



# St Francis Xavier Primary School

## Newsletter

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2026  
Term 3 Week 7

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

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

### Term 3 (10 weeks)

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

#### Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August

Casual Clothes Day - gold coin donations to support Diabetes Australia

2.40pm Assembly in School gym led by FLP

Book Week Dress Up Parade for Year 5 at the end of FLP Assembly

#### Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September

Father's Day Stall for Foundation, Year 1 & Year 2  
Student Led Conferences

#### Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September

Father's Day Stall for Year 3 & Year 4  
Student Led Conferences

#### Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September

Father's Day Stall for Year 5 & Year 6  
Last day for Book Club 6 orders

#### Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September

Father's Day Stall for anyone who missed out  
Interscholar Sport (Yr 5/6) at SFX  
Fathers/Special Friends Day Liturgy  
2pm Afternoon Tea in Gym  
2.40pm Family Group Liturgies in Classrooms  
No Assembly today

6.30pm Trivia Night in gym

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

Division Athletics @ Llanberris (qualifiers from BCPS Aths - Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)  
6pm in the Library Instrumental Music Showcase by Tim's students

### On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

Along with schools across the country, we celebrate Book Week this week.

Do you remember dressing up for Book Week when you were at school? Who was your favourite storybook character? What was your favourite costume? Who was your favourite author? The careful management of childhood dreams and parental artistic abilities when it comes to costume making remains as strong today as ever, and I am happy to report that Book Week is alive and well at Saint Francis Xavier school today!

As the first educators of your children, you already know the importance of reading every day. Regular reading helps children develop strong literacy skills, while also nurturing their curiosity and interest in the wider world. One thing we can sometimes forget is the importance of modelling reading to our children. When children see their parents reading by choice and for pleasure, they begin to understand that reading is not simply something we do for school—it is something we do because we enjoy it. Escaping into an adventure, enjoying a romance or solving a mystery, reading for pleasure really can't be underrated. Even ten or fifteen minutes of reading each day can help foster a love of books that lasts a lifetime. That's not a bad habit to develop at all!

As we celebrate great literature at school this week, let's take the opportunity to switch off the television, put away the technology and enjoy the shared experience of getting lost in a good story. Who knows where a good book might take you?

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



### Book week parade

Classes in Foundation, Yr.1, Yr.2, Yr.3, Yr.4, and Yr.6 had their Book Week Parade this morning at assembly in the gym. It was wonderful to see a great variety of costumes and have lots of family members there to support our Parade.

Children in Yr. 5 will have a special parade on Friday at our school assembly due to their planned secondary school transition day today.



**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

6pm in the Library  
Instrumental Music  
Showcase by Lauren's  
students, Chris' students  
and our choir

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September**

No Assembly today

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September**

6pm Confirmation at  
Damascus College

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

School Disco

**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 Adekate Day Camp

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October**

9.30am Start of T4/  
Mercy Day Mass at  
St Alipius Church

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

No Assembly today

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October**

Junior Sports Day @ SFX  
for F-Y2 and Yr 6 Sports  
Captains

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 5LD

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

Greater Western Region  
Basketball (Girls A) at  
Selkirk Stadium

Yr 2 Pax Hill Camp

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 1GT

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October**

Division Golf Tournament  
@ Mt Xavier Golf Club  
(selected Yr 5/6 students)

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

Casual Clothes Day - gold  
coin donations to support  
MercyWorks

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by FTW

**Funding for all staff in our catholic schools**

The following message has been sent to families across all our schools from the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA). It provides an update on the ongoing discussions regarding better working and pay conditions for all staff across our schools:

*Dear parent/guardian,*

*Teachers and support staff make an extraordinary contribution to the success of our students and school communities. Negotiations are currently underway for a new enterprise agreement to recognise this work through improved wages and conditions.*

*The Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) has been negotiating for a new cooperative agreement on behalf of 34 Catholic education employers, including our school, since early 2025. While negotiations are ongoing, Catholic schools have committed to matching the total percentage wage increases to be provided by the state government in government schools. Based on the state government's July wage offer, this will be at least 28.3 per cent over 4 years.*

*While these changes will be government-funded in state schools, Catholic schools will not receive additional government funding commensurate with the additional cost. The cost will need to be supported through our usual budget and planning processes.*

*This is a significant change for school budgets that will take some time to work through. We are currently undertaking planning and budgeting activities for 2027 to ensure we are well placed to support our staff, students and the school community into the future. As we work through our planning processes, we remain focused on delivering a high-quality Catholic education for every student. We are fortunate to have a team of outstanding teachers and staff at our school. We value their contribution, and recognise the expertise, hard work and care they bring to our school community every day. We look forward to providing further information as negotiations progress.*

Our staff at Saint Francis Xavier do an amazing job of caring for 485 students every day. It is our desire for all staff to be recognised fairly for their efforts, so that we can keep growing the educators of the future.

