

St Francis Xavier Primary School



Newsletter

Tuesday 10th March 2026
Term 1 Week 7

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

Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 1 (10 weeks)

Mon 27th Jan - Thu 2nd Apr

Friday 13th March

2.40pm Assembly in school gym led by 5ML

7pm-11pm Mix & Mingle on lower oval

Wed 11th - Tue 17th March

NAPLAN Testing

Wednesday 18th March

Last day for Book Club
Issue 2 orders

Thursday 19th March

Student Led Conferences

Friday 20th March

Yr 5/6 Interschool Sport @ STM

No Assembly today

Monday 23rd March

5.30pm P&F Meeting

Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th & Thursday 26th March

6pm Yr 4 Sacrament of Reconciliation at St Alipius

Wednesday 25th March

Regional Swimming at Horsham (qualifiers from Division swimming)

Thursday 26th March

Student Led Conferences

MDASA U9 Primary Schools

Swim Sports (nominated students from F-Yr2)

Friday 27th March

Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donations to support Project Compassion
No Assembly today

Mon 30th & Tue 31st March

Year 4 Lady Northcote Discovery Camp

Thursday 2nd April

Last day of term 1
2.20pm finish

The Big Water Walk

12.40pm Assembly in gym

On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Our Year 3 and Year 5 students will participate in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) over the next two weeks, joining students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia. NAPLAN provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning and to reflect on the progress they have made in literacy and numeracy.

It is important to remember that NAPLAN is just one of many ways we assess student learning. Throughout the year, teachers use a wide range of assessment strategies — before learning begins, during the learning process and at the conclusion of a unit of work. Daily observations, classroom discussions and student work samples all help teachers adjust programs to best meet individual needs.

At our school, our teaching approach is grounded in direct, explicit instruction and informed by the Science of Learning. This means that teachers clearly explain new concepts, model thinking processes, provide guided practice and gradually release responsibility to students as their confidence and competence grow. We know that students learn best when instruction is purposeful, structured and supported by regular feedback and opportunities for practice and revision.

Differentiation remains central to this approach. Some students may require additional support to consolidate skills and deepen understanding, while others may benefit from extension opportunities that challenge them to apply their learning in new and more complex ways. By truly knowing each learner, our staff are able to respond thoughtfully and intentionally to their needs each day.

When you reflect on your own schooling, you may remember times when learning came easily, and other times when you needed extra support. Learning is as individual as the learner. At our school, we strive to build strong, positive learning relationships so that every child feels safe to take risks, to be challenged and to grow. Feeling confident and supported in their learning journey is what school is all about.



God bless,

Mark Hogbin



Term 2 (10 weeks)

Mon 20th Apr-Fri 26th Jun

Tue 21st & Wed 22nd April

Year 5 Sovereign Hill
Costumed School

Friday 24th April

Start of Term 2 Mass

No Assembly today

Friday 1st May

Division AFL @ CE Brown
Reserve Wendouree
(selected Yr 5/6 students)

2.40pm Assembly in
school gym led by 4KB

Friday 8th May

2pm Mothers/Special
Friends Liturgy

No Assembly today

Monday 11th May

Division Cross Country @
Fed Uni (selected Yr 3, 4, 5
& 6 students)

Thursday 14th May

Last day for 2027
Foundation enrolments for
existing and new families

Friday 15th May

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 6MM

Friday 22nd May

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 1EM

Tuesday 26th May

Regional Cross Country @
Warrnambool (qualifiers
from Division XC)

Friday 29th 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 5th June

Pupil free day

Monday 8th June

Public Holiday-King's
Birthday Pupil Free Day

Friday 12th June

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

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 5CC



RIP Sr. Berenice

It was with heartfelt sadness that we received the message that Sr. Berenice Kerr died last week. Sr. Berenice was a great friend and supporter of our school as well as being a past Director of Saint Francis Xavier. As a member of the Sisters of Mercy Sr. Berenice kept a special place for our school in her heart and kept in contact with us as we continue to educate our students according to the Mercy tradition. We will certainly miss Sr. Berenice and we pray that she is resting peacefully in the presence of a loving God.

