

# St Francis Xavier Primary School



## Newsletter

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Term 1 Week 10

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### Term 1 (10 weeks)

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

### 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

12.30pm Big Water Walk

1.45pm Holy Thursday  
Liturgy led by 6JS

No Assembly today

### 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)

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

Last day for 2027  
Foundation enrolments for  
existing and new families

### 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 FJS

On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

As our term draws to a close, we also pause to recognise that we have entered Holy Week—the most sacred time in the Church calendar, marking the journey toward Easter and the celebration of Christ's resurrection.

Over the past forty days, we have embraced the season of Lent, striving to live more simply and reflectively through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. This has been a time of preparation, leading us into the profound mystery of Holy Week—a time that holds both sorrow and deep hope. At school, we have been working closely with the children to build their understanding of the significance of this season. We hope they have grown in their appreciation of what Lent represents and why it calls us to be ready for Easter.

Our Big Water Walk on Thursday will be a powerful and visible expression of compassion in action. The funds raised by our students will be a tangible way of supporting those in need. As the children carry buckets of water around the oval, each step will serve as a reminder of the preciousness of this resource and the importance of never taking it for granted.

This morning, we gathered for a special assembly to mark the beginning of Holy Week. Our Year 6PB students led us beautifully, helping to deepen our understanding of this sacred time. When we come together again on Holy Thursday, we will continue this journey as 6JS leads us to reflect on the final days of the church year before entering into the hope and renewal of Easter.

Wishing all our families a blessed and peaceful Holy Week.

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



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

Regional Cross Country @  
Warrnambool (qualifiers  
from Division XC)

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

Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations to support  
Cystic Fibrosis

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

Interscholar Sport (Yr 5/6)

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 3LL

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

Last day of term 2  
2.20pm finish

Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations to support  
Ballarat East Vinnies group

12.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 1EM

### Term 3 (10 weeks)

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

Mon 13<sup>th</sup> July, Tues 14<sup>th</sup> &  
Wed 15<sup>th</sup> July

Year 6 Melbourne CYC  
Camp

### 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

Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 3ZP

## Happy Holidays!



We would like to say a big THANKYOU! To our students, staff and Parents who have shown such great support for our school this term. We have had a very positive start to the year, and we have worked hard to earn our holidays. May your time away from school be happy, restful and rewarding so that when we all return in

two weeks, we will be ready to jump straight back into our learning at Saint Francis Xavier School.

## End of Term – Start of Term

Classes cease for first term on Thursday 2 April at 2.20pm and resume on Monday 20 April at 9.00am. See you then!

## Villa's Big Water Walk

It's nearly time for our BIG WATER WALK! Sponsor a child and help to support communities in need as we work together to raise awareness and funds for CARITAS Australia. Our children are ready to go on Thursday so let's show our support with your generous sponsorship.

## Year 4 Camp

Our Year 4 students are enjoying their school camp experience this week. We wish them well and look forward to hearing all the stories when they return.



## Sacrament of Reconciliation

Congratulations to our Year 4 children who received the sacrament of Reconciliation last week. This is an important step in your faith journey, and we are proud of you! Congratulations to our families too who have supported these children in their preparation.

## Road Safety



We were saddened to hear of a near-miss at school drop off time last week. Please be mindful when reversing out of car parks that young children may be exiting nearby vehicles or crossing the road. We have to be very careful around our school at pick-up and drop-off times so that our children remain safe each day.

## Foundation Siblings 2027

Enrolments for children of **existing** and **new families** who start Foundation/Prep in 2027 are open. Parents of **existing** and **new families** who have a child to start in 2027 - must complete the '**Enrolment Application Form**' form by clicking on the following link to submit your application:

<https://dobcel.catholic.edu.au/our-schools/enrolments-expression-of-interest-form/>

Please note this is an essential step for existing families in ensuring you child is enrolled in Foundation/Prep 2027. Enrolments close 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026

*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.*

**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)

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

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August**  
Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by FLF

**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

Footy Colours Day - gold  
coin donations to support  
Fight Cancer

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 T4/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

## Staff News

**Congratulations to Ms. McLean** who was  
married last Friday. We wish Estelle and  
Luke a lifetime of happiness together!



**Congratulations to Mr. Canny** who has  
become Captain of the East Point Men's  
Senior Football Team in the BFNL. We  
wish Liam well for the season ahead as he  
leads his team to certain victory!