**News from our Parents & Friends**

We are preparing for a busy second half of term at the moment. At our meeting last week we planned for our traditional Fathers & Special Friends afternoon on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September. As always we look forward to welcoming these great people into our school. We also planned our major fundraiser, The Amazingly Great Trivia night at school! This evening of entertainment is brought to us by *Trivia with A Twist* who work hard to ensure that everyone has a great night out. Please mark the date in your diary (Friday 4 September) and come along to support our school, meet some new friends and have a fun night out. Tickets are just \$17.00 per head. You can organise a table or we can place you on one. See you there!

**Free Dress Friday**

As we approach the last Friday in the month it will once again become our Free Dress Friday. This month we are raising funds for Diabetes Australia, and we really appreciate any gold coin donations that can be brought along for the cause. If every child in our school donates \$1.00 then we would be able to donate \$485.00 and that would be amazing! Around 13,200 children and young adults live with type 1 diabetes in Australia so any money we can donate will be put towards very useful research.

**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

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November**  
Art Exhibition

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

2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 4ZA

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November**  
12.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 2TS

Colour Run

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November**  
2.40pm Assembly in  
School gym led by 6JS

**Wed 25<sup>th</sup>-Fri 27<sup>th</sup> Nov**  
Year 5 Kangarooobie 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**  
9.30am End of Year Mass in  
school gym

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December**  
5pm Christmas Carols

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December**  
Year 6 Big Day Out

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December**  
5.30pm Year 6 Graduation

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December**  
Last 2026 day for students



We're very excited about our upcoming **Instrumental Music Showcase evenings!** These events are an informal opportunity for children who learn an instrument at St Francis Xavier to share their learning with their families and friends, with an encouraging audience and the support of their music tutor!

Families involved in our instrumental music program are asked to keep an eye on their emails and seesaw for further information!

Tim's students will share their learning on Wednesday September 9, and Chris and Lauren's students, along with our choir, will share their learning on Thursday September 10.



*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.*

# Year 3's **BIG BREAKFAST DOMINO CHALLENGE** for Vinnie's

**Every Box Makes a Difference!** 



## OUR GOAL

This term, our Year 3 students are partnering with St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies) to collect boxes of breakfast cereal for local families experiencing hardship. Each box donated will become part of our spectacular **Big Breakfast Domino Challenge** before being donated to Vinnies. Together, we'll create an incredible domino line that shows how many small acts of kindness can make a big difference.



## WHY A CEREAL DRIVE?

Breakfast gives children the energy they need to learn, concentrate and thrive at school. Research shows that children who eat breakfast are more likely to concentrate, remember what they learn and actively participate in class. Sadly, rising living costs mean that not every family can afford nutritious breakfast foods. Cereal is nutritious, easy to prepare, has a long shelf life and can provide many breakfasts for a family.



## LIVING OUR FAITH

In RE, we are learning about **Unity**—discovering that when people work together, they can achieve far more than they could alone. Just as every cereal box is needed to complete our domino line, every person's contribution helps build a stronger, kinder community.

Many Year 3 students are preparing for Confirmation, learning that God's Spirit calls us to live with courage, generosity and compassion. This project is a practical way for us to put our faith into action by caring for others.



## THE DOMINO EFFECT

Each cereal box represents one act of kindness. When the boxes are lined up together, they become a powerful symbol of **Unity**—showing that many small acts of generosity can create something extraordinary. Just as one domino starts a chain reaction, one act of kindness can inspire another, creating a ripple effect throughout our school and wider community.



## HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP

Families are invited to donate one (or more!) unopened boxes of breakfast cereal.



