



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 27th July 2026

Term 3 Week 3

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

Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 3 (10 weeks)

Mon 13th Jul-Fri 18th Sep

Thursday 30th July

Last day for Book Club
Issue 5 orders

Friday 31st July

Casual Clothes Day - gold
coin donations to support
Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
research

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 3ZP

Last day of Silver Coin
Challenge

Saturday 1st August

1pm School Choir at
Mt Clear College

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
(Staff professional
development day)

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

Friday 21st August

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 1GH

Sat 22nd – Fri 28th August

Book Week

Monday 24th August

Book Week Dress Up Day
"Symphony of Stories"

Friday 28th August

Casual Clothes Day - gold
coin donations

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by FLF

On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Many of our students have been enjoying the Commonwealth Games over the past few days. This morning I was presented with great recounts of the events in Glasgow as the children shared highlights of the first few days of competition. Occasions such as this remind our children to aim high and to strive to reach their goals, just as our Athletes are doing now.

At school we teach the children to have a go, to try their best and to be a good Sport. In other words, to show what it means to be a fair and just person. These skills are covered in sports lessons weekly, but they are also covered in all other subjects too. Mastering new skills is rarely easy. Practice can be hard and there is never any guarantee of a win. With persistence though, we hone our skills and success can take many forms. Over time our children will come to learn that excellence can mean different things and that our attitude counts more than anything else.

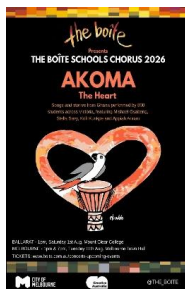
We don't know what the future may hold for the children in our care. The future leaders in sport, academia, leadership and development are in our schools across the country today, as are the future musicians, artists, scientists, teachers and trades people. Let's continue to work together at home and at school to build capacity in our students. Who knows where their futures may lead?

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



Congratulations Ms. Simpson! We offer our sincere congratulations to Ms. Jessie Simpson who became engaged while on holidays in Japan recently. Ms. Simpson's Foundation students are very keen to welcome her back after her time away. Congratulations Jessie from all in our SFX community!



News from Our School Choir Our fantastic school choir will be performing in Ballarat along with students from other schools in the Boite Schools Chorus 2026, this weekend. This is a great opportunity for our students to perform in a wider community setting and we wish them well. Special thanks to Mr. West and Ms. Harty who have given their time to make this possible for our students.

Friday 4th September
 Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6)
 Fathers/Special Friends
 Liturgy (to be confirmed)
 No Assembly today
 Trivia Night

Wednesday 9th September
 Division Athletics @
 Llanberris (qualifiers from
 BCPS Aths – Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)

Friday 11th September
 No Assembly today

Tuesday 15th September
 6pm Confirmation at
 Damascus College

Thursday 17th September
 School Disco

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

School Closure Day Please note that our school will be closed on Friday 14 August for staff professional development. No classes will be held at school on this day.

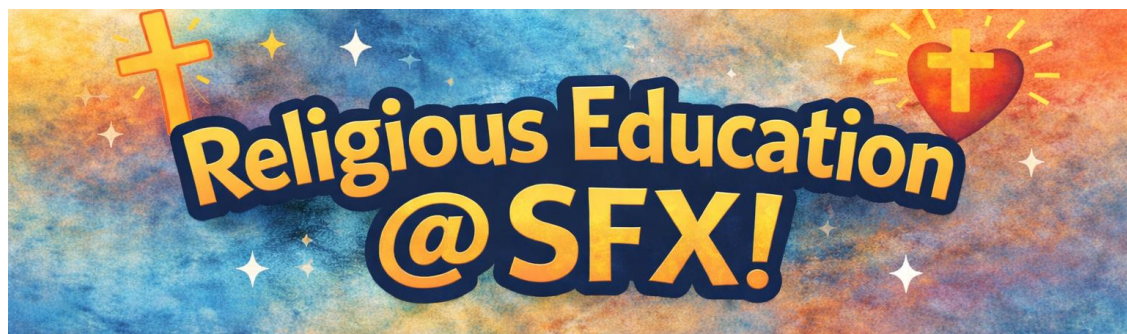
Cover Up Clothing Please ensure that your child has cover up clothing (at least a top and footwear) if they wish to play at the paddocks or top oval. The ground is very wet and soft at the moment and will remain so for the next few months.