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October**

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 1GT

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October**

Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations to support  
MercyWorks

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

**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 Kangaroo Camp

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

Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations to support  
Ballarat East Vinnies group

No Assembly today

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

End of Year Mass

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

Last 2026 day for students

## Villa's Big Water Walk 2026:



**Dear Diocesan Family,**

A week has passed since the very beautiful Ordination and Installation Mass in St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat. I have been overwhelmed by the generosity of your welcome, and I wanted to express my appreciation for that welcome and for the tireless efforts of so many to ensure the splendid celebration that was ours last Thursday.

From the time of the announcement that I would be the ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat; it was very clear in my mind that whatever was done for the Ordination and Installation had to be a celebration of this local Church. I am grateful for all the people from around the diocese who undertook the many ministries required at such a Mass. The readers, servers, singers and musicians all expressed the vibrancy of this local Church that has now become my home.

The beauty of the liturgical celebration was enhanced by those who acted as welcomers and ushers, by those who decorated the Cathedral, by those responsible for the livestreaming, by those who co-ordinated the refreshments afterwards. All these efforts have not gone unnoticed. For the rest of my life, I will be grateful.

How blessed we were that so many could join in the ceremony via live stream. Literally thousands have viewed the Mass on YouTube since last week. There is a real sense of journeying together into the future with all the good wishes and encouragement I have received. For this too, I am extremely grateful.

Every best wish and blessing to you all and again, **Thank You!** Please pray for me as I will for you. May we continue to grow together in faith and hope and love.

Sincerely,

**Mark Freeman,**

Bishop of the Diocese of Ballarat

On the last day of this term,  
Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the children of  
Villa will take part  
in 'Villa's Big Water Walk!'

Our goal is to raise \$6000 to  
provide a 25,000 litre water tank  
and collection point for a school  
in Tanzania.



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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.**



A sincere thank you to our students for the way they presented their learning during the Student Led Conferences over the last couple of weeks. They spoke with confidence and pride, and it was wonderful to see and hear them take ownership of their learning. Thank you also to our families for your strong engagement and support, and to our teachers for the thoughtful preparation of students and the learning experiences provided in the lead-up to these conferences. They will occur again in Term Three.

Seesaw continues to be a highly effective way for families to stay connected with their child's learning in real time. It provides a valuable window into the classroom, allowing you to see the progress, skills and understanding your child is developing throughout the school day. Our Specialist Teachers will also be sharing learning on Seesaw this week, so please keep an eye out for updates showcasing your child's skills and knowledge in these areas. As always please feel free to add a comment to your child's post.



**Week of March 22 - March 29 at St Francis Xavier Primary School - Ballarat East**



**640**

New Student Posts



**101**

Comments



It has been a productive term of learning and teaching at St Francis Xavier Primary School. Across the school, many students have engaged positively in their learning, demonstrating growth and taken on new challenges with increasing confidence.

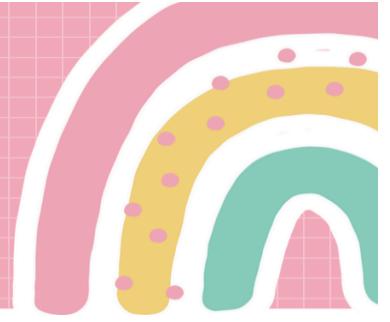
We look forward to Term 2 as an opportunity for continued growth, rich learning experiences and building on the strong foundations established this term.

Wishing all families a happy and holy Easter. Thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to strengthen our home-school partnerships.



Jane Clark, **Deputy Principal – Teaching & Learning**

# Wellbeing News



Can you believe we are at the end of Term One? It has been an exciting time in the wellbeing space, with the introduction of Pulse Wellbeing and Read and Thrive journals in our Year 3-6 classes. Our Foundation to Year 2 classes are not missing out! Stay tuned for ways we are planning to capture their student voice in Term Two!

Our Year 6 Student Wellbeing Leaders Milla, Lily and Bonnie have confidently presented thoughtful ideas for new initiatives to support wellbeing across our school and have spoken at school assemblies about these. There are exciting things ahead....