End of Day Collection A gentle reminder that we all need to be mindful of others when collecting children at the end of the day. Our teachers do a great job of supervising the children and you can assist them by ensuring that your children don't climb trees or run around the front of the school while you are collecting them. Likewise, we ask that animals remain outside the school fence to avoid contact with unfamiliar children. If we all do our best, we can keep everyone safe at a very busy time of the day.

Mix & Mingle



Are you coming along to our annual Mix & Mingle evening on Friday? We will gather for a great evening together on the lower oval from 7.00pm. Tickets are still available and drinks will be on sale from the bar. What a great opportunity to gather with friends, make new friends, catch up with old friends and have a good time. See you there!

Full-Time Foundations! We welcome our Foundation students to full-time school this week. No more rest days on Wednesdays which means that everyone can now enjoy school Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday!

Staff News We welcome Nellie Mullane and Alysha Schuppan to our staff this week. Both Alysha and Nellie will be joining our wonderful Learning Support team to assist the teachers with the amazing work they do for our students each day. Welcome Alysha and Nellie!

Concussion – Important information to be aware of for parents and carers

If your child has experienced a concussion outside of the school setting it is important that they rest for a period of 24 to 48 hours and then gradually return to activities after this time. Returning to school can be a graduated approach with the aim of increasing tolerance to a full day, the same situation could occur with sporting activities. It is always important to check with your doctor and seek medical treatment after a child sustains a concussion.

It is important to inform the school if your child has sustained a concussion outside of school; this is to ensure the school can monitor your child's wellbeing and adapt activities as required.

This factsheet link below from the Royal Children's Hospital is valuable to read and understand.

https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Head_injury_return_to_school_and_sport/

There is also a great evidence-based app from the Murdoch children's research institute that walks you through what to do in the result of a concussion. <https://www.headcheck.com.au/>

Friday 19th June

Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by 3LL

Friday 26th 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 FJS

Term 3 (10 weeks)

Mon 13th Jul-Fri 18th Sep

Mon 13th July, Tues 14th & Wed 15th July

Year 6 Melbourne CYC Camp

Friday 17th July

Start of Term 3 Mass

No Assembly today

Friday 24th July

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by 4RR

Friday 31st July

Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donations

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by 3ZP

Friday 7th August

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

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by FBK

Friday 14th August

Pupil free day (to be confirmed)

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

Friday 21st August

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by 1GH

Friday 28th August

Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donations

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by FLP

Friday 4th September

Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)

Fathers/Special Friends Liturgy (to be confirmed)

No Assembly today

Begonia Festival

Did you meet our giant snail at the Begonia Festival?

Claude Monsnail was having a delightful time when Mr. Hogbin discovered him in the gardens on the weekend.

Well done to Mrs. Molloy and our amazing young artists for creating a Monet inspired snail for the festival!



Foundation/Prep Enrolment 2027 – Existing and New Families

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 14th May 2026

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Wednesday 9th September

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

Friday 11th September
No Assembly today

Friday 18th September
Last day of Term 3

Footy Colours Day - gold
coin donations to support
Fight Cancer

No Assembly today

Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 5th Oct–Fri 18th Dec

Wednesday 7th October
Year 3 Day Camp

Friday 9th October
Start of T4/Mercy Day Mass

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

No Assembly today

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

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 5LD

Friday 23rd October
2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 1GT

Friday 30th October
Casual Clothes Day - gold
coin donations to support
MercyWorks

