



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Newsletter

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026  
Term 1 Week 3

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)

On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Jan - Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr

#### Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February

Year Ahead Meetings

#### Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February

2.40pm Assembly in school gym led by 6PB

Last day for Book Club Issue 1 Orders

Mix & Mingle

#### Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February

5.30pm P&F Meeting in Staff Room

#### Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February

Shrove Tuesday

#### Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February

9am Ash Wednesday Liturgy in school gym

#### Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February

Division Swimming at BALC (nominated students from Yr 4, 5 & 6)

#### Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February

SFX Athletics Day at Llanberris (ALL Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in school gym led by 2GJ

#### Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

School photo day

#### Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February

2.40pm Assembly in school gym led by 3JT

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

Pupil Free Day  
Literacy PD

#### Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March

Public Holiday - Labour Day  
Pupil Free Day

#### Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March

2.40pm Assembly in school gym led by 5ML

#### Wed 11<sup>th</sup> - Tue 17<sup>th</sup> March

NAPLAN Testing

Dear families,

Our children are settling into the new school year. Classes are running smoothly, specialist subjects have commenced for all year levels, our newest students are beginning to find their way around the school and our student leaders are bravely taking on their responsibilities. Overall, we can confidently say that at Saint Francis Xavier, we are off to a good start!

The new year at school is all about establishing set routines. These will become the strong and positive habits that we want to establish in order to see our year through. We know that children like to be able to predict what is happening in their world to help them find their way in new situations. If our children are feeling a little uncertain about things, routines can help to establish a sense of certainty.

Routines are important at home too. A regular bedtime (aim for between 9-12 hours' sleep for primary aged children), set mealtime practices and times, regular places and times for homework, sport, and entertainment all help to create a sense of stability for our children. When it comes to routine, there is no better time than now to set everyone up for success.

Throughout the year you will be receiving our newsletter and other correspondence each week. It will certainly pay to build time into your own routines to read about what is happening at school. So much happens in any given week, so it always helps to stay informed.

God bless,



Mark Hogbin

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March**  
Student Led Conferences

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March**  
Interscholar Sport at STM  
(Year 5/6)

No Assembly today

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March**  
Regional Swimming at  
Horsham (qualifiers from  
Division swimming)

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March**  
Student Led Conferences

MDASA U9 Primary Schools  
Swim Sports (nominated  
students from F-Yr2)

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March**  
No Assembly today

**Mon 30<sup>th</sup> & Tue 31<sup>st</sup> March**  
Year 4 Lady Northcote  
Discovery Camp

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April**  
Last day of term 1  
2.20pm finish

12.40pm Assembly  
in school gym

**Term 2 (10 weeks)**

Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Apr-Fri 26<sup>th</sup> Jun

**Tue 21<sup>st</sup> & Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> April**  
Year 5 Sovereign Hill  
Costumed School

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April**  
Start of Term 2 Mass

No Assembly today

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May**  
Division AFL @ CE Brown  
Reserve Wendouree  
(selected Yr 5/6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in  
school gym led by 4KB

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May**  
2pm Mothers/Special  
Friends Liturgy

No Assembly today

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May**  
Division Cross Country @  
Fed Uni (selected Yr 3, 4, 5  
& 6 students)

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 6MM

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 1EM

## A Prayer for the New School Year

Loving God,

We thank you for the gift of a new school year and for the community of Saint Francis Xavier Primary School.

Bless our students, staff, families and parish as we begin this year together.

May our days be shaped by respect for one another, compassion for those in need, hospitality that welcomes all, a commitment to justice, and a striving for excellence in all that we do.

Guide us in our learning and teaching, keep us safe in your care, and help us to grow in wisdom, faith and kindness throughout the year ahead.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## Traffic around our school

Safety for all children and adults around our school is very important to us. In order to assist with maintaining safety for all we ask everyone who drives to our school to observe the following safety rules:

- Adhere to designated speed limits when approaching the school
- Never cross over double lines
- All cars should drive up to the turning circle (marked by the big white X in the tree) before turning to approach the school
- Never drive on the wrong side of the road
- Do not attempt to pass when approaching the Fussell Street intersection
- Give way to pedestrians
- Be on the lookout for small children on foot and on bikes



## A New Bishop for Ballarat



Over the summer break we were officially notified that Fr. Mark Freeman has been appointed as the new Bishop for Ballarat. Bishop Paul has served our diocese for the past 12 years and is looking forward to his retirement. Bishop elect Mark Freeman will be inducted on March 18 at Saint Patrick's Cathedral. We congratulate Fr. Mark on his appointment and we thank Bishop Paul for his dedicated service to our Catholic community.