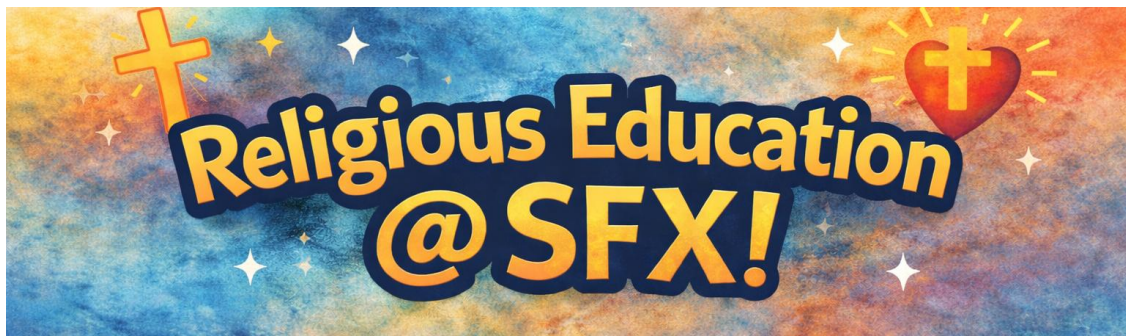
## TOGETHER, WE CAN:

- ♥ support local families through Vinnies
- ♥ provide nutritious breakfasts for children
- ♥ show the power of Unity and community
- ♥ live the message of the Holy Spirit through service and compassion
- ♥ make a real difference—one box at a time.



**THE BIG BREAKFAST DOMINO FALL!**  
**WEEK 8 • MONDAY, AUGUST 31<sup>ST</sup>,**  
**AT ASSEMBLY!**

**Together with Vinnies, we can make a BIG difference!** 



### **Staff Faith Formation Day**

Last Friday, our staff gathered at Bungaree for a day of prayer, reflection and learning as we explored the Jubilee Year of St Francis of Assisi – 800 Years of a Call to Peace.

Beginning with Mass at St Michael's Church, we reflected on the life and legacy of St Francis and what it means to be people who build peace, reconciliation and hope in our school community. We are grateful to Fr Justin Driscoll for leading us throughout the day, challenging us to consider how we can continue to create a culture of encounter, welcome, dignity and deep listening at St Francis Xavier.

We returned to school with a simple but powerful question: What have we been given... that we are now called to give?



### **This Week's Gospel – Who Do You Say I Am? (Matthew 16:13–20)**

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus asks his disciples a simple but profound question: "Who do you say I am?"

Peter responds with faith, recognising Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus then entrusts Peter with an important mission, reminding us that each of us is called to know Jesus personally and to live out our faith with courage.

This Gospel challenges us to think about our own response. We don't answer Jesus' question only with our words, but with the way we live each day. Every act of kindness, forgiveness and service is a way of saying who Jesus is to us.

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

Our staff reflection day and this Sunday's Gospel share a common message. Knowing Jesus leads us to action. As followers of Christ, we are called to become instruments of peace in our homes, our school and our wider community.

When we choose welcome over exclusion, forgiveness over resentment, and listening over judgement, we reveal something of who Jesus is to those around us.

### **A family reflection:**

Who has helped you grow in your faith?

How can our family be a source of peace for others this week?

*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.*

### Our challenge for the week:

Choose one way to be an instrument of peace this week.

- Welcome someone who may feel left out.
- Listen carefully before responding.
- Offer forgiveness or encouragement to someone who needs it.

Small acts of peace, lived each day, help bring the Gospel to life.

### **Casual Clothes Day – Friday 28th August**



This Friday, students are invited to wear casual clothes and bring along a gold coin donation (or more) to support Diabetes Australia.

Diabetes affects hundreds of thousands of Australians, including many children and young people. Living with diabetes means carefully managing blood glucose levels every day, and it can have a significant impact on daily life for individuals and their families. Diabetes Australia provides education, support, advocacy and funds research to help improve the lives of those living with diabetes.

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 help support people living with diabetes while also raising awareness and understanding of a condition that affects many members of our wider community.

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



Michael Marshall, **Religious Education Leader**

Happy 2026 Book Week! What a great celebration we had this morning to kick off Book Week with our School assembly.

### The Importance of Reading



Reading every day is one of the most valuable things we can do to support our children's learning and development. Regular reading builds vocabulary, strengthens comprehension, develops imagination and helps children become confident, capable learners. Whether reading independently, sharing a book together or listening to a story, every reading experience counts. A few minutes each day can make a lasting difference. We encourage all families to make reading a regular and enjoyable part of life at home.



### Student Led Conferences

Week 8 of this term your child(ren) will be showcasing their school work and discussing learning goals with you through their Student-Led Conferences. During Student – Led Conferences, your child will lead the discussion with you about their school work, while teachers will help direct conversation. Each Student-Led Conference will run for 13 minutes, and we strongly encourage all families to attend. Please note that children are required to be present at

these sessions.

We look forward to positive and meaningful Student-Led Conferences that highlight and celebrate each child's achievements.

Bookings for Student Led Conferences are open. Please follow the process below to make your bookings.