100 Days of School for our Foundation Students



Congratulations to our Foundation students who have celebrated their first 100 days of school today.

Well done children!



NAIDOC Week Mass!

Last Friday, our school community gathered to celebrate our Term 3 Mass, giving thanks for the rich history, culture and contributions of Australia's First Nations peoples. We were honoured to begin our celebration with a Welcome to Country from Jenna Oldaker, Wadawurrung Traditional Owner, before Fr Justin Driscoll led us in a beautiful Eucharist centred on the Parable of the Sower. Together, we reflected on how God's love is planted like a seed in our hearts, calling us to grow in kindness, respect and care for one another and for creation.

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 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

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

This Week's Gospel – The Kingdom of God (Matthew 13:44–52)

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus shares a series of short parables about the Kingdom of God. He compares it to a treasure hidden in a field, a pearl of great value, and a net gathering all kinds of fish.

Each story reminds us that God's Kingdom is something truly valuable- worth seeking, choosing and holding onto.

These parables invite us to consider what matters most in our lives. What do we treasure? What do we give our time, energy and attention to?



Casual Clothes Day – Friday 31st July

This Friday, students are invited to wear casual clothes and bring along a gold coin donation (or more) to support Multiple Sclerosis (MS) research.

Multiple sclerosis is a lifelong neurological condition that affects the brain and spinal cord. It can impact movement, vision, balance and energy levels, and while there is currently no cure, ongoing research is helping to improve treatments and work towards a future free from MS.

This cause has a special connection to our school community, making it a meaningful opportunity for us to come together in support of those living with MS and their families.

At SFX, we are called to live out our Franciscan values of compassion, generosity and care for others. By taking part in this Casual Clothes Day, we can make a small contribution that helps bring hope through research, support services and advocacy.

Thank you for your generosity. Every donation, no matter the size, helps make a difference.



Michael Marshall, **Religious Education Leader**

Curriculum News



Upcoming Event - Book Week 2026

Book Week is a much-anticipated annual celebration at St Francis Xavier, inspiring a love of reading and bringing stories to life through literature, imagination and dress-ups. It is a wonderful opportunity for children to celebrate books and the joy of reading. Please save the date, with further information to follow.

Book Week begins on Monday 24 August (Week 7). Each year Book Week features a new theme. This year's theme is "Symphony of Stories."

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Reading

At **St Francis Xavier Primary School**, we encourage every student to read every day and to have their **Reading Log or Read and Thrive diary signed by an adult**. Reading at home is one of the most effective ways families can support their child's learning and help strengthen the important partnership between home and school.

Why is daily reading so important?

- **Reading supports learning across all areas of the curriculum.** Strong readers are better equipped to succeed in mathematics, science, inquiry learning and problem-solving.
- **Reading develops independence.** Regular reading builds confidence, critical thinking and the ability to learn independently.
- **Reading expands vocabulary and knowledge.** Books, magazines, graphic novels and informative texts all introduce children to new ideas, concepts and language.
- **Reading builds empathy and understanding.** Stories help children appreciate different perspectives, cultures and life experiences.
- **The more children read, the better they become.** Regular reading improves fluency, comprehension and overall academic achievement.
- **Talking about books deepens understanding.** Asking questions and discussing characters, events and ideas helps children think more deeply about what they read.
- **Choice encourages a love of reading.** Allowing children to choose books that interest them increases motivation and enjoyment.
- **Reading is a lifelong skill.** Developing strong reading habits in primary school provides the foundation for success in secondary school and beyond.

Thank you for supporting your child's reading journey by making reading a regular part of your family's daily routine. Just **10–20 minutes of reading each day** can make a significant difference.