*(Photo: Bishop Paul Bird C.Ss.R. and Bishop-elect Father Mark Freeman with DOBCEL Deputy Director: Stewardship, Megan Ioannou and Deputy Director: Catholic Education, Matt Byrne)*

**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.**

### **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May**

Regional Cross Country @  
Warrnambool (qualifiers  
from Division XC)

### **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May**

Division Soccer @ Ballarat  
Regional Soccer Facility  
(selected Yr 5/6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in  
school gym led by 2MH

### **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June**

Pupil free day

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June**

Public Holiday-King's  
Birthday  
Pupil Free Day

### **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June**

Division Netball @ Selkirk  
Stadium (selected Yr 5/6  
students)

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 5CC

### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 3LL

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June**

Last day of term 2

12.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by FJS

2.20pm finish

### **Term 3 (10 weeks)**

Mon 13<sup>th</sup> Jul-Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Sep

### **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

Start of Term 3 Mass

No Assembly today

### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July**

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 4RR

### **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July**

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 3ZP

### **Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August**

Ballarat Catholic Primary  
Schools Athletics @  
Llanberris (selected Yr 3, 4,  
5 & 6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by FBK

### **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August**

Pupil free day (to be  
confirmed)

Division Basketball @  
Selkirk Stadium (selected  
Yr 5/6 students)

## **Introducing our Wonderful Learning Support Team**



We are very proud of the focus we place on meeting the diverse needs of all students in our school. As part of our dedication to addressing student learning needs, we employ a dedicated team of support personnel to assist the classroom teachers across the school. We are delighted to welcome back the following members of our support staff this year: Aiden Atlas, Andrea Grant, Ange Staley, Bianca Tocchet, Gab Leazier, Jacinta Waller, Jack O'Brien, Jocelyn Goldsworthy, Karen Nunn, Kath Boyd, Laura Stevens, Leah Hanrahan, Maree Dodd, Mikaela Monson, Nicole Arnel, Shaun Carroll, Tara Nicholson, Tegan Edwards and Tom Bosworth.

## **Year Ahead Meetings**

Our Year Ahead Meetings will be held on Tuesday 10 February (Week 3) in a new, streamlined format, allowing families with multiple children to attend all meetings on the same afternoon. Each session runs for 25 minutes, with four sessions available between 3:30–5:25pm. Families may attend relevant year-level and specialist sessions and move between locations as needed. See you there!

### Session times:

- Session 1: 3:30–3:55pm
- Session 2: 4:00–4:25pm
- Session 3: 4:30–4:55pm
- Session 4: 5:00–5:25pm

### Locations:

- Year 6: Petra Barclay's Room P
- Year 5: Shannon Macklin's Room M
- Year 4: Kai Barclay's Room I
- Year 3: School Library
- Year 2: Middle School Building
- Year 1: Mother Xavier Flood Building
- Specialists: School Gym



## **News from the Parents & Friends Committee**

All parents and friends are welcome to attend our P&F meetings which are held regularly throughout the year. Our first meeting for 2026 will be held on Monday 16 February at 5.30pm in the staffroom at school. If you would like to play an active role in the life of our school and community, we would love to see you there!

## **School Closure Day**

Our first school closure day for 2026 will be held on Friday 6 March. There will be no classes held at school on this due to staff professional development.

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**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 1GH

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by FLP

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September**  
Interscholar Sport (Yr 5/6)

Fathers/Special Friends  
Liturgy (to be confirmed)

No Assembly today

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

Division Athletics @  
Llanberris (qualifiers from  
BCPS Aths – Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September**  
No Assembly today

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September**  
Last day of Term 3

No Assembly today

**Term 4 (11 weeks)**

Mon 5<sup>th</sup> Oct–Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Dec

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October**  
Year 3 Day Camp

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October**  
Start of Term 4/Mercy Day  
Mass

Regional Athletics @  
Llanberris (qualifiers from  
Division Aths-Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)

No Assembly today

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October**  
Division Tennis @ Ballarat  
Regional Tennis Centre  
(selected Yr 5/6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 5LD

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 1GT

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by FTW

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**  
Assessment and Reporting  
Pupil Free Day

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**  
Public Holiday-Melbourne  
Cup Pupil Free Day

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November**  
Eureka Division Cricket @  
Alfredton Reserve (selected  
Yr 5/6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 6JS

## A message from St. Vincent de Paul

Thank you to everyone who was able to assist with our efforts to assist those in need over the Christmas break. Our local Saint Vincent DePaul conference is very grateful.