School Interviews – Booking Process:

1. Visit [schoolinterviews.com.au/code](https://schoolinterviews.com.au/code)
2. Click on 'Make a Booking'
3. Put in the event code: 87myu
4. Follow the instructions to make your Student Led Conference time

Enjoy Book Week.



Jane Clark, Deputy Principal – Learning & Teaching



# 2026 BOOK WEEK

## The Great Book Swap!

### *Let the Stories Play On*

*Sharing Stories, Caring for Our Common Home*



Don't forget to bring 1 or 2 books to swap on your allocated day!

**The allocated times are:**

**Tuesday** - Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2

**Wednesday** - Years 3 and 4

**Thursday** - Years 5 and 6

By giving books a new home, we reduce waste, make the most of our resources, and help foster a love of reading across our school community.



### Ben Sanders

Ben will visit our Year 3 and 4 students on Tuesday this week. He spends his days drawing and writing in his little studio in Ballarat. Some days he illustrates for international publications like Wall Street Journal. Other days he's writing children's picture books and creating colourful characters like *Lento & Fox* or naughty fruit such as *Bad Apple*. We look forward to learning all about his new graphic novels in the Agent Harrier Series.

| Week 7                       |                                                                                                                            |                                                               |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday 24th August           | <b>Dress up Parade -</b><br>Foundation, Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.                                                               | <b>Storytime</b> in the library<br>Second break - Mr Hogbin   |
| Tuesday 25th August          | <b>The Great Book Swap</b><br>Foundation, Year 1 and 2 Undercover - First Break                                            | <b>Storytime</b> in the library<br>Second break - Mrs Meneely |
| Tuesday 25th August          | <b>Author Visit</b> - Ben Sanders Years 3 and 4                                                                            |                                                               |
| <b>Wednesday 26th August</b> | <b>The Great Book Swap</b><br>Year 3 and 4 Undercover - First Break                                                        | <b>Storytime</b> in the library<br>Second break - Ms Harty    |
| Thursday 27th August         | <b>The Great Book Swap</b><br>Year 5 and 6 Undercover - First Break                                                        | <b>Storytime</b> in the library<br>Second break - Mrs Clark   |
| Friday 28th August           | <b>'Symphony' Celebrations</b> with our Music Students<br>Year 2 / 3 building steps<br><br><b>Dress Up Parade</b> - Year 5 | <b>Storytime</b> in the library<br>Second break - Mrs Mohr    |
| Week 8                       |                                                                                                                            |                                                               |
| Thursday 3rd September       | <b>Something Special! Book Week Performance</b><br>Foundation, Year 1 and 2                                                |                                                               |

Lindy Harty, **Literacy Leader**



*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.*



Book Week is one of my favourite weeks of the year!

It's not only the fun of sharing books and dressing up as a favourite character- to me it brings back such wonderful memories of being snuggled up and read to as a child.

One of my earliest memories is my mother reading me the whole series of Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne. I still can't help but smile when I think of Pooh getting stuck after eating too much honey!

In turn, reading books at bedtime was a time of precious connection with my own boys. It was a nightly routine that we did together and it had special meaning for our family.

Family rituals are important to the health and well-being of today's families trying to juggle busy demands of work, home, school, social lives and uncertainty. Your family rituals may not include reading at night, but could be watching a footy game together, cooking, gardening, board games or family celebrations. These are times that create shared memories, build family relationships and provide comfort and stability in our life.

Family rituals give you and your children a sense of security, identity and belonging.

In the attached article, parenting expert Maggie Dent shares why family rituals are so important.

Why not grab a book and start your own family ritual tonight?

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



INSIGHTS

## Why family rituals really matter



Family rituals strengthen the sense of warm connectedness in families. This makes sense, given that the number one biological need for every human is the hunger to belong, and to be accepted, valued and loved.

The disruption of life in 2020 saw many families unable to go about their normal activities, and for many, family rituals reclaimed their valuable position. For some, it was simply going for walks together, riding bikes together, baking, or watching movies together complete with home-made popcorn.

So how can families create and maintain small rituals that make such a difference?

### Turn routines into rituals

Bedtime routines that include such things as reading to your children, singing special bedtime songs or even just lying beside your child do far more than help them to fall asleep. When these routines are repeated, they create neural pathways which enhance loving connection. As a nanny to several precious little ones, I absolutely love being a part of their bedtime rituals.

### Reign in the chaos

Family rituals bring a degree of predictability and certainty into our sometimes chaotic lives. They are important for teenagers as they provide a sense of control at a time of change and challenge. Families who are struggling with any uncertainty and stress should regularly connect with a much-loved board game or family movie and dive into it with enthusiasm. Leave work and worry behind and spend a couple of hours with those you love the most.