Our **Read and Thrive Journal** topic this week focuses upon the importance of physical activity and its positive impact upon our mental health. Research shows that regular physical activity and exercise leads to changes in the brain. It improves cognitive function, elevates mood, enhances learning and improves academic outcomes. Playing sport helps kids develop fundamental movement skills impacting positively on their confidence, self-esteem and ability to develop social skills. Parents play an important role in helping children establish positive habits that will benefit their children in the long-term.

In this edition of SchoolTV, parents will discover practical advice relating to the benefits of regular physical activity and exercise, as well as tips on how to get their kids motivated and moving more.

**Here is the link to your Edition** <https://sfxballarat.catholic.schooltv.me/newsletter/physical-activity-exercise>

**Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships (RRRR):** Have a chat to your children about what they have discovered in our Social and Emotional Learning lessons this term. We have focused upon their Emotional Literacy and their Personal/ Cultural Strengths.

We have learnt that being kind, brave and showing respect are superpowers!

Many thanks for your continued support of our wellbeing initiatives and for the children/ families/ community members who share their ideas with me.

Have a wonderful Easter break!

Christine Meneely (**School Counsellor and Wellbeing/ MHiPS Leader**)  
Contact me on : [cmeneely@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cmeneely@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au)



### **MDASA Under 9 Swimming event**

Last Thursday evening, we had 7 students participate in an Under 9 swimming event at the Ballarat Aquatic Centre. Teddy B, Hudson W, Harriett H Harry J Tom S, Louie E, Audrey G and Khloe N battled nerves and a big crowd but all swam the very best they could. Well Done you should be very proud of your efforts

### **Term 2 After School netball**

SFX is looking forward to once again entering teams in the BNA Primary School after school netball season in Term 2.

- The season is 8 weeks long and all competitions are on Tuesdays or Wednesdays.
- Game times are 4pm / 4:50pm / 5:40pm.
- Great for beginners or those with experience

Please respond to the communication correspondence that was sent last week to express your child's interest or contact me if you have any questions.

### **Term 2**

Next term promises to be huge in terms of sport at SFX with many exciting opportunities for our students. We will be involved in Division Football, Division Cross Country, Division Soccer, Division Netball as well as the golf clinics. In weeks 7 and 9 there is also the swimming program for year levels one through to six.

Have a fantastic break everyone, rest up and we look forward to seeing you all in Term 2.

### **2026 SFX SPORTS DATES**

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)

### **SFX Football Jumpers, Singlets & Netball dresses/bibs**

If you have any SFX Football jumpers, singlets or netball dresses/bibs at home could you please return them to Mr Down or Mr Carroll or drop them into the office.

Have a great week.

Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**



**Easter Raffle Winners – please collect your prize from the office before end of term**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 1022 – Georgia Hudson
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 1240 – Hayley Ellis
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 767 – Withhold identity
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 1573 – Johanna Crespo
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no:1573 – Withhold identity
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 283 – Marice O'Brien
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 1139 – Gail Atkins
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 710 – Maree Slack
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 614 – Withhold identity
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 251 – Chantelle Toohey
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 404 – Nathan Williams
<b>12<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 118 – Withhold identity
<b>13<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 61 – Bec Belsar
<b>14<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 1545 – Joe White
<b>15<sup>th</sup> Prize</b>	Ticket no: 918 - Willow Begbie

• **RYANS IGA COMMUNITY REWARDS Program**

For the months of March & April 2026 – St Francis Xavier Primary School has been selected to participate in the **Ryan's IGA Community Rewards program** at the **Pleasant Park store** – corner Sturt & Pleasant St  
If you are in the area, pop in and collect your groceries and put your tokens in our token box.



# 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  
 Jackie Wrigglesworth (Finance Officer)  
 5337 7128  
 Jackie.wrigglesworth@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**

## Palm Sunday Year A – 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2026

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Monday March 30 <sup>th</sup>	1.00 pm	Mass of the Oils (Cathedral)	
Tuesday March 31 <sup>st</sup>	11.00 am	Mercy Place, Ballarat East Anointing Mass	
Wednesday April 1 <sup>st</sup>	9.30 am	St. Brendan's End of Term Mass	
	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East	
	5.30 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Reconciliation St Brigid's Ballan	
Easter Triduum			
Holy Thursday April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	6.00 pm	Evening Mass	St. Alipius' Ballarat East St. Michael's Bungaree
	6.30 pm		
Good Friday April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10.00 am	Stations of the Cross	St. Brigid's Ballan
	3.00 pm	Celebration of the Passion	St. Alipius' Ballarat East
	3.00 pm	Celebration of the Passion	St. Patrick's Gordon
Holy Saturday April 4 <sup>th</sup>	7.00 pm	Easter Vigil	St. Alipius' Ballarat East St. Brigid's Ballan
Easter Sunday April 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.00 am	Easter Mass	St. Alipius' Ballarat East
	9.00 am		St. Brendan's Dunnstown
	10.30 am		Ss. Peter & Paul's Buninyong
	10.30 am		St. Michael's Springbank

### WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

#### THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Annabella Elliott, Frank Hanrahan (Wendouree), Fred Tiehuis

#### THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

John L. Alexander, Fr Philip Crosbie SSC, Reg Haintz, Monica Hryncyszyn, Laurie O'Neil, Monica Ramsay, Martin Wheelahan

#### THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Elaine Conlan, Irene D'Arcy, Evelyn Farrugia, Patricia (Patty) Gannon, Michelle Hall, John Healy, Thelma Keating, Sarah McLachlan, Carole Simmons, Darren Vukmirovic, Troy Watson (Steenhuis family), Richard Wade, John White, Owen Widdison.

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Palm Sunday  
 Isaiah 50:4-7  
 Philippians 2:6-11  
 Matthew 26:14 — 27:66

### NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

Easter Sunday  
 Acts 10:34, 37-43  
 1 Corinthians 5:6-8  
 Matthew 28:1-10

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

COLLECTIONS	
Weekend of 21st & 22nd March	
Ballarat East & Buninyong	
Supporting our priests	\$1,114
Supporting our Parish	\$333

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

### MASS OF THE OILS 2026

All are welcome to attend the Mass of the Oils year Monday, March 30, 2026 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 1.00pm. Afternoon tea will follow in the Hall. The Mass will also be livestreamed at <https://youtube.com/live/zYkFoGIKIdY?feature=share>

### HOLY LAND COLLECTION – GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2026

The annual collection for the support of the church in the Holy Land will take place on Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. As we are all aware, the Church and people of the Holy Land have over recent years, been passing through very difficult times. At this moment, attempts are being made to produce a lasting ceasefire in Gaza, but even so, the shadows of insecurity and economic deprivation remain over so many in the region. Christians in particular, due to their minority status, are particularly vulnerable. The Pontifical Good Friday Collection will continue to support the works of the Holy Land through the generosity of the Australian Church. Your donation is a direct way to make a difference in the lives of people who are keeping alive the Christian presence in the land of Jesus, often in the face of great odds.

### CHILDREN'S FIRST RECONCILIATION

Over the weeks of Lent children from across our churches and schools have been preparing to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Sacramental preparation is parish coordinated, family based and Catholic school supported. This week children will celebrate Reconciliation at St Brigid's Ballan on April 1<sup>st</sup> 5.30pm. Our thanks to Frs. Justin and Shaiju who will give their time over a number of days to support our First Reconciliation liturgies.

UPCOMING DATES
<p><b>Monday March 30<sup>th</sup></b>            Mass of the Oils            St. Patrick's Cathedral            1 pm</p>
<p><b>Wednesday April 1<sup>st</sup></b>            First Reconciliation            St. Brigid's Ballan            5 pm</p>
<p><b>Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup></b>            Baptism Information Session            Mary Glowrey Rooms            St. Pat's Cathedral            10.00 am</p>

### UPDATING OUR UNWELL LIST

Following Easter, we will update our list of those who are unwell. If you have someone on this list at the present time and would like their name to remain, please contact the parish office. All names will be removed from the list unless we are contacted and asked to leave them on.