## News from Mrs. Toohey

Mrs. Toohey arrived at school with some very exciting news this year. Mrs. & Mr. Toohey are looking forward to welcoming a little baby into the world later this year. We wish Jess and Dan all the best for the months ahead. We can't wait to meet the newest member of our SFX community!

## Welcome Tierney & Lyla

We welcome Tierney and Lyla from Damascus College who will be working at our school each Wednesday for first term. Both Lyla and Tierney are in Year 10 and they are looking forward to learning about our school over the coming weeks.

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

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by 2TS

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

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by 4ZA

**Wed 25<sup>th</sup>-Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Nov**

Year 5 Kangarooobie Camp

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

No Assembly today

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

End of Year Mass

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December**

Last 2026 day for students



MSP Photography  
Ballarat

T 03 5333 5577

E [ballarat@msp.com.au](mailto:ballarat@msp.com.au)

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

**PHOTO DAY: Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026**

## HOW TO ORDER

Ordering online is quick and easy using the steps below!

If you have an existing account, please use those login details. Once logged in, you will be able to add additional children and place sibling photo orders.

### Step 1

Click on the link below to access your ordering portal.

<https://stfrancisxavierballarateast-vic.msp.photos>

If you are new to the school, please follow Step 1 and Step 2.

### Step 2

Click 'Sign in with Student Details'



Enter your child's surname and date of birth. You will be prompted to create an account.

Please note that sibling photo orders must be placed by **Midnight on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2026, to be included in student family list, that is sent to the school early on photo day.**

The portal does not have a cut off ordering date, however any orders placed more than 7 days after photo day will no longer be at the bulk discounted price and will revert to the standard pricing cost.



# Collection notice for parents/guardians

2026 Student residential address and other information collection  
(address collection)

The Australian Government Department of Education (the department) would like to notify you that we have requested for your child's school to provide residential address and other information.

Under the Australian Education Regulations 2023, the school is required to provide the department with the following information about each student at the school:

- names and residential addresses of the student's parent(s) and/or guardian(s)
- student residential address (**excluding student names**)
- whether the student is a primary or secondary student (education level)
- whether the student is boarding or a day student (boarding status).

The school collects the above information by generating a **unique and unidentifiable** student reference number (SRN) for each student record. The school only uses the SRN for this collection. **The SRN cannot be used for any other purpose.** The number only indicates to the department that each record provided is for one student.

## Purpose of the collection

The address collection informs Australian Government school education policy and helps ensure funding for non-government schools is based on need.

The information collected is used to inform school funding calculations. It is combined with Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data to calculate a non-government school community's anticipated capacity to contribute to schooling costs, known as the capacity to contribute (CTC) score. More information is available on the [CTC page](#).

## Use and disclosure of personal information

**Your personal information is protected by law** under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (the Privacy Act). Personal information is information or an opinion about an identifiable individual. Personal information includes an individual's name and contact details.

Any use or disclosure of your personal information must occur in accordance with the Privacy Act, the *Australian Education Act 2013* and Australian Education Regulations 2023.

Your personal information provided to the department through the collection may be:

- disclosed to the ABS for the purposes of the ABS linking names and address(es) with their personal income taxation data using the capacity to contribute calculations and analysis as a part of the Person Level Integrated Data Asset (PLIDA – previously known as MADIP). Find more information about PLIDA on the ABS website [PLIDA page](#)

- disclosed to an authorised person (for example, contracted auditor or identified departmental official) where the department may audit a school's collection submission. The authorised person compares the school's submission with the student enrolment information. The authorised person will not use the information for any other purpose
- disclosed to our service providers for the purpose of providing the department with information and communications technology support
- used or disclosed where it is otherwise required or authorised by law.

The department does not intend to disclose your personal information to any overseas recipients.

Aggregated information will be provided to your school in the form of school level median income for the last 3 years, rounded to the nearest \$5,000. This information is provided to help your school understand their level of government funding. Your personal income information **will not** be provided to your school.