### Create greeting rituals

Greeting and goodbye rituals within families are also important. How you welcome and reconnect to children after a day away shows them that you have missed them and still love them. With little ones, some parents leave a kiss on their child's palm. For others there are special handshakes. I can still remember my dad saying goodbye to us with the oldie but goodie "See you later alligator!" To which we naturally replied, "in a while, crocodile!" This is a ritual that happens now with my grandchildren.

As an authorised celebrant, I have conducted many funerals and one of the things that brings joy to broken hearts are the shared memories of family rituals. The repeated nature of ritual helps to anchor memories deeply in our minds. I remember a beautiful funeral for a man where everyone wore a beanie and a scarf, including his youngest grandchild. This simple act was a nod to the fact that whenever this grandfather watched football on TV, he always wore a beanie and a scarf and so did anyone else who was watching with him. A simple but powerful act.

Never underestimate the importance of family rituals in your home.

Provided as a part of our school's Parenting Ideas membership

[parentingideas.com.au](http://parentingideas.com.au)



### Maggie Dent

Commonly known as the 'queen of common sense', Maggie Dent has become one of Australia's favourite parenting authors and educators, with a particular interest in the early years, adolescence and resilience. She has written seven major books including the bestselling *Mothering Our Boys* and her 2020 release, *From Boys to Men*. Maggie is host of the ABC podcast, [Parental As Anything](https://www.abc.net.au/podcasts/parental-as-anything). She is the mother of four sons and a very grateful grandmother. For further details visit [maggiedent.com](http://maggiedent.com)

### Local Finals

Good luck to all of the students and staff that are currently participating in local football and netball finals. Keep enjoying the game, doing your best and being the best teammate you can be.

### 2026 SFX SPORTS DATES

Term 3:

- Week 8 - Friday Sep 4th - Interschool Sport (Yr 5/6) @ SFX
- Week 9 - Wednesday Sep 9th - Division Athletics @ Llanberris (qualifiers from BCPS Aths - Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)

Term 4:

- Week 1 - Friday Oct 9th - Regional Athletics @ Llanberris (Qualifiers from Division Aths - Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 2 - Friday Oct 16th - Junior Sports Day @ SFX (F-Y2 & Yr 6 Sports Captains)
- Week 3 - Friday October 23rd - Greater Western Region Basketball (Girls A) @ Selkirk Stadium
- Week 4 - Wednesday Oct 28th - Division Golf tournament @ Mt Xavier Golf Club (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 5 - Friday Nov 6th - Eureka Division Cricket @ Alfredton Reserve (selected students from 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 tremendous week.

Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator



## P&F News

- **Silver Coin Challenge – Pizzas this week for winning classes – Thanks to Carboni's**  
**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>** – FTW, 1GH, 2MH  
**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup>** – 3LL, 4KB  
**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>** – 5CC, 6PB
- **Trivia Night**  
Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September – 6.30pm in the school Gym  
Don't forget to book your table/seat – we look forward to seeing many of you on the night  
BYO food – drinks at bar prices
- **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.**  
If you have committed to donating a prize, please bring them into the office and leave them with Anita as soon as possible.
- **Father's Day Stall – first break in the undercover area**  
Gifts priced from \$2 - \$7  
**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September** – Foundation, Year 1 & Year 2  
**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** - Year 3 & Year 4  
**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September** – Year 5 & Year 6  
**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September** – catch up for anyone who missed out

- **SAVE THE DATES: School Disco – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September – more details to come**
- **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  
We require 5 volunteers to assist each week please sign up via the link sent 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
- **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.



# SFX TRIVIA NIGHT

**BOOK YOUR TABLE  
IN THE OFFICE**

**Friday**  
**4th September**  
at SFX Gymnasium  
Doors open at 6.30pm

\$17 per person  
or \$150 for a  
table of 10

**Gather your table**  
**Book your babysitter**

Drinks at Bar prices - BYO Food  
Silent Auction, Great Raffle Prizes & lots of fun to be had



## Attachments

### ASSEMBLY AWARDS 21<sup>st</sup> August 2026 Hosted by 1GH Theme: Respect

Respect means considering the feelings and wishes of others, respecting myself and caring for all of creation.  
We show respect because Jesus shows us that everyone is important and because our world needs our care.