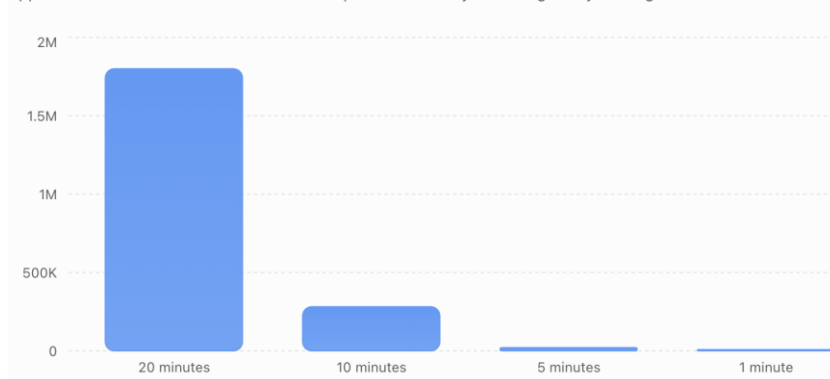
Just 20 minutes of reading each day makes an enormous difference.

Children who read for 20 minutes every day are exposed to around **1.8 million words each year**,

helping to build vocabulary, improve comprehension, strengthen spelling, and support success across all learning areas. Thank you for supporting your child in this area.

The power of reading 20 minutes every day

Approximate number of words children are exposed to in one year through daily reading.



Friendly Reminder – Semester Reports on PAM

A friendly reminder to families who have not yet accessed their child's Semester Report on PAM. Reports are now available to view, and we encourage you to take some time to read through your child's achievements, progress, and areas for continued growth. If you experience any difficulties logging into PAM or accessing your child's report, please don't hesitate to contact the school office—we are happy to assist.

Enjoy your week!

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





Friendships are such an important part of growing up. Feeling accepted, included and connected helps children develop confidence, resilience and a strong sense of belonging. While making and keeping friends comes naturally for some children, others may need a little extra support as they learn the social and emotional skills that help build positive relationships.

As parents and carers, we play an important role in guiding our children through the ups and downs of friendships. By encouraging kindness, empathy, communication and problem-solving, we can help them build healthy, respectful relationships and recognise when a friendship may not be making them feel safe or valued.

This week, our **Year 3–6 Read and Learn Journal** focuses on **International Friendship Day**, providing students with opportunities to reflect on what it means to be a good friend, celebrate positive relationships and consider ways they can help everyone feel included.

To support these conversations at home, this week's **SchoolTV** edition explores **Friendship & Belonging**. It is filled with practical advice and strategies to help children develop strong, healthy friendships and a genuine sense of connection.

I encourage all families to take a few moments to explore this valuable resource:

<https://sfxballarat.catholic.schooltv.me/newsletter/friendship-belonging>





Later this term we will begin the **Seasons for Growth** program for children who are dealing with significant life changes by:

- exploring the impact of change and loss on every-day life
- learning new ways to respond to these changes

These changes may be situations such as parental separation/divorce/estrangement, the death or illness of a family member/friend/pet, family changes such as loss of employment or change of schools/cities.

Seasons for Growth is an 8 week evidence-based peer education program that helps children understand and cope with change, loss, and grief.

Developed by  MacKillop Seasons, the program uses the metaphor of the seasons to normalise grief and build resilience.