Find the department's privacy policy on the [Department of Education web site](#). This includes information on:

- how individuals can access and modify personal information held by the department
- how complaints about potential breaches or breaches of the Privacy Act can be made
- how the department will deal with these complaints.

In association with this, the department commissioned an independent Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA). The PIA assessed the flows of information under the address collection, compliance with the Privacy Act and measures in place to safeguard the personal information being collected. The current version is available on the [Department of Education web site](#).

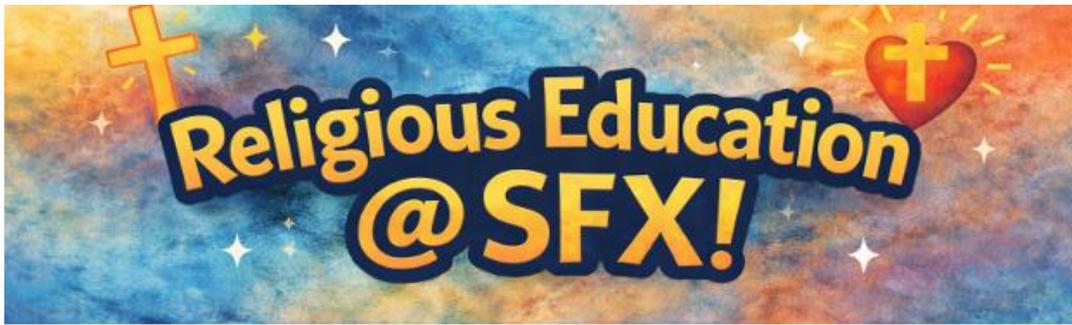
## What do you need to do?

You are not required to do anything. Your school is responsible for providing the department with the requested details; however, you can contact the school to update your family's details.

## Contacts for further information

Your school can provide additional information about the address collection process.

Alternatively, please visit the [EducationHUB address collection page](#).



### **Beginning of School Mass**

Last Friday we gathered as a whole school community to celebrate our Beginning of School Mass, marking the start of the 2026 school year together.

It was a beautiful celebration, and it was wonderful to see students involved so thoughtfully in the liturgy. Our Mass reminded us that as we begin the year, we do so together — grounded in faith, gratitude, and hope for the year ahead.

A sincere thank you to Fr Justin Driscoll for celebrating with us, and to the staff and students who helped prepare and lead the Mass so reverently. It was a lovely way to begin the school year as one community.

### **This Week's Gospel – Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13–16)**

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus reminds his disciples that they are called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Salt adds flavour and brings out the best in food, and light helps us see clearly and find our way. Jesus uses these simple images to explain how our everyday actions can make a real difference.

#### **A message for families:**

Being salt and light doesn't mean doing big or dramatic things. It's often shown in small, ordinary moments — kindness at home, patience when things feel rushed, forgiveness after a disagreement, or helping someone who needs support.

#### **A family reflection:**

Where do we notice moments of kindness or care in our home each day?

How can we encourage one another to let our "light" shine through the way we speak and act?

#### **Our challenge for the week:**

This week, try to notice and name one moment each day where someone in your family has been "salt" or "light" for others — even in the smallest way.



Michael Marshall, **Religious Education Leader**

# Wellbeing News



## A NOTE FROM MS MENEELY

Welcome to Week Three of our term!  
It has been a joy to see our little (and big!) learners sprinkling kindness and learning together this week.  
Thank you for your support at home.  
I look forward to more magical days ahead.  
Please do not hesitate to reach out should your child or family require support

## RIGHTS, RESILIENCE AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS (RRRR) PROGRAM

RRRR is an evidence-based teaching and learning program used from Foundation to Grade 6. It supports students to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed for respectful relationships, and helps to build respect and equality across the entire school community. Research tells us that providing respectful relationships education at school can lead to positive impacts on students' academic outcomes, their mental health, classroom behaviour and relationships.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

Child and Family Services Ballarat (CAFS) is pleased to announce a new suite of free parenting programs. Head [here](#) to learn more!

