently use daily.

The eSafety Commissioner encourages families to start preparing now. Their 8-Step Action Plan for Under-16s offers a helpful guide for supporting children through this change. It suggests families:

- Check which apps your child currently uses and note which will become age-restricted.
- Make a list of friends, family, and groups your child wants to stay connected with, and think about other ways to do this.
- Explore new ways to follow creators, learn, and socialise through age-appropriate platforms.
- Back up photos, videos, and messages your child wants to keep.
- Start reducing social media use gradually to avoid a sudden change.
- Keep communication open about how your child is feeling and any challenges they face.

How Parents Can Support Their Children

Parents play a crucial role in helping young people navigate this transition. The eSafety Commissioner's website offers a dedicated section for parents at esafety.gov.au/parents. This page includes step-by-step guidance, practical tips, and resources to help families manage online safety and digital wellbeing at home.

The eSafety site also has a section written specifically for young people, with advice on staying connected, protecting their privacy, and coping with change.

Families can also access free **eSafety webinars**, designed to help parents and carers understand current online risks, learn how to set up parental controls, and explore ways to foster positive online habits. These webinars are a valuable opportunity to hear from experts and ask questions in a supportive environment.

Where to Find Help

If your child experiences something distressing online — whether or not they're using a restricted platform — they can still report it and seek support through eSafety's **I Need Help** page. Services like **Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800)** are also available 24 hours a day for young people aged 5 to 25.

For more details, resources, and the full action plan, visit the [eSafety Commissioner's website](https://esafety.gov.au) and explore their pages for both parents and young people. Starting these conversations early can help families navigate the transition smoothly and confidently.

Let's Keep Being Sun-Smart!

- At school we are really working hard with the children to push the Smart-Smart message during term 4.
- Children are required to wear their school hat every day when outside.
- No hat? Children will be required to play only under the verandas
- Children should carry their own sunscreen in their school bag so that it can be reapplied during the day if required
- The school has a small amount of general-purpose sunscreen available in the first-aid room for children who may require it



Movember — The Villa Caterpillars Are Back!

The fuzz is officially back! A brave crew of Villa Caterpillars are once again taking part in Movember 2025, growing (and sometimes struggling to grow) moustaches to raise funds and awareness for men's mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer.

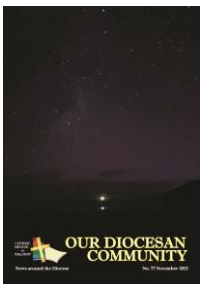
The Caterpillars are crawling into action for a great cause. You can support the team or donate here:

https://au.movember.com/team/2387495?mc=1&utm_medium=share&utm_source=dynamic&utm_campaign=copy-clipboard

or

- go straight to the Movember website and search for the Villa Caterpillars!

Let's get behind our staff as they help change the face of men's health — one dodgy upper lip at a time!



Please find below the link for the November 2025 edition of **“Our Diocesan Community”**

<https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/ODC-November-2025-web.pdf>

Religious Education News

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday November 16, 2025 Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C)

Gospel: Luke 21:5-19

Some of the disciples were talking about the Temple, how beautiful it looked with its fine stones and the gifts offered to God. Jesus said, “All you see – the time will come when not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one will be thrown down.”

“Teacher,” they asked, “when will this be? And what will happen in order to show that the time has come for it to take place? Jesus said, “Be on guard; don't be deceived. Many men, claiming to speak for me, will come and say, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time has come!’ But don't follow them. Don't be afraid when you hear of wars and revolutions; such things must happen first, but they do not mean that the end is near.” He went on to say, “Countries will fight each other; kingdoms will attack one another. There will be terrible earthquakes, famines, and plagues everywhere; there will be strange and terrifying things coming from the sky. This will be your chance to tell the Good News. Make up your mind beforehand not to worry about how you will defend yourselves, because I will give you such words and wisdom that none of your enemies will be able to refute or contradict what you say. You will be handed over by your parents, your brothers, your relatives, and your friends; and some of you will be put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me. But not a single hair from your heads will be lost. Stand firm and you will save yourselves. *(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation)*

Gospel reflection: Jesus was with his disciples in the temple. He told them that the temple would one day be destroyed and that there would be wars, earthquakes, and people hungry for food. Jesus told the disciples not to be afraid. He promised that he would be with them always and that they wouldn't be harmed if they put their trust in him.

