



St Francis Xavier Primary School

Newsletter

Monday 7th September 2026
Term 3 Week 9

P.O. Box 2027
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Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 3 (10 weeks)

Mon 13th Jul-Fri 18th Sep

Tuesday 8th September

Bravehearts visit

11.40am Foundation

12.30pm Year 1 & 2

Wednesday 9th September

Division Athletics @

Llanberris (qualifiers from

BCPS Aths – Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)

6pm in the Library

Instrumental Music

Showcase by Tim's students

Thursday 10th September

6pm in the Library

Instrumental Music

Showcase by Lauren's

students, Chris' students

and our choir

Friday 11th September

1.45pm-3.00pm

Market Day

No Assembly today

Tuesday 15th September

6pm Confirmation at

Damascus College

Wednesday 16th Sept

Pop Up Uniform Shop

8.30am in undercover area

Thursday 17th September

School Disco

Entry by gold coin donation

Foundation & Year 1:

4.15pm - 5pm

Year 2 & 3: 5pm-5.45pm

Year 4 & 5: 5.45pm-6.30pm

Year 6: 6.30pm-7.15pm

Friday 18th September

Last day of Term 3

Footy Colours Day - gold

coin donations to support

Fight Cancer

No Assembly today

On the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

This week I was fortunate to attend the Australian Primary Principals Conference in Canberra. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend a few days in our nation's capital, learning from inspirational keynote speakers and connecting with colleagues from government, independent and Catholic schools from across Australia.

The conference brought together an exceptional group of national thought leaders, educators, psychologists and social commentators whose work explored issues including leadership, wellbeing, public ideas, digital impact, gender equality and youth empowerment.

The speakers offered a rich blend of academic expertise, practical leadership experience and contemporary Australian social insights. Their presentations provided plenty of opportunities to reflect on the challenges and opportunities facing primary schools and the important role that school leaders play in responding to them.

The Federal Minister for Education, Mr Jason Clare, also attended the conference and spoke passionately about the importance of primary education and the significant role primary school principals play in shaping the lives and futures of young Australians.

While the conference provided plenty of opportunities to learn, it also gave me some valuable time to reflect on the many strengths of our own school. I was reminded of just how much we can be proud of at Saint Francis Xavier. Our commitment to providing an excellent education for every student, our focus on the wellbeing of our children, our dedication to growing in faith and our strong sense of community are all wonderful strengths.

At the same time, conferences such as this encourage us to look beyond what we are doing today and consider what we might do even better tomorrow. There are always new ideas to explore, new opportunities to embrace and ways in which we can build upon the strong foundations we have established.

As my school report cards used to say so often: there is always room for improvement!

I returned from Canberra feeling both proud of our school and energised about the opportunities that lie ahead. Most importantly, I was reminded that the work we do together — staff, students and families — really does matter. It is through our shared commitment to our children that we continue to grow as a strong and caring school community.

God bless,

Mark Hogbin



Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 5th Oct–Fri 18th Dec

Wednesday 7th October

Year 3 Adekate Day Camp

Friday 9th 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 16th October

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

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by SLD

Friday 23rd 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 28th October

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

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

Thursday 5th November

3.30pm-6pm
Art Exhibition in school gym
Gold coin donation

Friday 6th November

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

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 4ZA

Friday 13th November

12.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 2TS

Colour Run

Father's & Special Friends Celebrations

Thank you to all families and friends of our school who supported our Father's Day events last week. A small team of parents managed to ensure that every child had the opportunity to purchase a gift, and our gathering on Friday afternoon was very special. Mr. Marshall; Dad, teacher and Religious Education Leader produced a very appropriate service for us to share. We hope that all dads had a great day, and a very happy Sunday.

Student Led Conferences

Our students proudly showcased their learning last week for the second time this year. The Student Led Conferences form part of our commitment to reporting each students learning successes to parents in a format that allows for the student to have an active role in the process. We hope that all families had the opportunity to celebrate learning together and we thank you for supporting your children's learning at school.

New Newsletter Format

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving the way we communicate with our school community, we have been making a number of changes to our online presence this year. These have included updating our school newsletter, strengthening our email communications and introducing clearer guidelines around the use of images for school purposes.

Our next step is to introduce a **new and more user-friendly format for our school newsletter**. We want our newsletter to be easy to access, simple to navigate and an effective way of keeping families connected with all that is happening at Saint Francis Xavier Primary School.

Over the coming weeks, we will transition to this new format, and we invite you to **subscribe from today**. By subscribing, you will automatically receive the newsletter in its new format as soon as it is launched.