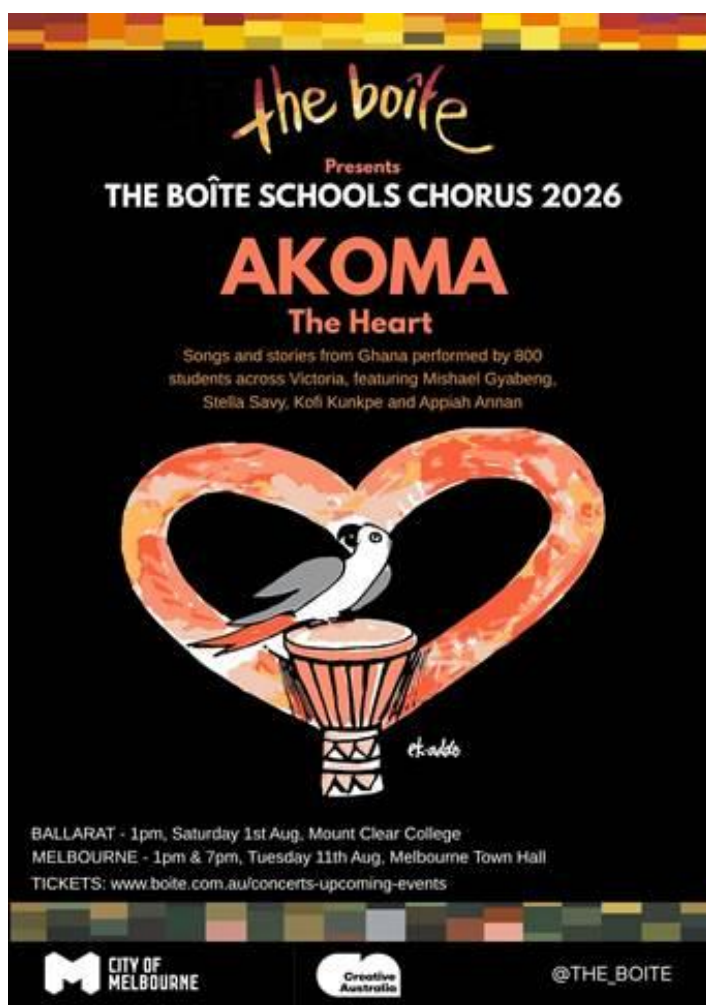
Please don't hesitate to talk to me if life circumstances have changed for your family and you would like your child to be considered for inclusion in Seasons for Growth.

Please email me at cmeneely@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au



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

Music News



Over the last few months our choir has been busily preparing for their performance with the 'Boite School's Chorus'. This is a large-scale event that combines choirs from all over Ballarat!

During this time our choir has shown wonderful commitment and growth as they rehearsed a collection of songs from Ghana.

Their performance is on Saturday August 1, at Mount Clear College's Gay E. Gough Theatre, commencing at 1pm.

If you would like to come along to the performance, please click the link below to access tickets!

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1608568>

Sporting Schools - Term 3

SFX was fortunate to receive funding to provide 2 after school sport programs for Term 3. The positive response in such a short period of time to these programs was overwhelming.

There were close to 140 responses but unfortunately both programs have a limited capacity.

Please see below a list of the names of the students that will be participating in the programs:

Monday - Basketball (Mon Aug 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 & Sep 7)

Judd Boyd, Alfie Brennan, Odie & Vann Brooks, Zoe Cooper, Mackenzie Donnelly, Aiden & Hallie Graham, Laila Jennings, Flynn & Hudson McKay, Arthur & Harrison Madigan, Elsie & Polly O'Loughlin, Cruz & Jett Raine, Milla Rowland, Charlize Simpson, Noah Stewart, Asher & Finn Sutcliff, Kenzie & Lawrence Wilson, Christian Wright.

Thursday - Badminton (Thur - Aug 6, 13, 20, 27, Sep 3 & 10)

Lillian Armstrong, Harvey & Max Banwell, Spencer Belsar, James & Meredith Bodnar, Sienna Cardona, James & Mitchell Cycles, George Ellis, Jasper, Quinn & Scarlett Govan, Harriet & Rupert Howard, Charlie & Oscar Johnson, Layla Marshall, Lenny & Rex Owins, Shevan Perera, Austin, Cooper, Hughey & Jackson Roberts, Ava Segrott, Yael Vasserman.

Eureka Division Basketball

Tryouts for Boys & Girls in Year 5 & 6 will be conducted this week. The day of the tournament is Friday August 14.

****Please note that this is a Student Free Day so selected students will need to be able to be taken directly to/from the venue. Staff will meet students at venue**

2026 SFX SPORTS DATES

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) **also a student free day*
- 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)

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 fantastic week.

Shaun Carroll, **SFX Sport Coordinator**



P&F News

- **Silver Coin Challenge – BRING IN ALL YOUR SPARE CHANGE**

Monday 20th July – Friday 31st July

How Silver coin challenge works - each class are provided a container, children can bring in coins throughout the 2 week period, the class (1 from each year level) who collects the most amount of money will then have a pizza lunch as their prize at a date selected by the school – thanks to Carboni's