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by FTW

Monday 2nd November
Assessment and Reporting
Pupil Free Day

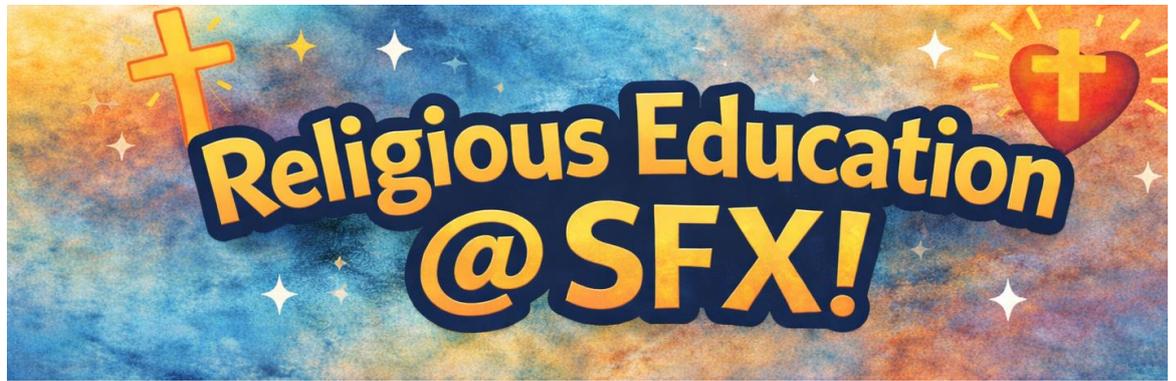
Tuesday 3rd November
Public Holiday–Melbourne
Cup Pupil Free Day

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

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 6JS

Friday 13th November
2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 2TS

Friday 20th November
2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 4ZA



The Big Water Walk

As part of our commitment to Project Compassion during Lent, our school will take part in Villa's Big Water Walk on Thursday April 2. Inspired by the Year 3 students' reflection on The Good Samaritan, this initiative reminds us of the challenge to love our neighbours. Students will carry buckets of water in relay teams as a symbol of solidarity with children in Tanzania who must walk long distances each day to collect water for their families. Our goal is to raise \$6,000 to help establish a 25,000-litre water tank for a school in rural Tanzania, providing safe drinking water for up to 1,000 students.

This Week's Gospel – Jesus Meets the Samaritan Woman at the Well (John 4:5–42)

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well while she is collecting water. In that time, Jews and Samaritans rarely spoke to one another, yet Jesus chooses to stop, speak with her and treat her with dignity and respect.

During their conversation, Jesus speaks about "living water" — the kind of life and hope that comes from knowing God. The story reminds us that Jesus reaches out to everyone, especially those who may feel excluded or overlooked.

Water is central to this Gospel, and it also reminds us how precious this gift is. While many of us can turn on a tap and have clean water whenever we need it, this is not the reality for many families around the world.

A message for families:

This week also included World Wildlife Day, which reminds us of our responsibility to care for the Earth and the gifts of creation.

Water, land, animals and ecosystems are all part of God's creation. When we care for our planet and its resources, we help ensure that people and communities around the world can flourish.

A family reflection:

Where do we see water as a gift in our everyday lives?

How can our family show care for the world God has given us — even in small ways?

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Wed 25th-Fri 27th Nov
Year 5 Kangaroo Camp

Friday 27th November
Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donations to support Ballarat East Vinnies group

No Assembly today

Friday 4th December
End of Year Mass

Thursday 17th December
Last 2026 day for students

Our challenge for the week:

Choose one small action as a family this week to care for God's creation.

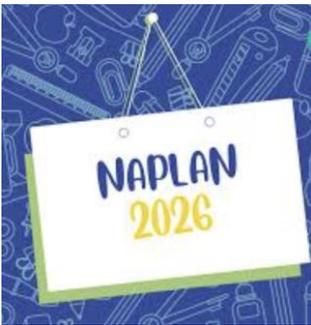
- Spend time outside noticing the beauty of nature
- Reduce waste or recycle something at home
- Talk together about how we can look after our planet

Small actions, done with love, help bring God's light into the world.