|                                                                                                                         |                                      |        |                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------|
| FLP                                                                                                                     | Lola Mahar and Harry Howe            | 4RR    | Paityn Grant and Wilson Quinlan          |
| FJS                                                                                                                     | Tomas MacGillivray & Alfred Bromley  | 4ZA    | Mila Quandt & Patrick Robinson           |
| FBO                                                                                                                     | Kingston Pitman and Daisy Bye        | 4KB    | Lachy Just & Oskar Olszewski             |
| FTW                                                                                                                     | Emerson Somerville and Ivy Jolly     | 5CC    | Jameson Campbell and Paddy Ludbrook      |
| 1GH                                                                                                                     | Hudson Nicholson and Harvey Rowland  | 5LD    | Ned Kersley and Willow Prato             |
| 1EM                                                                                                                     | Lenny Richards and Eden Vanderkley   | 5ML    | Connor White and Abbey Williams          |
| 1GT                                                                                                                     | Marley Gull and Blake Morvell        | 6PB    | Hannah Firth and Eliza Hanrahan          |
| 2GJ                                                                                                                     | Blake Pitman and Patrick Olechnowicz | 6JS    | Sadie Buntsma and Maddie Purtell         |
| 2MH                                                                                                                     | Lachie Skewes & Aria Steinman        | 6MM    | Sibella Moore and Levi Crowe             |
| 2TS                                                                                                                     | Sophie Quinlan & Bob Nunn            | EE/Sci | 4ZA                                      |
| 3LL                                                                                                                     | Lachy Hatt Amaiyah Moore             | PA     | 4KB for the respect they show each other |
| 3JT                                                                                                                     | Annie Ludbrook & Charlie Ryan        | VA     | Shirley Dorning & Henry Sertori (1GH)    |
| 3ZP                                                                                                                     | Birdie Toohey & Patrick Lenaghan     | PE     | Oliver Quinlan and Maeve Williams        |
|                                                                                                                         |                                      | Tch    | Mia Cadogan (3LL) and Mayo Baruwa (3LC)  |
| Principal's Award: Casey Hartup & James Cycles for reaching out the hand of friendship to other students in our school. |                                      |        |                                          |

# Ministry District Newsletter

## 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A - August 23rd, 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)  
Natalie Gleeson (Admin Assistant)

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au  
Phone: 0437 505 517

Finance: Jackie Wrigglesworth

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

|                                               |               |                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday August 25th                           | 9.30 am       | St. Alipius' Ballarat East                          |
| Wednesday August 26th                         | 11.00 am      | Mercy Place Ballarat East                           |
| Thursday August 27th                          | 11.00 am      | Estia Mt Clear                                      |
| Friday August 28th                            | 9.30 am       | St. Alipius' Ballarat East<br>St Michael's Bunagree |
| Saturday August 29th                          | 9.30 am       | St. Alipius' Ballarat East                          |
| WEEKEND MASSES - 22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME |               |                                                     |
| Saturday August 29th                          |               | Sunday August 30th                                  |
| 5.00 pm                                       | Ballarat East | 9.00 am<br>Ballarat East<br>Bungaree                |
| 6.00 pm                                       | Springbank    | 10.30 am<br>Buninyong<br>Ballan                     |

### WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

#### THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

#### THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

Peter Cefai, Maureen Everard, Rita Fuller, Patrick Keating, Frank Leahy Maureen Mahar, Jack Mahoney, Robert Marshall, Malcolm McKenzie, Molly O'Loughlin, Rita Powell, Maureen Santamaria

#### THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Bill Burgess, Patrick Landrigan, Richard Wade, Owen Widdison

### THIS WEEK'S READINGS

#### 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 22:19-23

Romans 11:33-36

Matthew 16:13-20

### NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 20:7-9

Romans 12:1-2

Matthew 16:21-27

*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.*

### CELEBRATING FIRST EUCHARIST

This Saturday evening at Clarkes Hill, Alexander, who has been preparing in the Parish Eucharist Program will celebrate his first reception of the Eucharist, completing his full sacramental initiation into the Church. We welcome Alexander and his family to our Mass and thank Therese Winter for coordinating this sacramental program, acknowledging the support of the staff St Mary's Clarkes Hill.



### BAPTISMS

#### St Alipius' Ballarat East

Hazel George  
Daughter of Garry and Jessica

Ziggy Ashley Coxall  
Daughter of Ashley and Alecia

Myles Ebery  
Son of Anthony and Shannon

### REMEMBERING SISTER BERENICE

Next Wednesday August 26th, Bishop Mark & Fr Shaiju will celebrate the 10.45am Mass at Mercy Place Ballarat East in remembrance of Sr Bernice Kerr RSM who died earlier this year. All are welcome to the Chapel at Mercy Place to celebrate this Mass.