- **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
- **Milkshake Mondays**
\$1.50 for a milkshake & freckle/or marshmallow
The P&F are looking for anyone who would like to learn how to run Milkshake Mondays – they will then be put on a rotating roster to co-ordinate Milkshakes a few time each term so that we are not reliant on the same 1 or 2 people running this each week – if this is something you would like to do please contact Lisa on 0412 647 737 and come and learn next Monday at our Milkshake Monday. *Please don't think that someone else will sign up so I don't need to – if we cannot get the volunteers to co-ordinate this each week we will not be able to run this and then the Children miss out.*
We will also require 5 additional volunteers to assist each week via sign up in your class chat.
- **Uniform Shop**
Did you know our Second Hand Uniform shop is always open? Please see the ladies in the office if you wish to look at any items in our Second Hand Uniform shop, or reach out to a member of the P&F to help you with any of your Uniform needs.
All items in the Second Hand Uniform shop are between \$5 and \$10.
- **SAVE THE DATES:** **Trivia Night – Friday 4th September**
 School Disco – Thursday 17th September
- **DONATIONS/PRIZES needed**
As part of our Trivia night, we run a silent auction as well as a Raffle on the night – if you are able to assist with a Donation/Prize, please reach out to a member of our P&F or leave your donation in the office.
- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**
The P&F relies on volunteers each and every week to help pack Hot Lunches and assist with Milkshake Mondays.

Your class rep shares the volunteer sign up link in your class chat on a regular basis. The links cover the entire term, allowing you to choose a date that suits you well in advance.

Unfortunately, we are finding it increasingly difficult to fill all volunteer spots each week. Without enough volunteers, we may need to reduce or change the frequency of these much-loved treats for our children.

If you have an hour or 2 spare, please consider signing up for a shift. Every volunteer makes a real difference, and your support helps ensure we can continue to offer these special treats for our children, please don't think oh someone else will do it – we are a large community and if each family volunteered once or twice a year it would ease the constant request for volunteers.

Attachments

ASSEMBLY AWARDS 24th July 2026 Hosted by 4RR Theme: Justice

We make fair choices.

Justice means being the best person we can be.

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

FLP	Essie Thomas and Luka Ross	4RR	Edward Giblett and Sophie Crumpton
FJS	Nina Trigg and Harry Baldwin	4ZA	Bryn Glab & Eliza Vallance
FBO'K	Sienna Cardona and Lenny Rumble	4KB	Ollie Geaghan & Alfie Heywood
FTW	Mathew Harrow and Frankie Meade	5CC	Ailbe Kirby and Max Miller
1GH	Eva Ludbrook and Riley Smith	5LD	Oliver Downes and Hamish Nicholls
1EM	Archie Stevens and Mason Cadogan	5ML	Mitchell Cyples and Ella Wilson
1GT	Oliver McGregor and Amelia Whykes	6PB	Milla Richardson and Eli Jones
2GJ	Finn Sutcliffe and Sophia Sammii	6JS	Noah Irving and Olive Lenaghan
2MH	Elsie Howe and Rex Owins	6MM	Grace Hocking and Xavier Morris
2TS	Shayenka Gunitekele & Harry Jolly	EE/ Sci	Lilly Bye and Wilson Quinlan
3LL	Connor Allen & Alfie Brennan	PA	Lachie Skewes Murphy Daniel in 2MH
3JT	Oscar Martin & Aurorah Rivett and Daisy Whittlam (Excellence - from last assembly)	VA	Sutton Answer & Arlo Troon (4RR)
3ZP	Cruz Raine & Elizabeth Kelly	PE	Isla Page and Casey Hartup
		Tch	Alby Whittlam (FBOK) Sophia Samii (2GJ)

Principal's Award:

Ava Segrott for always caring for our environment - especially showing great care for our Indigenous garden.