To subscribe, simply follow the prompts using the QR code below.

We look forward to sharing our new-look newsletter with you and continuing to improve the way we communicate with our families.

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR



NEWSLETTER



Click subscribe
in the main menu



sfxballarat.modularmedia.com.au

Friday 20th November

2.40pm Assembly in
School gym led by 6JS

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

9.30am End of Year Mass in
school gym

Thursday 10th December

5pm Christmas Carols

Monday 14th December

Year 6 Big Day Out

Tuesday 15th December

5.30pm Year 6 Graduation

Thursday 17th 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.



SAVE THE DATE!

Please save the date for our biannual SFX Art Exhibition! More information to come!



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YEAR SIX PRESENTS

MARKET Day!

SHOP • SUPPORT • MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



1:45PM
— TO —
3:00PM

BALLARAT
SOUP BUS



ALL MONIES RAISED WILL GO TOWARDS
THE BALLARAT SOUP BUS ♥



LOTS OF DIFFERENT
GOODS & SERVICES

CREATED AND RUN BY
OUR YEAR SIX STUDENTS!

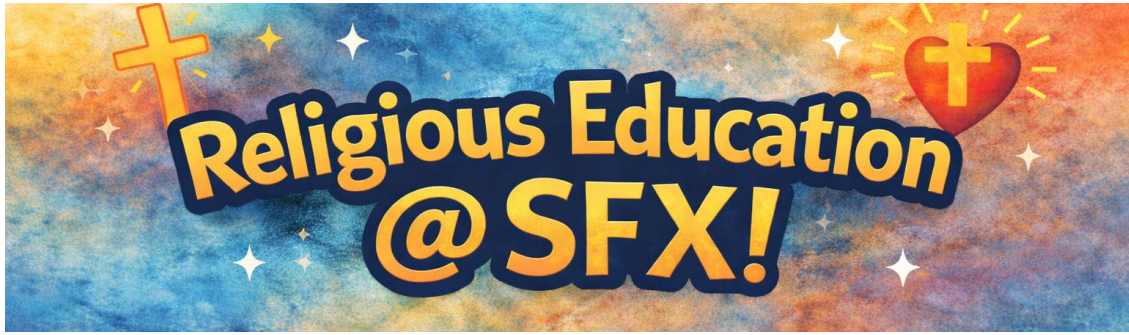
SOMETHING
FOR EVERYONE
TO ENJOY!



EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

STUDENTS • PARENTS • GRANDPARENTS • FRIENDS

LET'S COME TOGETHER AS THE SFX COMMUNITY
TO SHOP, SUPPORT & CELEBRATE!



Fathers & Special Friends Day

A heartfelt thank you to all the fathers and special friends who joined us last Friday for our Fathers & Special Friends Day afternoon tea and liturgy.



It was wonderful to see so many members of our school community gathering to celebrate the important role that fathers, grandfathers, carers and special people play in the lives of our students. Thank you for sharing this special afternoon with us and helping to create such a warm and joyful atmosphere. We are also incredibly proud of our students and staff who prepared and led the liturgy with such reverence and care.

This Week's Gospel – Where Two or Three Are Gathered (Matthew 18:15–20)

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus reminds his disciples of the importance of relationships, forgiveness and community. He finishes with these comforting words:

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them."

Jesus reminds us that God is not only present in churches or special occasions. He is with us whenever we come together in love, prayer and support of one another.

Whether we're gathered as a family around the dinner table, celebrating together at school, or helping a friend through a difficult time, Christ is present in those moments of connection.

A message for families:

We continue to celebrate the Season of Creation, reflecting on our shared responsibility to care for God's creation. This week also includes Threatened Species Day, reminding us of the importance of protecting the unique plants and animals that share our world.

As people of faith, we are called to care not only for one another, but also for the Earth that God has entrusted to us.

A family reflection:

When do we feel most connected as a family?

How can we care for God's creation in simple ways 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 strengthen your family or community this week.

- Spend time together without distractions.
- Say a prayer together as a family.
- Do one small thing to care for the environment or protect wildlife.

When we gather with love, kindness and faith, we make space for Christ to be present among us.



Michael Marshall, Religious Education Leader

Curriculum News

Student-Led Conferences



A huge thank you to our wonderful students and teachers for their enthusiasm, preparation and effort in making our **Student-Led Conferences** such a success last week.

Student-Led Conferences are an important part of our school reporting cycle. They provide students with an opportunity to take ownership of their learning and share their achievements, progress and goals with their parents and carers.