St. Francis Xavier Primary School is a Child Safe School called to action through Gospel values and Mercy tradition. Through the mission of Jesus within the Mercy tradition, we are called to action in pursuing fullness of life for all.

Jesus is with us always, even in the hardest times. Jesus is in all people. Perhaps we can see Jesus in the person who helps us when we are struggling, in the person who inspires us to keep going, in the person who shows us that things can be different.

Our Challenge: Next time you hear about an earthquake, flood or drought on the news what will you do to help the people affected? How will you help them to know that they haven't been forgotten? Can you see Jesus in all the people that you meet and those who you just hear about? What does that mean for how you will treat them?

(Adapted from CAFOD website)

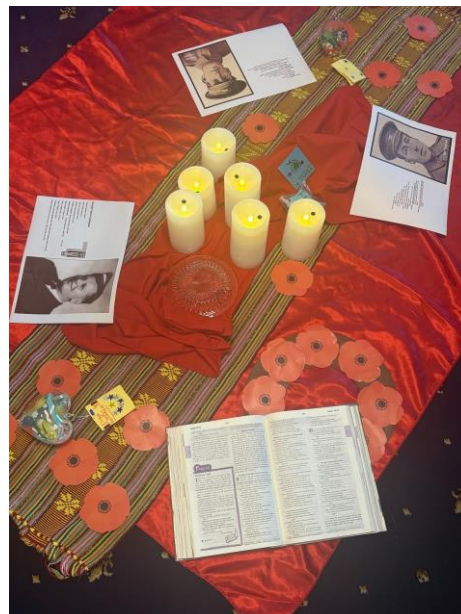
Congratulations to these Year Three students on their Sacrament of Confirmation on Saturday evening at St Alipius Church.

We wish them all the best as they continue their faith journey. A heartfelt thanks to their families, Fr Justin, parish team and teachers for supporting the children so beautifully. May the gifts of the Holy Spirit continue to guide and inspire them as they grow in faith, courage and compassion.



Celebrating the Amazing Work in our School!

Last Tuesday, our Year 3 classes gathered in the School Chapel for a touching and reverent Remembrance Day liturgy. Together, the children paused in prayer and reflection to honour the courage, service and sacrifice of all who have served. Their thoughtful participation created a meaningful space to remember and give thanks. Across the school, other classes also held their own Remembrance Day reflections in classrooms, ensuring our whole community was united in remembrance.



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In these busy weeks, it is important we take time to celebrate and highlight the amazing work happening across our school community. From the rich learning taking place in classrooms to the kindness, teamwork and creativity shown by our students, there is so much to be proud of. Special thanks to our staff and families for their ongoing support in helping our students thrive.

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SUPPORT THE WORK OF BALLARAT
FOOD RELIEF AGENCIES BY DONATING ...



PASTA & SAUCE



Your contributions will be added to
REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR BOXES
to be given to families in need.

Please return your
donations to school by:

Monday 1st December



Thank you



Reverse Advent Calendar Ballarat
schools@reverseadventcalendar.com.au

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



Writing Moderation

Teachers are continuing assessments this week in preparation for end-of-year reports. On Wednesday night, we will review writing samples from our structured literacy process, including context rewriting. These samples come from a picture-prompt writing session completed within the appropriate time for each year level. Teachers will assess their own year level, as well as levels above and below, to ensure accurate and consistent marking. This process assists greatly with our reporting processes.

Plans for 2026

In the coming weeks, teachers will be working on student profiles. These documents provide up to date handover information for your child's new teacher in 2026. We thank our students, staff, and families for their positivity and commitment to ensuring a successful and confident transition for all children.

Seesaw

Please keep an eye out for Seesaw posts. As the term gets closer to the end teachers and Specialists teachers add great pieces of work produced by your child/ren which are in 'real time'. As always make a comment which adds great enjoyment for children and teachers.



Week of November 9 – November 16 at St Francis Xavier Primary School - Ballarat East



315
New Student Posts



132
Comments

Enjoy your week.