Michael Marshall, **Religious Education Leader**

Curriculum News



NAPLAN Week – Years 3 & 5

NAPLAN week is here, and our Year 3 and Year 5 students are well prepared and ready to do their best. We are proud of the positive and confident way they have approached their learning in the lead-up to testing.

Thank you for your continued support at home. Your encouragement plays an important role in helping children feel calm and capable.

A few simple ways you can support your child this week:

- Ensure they have a good night's sleep.
- Provide a healthy breakfast each morning.
- Arrive at school on time to avoid feeling rushed.
- Offer reassurance and remind them that NAPLAN is just one way of showing what they know.
- Encourage them to simply try their best — that is all we ask.

We are very proud of our students and the way they are approaching this experience. Thank you for partnering with us to support them.



Student-Led Conferences at SFX

In Weeks 8 and 9, we look forward to hosting our Student-Led Conferences. This is a valuable opportunity for your child(ren) to share their learning, showcase their work, and discuss their goals with you.

During these conferences, students take the lead in guiding the conversation about their progress, achievements and next steps. Teachers will support and facilitate the discussion as needed.

Bookings are now open through School Interviews. You will have received an email from our school office with the link and code to use. If you have not yet scheduled a time, please log in and secure your booking.

Each conference runs for 12 minutes, with a short transition time between families. We strongly encourage all families to attend, and student participation is essential.

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Why Student-Led Conferences?

- For parents/carers: An opportunity to see your child’s learning firsthand, rather than simply hearing about it.
- For students: A chance to take ownership of their progress and develop confidence in speaking about their learning.
- For teachers: More meaningful and focused conversations that strengthen the home–school partnership.
- For our community: A shared commitment to supporting every child’s growth and success.

Questions You Might Ask

To support the conversation, you may wish to ask your child:

- What are you most proud of this term?
- Where have you improved the most?
- What did you find challenging?
- Did you achieve your goals? Why or why not?
- What would you like to focus on next?
- How can we support your learning at home?

This format strengthens student voice and reflects contemporary research around Assessment as Learning.

If you would like to discuss matters without your child present, please contact your child’s teacher to arrange a separate meeting at a suitable time.

All the best to our Year 3 & 5 students this week.

Jane Clark, Deputy Principal – Teaching & Learning



Discussing War & Conflict with Your Children

With the recent escalation of conflict involving Iran, children may be hearing or seeing distressing updates through the 24-hour news cycle, social media and conversations at school. Even when events are geographically distant, repeated exposure to images, headlines and commentary can heighten anxiety, particularly for young people whose understanding of the world is still developing.

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It is important for parents and caregivers to be mindful of overexposure, as constant coverage can amplify fear and uncertainty. Reassurance is key. Children need to feel safe and supported as they process complex global events.

Before beginning these conversations, take a moment to check in with your own emotions. Children often take their cues from the adults around them. Remaining calm, listening openly and offering reassurance can help your child regulate their feelings and maintain a sense of security.

This SchoolTV Report provides practical guidance to help families navigate conversations about war and conflict in a measured, age-appropriate way, while reinforcing hope, empathy and resilience.

Here is the link to this Special Report http://sfxballarat.catholic.schooltv.me/wellbeing_news/special-report-discussing-war-conflict

Introducing Pulse – Supporting Wellbeing in Years 3–6

This term we are introducing **Pulse Wellbeing** for students in Years 3–6 as part of our continued commitment to student wellbeing.

Pulse is a simple, age-appropriate online check-in tool that gives students the opportunity to regularly reflect on how they are feeling. Each week, students will complete a short check-in at school, answering questions about their wellbeing, friendships and general school experience. The process is quick, supportive and designed to help children build emotional awareness and language around their feelings.

Why are we using Pulse?