### PALM SUNDAY RALLY

The Ballarat Rural Australians for Refugees invites you to support the Refugee Advocacy Network's Palm Sunday Rally in Melbourne on Sunday, March 29, 2026. Program for the day: 1.00 pm - gather on Princes Bridge with banners and placards; 1.30pm - Solidarity walk to Birrarung Marr Lower Terrace (Angel statue); 2.00 pm – 3.30 pm - a full program of speakers and music. More information available at <https://refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au/>

### 2026 ROUNDTABLE ECOLOGICAL THEOLOGY SESSIONS

Venue: Mercy Centre Ballarat East (Gent Street entrance). Dates: March 24, April 21, May 18, June 18, August 19, September 15, October 13, November 17. Times: Afternoon sessions: 1.30pm - 3.00pm; Evening sessions: 7.00pm -8.30pm. To register, text Sr Veronica Lawson on 0408392297 or email [veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au](mailto:veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au)

## PROJECT COMPASSION – PALM SUNDAY

**UNITE AGAINST POVERTY**  
this Lent



As Project Compassion 2026 comes to a close, we thank you for your generous support throughout Lent. This year, we shared the stories of four inspiring people whose lives are being uplifted through your compassion. Your support is helping them overcome challenges and build stronger futures. There is still time to donate! Together, we can continue nurturing hope and empowering communities facing poverty and injustice. **Please donate today.** You can support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes, scanning the QR code, online at [www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate](http://www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate) or by calling 1800 024 413. Thank you for standing with us, as we Unite Against Poverty this Lent.

### PROJECT COMPASSION LENTEN PRAYER

God of all love,

We remember that on the night before he died Your son, Jesus, prayed that his friends 'may all be one.' Yet we see so much division in the world. War, conflict, violence and hatred must all distress you. Millions of people suffer when they don't have peace and respect. They lack the necessities of life: food, water, health, education and security. We pray that we may all Unite Against Poverty this Lent.

May our support for Project Compassion be a sign to ourselves and others, of our hope for a better world.

This Lent, we pray that our dedication to prayer, fasting and almsgiving will help restore your vision of justice and peace. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

### CARITAS SUPPORT FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

A Humanitarian Appeal for Lebanon is seeking donations, to provide emergency support to vulnerable communities. Donate now at <https://www.caritas.org.au/donate/donate-lebanon/>

## LAUDATO SI' ANIMATORS COURSE

Caritas Catholic Earthcare encourages your participation.

Registration is now open for the 2026 Laudato Si' Animator course! Become a Laudato Si' Animator and bring Pope Francis's teaching on caring for our common home to your local community. There is no cost to participate, only your passion for accompanying change. All online, the webinars are 11.00pm AEST, but you can watch the recordings in your own time. Suitable for teachers, parishioners and anyone interested in learning more about *Laudato Si'* through prayerful reflection and bold action. Register at <https://laudatosianimators.org>

### PARENT INFORMATION SESSION - BAPTISM

Please note that next Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> there will be a morning session for Baptism Information at 10.00 am, but there will not be an evening session due to it being Holy Thursday. If you know of anyone who may be planning to attend a session next week, please let them know that the only option will be the morning session.

## STAR OF THE SEA, APOLLO BAY



Looking for a "Winter Warmer" in Apollo Bay?  
Our special deal is from mid-May to late-Aug.  
Pay for 3 nights and receive the 4<sup>th</sup> night free:  
normally \$300pp - now only \$225pp

Enjoy our beautiful coastal town on the Great Ocean Road for a winter escape with fewer crowds, rolling seas and a cozy place to stay at Star of the Sea.

Come with your family, or a group of friends and receive a warm welcome and warm hospitality

For more info & contact details visit:

<https://staroftheseaapollobay.org.au/>

# Passion Sunday

## Reflection on the Gospel

Year A

(Matthew 26:14-27:66)

Veronica Lawson RSM

This year we hear Matthew's passion narrative through the lens of armed conflict and death from deprivation. The prospect of untimely death is a reality for many. Even more abhorrent is the ongoing practice of capital punishment in so many places, particularly when a just person is put to death for specious reasons or to political ends. That's what confronts us in today's gospel, although the gospel writers pay little attention to the details of the suffering and death of Jesus: they are more interested in the meaning of these events.

The Romans execute Jesus outside Jerusalem when the city is filled with Jewish pilgrims, there for the Passover festival. For Jesus' friends and followers, every subsequent Passover will be celebrated in the light of his death by crucifixion. They share their memories and reflect on the meaning of his death in the light of their sacred traditions. Every element of the Passover story, the ancient story of God's deliverance of their ancestors, resonates with echoes of the experience of Jesus who is now present to them in a new way. Little wonder, then, that the final events of Jesus' life were probably the first part of his story to be committed to writing.