## READ AND THRIVE JOURNAL FOCUS

Our Read and Thrive Journal topic this week focuses upon taking a break from screens. Families are transitioning back to school routines but many are still struggling to re-establish the boundaries and rules around screen use. Some continue to deal with digital conflict and tech-tantrums on a daily basis.  
Here is the handy link to the Managing Screen Time edition of SchoolTV  
<https://sfxballarat.catholic.schooltv.me/newsletter/managing-screen-time>

## SCHOOL TV

### OUR SCHOOL HAS A SUBSCRIPTION

SchoolTV is a wellbeing resource implemented at our school to help support you in the challenges of modern-day parenting relating to child mental health and wellbeing. SchoolTV focuses on empowering confident parenting by providing credible information from trusted sources with practical strategies to help alleviate some of the challenges being faced by young people today. It will assist you in starting those conversations on topics that can sometimes be awkward or difficult to tackle. Each topic is accompanied by factsheets, podcasts, books, articles, apps and other videos.  
Click on the link to discover SchoolTV today! [SchoolTV](#)

## CONTACT DETAILS



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

### Yr 3 - 6 Athletics Day

Always a very popular event on our calendar is the Yr 3 - 6 Athletics Day to be held at Llanberris Athletics Reserve.

Mr Down and myself are busy finalising the day. Please note our 2026 event is on Friday Feb 20.

A reminder that students are to be taken directly to the venue for a 9:20am start, and are to be collected at 2:30pm.

Students are to bring lunch, snacks, water bottle, HAT and sunscreen.

Please note that there will be NO HOT LUNCHESES delivered to Llanberris.

For all information please refer to the PAM notification.

### 2026 SFX SPORTS DATES

Term 1:

- Week 4 - Thursday Feb 19th - Division Swimming @ BALC (nominated students from Yr 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 4 - Friday Feb 20th - SFX Athletics Day @ Llanberris (ALL Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 students)
- Week 8 - Friday Mar 20th - Interschool Sport @ STM (Yr 5/6)
- Week 9 - Wednesday Mar 25th - Regional Swimming @ Horsham (qualifiers from Division swimming)
- Week 9 - Thursday Mar 26th - MDASA U9 Primary Schools Swim Sports (nominated students from F - Yr 2)

Term 2:

- Week 2 - Friday May 1st - Division AFL @ CE Brown Res, Wendouree - (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 4 - Monday May 11th - Division Cross Country @ Fed Uni (selected students from Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 6 - Tuesday May 26th - Regional Cross Country @ Warrnambool (qualifiers from Division XC)
- Week 6 - Friday May 29th - Division Soccer @ Ballarat Region Soccer Facility (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 8 - Friday June 12th - Division Netball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 9 - Friday June 19th - Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)

Term 3:

- Week 4 - Friday Aug 7th - Ballarat Catholic Primary Schools Athletics @ Llanberris (selected students from Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 5 - Friday Aug 14th - Division Basketball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 8 - Friday Sep 4th - Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)
- Week 9 - Wednesday Sep 9th - Division Athletics @ Llanberris (qualifiers from BCPS Aths - Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)

Term 4:

- Week 1 - Friday Oct 9th - Regional Athletics @ Llanberris (Qualifiers from Division Aths - Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 2 - Friday Oct 16th - Division Tennis @ Ballarat Regional Tennis Centre (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 5 - Friday Nov 6th - Eureka Division Cricket @ Alfredton Reserve (selected students from Yr 5/6)

- *Term 4 - F - 2 Junior Sports Day - TBC*
- *Term 4 - Division Golf Tournament - TBC*

Have a tremendous week.

Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator



- **P&F Meeting** – Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February – 5.30pm in the Staff room – everyone welcome
- Save the Date: **Mix & Mingle** – Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026 – more details to come at the end of the week
- **Hot Lunch Reminder** – Hot lunches every Friday, place your child’s order on Flexi Schools before 10am Thursday – no late orders will be taken – Volunteers needed to help pack – sign up available in your class chat group
- **Zooper Doopers** – Fridays at 2<sup>nd</sup> break - \$1
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Hand Uniform Shop** – our Second Hand Uniform shop has a lot of good quality second hand uniforms at an affordable price – all items \$5 with the exception of woollen jumpers & tunics which are \$10 -if you require any extra Uniform items please see the ladies in the office and they can assist you – we will be holding a Pop up shop in the next few weeks as well
- **Easter Raffle donations welcome** – please drop them into the office

# 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](mailto:ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au)  
 Jackie Wrigglesworth (Finance Officer)  
 5337 7128  
[Jackie.wrigglesworth@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:Jackie.wrigglesworth@ballarat.catholic.org.au)  
 Tuesday – Friday 9:00 AM – 12:00PM