Ministry District Newsletter

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A – July 26th, 2026

Incorporating the faith communities of Ballan, Ballarat East, Bungaree, Buninyong, Clarke's Hill, Dunnstown, Gordon & Springbank

Priests: Frs. Justin Driscoll & Shaiju Mathew

Staff: Cathy Prunty (Parish Co-ordinator)

Finance: Jackie Wrigglesworth

Natalie Gleeson (Admin Assistant)

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Email: jackie.wrigglesworth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Phone: 0437 505 517

Phone: 5337 7128

Our parishes are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
Safeguarding Officers: Ballarat East Parish – Emily Clarke 5331 1816; Bungaree & Gordon Parishes – Cathy Prunty 0437 505 517

MINISTRY DISTRICT MASS TIMES

Weekday Masses

Monday July 27 th	10.00 am	Funeral Mass Anne Earnshaw (St Pat's Cathedral)
Tuesday July 28 th	2.00 pm	Funeral Mass Trish Irvin (St. Alipius')
Wednesday July 29 th	11.00 am 2.00 pm	Mercy Place Ballarat East Funeral Mass Peter Martin (St. Alipius')
Thursday July 30 th	10.30 am	Funeral Mass John White (Ss. Peter & Paul's)
Friday July 31 st	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East
Saturday August 1 st	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East

Weekend Masses – 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday August 1 st		Sunday August 2 nd	
5.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Ballarat East Gordon
6.00 pm	Dunnstown	10.30 am	Buninyong Ballan

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Trish Irvin, Peter Martin, John White.

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Josephine Borg, Carmen Buttigieg, Rohan Cosgriff, Joe D'Arcy, Margaret Dunn, Angus Finlayson, Beth & Mary Flynn, John Bernard Fuller, Mary Gilmartin, Carmel Grano, John Green, Noelene Hagar, Patrick Hodgson, Robert McGiffin, Pat McKee, Kylie Magree, Vince O'Neil

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Owen Widdison, Richard Wade

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

Romans 8:28-30

Matthew 13:44-46

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 55: 13

Romans 8:35, 37-39

Matthew 14:13-21

UPCOMING DATES

Wednesday July 29th
Ballarat East Finance Council
7.30 am Parish Hub

CLASS OF 1974 SHC AND ST MARTIN'S

Class of 1974 SHC and St Martin's girls are welcome to join us for lunch on Wednesday 29th July at 11.30 am. Please phone Coleen for any details: 0400341408

BAPTISMS

Ss Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Joseph Michael and Mabel Joan Adams
Children of Samuel and Kaylah

Sonny Jude Peters
Child of Emilio and Shannen

Louis Jude, Raphael Leo and
Ada May Lacoste
Children of Joshua and Bridget

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY WINTER APPEAL

With fuel, the cost of living and rental prices higher than ever, an unexpected bill, the loss of a job or a relationship break down can be enough to push someone into homelessness. For more and more people, homelessness is just one sudden crisis away. And this winter, more people than ever before are facing homelessness and poverty in Australia. Your generous gift today can help people at risk of or experiencing homelessness get the support they need to find and keep a safe place to stay. To donate online, go to <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/winter-appeal> or phone 131812.

CONFIRMATION – BALLARAT EAST PARISH

Welcome to the children and their families being presented at Masses in Ballarat East and Buninyong this Sunday as they commence preparation for the celebration of Confirmation to be held on Tuesday September 15th, 6.00pm at Damascus College Mt Clear. In the parishes of our Ministry District the preparation of the sacraments is Parish Coordinated, Family based and Catholic School supported. In the Diocese of Ballarat, the order for celebrating the sacraments of initiation is Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING CATHOLIC?

The process for adults seeking to become Catholic will soon be commencing with the time to inquire for our local church communities of Ballan, Ballarat East, Bungaree, Buninyong, Clarkes Hill, Dunnstown, Gordon and Springbank. If you're an adult who's either not been baptized or has been baptized in another Christian tradition and would like to inquire about becoming catholic, we welcome you to 'come and see'. Please contact our Parish Hub, 86 Victoria St Ballarat East or 0437 505 517 or ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

WELCOME TO FR EUGENE

Fr Eugene McKinnon will celebrate Masses at Clarkes Hill, Gordon and Ballan this weekend while Fr Shaiju is on annual leave. Welcome and thank you Fr Eugene.

MAGNIFICA HUMANITIES

An Australian Group Reading Guide to Pope Leo's Encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, on Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence by Bill Huebsch and Michael Walker. This guide will help you to explore and understand Pope Leo's important contribution to one of the most significant conversations shaping our world today. To order your copy (\$10) please contact Cathy or Nat in the Parish Hub. This guide will be used by those who have expressed interest in exploring the Encyclical together.