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

Child Safe Standard 5: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.



SPECIAL REPORT: Embracing Change & New Beginnings

Change is a natural part of growing up. Whether it's the start of a new school year, moving between year levels, or stepping beyond the school gates for the final time, each transition brings a mix of emotions, presenting both opportunities and challenges. These shifts call on young people to adjust to new routines, navigate unfamiliar environments and develop emotional flexibility. While some may embrace these changes, others may find the disruption unsettling and struggle with the loss of predictability.

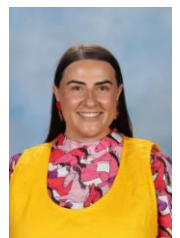
Research shows that periods of transition are often linked to heightened anxiety, reduced academic engagement and changes in peer relationships. For families, these periods can also bring added stress. Recognising the emotional and psychological impact of change helps us respond more effectively and supportively.

While change can feel daunting, it also offers valuable opportunities for young people to learn and grow. By normalising uncertainty and encouraging open conversations, we help young people face new beginnings with curiosity rather than fear. When children are surrounded by guidance, encouragement and consistent structure, they're far better equipped to manage life's transitions with confidence and resilience.

Here is the link to our Special Report: https://sfxballarat.catholic.schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/special-report-embracing-change-new-beginnings-au

Sending cheers your way,

Gemma Johnson, **Wellbeing Leader**



Regional Golf

We wish Levi C & Rhys B all the very best as they tackle the tricky Midlands Golf Course on Tuesday at the Greater Western Region golf tournament. We hope you both strike it well and have a bit of good luck along the way.

Interschool Sport

This Friday our Yr 5 and 6's will be enjoying a morning of sports and activities with students from Emmaus PS. Our Yr 6's will travel to Emmaus while the Yr 5's will play host. Interschool sport is a fantastic opportunity to participate in fun and friendly activities with students from other schools to form friendships and connections going into secondary school.

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 7 - Tuesday November 18th - GWR Golf tournament @ Midlands GC.
- Week 7 - Friday November 21st - Interschool Sport with Emmaus - Yr 5 @ SFX, Yr 6 @ Emmaus

Have a great week.



Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**

P&F News

- **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!**
- **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**

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

Tuesday – Friday 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Incorporating the faith communities of Ballan, Ballarat East, Bungaree, Buninyong, Clarkes Hill, Dunnstown, Gordon and Springbank

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

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C – 16th November, 2025

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday November 18 th	9.30 am	St Alipius' Ballarat East	
Wednesday November 19 th	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
Thursday November 20 th	10.30 am	St Brigid's Ballan	
	11.00 am	Calvary Kirralee Aged Care	
Friday November 21 st	9.30am	St Alipius' Ballarat East St Michael's Bungaree	
Saturday November 22 nd	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses			
Saturday November 22 nd		Sunday November 23 rd	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Buninyong Gordon
6.30 pm	Clarkes Hill	10.30 am	Ballarat East Ballan

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Fr. Frank Moloney SBD, Simon deSpirit

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Gerard McCarty, Paul Bound, Jack McEldrew, Steven Tingate, Katherin Mary Clarke, Louisa Mary Jarvis, Frank Pranas Bartaska, Michael Dyer, Mary Canty Leelamma Mathew, Mary Molloy, Doreen Conroy, Troy Toohey

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Daren Vukmircovic, Irene D'Arcy, Troy Watson (Steenhuis family), Elaine Conlan, Evelyn Farrugia, Patricia (Patty) Gannon, Michelle Hall, 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).

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

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

The Gordon Parish is hosting a Christmas Celebration at Donegan's Farm, 309 Butter Factory Road, Gordon, on Sunday, 30th November at 6.00pm. All welcome, it's a great opportunity for us all to have a get together before Christmas. Nibbles on arrival, roast main and plum pudding. Cost \$40 Bookings to be made through the Parish Office, phone 0437 505 517 or sign up sheets will be in the back of country churches. If you would like a ride to this celebration, please contact us in the office and we will organise this for you.

OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

The ODC magazine is available in the foyers of our churches. Pick up your copy today, to read the news from around the Diocese. This edition includes a reflection on the 150th Anniversary celebrations at Gordon, a great photo of students from St. Alipius' School who were confirmed in September as well as an excellent article written by Sr. Berenice Kerr on the history of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat.

NOVEMBER DATES

Sunday 16th

Remembrance Mass
10.30 am Ss. Peter and Paul's

Thursday 20th

6.30pm Ballarat East Parish Council meets
7.00pm Br Michael Herry Music Workshop
@ OLHC Wendouree

Monday 24th

5.00pm Damascus Year 12 Graduation Mass
St Patrick's Cathedral

Thursday 27th

5.00pm Parent Information for RCIC

Sunday 30th

6.00pm Ministry District end of year dinner
Donegan's farm @ Gordon

RCIA

The RCIA candidates and catechumen met twice recently, and team presented two very important topics: Prayer and Jesus and Mary.

These were linked back to our previous topics of Bible and Salvation History and The Church and provided great material for discussion and reflection.

NOVEMBER REMEMBRANCE MASSES

BUNINYONG MASS

Families will gather at Ss. Peter and Paul's Buninyong this weekend to remember and pray for their loved ones. We welcome each of these families and their friends.

GORDON CEMETERY MASS

Welcome to all who gather with us this Sunday at the Gordon Cemetery for Mass at 11.00am as part of our November tradition of remembering and praying for the faithful departed. Thank you to all who made the preparations for us to celebrate this Mass and to Fr Wally Tudor for leading us.

FORMATION IN SYNODALITY

The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat is excited to be joining with the Catholic Theological College to provide formation in Leadership for Synodality in the Diocese of Ballarat through a bursary funded by the Therese D'Orsa Mission Fund. This formation opportunity emerged following the Ballarat Diocesan Assembly at the end of 2024. The Diocesan Assembly Report details the support for building a Synodal Church in this diocese with a prominent outcome of the Assembly being the need to provide formation for synodal leadership. Parishioners interested in joining this formation opportunity can find further information from the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/formation-in-synodality/> or scan or click the QR code

OLHC PARISH WENDOUREE CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

OLHC Parish Wendouree volunteers are hosting a free lunch on Christmas Day in the Parish Hall, 480A Gillies Street North, Wendouree from 12.00noon – 2.00pm (meal at 12.30pm). Bookings are essential as seating is limited, ph. 0491 029217. Thank you to all the very wonderful volunteers for their work in making the Christmas Day lunch at OLHC so special over all the years it has been held. We welcome all those who would like to volunteer on the day - please phone 0467 683504 to register. A Working with Children Check is required for all volunteers.

WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

Today is the World Day of the Poor. It offers us an opportunity to renew our solidarity with those who are poor in our own community and across the world.

The figures below are for the last 2 weeks.

Supporting our priests: \$2203

Supporting our parish: \$ 631.20

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

COUNTER'S ROSTER

Our parish is currently looking for people who might like to be on our counter's roster. If you are available on a Tuesday morning and think that this is something you could do, please contact the parish office. Please note that a Police check is required for this, but we are happy to help you with that.

CONFIRMATION

At the Vigil Mass at St. Alipius this weekend, the last of the children who have been preparing for Confirmation will receive this special sacrament. These children were not available when the majority were confirmed in September, so we welcome them to this Mass where they take the next step in their journey of initiation. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

Y.C.W CRICKET CLUB

Former players, family and supporters of the Y.C.W Cricket Club are invited to a get together for lunch on Sunday 7th December 2025 at the Robin Hood Hotel, starting at 12pm. For further details or to book contact Terry on 0401 730 670 or John on 0409 864 080.

LITURGY ROSTER

During the next week office staff will be looking at the Liturgy Roster for Advent and beyond. Please advise us if you are not available to be rostered at stages during the months of December and January. Please note that we cannot include your name on the Liturgy Roster if you have not provided the office with a copy of your WWCC or VIT registration where appropriate. Please speak to office staff if you have questions regarding compliance.