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

## Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A – 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2026

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday February 10 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St Alipius' Ballarat East	
Wednesday February 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	Funeral Mass James Torpy (St. Alipius')	
	11.00 am	Mercy Place (All Welcome)	
	5.30 pm	St Peter's Clarke's Hill (School Mass)	
Thursday February 12 <sup>th</sup>	9.15 am	St Patrick's Gordon (School Mass)	
	1.00 pm	Funeral Mass Margaret McInerney (St. Alipius')	
Friday February 13 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St Alipius' Ballarat East	
	10.00 am	Funeral Mass Peter Molloy (Cathedral)	
	12.00 pm	St Alipius' (Emmaus School Mass)	
Saturday February 14 <sup>th</sup>	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses – 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time			
Saturday February 14 <sup>th</sup>		Sunday February 15 <sup>th</sup>	
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

Margaret McInerney, James Torpy, Peter Molloy

#### THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

John Brennan, Sr. Lesley Dickinson RSM, Peter Kerwan, Tom Shannon, James Leonard, John Ronan, Martin Molloy, Chris Maher, James Robert Baynes, Veronica Bryce, Fay Daly, Laurie Wheelahan, Mary Magdens

#### THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

John White, Daren Vukmirovic, 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.

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION ACROSS OUR MINISTRY DISTRICT

#### [St Alipius Parish Kindergarten - ECKA](#)

[St Alipius Ballarat East](#) – Emily Clarke, Principal

[St Brigid's Ballan](#) - Jayne Bosworth, Principal

[St Patrick's Gordon](#) – Paul McDowell, Principal

[St Francis Xavier B'rat East](#) – Mark Hogbin, Principal

[St Mary's Clarkes Hill](#) – Clare Scanlon, Principal

[Emmaus Mt Clear](#) – Ethan Corfee, Principal

[Damascus College Mt Clear](#) – Steven Mifsud, Principal

[Damascus @ St Brendan's Dunnstown](#) – Campus

Leader - Karen Goonan

[Saints College Bakery Hill](#) – Troy Strybosch, Principal

[Saints College @ Bungaree](#) – Renee Vallance

Deputy Principal

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

*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.*

### PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

Weekend of January 31 <sup>st</sup> February and 1 <sup>st</sup>	
Supporting our priests	\$951
Maintenance of parish buildings	\$298

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

### MORNING TEA AT SS. PETER AND PAUL’S

It has been decided that due to the fall in helper numbers to assist at morning tea, we will now hold morning tea once a month rather than after every 10.30 mass. Beginning in March, morning tea will be held after the 10.30 am mass on the first Sunday of the month. If you would like to assist with providing morning tea, please leave your name and number at the Parish Office and we will be in touch. Thank you for your understanding.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT WEBINAR: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

The Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission invite all to a webinar in celebration of the launch of the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Social Justice Statement February 2026, “The Cost of Our Living: Economic and Social Justice for the Common Good” on Thursday, February 12, 2026 from 7.00pm – 8.00pm. The webinar will include an overview from Bishop Paul Bird CSsR and presentations from James Treloar, Senior Manager in Homelessness and Housing Support at CatholicCare Victoria, Michael Ryan, OAM, President of the Ballarat region of the St Vincent de Paul Society and Cr Tanya Kehoe, Councillor with the Pyrenees Shire Council. Please register via the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au> (link in the buttons at the bottom) The Statement and further resources are also available from this webpage.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference are hosting a webinar launch of the statement on February 9 at 11.00am AEDT involving Bishop Tim Harris and Catholic Social Services Australia executive director Jerry Nockles <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6R3rCmTba2A>

### EPISCOPAL ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE NINTH BISHOP OF BALLARAT

The ordination and installation of Fr Mark Freeman as the next Bishop of Ballarat will be at held on Thursday March 19, 2026 at 11.00am at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Ballarat. The Mass will be livestreamed. Further details to follow.

### PROJECT COMPASSION LAUNCH 2026

Please join us for the launch of Caritas Australia Project Compassion 2026 on Sunday, February 15, 2026 at the 5.00pm Mass at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Ballarat. Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Paul Bird.