At St Francis Xavier, we know that wellbeing and learning go hand in hand. When children feel safe, connected and supported, they are more ready to learn and thrive. Pulse allows us to:

- Strengthen student voice
- Identify trends or concerns early
- Provide timely support where needed
- Build a shared understanding of wellbeing across our school

Importantly, Pulse does not replace relationships – it strengthens them. This data helps our staff notice patterns and respond proactively, but it is always conversations, care and connection that sit at the heart of our approach. Together, we are committed to helping every child flourish — academically, socially and emotionally. If you have any questions about Pulse Wellbeing, please feel free to contact me or you may like to watch this short intro video.

[Introduction to PULSE WELLBEING](#)

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



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 keep an eye out for a communication correspondence to express your child's interest.

MDASA U/9 Encouragement Swimming Sports

This event is available to all students that will be 9 years old and under as at 31/12/2026. It is being held in the 25m pool at the Ballarat Aquatic Lifestyle Centre on Thursday March 26 from 7pm. For further information and details on how to enter please refer to the email notification sent last week.

2026 SFX SPORTS DATES

Term 1:

- Week 8 - Friday Mar 20th - Interschool Sport @ STM (Yr 5/6)
- 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)

Have a terrific week.

Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**



- **P&F Meeting** – Monday 23rd March 2026 – 5.30pm
- **Mix & Mingle** – Friday 13th March 2026 – BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW it is only 3 days away!!! - Please purchase your tickets early for catering purposes
Join us for a night out under the stars! Meet fellow parents and make new friends!
SFX Lower Oval 7pm – 11pm
Book your Tickets via Flexi Schools \$25 – *includes drink on arrival, finger food & music*
- **TUITION RAFFLE**
WIN - \$1,500 OFF Tuition Fees – Raffle – tickets available via QR code
or <https://rafflelink.com.au/villa2026fees>
- **EASTER RAFFLE IS NOW LIVE** – See attached flyer – tickets available for purchase via QR code
or <https://rafflelink.com.au/villa2026-easter>
We are also taking Easter Raffle donations please – *please drop them into the office at your earliest convenience*
- **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 2nd break - \$1
- **2nd 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 woolen 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
- **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.



2026 SFX TUITION RAFFLE



**Win \$1500 off
your school fees**

Buy tickets NOW



1 ticket \$10
3 tickets \$25
5 tickets \$35
8 tickets \$50

SFX Mix & Mingle

Join us for a fun night out under the stars! Meet fellow parents and make new friends!