BAPTISMS

Mackenzie Grace and Bonnie Elice Hanley
Daughters of James and Kerrie Hanley

Elka Mae Toohey
Daughter of Sean and Jacqueline Toohey

During Advent this year, we will be having the Children's Liturgy of the Word at our 6pm Masses. This program will begin on the evening of Saturday November 29th and will run each weekend until Christmas. This gives children a chance to listen to the readings, complete an activity and pray together. Please spread the word.

BALLARAT EAST MINISTRY GROUPS & PASTORAL MINISTRY

Over recent months invitations to parishioners to express interest in serving on the Pastoral Council, Finance Council and Liturgy Team have been responded to with generosity. The Finance Council has welcomed Paul Dempsey and Carmel Flynn who join Brett Holloway, Greg O'Beirne, Paul O'Beirne, John White and ex-officio members Fr's Justin & Shaiju, Cathy Prunty and Jackie Wrigglesworth. The Parish Liturgy Team has welcomed Michael Goss, Tim Healy and Liz McCartin, joining Margaret McCarty, Mike Maloney and ex-officio members Fr's Justin & Shaiju and Cathy Prunty.

The pastoral ministry of our parish has been enhanced by Angelica Murillo, Maria Jones, Lesley Price, Pascal Somers and Leonie McGuigan offering their service as Ministers of Holy Communion and Visitation to those in aged care facilities within the parish and to those in their own homes. They join Sr Margaret Kelly RSM and Monica McKeegan in this ministry.

Thank you to all who have responded to the invitation to service as well as the many who continue to serve in the great diversity of liturgical, pastoral, outreach and stewardship ministries of St Alipius Parish. Expressions of interest from parishioners from Buninyong or Ballarat East church communities to serve on the Parish Pastoral Council are still being welcomed.

Thank you to Jason Fletcher and John White who have resigned from the Liturgy Committee after many years. Your dedication to your roles is greatly appreciated by us all. John will continue on the Finance Council of which he is also a member while Jason will have a well-earned rest.

Called to Witness to a Gospel Way of Life

Reflection on the Gospel-33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time C

(Luke 21:5-19)

Veronica Lawson RSM

Sixty-five years ago, there was no Sydney Opera House. A hundred years ago, the Sydney Harbour Bridge was in the early stages of construction. It is hard to imagine a time when these monuments did not exist or a time when they will cease to be, such is the status they have both acquired over a very short span of history. They are a source of wonder for tourists and locals alike. They have their counterparts elsewhere in our contemporary world. Twenty-five years ago, New York's World Trade Centre was another such icon, seemingly indestructible and holding the pride of an economically and politically dominant nation, even if less aesthetically engaging than Sydney's monuments.

In first century Palestine, the newly refurbished Jerusalem Temple was both aesthetically stunning and symbolically charged. Earth paid a monumental price for this edifice, yielding its treasures in abundance. While the Temple functioned primarily as the centre of religious worship, it was also an important locus of financial and political power. Its significance can hardly be exaggerated and its destruction at the hands of the Romans in 70CE was a devastating blow for the Jewish people. Luke is writing some twenty years after this event. He wants to tell his communities that the destruction of the Temple did not signal the end of the world, though that is how it might have seemed at the time.

There is life to be lived and there are struggles to be endured before God's final advent. Luke wants to offer hope and encouragement in the face of conflict, persecution and family division. He wants to offer his readers a caution not to listen to everyone who claims to know the time, the *kairos*, of God's visitation.

The gospel asserts that, like Jesus, disciples can expect to be "handed over" and brought before political authorities. They are to find in this an opportunity to give witness or "to testify". In his second volume, Luke has Jesus commissioning the disciples to be his witnesses "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). They do not have to be concerned about what to say in their own defence: "I will give you words and wisdom...." Endurance or patience is the way to life. The Greek term used here evokes the parable of the sower: "as for [the seed] in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance" (Luke 8:15). In our own times, when the very life of our planetary home is at stake, when the political and economic systems we may have trusted are so often manipulated by the greed of the few and when nations and families are torn apart, we are called to witness to a gospel way of life, to hold the word of God fast in honest and good hearts and to trust that we are not alone in the everyday struggles of life.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Malachi: 3:19-20

2 Thessalonians: 3:7-12

Luke 21:5-19

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

2 Samuel 5:1-3

Colossians 1:12-20

Luke 23:35-43