BAPTISMS
<p><b>Xavier Rex Kirby</b> Son of Stephen and Brittany Kirby</p>

### LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUPS

Are you interested in gathering with a small group of parishioners to reflect on the season of Lent? If so please contact the parish office so that we can get the materials organised. Groups would meet once a week during Lent.

### ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday is on February 18<sup>th</sup>. Mass and distribution of the ashes are as follows:

Vigil Mass Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Dunnstown
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Ballarat East
	9.15am	Gordon
	10.30am	Ballan
	6.00pm	Buninyong



In preparation for Ash Wednesday parishioners are invited to place palms from Palm Sunday 2025 into the baskets in the foyers of the churches which will be burnt to become ashes for 2026!

## RCIA

We regrouped after a summer break and presented the first of two sessions on the 7 sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony). We spoke about the importance of the sacraments and how each provides a channel of divine grace for the recipient.

We are preparing for our Rite of Election with Bishop Paul on Saturday 21st February which marks our transition from the Period of Catechuminate to the Period of Purification and Enlightenment.

Please take time after Mass to greet our Catechumen and Candidates and welcome them to our community.

### THE RITE OF ELECTION - RCIA

The Rite of Election is an important part of the process of a person's journey to full membership in the Catholic Church community and one which is greatly appreciated by all who participate. This applies to adults who have undertaken formation. The Rite Election for catechumens and candidates will take place on **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2026 at 12.30pm** in St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat. The presider will be Bishop Paul Bird CSsR. At the conclusion of the ceremony all are invited to join the Bishop in the Cathedral Hall for a light lunch.

We keep the following catechumens and candidates in our prayers as they continue their RCIA journey in preparation for full communion in the Catholic church.

Please say hello to them if you see them and make them welcome in our community.

## UPCOMING DATES

### Wednesday Feb 11<sup>th</sup>

Parish Finance Council  
Parish Hub 7.30 am

### Tuesday Feb 16<sup>th</sup>

Vigil Mass – 6.30 pm – St Brendan's Dunnstown

### Wednesday Feb 18<sup>th</sup>

Ash Wednesday

### Thursday Feb 19<sup>th</sup>

Parents Meetings – Reconciliation Preparation  
St. Alipius Hall 10.30 am or 6pm

●

RCIC

Parish Hub 4pm

### Saturday Feb 21<sup>st</sup>

RCIA Rite of Election  
St. Patrick's Cathedral 12.30 pm

### Saturday & Sunday Feb 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>

Enrolment Masses for the Sacrament of  
Reconciliation

## 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 next Cycle, which begins March 9 is a short cycle of 3-week e-seminars only. There are 15 subjects to choose from – find one that interests you! Registrations are open now until March 5. email [djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7121.

Name	Sponsor	Church attending
Simon Passalick	Harley Passalick	St Alipius Ballarat East
Libbi Bennett	Dallas Wilkinson	St Peter & Paul's Buninyong
James Thompson	Jeff Pilati	St Alipius Ballarat East
Tegan Heinrich-Morrison	Cathy Prunty	St Alipius Ballarat East
Samantha Hodge	Gillian Baxter	St Brigid's Ballan
Jasmine McIlvena	Therese Winter	St Brigid's Ballan
Kate Powell	Josie Franklin	St Alipius Ballarat East
Marcus Ruthen	Martin Brennan	St Brigid's Ballan
Kenneth Spedding	Kerryn Parkinson	St Alipius Ballarat East

# Called to “Season” the Earth Community

## Reflection on the Gospel

### 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

(Matthew 5:13-16)

Veronica Lawson RSM

In today's gospel, Jesus addresses two short parables to his disciples in the presence of the crowds. Parables were intended to tease their hearers, inviting them to see things from a new perspective, to see themselves in a new light. Jesus told these parables in early first century Palestine with its particular symbol system, while we hear them through the multiple layers of our own twenty-first century contexts and symbol systems. “Salt” and “light” have slightly different resonances in different contexts, as do “earth” and “world”. Exploring those resonances or nuances can bring us to a deeper appreciation of the text.

This short reflection allows for a focus only on “the salt of the earth” parable or metaphor. For Jesus' Palestinian audience, salt was used to preserve and to season food. It also functioned as a cleansing or purifying agent. It could only lose its savour if contaminated by additives. We can resonate with all of that. For some of the Jewish rabbis, salt signified wisdom: a “salted” disciple was a “wise” disciple. In some parts of the ancient world, as in Pakistan today, salt was used in dyeing processes as a way of intensifying as well as preserving the colour of fabrics. Many Westerners are not aware of this practice. These days we are rightly concerned about high levels of salinity in overworked soil. That was certainly not so for first-century Palestinians.