### BALLARAT DIOCESE LAY PASTORAL MINISTRY PROGRAM: GROW IN FAITH, KNOWLEDGE AND MINISTRY.

The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF) offers flexible online courses for parish staff and volunteers through the University of Dayton. With 31 subjects to choose from and a course fee of just USD \$50, there is something for everyone. Cycle 6 begins on 7 September, and registrations close on 3 September. Scan the QR code for more information or email [fran.peterkin@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:fran.peterkin@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 5337 7154.

### ST MARY'S SCHOOL CLOSING CELEBRATION

After 80 wonderful years of Catholic education and service to the local community, St Mary's School will be closing. We are seeking a small group of parishioners, past and present families, former students and community members who would like to join a committee to help organise a special celebration to mark the closing of our much-loved school. If you would like to be involved in planning this special occasion and helping us celebrate the history, memories and legacy of St Mary's, please register your interest with Clare on 53345280 or [cscanlon@smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au](mailto:cscanlon@smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au) by Tuesday 1st September. We would love to hear from anyone who would like to be part of making this a meaningful celebration of 80 years of St Mary's.

### THE BIG TENT

For the past year Geraldine Doogue and an inter-generational cast have developed a podcast series titled The Big Tent, hosting an honest, contemporary search that aims, in the prophet Isaiah's words, to 'enlarge the space of your tent'. The links below take you to two of the Apple podcast episodes: [Changing belief: between faith and fiction](#) & [Changing belief: faith in the bush](#).

### UPCOMING DATES

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August

RCIA Inquiry Ballan  
St. Brigid's Church 11.30 am

Thursday 3rd September

Ballarat East Pastoral Council meeting  
Parish Hub 5.30pm

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September

Bungaree Parish Leadership Team meeting  
Dunnstown, Damascus @ St. Brendan's School  
7.00pm

*Please note the change of date for the Ballarat East Parish PPC and the Bungaree Parish Leadership Team meetings.*

---

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

**LONG TERM VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN  
THE AUSTRALIA-PACIFIC REGION  
THE CAGLIERO PROJECT,  
SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO**

The Cagliari Project is an initiative of the Australia-Pacific Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco, providing overseas volunteer experiences for Australians and New Zealanders who wish to work with young people in the Asia-Pacific region. We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers for January 2027 departure. Our volunteer placements run for 6-12 months and are centered around working with young people in educational settings. We are currently recruiting for volunteers for Cambodia, Samoa, Timor Leste, Mongolia and the Solomon Islands. We use the skills and talents of our volunteers to contribute meaningfully to host communities. Rather than "helping," we walk in solidarity with young people, creating opportunities for mutual learning and growth. Cagliari volunteers work in the Salesian way, placing young people at the centre of all they do and approaching life with joy, compassion, and respect. While the focus is on those we serve, the experience is often deeply rewarding for volunteers as well.

Applications close October 31st, 2026. Send us an enquiry - [www.cagliari.org.au](http://www.cagliari.org.au) or [lhichaaba@salesians.org.au](mailto:lhichaaba@salesians.org.au).

**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.



**MACKA MOMENTS**

Sister of St Joseph, Rita Malavisi has created over 300 youtube videos aimed at teaching more about St Mary MacKillop. It has become a weekly must-view for thousands across the country. Sr Rita says what keeps the series going is that it focuses not just on the woman MacKillop was, but also on her ability to guide others in their faith. "The focus has always been on how she's followed Christ in her life, and how she can be an example." [A Macka Moment](#)

**SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT AUGUST 2026,  
"LIVING THE GOSPEL IN TIMES OF  
SOCIAL DIVISION"**

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has released the second Social Justice Statement for this year ahead of Social Justice Sunday (August 30, 2026), "Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division". This statement invites us to see our current social climate as an opportunity to witness to the Gospel. The Church can and must be a sign of unity: a community where every person feels at home and all are encouraged to use their gifts to build a more just, peaceful and cohesive Australia. The Statement and more information can be accessed at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/service-and-agencies/welfare/social-justice/social-justice-statement-current/>. The Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission will host a webinar in November to celebrate the launch of the Statement - details to be advised.