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

PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Ballarat East Parish:

Rose Consignano, Judith Glaubitz, Martin McGettigan, Dianne McKeegan, Claire Stewart.

Bungaree Parish:

Damian Ryan & Chris Frawley (Bungaree), Barry Sheehan & Dianne Reynolds (Dunnstown), Dom Prendergast, Maurice Mahar (Clarkes Hill).

Gordon Parish:

Sue Daly & Brendan Maher (Springbank), Joan Bourke & Shane Carey (Gordon), Mark Conlan & Jim Leahy (Ballan).

WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY: SUNDAY, JULY 26, 2026

The theme chosen by Pope Leo XIV for the sixth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly – “I will never forget you” (Is 49:15) – reminds us that God’s unwavering love is the ultimate answer to the isolation and neglect so often experienced by the elderly. It brings comfort and hope, assuring us that the Lord knows each of us personally, forgets no one, and loves us unconditionally, even through the frailties of old age.

PRAYER FOR GRANDPARENTS

Holy Father, who watches over every person
Watch over me too when I am elderly.
You have revealed your name to me in Christ,
And You were not discouraged by my frailties.
You hold me tenderly in your hands,
And You caress my lines.
You will never forget me! (see Is 49:15).
Grant that I may not fear my weakness;
Help me learn to love it, Just as You love it.
Help me learn to listen to it, Just as You listen to it.
Help me embrace it, Just as You have chosen it –
You who, though all-powerful, clothed yourself in humility.
May growing old strip away all our pride and all division
So that we may live these years united in You.
You will never forget us! (see Is 49:15)

Amen.

RETREAT OPPORTUNITY

On August 22nd, Anna Schlooz will be conducting a retreat at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish Centre in Wendouree. The retreat will run between 10 am and 5pm and will invite participants to prayerfully experience selected Gospel Meal stories where Jesus gathered with friends and strangers alike. The retreat explores mindful living, gratitude, companionship, and the sacredness of our experiences whilst being mindful that Christ can be at the table with us in our contemporary world. There is no cost for this retreat and materials and meals are provided. You are asked to BYO journal and bible. Contact Anna for more information or to register no later than August 17th. Email:

ecomyriad@gmail.com

SISTERS OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN STUDY, ACCOMPANIMENT AND MENTORING (SAM) SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are invited for the women’s Study, Accompaniment and Mentoring (SAM) Program, an initiative of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, for study in 2027. Core components of the program include opportunities for spiritual accompaniment and mentoring. Invitations are also offered for participants to gather to share their experiences and to explore questions arising from their study in conversation with experienced women leaders in the Church. The grant can be spent on tuition or other expenses associated with the completion of the qualification. For more information go to <https://www.goodsams.org.au/2026/06/17/applications-invited-for-womens-study-accompaniment-mentoring-sam-program/>

CATHOLIC CARE VICTORIA

WINTER APPEAL

This winter, your kindness can help someone rebuild their life. Across Victoria, many people are just one crisis away from homelessness. Your donation to CatholicCare Victoria provides safe housing, practical assistance and ongoing support. Donate at <https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/winter-appeal/>

We Search our Hearts to Know where our Treasure Lies

Reflection on the Gospel

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time A

(Matthew 13:44-52)

Veronica Lawson RSM

New Zealand poet Anne Powell proposes four journeys of seeking and finding treasure. She puts it this way: "Go down, down, down to the place in you where fire and silence dwell-the place of power. Go down, down, down to that pool in you of weedless water-the place of knowing.... Go down, down, down to the last strawberry-freshness of God". The place of power within, the place of knowing, the place of song, the freshness of God will be there for those prepared to take the journey into the depths of their being. Matthew's Jesus has another way of saying something very similar. Three parables and a summary statement conclude Matthew's parable chapter. They constitute a timeless gospel treasure chest that features lengthy statements about God's kin-dom of the heavens. In the first parable, Matthew's Jesus likens the kin-dom, not just to "treasure", but rather to treasure hidden in a field that someone, possibly a slave or day labourer, finds and hides before going joyfully to sell everything in order to buy the field and acquire the treasure. The parabolic image comprises the whole complex of actor, objects and actions (the finder; the finding, the selling and buying; the joy; the treasure and the field). The details pose endless questions. Who had right to ownership of the treasure? Is this a case of theft? Whatever the answer to these questions, this parable invites us to pause and consider what constitutes the real "treasure" in our lives and ask

to what lengths we would go in order to secure that treasure.