Friday 13th March 2026

SFX Lower Oval

7pm - 11pm



Tickets. \$25

includes drink on arrival, grazing table/fingerfood & live music

Purchase your tickets on Flexi schools

SFX Easter Raffle

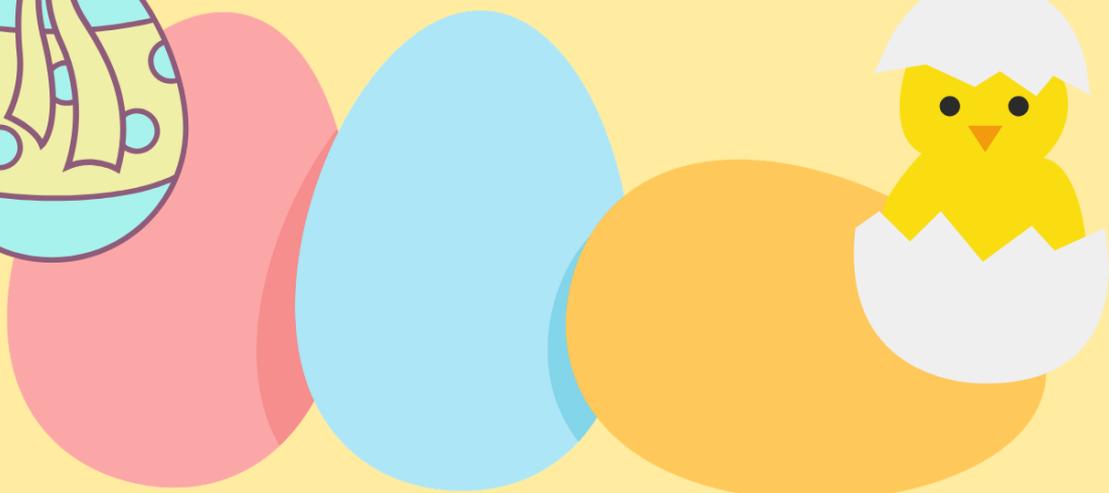
SCAN HERE AND BUY TICKETS NOW



1 ticket \$2
3 tickets for \$5
7 tickets for \$10
16 tickets for \$20



<https://rafflelink.com.au/villa2026-easter>



*drawn Monday 30th March

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

3rd Sunday of Lent Year A – 8th March, 2026

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES			
Weekday Masses			
Tuesday March 10 th	10.30 am 2.00pm	Funeral Mass Sr. Berenice Kerr RSM (B'rat East) Funeral Mass Betty Conroy (Ballan)	
Wednesday March 11 th	9.30 am	Funeral Mass Jan Hough (Ballarat East)	
Thursday March 12 th	9.30 am 11.00 am 11.00 am	St. Brigid's Ballan Funeral Prayers Warren Silvey (Ballarat East) Mecwacare Canadian	
Friday March 13 th	9.30 am 10.00 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East Kathy Pollard Funeral Mass (Cathedral)	
Saturday March 14 th	9.30 am	St Alipius' Ballarat East	
Weekend Masses – 4 th Sunday of Lent			
Saturday March 14 th		Sunday March 15 th	
6.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Ballarat East Ballan (Autumn Festival)
6.30 pm	Dunnstown	10.30 am	Buninyong Gordon

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Warren Silvey, Betty Conroy, Sr Berenice Kerr RSM, Derek Lister, Janice Hough, Rosa Klaric, Kathy Pollard.

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Pauline Prince, Barry Ridsdale, Elsie and Harry Lavery, Frank Sims, David Carton, Margaret O'Regan, Andrew Barbara, Peter De Spirt, Harry Wise, Joseph Micallef, Mary Winter, Joseph and Antonia Spiteri, Renee Agostina Barbara, Helen Elizabeth Kuczysnski, Brian Darcy.

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.

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 and present.

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

Weekend of February 28 th & March 1 st	
Supporting our priests	\$1,026
Maintenance of parish buildings	\$705
January and February Finances	
Direct Debits	\$6,215
Credit Cards	\$2,885
Tap n Go	\$1,817.94

January and February St Patrick's & St Michael's Finances	
Supporting our priests	\$5,393
St Patrick's	
Maintenance of parish buildings	\$1,250
Direct Debits	\$3675
Tap n Go	\$325
St Michael's	
Maintenance of parish buildings	\$75
Direct Debits	\$1664

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

PREPARATIONS FOR HOLY WEEK AND

This Thursday, March 12th, we will gather in the parish hub to plan for the Easter Vigil. We encourage you to attend this meeting if you would like to contribute to this planning. Everyone is welcome. If you will be attending please contact the parish office by Wednesday so that we can plan accordingly.

CELEBRATING ST PATRICK'S DAY

All parishioners and friends from across our Ministry District are invited to celebrate St Patrick's Day on Tuesday March 17th with 11.00am Mass at St Patrick's Gordon followed by lunch in the school multipurpose room.

THANK YOU

In any given week, we find ourselves calling on parishioners to do jobs for us. Please know that we really do appreciate you, your willingness to answer our calls makes a real difference. Thank you.