**LEADING IN A SYNODAL CHURCH: LESSONS  
FROM POPE FRANCIS AND POPE LEO XIV**

Join the Global Centre for Catholic Leaders as we welcome Gerard O'Connell and Elisabetta Pique to the University of Notre Dame Australia to explore the unfolding synodal journey on Tuesday, August 25, 2026 from 9.30am – 12.00noon at the Sheraton Melbourne Hotel. This engaging session will provide an opportunity to consider: the driving factors for Pope Francis's synodal imagination; the seeds and inspiration for synodality; observations of Pope Leo XIV in relation to synodality. Whether you are enthusiastic, curious or new to understanding synodality, this session offers an opportunity to better understand its origins, purpose and significance for the Church today. Bookings essential, \$75.00 per person. Booking link <https://payments.nd.edu.au/LeadinginaSynodalChurchMelbourne>

# Recognising Jesus' True Identity

## Reflection on the Gospel

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

(Matthew 16:13-19)

Veronica Lawson RSM

Jesus' true identity is a key issue for Matthew's community, as it is for us. "Be yourself. Everybody else is taken", sings Melinda Schneider. The lyrics of this song, composed for Melinda's dying father, affirm some fairly obvious truths. Even though we know that "everybody else is taken", most of us spend energy trying to measure up to other peoples' expectations and fail to be truly ourselves. In our self-absorption, we can also misread others and fail to know them as they are. Accepting ourselves and being accepted as we are is among the most precious of gifts. Jesus knew this. He was utterly true to himself and he allowed others time to discover for themselves his real identity and the nature of his mission. If the mission were to succeed, then his followers needed to look beyond their preconceptions about him and accept him as God's anointed, as the revelation of the living God.

From the outset, Jesus is presented as the anointed of God, the Messiah or the Christos. Before his birth, the reader knows him as "Emmanuel", God with us. What the narrator asserts at the outset, certain characters in the story come to understand. Jesus' fearless teaching and his healing ministry bring the crowd to recognise him as a prophet and as the incarnate Wisdom of God. The power of God at work in Peter leads him to a deep understanding of Jesus' identity. Peter has faltered in the past and will falter again, even to the point of denying any knowledge of or association with Jesus. He finally arrives at deep insight, however, and proclaims his faith in Jesus as both Christ/Messiah and son of the living God. Insight is a gift and God can work wherever there is openness and goodwill. Peter is presented here as having both. He is declared "blessed" on



account of this gift of insight and entrusted with the "keys" of God's empire.

The specific power of binding and loosing that is given to Peter is subsequently given to the community of disciples (18:18). The saying is framed by instructions about dealing with transgressors and by the assertion that where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, he is there in their midst.

"Binding and loosing" belong to all who gather in the name of Jesus whom Matthew presents as God-with-us, as prophet and Wisdom, as the Christ and as the revelation of the living God. The exercise of the power "to bind and to loose" demands the same wisdom and insight as does the capacity to recognise and affirm the true identity of Jesus. Gathering in the name of Jesus is a challenge at any time. It is a particular challenge in the face of the disillusionment and hurt caused by abuse of the most vulnerable in our midst. We pray for the wisdom to find new ways of being church and of truly dealing with transgression.

A colorful poster for the Dean Kite Festival. At the top, a large, multi-colored kite (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) flies against a light blue sky with white clouds. A long red ribbon trails from the kite. The text 'DEAN KITE FESTIVAL' is written across the kite. Below the kite, the date and time are listed: 'Sunday September 6th 2026' and '12 Noon - 4pm'. Further down, the activities are listed: 'Kite Making Workshops \$10', 'Kite Demonstrations', and 'Sausage Sizzle & Afternoon Tea'. To the right of the text, a simple line drawing of a person is shown flying a kite. At the bottom left, the 'Hepburn SHIRE COUNCIL' logo is displayed. To its right is the location: 'Dean Recreation Reserve', '1370 Daylesford / Ballarat Road', 'Dean, Victoria'. Below the council logo is a small box that says 'Fundraiser on day for local charity'. To the right of this box is the 'IGA CRESWICK' logo. At the very bottom, contact information is provided: 'enquiries: Jon Rofe, p: 0428 340 596 e: rofey@bigpond.com'. The bottom of the poster features a green field with a line of trees.

**DEAN KITE FESTIVAL**

**Sunday September 6<sup>th</sup> 2026**  
**12 Noon - 4pm**

Kite Making Workshops \$10  
Kite Demonstrations  
Sausage Sizzle & Afternoon Tea

**Hepburn**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

Dean Recreation Reserve  
1370 Daylesford / Ballarat Road  
Dean, Victoria

IGA CRESWICK

Fundraiser on day for local charity

enquiries: Jon Rofe, p: 0428 340 596 e: rofey@bigpond.com