The second parable tells of a merchant who seeks fine pearls, finds one of great value, then goes and sells all possessions in order to acquire that one pearl. What is of such value to us that we would give up everything else in order to have that one thing, that one relationship? Jesus proceeds to liken the kin-dom of the heavens, not just to a net, but to a net thrown into the sea that catches fish of every kind and is drawn to shore by fisher-folk who sit down and sort it, putting the good into baskets and throwing away the bad. This parable foreshadows God's universal reign over all creation when good will finally triumph over evil.

The summary statement tells us that we need to be "scribes" educated in the ways of God. We need to bring out of the treasury of our traditions "what is new and what is old", wisely discerning what to keep and what to relinquish. Parables help to subvert our presuppositions. They disturb our complacency if we allow them to do so. The parables of the buried treasure, the priceless pearl and the net remind us that gospel discipleship demands an all-embracing investment of heart and spirit. We search our hearts to know where our treasure lies and join with others who show us how we might claim it for the common good of the entire Earth community.



Readathon

**MS Readathon – the month when kids fall in love with reading
1–31 August 2026**

<https://www.msreadathon.org.au/>

MS Readathon invites and inspires thousands of kids across the country to set a reading goal in August - whether it's daily reads, longer books, or learning new words. In one month, their focus deepens. Their confidence grows. And their imaginations take flight.

It's free to sign up, every reader receives a free welcome pack, and gets access to fun tools and resources to keep them reading all month long.

Readers and their families raise funds to support families in Australia impacted by MS and neurological conditions.



MS Readathon

Unlock a world of WOW this August.

SIGN UP NOW 1–31 August

Join MS Readathon, set a reading goal for August and make story time the best part of the day. All while building lifelong literacy skills. And with every page, and every story, you'll raise funds for families impacted by MS.

[msreadathon.org.au](https://www.msreadathon.org.au)

SIGN UP NOW

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.



Congratulations to St Francis Xavier students Mackenzie, Lily, Lucinda and Finya who are involved in the upcoming Ballarat Centre of Music and the Arts production of Winnie the Pooh Kids.

When: Saturday 15th Aug – 3:00pm Sunday 16th Aug – 11:00am

Where: Gay E Gough Theatre, Mt Clear College.

Tickets: \$18 - \$30: <https://events.humanitix.com/winniethepooh-bcma>

Welcome to the Hundred Acre Wood, where Winnie the Pooh is once again on a quest for his favourite thing... honey! Along the way, he reunites with his dear friends Tigger, Piglet, Rabbit and Owl, who join him on a brand-new adventure filled with imagination, laughter and friendship. But when they discover that Christopher Robin has been captured by the mysterious Backson, the animals must put aside their differences and work together to bring their friend home. They enlist the help of the buzzing bees and the Animal Chorus, and together find they can quite literally, dig themselves out of any hole.

With courage, creativity and a little help from their friends, Pooh and the gang embark on a rescue mission that reminds them of the most important things in life; teamwork, kindness, loyalty and, of course... sharing snacks! Join us in the Hundred Acre Wood for a charming celebration of friendship, where even the smallest creatures can make the biggest difference.

This delightful 30 min show is fun for all ages.

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THE RETURN OF PHOENIX FLEDGLING ACADEMY



A fun introductory program for children who are new to basketball, focusing on the fundamentals through games and activities.

RAN BY PHOENIX HMEGROWN
AND MINERS YOUTH LEAGUE PLAYER,
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**AGES
5-8
YEAR OLD**

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Understanding the game in a fun way
-  **MAKE FRIENDS & HAVE FUN**
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-  **IGNITE A LOVE OF THE GAME**
A passion that will last a lifetime



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6 WEEK PROGRAM



6:00PM
LUCAS PRIMARY SCHOOL



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FOR THE 6 WEEK PROGRAM

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<https://www.playhq.com/basketball-victoria/register/cffae2>


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