Though Matthew draws much of his material from Mark, he fashions the tradition into a new narrative and adds several distinctive features. "To fulfil all righteousness" is Jesus' stated mission (3:15). He has declared "blessed" those who suffer for the sake of righteousness (justice or right relationship)" (5:10). He now embodies his own teaching, as the just or righteous one, the one in right relationship with God. The prayer on his lips as he faces death (Psalm 22) is that of the suffering just Israelite who is utterly faithful to his mission and whose trust in God never fails.



There are hints that Jesus' death is not the end but is rather the inauguration of the new age of God's empire, a compassionate alternative to the brutality of Rome. In response to the high priest Caiaphas, Jesus points beyond death to his resurrected life "at the right hand of power...." Extraordinary signs follow his death: the tearing of the temple curtain; the trembling of the earth; the recognition by the Roman centurion and his companions that this man is of God; and finally, the opening of the graves and appearance of the dead in anticipation of the resurrection of those who accept him as the Christ. These signs offer the hope of reversal to all who have witnessed the events surrounding Jesus' death. They offer hope to the women who have followed him all the way from Galilee and "ministered to him". They offer hope to the male disciples who have deserted or denied him, to faithful disciples like Joseph of Arimathea, and even to his Roman executioners. They have the potential to bring hope to us all at this time, especially to those who put their lives on the line for others.





**nab AFL Auskick**

# GOOD CLEAN FUN

**PLAY.AFL/AUSKICK**

## EAST POINT AUSKICK CENTRE

EASTERN OVAL  
PEEL STREET N, BALLARAT EAST

**STARTS APRIL 30TH**  
**THURSDAYS | 4:15 - 5:15PM**

For Further information Contact:  
andrew.powell@bayer.com



*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.*

# FREE COME AND TRY

## SOVEREIGN KNIGHTS BASKETBALL CLUB

Basketball  
come & try  
day for  
**all ages!!**

Bring your  
friends along.



Held at  
Phoenix  
Community  
College.

SCAN QR CODE  
TO SIGN UP OR  
EMAIL US!

- Thursday  
march 26th at  
4:30 – 5:30



EMAIL:  
[admin@skbc.org.au](mailto:admin@skbc.org.au)

Sovereign Knights Basketball  
Intention to play form



# Come and join our Under 8s!

**Begin your journey at Lake Wendouree  
Junior Football Netball Club!**



**Coach:** Billy Anderson

**Season Start:** Friday April 24<sup>th</sup> Round 1 at Mars Stadium

**Season Finish:** Friday June 26<sup>th</sup>

**Training Start:** Wednesday April 15<sup>th</sup>

**Come and join us for the 2026 season!**

**If your child was  
born between  
Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2018 and  
April 30 2019  
they qualify for  
Under 8s!**



**To register your child, please  
complete the Expression of Interest  
Form via the QR code:**



In one fun-filled day, kids will learn and play footy in a safe, inclusive environment. They'll pick up new skills, play mini-games and get creative with designing a footy or uniform. Plus have a footy goodie bag to take home.



**4-7 YEAR OLDS\***

Our youngest players learn footy through fun, age-appropriate games that build skills, confidence and teamwork, led by NAB AFL Auskick coaches.



**7-12 YEAR OLDS**

Older kids level up their footy skills through modified game play and challenging activities that build teamwork, leadership and lasting memories in a fun, energetic day.

*\*Kids can join NAB AFL Auskick if they are turning 5 in the calendar year (before 30th June in WA).*

## BALLARAT SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

**BALLARAT NORTH SESSION**  
**TUES APRIL 7 | 9AM-3PM**  
**C.E. BROWN RESERVE**

**BALLARAT SOUTH SESSION**  
**TUES APRIL 14 | 9AM-3PM**  
**MT CLEAR REC RESERVE**





# SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



## PAINT YOUR OWN POTTERY SESSIONS

**WEDNESDAY APRIL THE 8TH**

**10:30AM & 2:30PM**

**THURSDAY APRIL THE 9TH**

**11:30AM & 3:30PM**

**FRIDAY APRIL THE 10TH**

**1:30PM & 5:30PM**

**SATURDAY APRIL THE 11TH**

**10:30AM & 2:30PM**

**FRIDAY APRIL THE 17TH**

**1:30PM & 5:30PM**

**SATURDAY APRIL THE 18TH**

**10:30AM & 2:30PM**

USE CODE  
SCHOOL10 FOR  
10% OFF