When we declare someone to be “salt of the earth”, we are generally referring to the sheer goodness of the person in question, her/his down to earth reliability, lack of pretentiousness and practical wisdom. To be salt of the earth is to season the earth community, to intensify its beauty, to be wise in one's judgments, to be just and compassionate in all of one's dealings. This parable, with its multi-layered symbolism, certainly teases the mind.

In the original Greek, the emphasis is on the first word in the sentence. Jesus is telling his hearers, disciples and crowds, that *they* are the salt of the earth. They do not have to *become* the salt of the earth; they *are* the salt of the earth. In short, he is affirming their worth. In its literary context, that assertion contrasts Jesus' followers with those who might persecute them. It affirms their capacity to stand strong in the face of opposition, “for the sake of justice”. If they allow their commitment to be shaken, then the “salt” will be contaminated and the “earth” cannot be seasoned. As we reflect on the diverse metaphorical applications of salt and earth, we might take a moment to give thanks to God for the gift of the material realities that underlie these powerful metaphors. This as I celebrate sixty-three years of consecrated Mercy living, I give thanks for the wonders of our planetary home and for all who have shown me what it means to be salt of the earth and light of the world.

#### THIS WEEK'S READINGS Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah: 58:7-10  
1 Corinthians 2:1-5  
Matthew: 5:13-16

#### NEXT WEEK'S READINGS Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sirach 15:15-20  
1 Corinthians 2:6-10  
Matthew: 5:17-37



# JUNIOR COMPETITION

**Tuesday Competition**

**6-9 & Under Divisions**

Woodman's Hill  
1 Fussell Street,  
Ballarat East

**10-12 & Under Divisions**

Federation University  
University Drive, Mt Helen

**Saturday Competition**

**6-12 & Under Divisions**

Ballarat High School  
1726 Sturt Street  
Lake Gardens





## REGISTER NOW!

 0488 086 456    
  [www.futsalballarat.com.au](http://www.futsalballarat.com.au)

## Dance! Connect! Play!

**Tanzpro - Dance of Life  
for Children 6-12 yo**  
*with Liz*



**FREE  
COME & TRY  
SESSIONS**

Contact us to  
book!

**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
HOUSE**

BALLARAT EAST



The Tanzpro program involves dance, imaginary play, and movement with music, as well as story sharing and art, all carefully curated for children.

Tanzpro is an evidence-based program that supports children developmentally with emotional regulation, empathy, relaxation, self esteem, confidence and increased skills in communication and connection, in a fun and engaging way.

Children will develop an awareness of self-perception, growing their identity and developing their self-confidence. They will learn to express their creative potential, have courage to take risks through creativity, and to respect each other and feel cared for.

This course encourages pathways to developing empathy which is a fundamental skill to foster lifelong healthy relationships.

**Where and when**

**Community Room #102**  
Ballarat East Neighbourhood House  
Barkly Square, 25-39 Barkly Street  
Ballarat East

**Tuesday afternoons in Term 1**  
4.00 pm - 5.30 pm

**\$80 8 week course from 10 February**

**FREE COME & TRY sessions**  
for new children.

Casual sessions or bundles for  
later starts available.

**To register, please visit:**  
[ballarateastnh.org.au/classes/tanzpro](http://ballarateastnh.org.au/classes/tanzpro)

or call: 0422 612 052

or email:  
[reception@ballarateastnh.org.au](mailto:reception@ballarateastnh.org.au)

## Dance Connect Play! Tanzpro - Dance of Life for Children with Liz



Calling Ballarat children who love to move and dance, to be creative and share stories! The program involves dance, story sharing, art, imaginary play and movements with music, curated for children.

**6-12 year olds**  
**Tuesdays 4.00 - 5.30 pm**  
\$80 8 week course from 10 February  
**FREE COME & TRY** sessions for new children. Casual sessions or bundles for later starts available.

**Express interest for 3-6 year olds**

More info and register: [ballarateastnh.org.au/classes/tanzpro](http://ballarateastnh.org.au/classes/tanzpro)