RESPECT BALLARAT: BALLARAT

FOUNDATION GRANTS ANNOUNCED

The Ballarat Foundation in partnership with Respect Victoria, with the support of the Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Ingrid Stitt, has announced the recipients of 11 grants to support the work of Respect Ballarat. Amongst the 11 grants awarded is **St Alipius Parish Ballarat East and Parishes of the Ministry District**, with its project *Faith Communities Focusing on Prevention: Building Respectful Communities*, \$95,600. This project aims to build capacity by creating opportunities for those in faith communities to reflect on where the drivers of gendered violence might be being perpetuated, and how they might be a proactive part of prevention, considering prevention of gendered violence in a way that is grounded within their spiritual, theological and community traditions. This project is auspiced by **Catholic Social Services Victoria** who will work in collaboration with our Parishes and the many faith communities of the Greater Ballarat region that will include churches, faith-based schools, social services, health-care agencies of Catholic and all Christian denominations and other faiths. Our parishes have been part of the **Ballarat Prevention of Violence Faith Network** that has been meeting over the past 18 months with members from McAuley Community Services for Women, CatholicCare Victoria, St John of God Hospital Ballarat, St Vincent de Paul Society, Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Ltd., Jesuit Social Services, Anglican Church Australia, the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat and St Alipius Parish (represented by Fr Justin).

MASS OF THANKSGIVING TO MARK THE RETIREMENT OF BISHOP PAUL BIRD

The Diocesan Liturgical Commission thanks all those involved in the wonderful Mass of Thanksgiving to mark the retirement of Bishop Paul Bird CSsR last Monday evening. Thank you to those who participated in the ministries of the Mass, those who contributed to the music that filled with Cathedral with joy, those who prepared the Cathedral for the celebration and to those who attended in person or online. The Mas can be viewed

at <https://youtube.com/live/yPVzUisWoow?feature=share>. Copies of the Mass book are available from the Bishop's Office bishopsoffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au.

BISHOP'S ORDINATION

Congratulations to Renata Demspey, Alona Gazmen, Dianne Reynolds, Winnie Leonard, Joan Bourke, Anne Eskdale who will be representing the Ministry District at the Bishop's Ordination.

VENERABLE MARY OF THE SACRED HEART GLOWREY CELEBRATIONS

The Catholic Women's League of Victoria and Wagga Wagga invite all to a celebration of Venerable Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey on Friday, March 13, 2026. The celebrations will commence with a Mass of Thanksgiving at St Patrick's Cathedral East Melbourne at 5.00pm. Mass will be followed by a presentation and reflection of Mary Glowrey's faith, courage and legacy at the Cathedral Hall, ACU Fitzroy from 6.00pm – 7.30pm. Tea and coffee will be provided. Please register for the presentation at <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1526468> or scan the QR code.

BAPTISMS

Giovanni Albert Poe & Theodore Santamaria
Children of Nicholas and Catherine

Illy Maeve Romein
Daughter of Josh and Amy

PALM SUNDAY CRAFT SESSION

On Friday 27th March between 10am and 12pm you are invited to join us to make palm crosses for Palm Sunday. Instructions will be provided and fun is assured. BYO scissors. Morning tea will be provided. RSVP by Wednesday 18th March.

MINISTRY DISTRICT BULLETIN

Please note that we are currently attempting to provide the same bulletin to all parishes in the Ministry District as we are finding that the country parishes require more room. Hopefully this will explain any changes you may notice in coming weeks. Feedback is always welcome.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

3rd Sunday of Lent

Exodus 17:3-7
Romans 5:1-2, 5-8
John 4:5-42

UPCOMING DATES

Wednesday March 11th
Parish Finance Committee
7.30 am

Thursday March 12th
Liturgy Committee Meeting
Hub
5.00 pm

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Parish Pastoral Council
Hub
6.30 pm

Tuesday March 17th
St Patrick's Day Mass & lunch
Gordon Church & School
11.00 am

Thursday March 19th
Ordination & Installation of Bishop-Elect
Mark Freeman
11.00 am

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RCIC
St. Alipius Hall
4 pm

March 24th, 25th & 26th
First Reconciliation
St. Alipius
6.00 pm

BULLETIN EMAILS

Thank you for your patience in recent weeks when sending the bulletin via email has been difficult. Issues with sending the bulletin began last year when bulk emails to Gmail addresses were stopped. Our new data base made these emails possible again, but then Microsoft managed emails became an issue. As a result, we will now provide a link to the newsletter in the email, rather than sending it as an attachment. This is what happened last weekend and this is the way we will need to continue. Please contact the office if you have any issues.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

4th Sunday of Lent

1 Samuel 16:1, 67, 10-13
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 1:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

A Woman of Samaria: Disciple and Missionary Prophet

Reflection on the Gospel

3rd Sunday of Lent Year A

(John 4:5-42)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Those privileged to act as catechists in the RCIA (Right of Christian Initiation of Adults) program over the Lenten period are exploring with candidates some of our most treasured gospel stories. In 1963, Vatican II's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* called for the restoration of certain early Church practices. The two main features of Lent, baptism and penance, were to be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. More use was to be made of the baptismal elements proper to the Lenten liturgy. Some features that were part of an earlier tradition were to be restored. In response to this call, John's stories of the Samaritan woman, the man born blind and the raising of Lazarus were moved from the weekday to the Sunday liturgy. Thus, three weeks into Lent, the liturgy invites us to take a faith journey in the company of a courageous outsider, an unnamed woman from a despised religious group.

A woman of Samaria comes to draw water from the well of Jacob, Israel's great ancestor in faith. She belongs in a long line of women whose lot as women is to undertake the burdensome, often dangerous, daily toil of carrying water so that their families might simply survive. Jesus asks the woman for a drink and elicits a bewildered response. She responds, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" This response provides the opportunity for Jesus to move into an extended and constantly deepening exchange in which the woman proves herself a knowledgeable and worthy dialogue partner.

The pursuit of water, a key baptismal symbol in the gospel tradition, provides the catalyst for her journey to faith in Jesus as Messiah/the Christos and her engagement in the mission of proclaiming the good news to her people.

Commentators tend to focus on the woman's marital status, usually in negative terms. Because she is said to have had five husbands, many presume that she is a sinner: there is nothing in the text to support this position. Successive husbands may have died. Financial, religious or societal constraints may have functioned in her decision to remarry. The "husbands" may refer to the strange gods, five in number, that claimed the allegiance of the Samaritans. There is no consensus on this among scholars.

At the outset, the woman views Jesus simply as a Jew who breaks with established custom by asking her, a woman, for water. Jesus understands her life story and opens up the way for her to accept him as a prophet. She comes to accept him as the provider of living water. She takes the risk of sharing her own convictions about the locus of worship and is gifted with new understanding and with Jesus' further self-disclosure. She leaves her water jar behind and brings others to faith in Jesus as Messiah and saviour of the world. She becomes both disciple and missionary prophet.



EASTER HOLIDAY PROGRAM



BALLARAT NETBALL ASSOCIATION
115 BARKLY ST, GOLDEN POINT, 3350

7 APRIL - 17 APRIL

KINDER - GRADE 6

\$70 PER CHILD

8:00AM - 5:00PM

APRIL 10TH AND 14TH WE WILL BE RUNNING AT ST ALIPIUS PS!



WHAT'S ON

GAGA BALL DAY - FRI 10th

KELLY SPORTS GAMES - FRI 17th

TONNES OF SPORTS/GAMES

WHAT TO BRING

- A big packed lunch + morning and afternoon snack!
- Large refillable drink bottle
- Hat & sunscreen.
- Dress in comfortable sports clothing!

NO PROGRAM ON THESE DATES

No sessions MON 6th April (Easter Monday)



AVAILABLE NOW

WWW.KELLYSPORTS.COM.AU/GREATER-BALLARAT

CONTACT COACH SEAN - 0411 602 204