These conferences help students to:

- **showcase their learning and progress** through evidence and examples
- **develop reflection and self-evaluation skills**, building confidence in their learning
- **strengthen organisation and communication skills**
- **encourage open and honest conversations** between students, parents/carers and teachers
- **take greater responsibility and ownership** of their learning
- **give parents and carers a deeper understanding** of their child's learning journey.

We are incredibly proud of the way our students embraced this opportunity to share their learning and celebrate their growth. A special thank you to our families for their support and for taking the time to be part of these important conversations.

Bravehearts Incursion F-2



As part of our Health and Physical Education curriculum, our Foundation to Year 2 students will have a wonderful opportunity tomorrow to learn with Ditto the Lion Cub from Bravehearts.

This engaging program supports the VCAA (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority) guidelines, helping children develop an understanding of health, safety, relationships and wellbeing in age-appropriate ways.

More broadly, Health Education at our school encourages all students to explore the factors that influence their wellbeing. Students develop skills in respect, inclusion and positive decision-making, while learning to challenge stereotypes and assumptions. They also build personal and social skills, explore identity and emotions, and learn how to access reliable health information to support both their own health and the health of others. Looking forward to seeing Ditto tomorrow.

Enjoy your week.

Jane Clark, Deputy Principal – Learning & Teaching





PRIME MINISTER'S SPELLING BEE



Congratulations to the students in Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 who participated in the Prime Minister's Spelling Bee this year. It was wonderful to see so many super spellers challenging themselves to spell tricky words against the clock! Congratulations to the following **Class Champions!**

Year 3	Year 5
Amaiyah Moore, 3LL	Oliver Downes, 5LD
Birdie Toohey, 3ZP	Jameson Campbell, 5CC
Odie Brooks, 3LC	Austen Roberts, 5ML
Year 4	Year 6
Mila Quandt, 4ZA	Olive Lenaghan, 6JS
Angus Morley, 4KB	Alexis Toohey, 6MM
Banjo Nicholson, 4RR	Evangeline Speirs, 6PB



This year we had three students who made the State Finals, due to their speed and accuracy - Congratulations to: Banjo Nicholson, Angus Morely and Alexis Toohey!



Lindy Harty, **Literacy Leader**



BRAVEHEARTS VISIT



On **Tuesday September 8th**, the children in Foundation, Year One and Year Two have the opportunity to experience Bravehearts' personal safety education program Ditto's Keep Safe Adventure Show. The Ditto show is a live, interactive 40 minute performance starring Bravehearts' mascot 'Ditto'. It includes song, dance, and easy-to-remember messages about personal safety.

The show is underpinned by the following six principles of personal safety:

- Differentiating 'yes' and 'no' feelings
- Recognising the bodies 'warning signs'
- Identifying 'private parts' and 'privacy'
- Helping children identify language and feelings associated with secrets
- Reinforcing that there is no secret that children cannot tell someone

Parents and carers are **WELCOME** to attend!

We would **LOVE** you to join us!

Sessions are at **11.40am (Foundation)** and **12.30pm (Year One and Two)**

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Start a conversation using these 4 steps

1


Ask RU OK?

2


Listen

3


Encourage action

4


Check in

Find tips at ruok.org.au

Useful contacts for someone who's not OK

If your life is in danger or you're concerned for your own or someone else's safety please call 000.
 You can find support by contacting your local doctor or one of these crisis lines available 24/7.

Lifeline 13 11 14 lifeline.org.au	Beyond Blue 1300 224 636 beyondblue.org.au	Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467 suicidecallbackservice.org.au
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R U OK Day this week on Thursday September 10 reminds us to check in on our family, colleagues and loved ones.

R U OK suggests we use four steps to start a conversation about mental health-

- 1) Asking R U OK?
- 2) Listening with an open mind
- 3) Encouraging the person to take positive action
- 4) Checking in with the person again to follow up



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

Local Finals

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

Division Athletics

Good luck to the 20 students that will be participating in the Eureka Division athletics this Wednesday at Llanberris Athletics Reserve. Birdie T, Fletcher H, Milla N, Imogen S, Edward G, Damilare B, Eliza V, Ryder B, Isabella C, Mackenzie D, Lawrence W, Charlotte P, Edith B, Nixon G, Jackson R, Isla J, Alexis T, Nellie C, Emily C & Remi J will proudly represent our school in various track and field events. We wish you all the best and look forward to hearing how you go.

2026 SFX SPORTS DATES

Term 3:

- 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 wonderful week.

Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator



P&F News

• School Disco – Thursday 17th September

Foundation & Year 1: 4.15pm - 5pm

Year 2 & Year 3: 5pm – 5.45pm

Year 4 & Year 5: 5.45pm – 6.30pm

Year 6: 6.30pm – 7.15pm

Entry is a Gold Coin donation – lollies, popcorn, chips & Slushies available to purchase after each session

- **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** Pop up shop – Wednesday 16th September – 8.30am in the undercover area

- **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.



Ministry District Newsletter

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A - Sept 6th, 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 Wigglesworth

Natalie Gleeson (Admin Assistant)

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Email: jackie.wigglesworth@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			
Monday September 7 th	10.30 am	Funeral Prayers for Kruno Devcic St. Alipius' Ballarat East	
Wednesday September 9 th	11.00 am	Mercy Place Ballarat East	
Thursday September 10 th	10.30 am 11.00 am	St Brigid's Ballan Mecwacare Canadian	
Friday September 11 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East St Michael's Bungaree	
Saturday September 12 th	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Ballarat East	
WEEKEND MASSES - 24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME			
Saturday September 12 th		Sunday September 13 th	
5.00 pm	Ballarat East	9.00 am	Buninyong Bungaree
6.00 pm	Springbank	10.30 am	Ballarat East Ballan

WE ASK YOUR PRAYERS FOR:

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Krno Devic

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME

George Azzopardi, Bill Black, James Cummins, Justin Driscoll (snr), Elspeth Eastwood, John Faulkner, Emily Green, Ewen McCarthy, John McCarthy, Colin McKenzie, Jack Nunn, Janette Pearse, Eileen Pendergast, Bob Stevenson, Wayne Torpy, John Meiklejohn, Michael Williams, Jimmy Winter

THOSE WHO ARE UNWELL

Bill Burgess, Patrick Landrigan, Aurelia Masi, Cindy McKenzie, Marcia O'Neill, Richard Wade, Owen Widdison

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ezekiel 33:7-9

Romans 13:8-10

Matthew 18:15-20



NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sirach 27:30 - 28:7

Romans 14:7-9

Matthew 18:21-35

Happy FATHERS' DAY

God our Father, we give you thanks and praise for fathers young and old.

We pray for young fathers, newly embracing their vocation; may they find courage and perseverance to balance work, family and faith in joy and sacrifice.

We pray for our own fathers around the world whose children are lost or suffering; may they know that the God of Compassion walks with them in their sorrow. We pray for men who are not fathers but still mentor and guide us with fatherly love and advice.

We remember fathers, grandfathers, great grandfathers and father figures who are no longer with us, but who live forever in our memory and nourish us with their love. Amen.

INTRODUCING CATHEVENTS

~EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY~

CathEvents is a free online hub that gathers Catholic events from right across Australia and New Zealand — retreats, conferences, formation courses, lectures, community gatherings — in one easy-to-navigate place. Whether you're looking for something for yourself, your parish, or the people you serve, it's all there. Visit www.cathevents.org.au and explore and to subscribe to the weekly newsletter.

WELCOME TO FRs GARY JONES AND KEVIN MALONEY

Thank you to Frs Gary and Kevin who are celebrating the Masses at Ballarat East and Buninyong this weekend while Fr Justin travels to Mildura to celebrate the weekend Masses in Mildura and Merbein. Since the transfer of Fr Matthew Thomas from Mildura to Warrnambool there has not yet been an appointment of a new Parish Priest to the Sunraysia. Until an appointment is made, the priests from the Ballarat area will travel to the Sunraysia for weekend Masses.

UPCOMING DATES

Wednesday 9th September

Ballarat East Parish Finance meeting
Parish Hub 7.30am

*

Gordon Parish Leadership team meeting
St Brigid's Ballan 7.00pm

Thursday 10th September

Ballan RCIA Inquiry
St Brigid's 11.30 am

*

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

Tuesday 15th September

Ballarat East Parish Confirmation Liturgy
Damascus College 6.00 pm

Wednesday 16th September

Damascus Day Mass
11.15 am Damascus College

Thursday 17th September

Ballan Mecwacare Anointing Liturgy
10.00 am Ballan Mecwacare

*

St Brigid's Anointing Mass
11.00 am St Brigid's, Ballan

Friday 18th, September

Loreto College Gonzaga Barry Day Mass
9.15 am Loreto College

PARISH FINANCES - AUGUST

	Gordon	Bungaree	Ballarat East
Parish	\$1,785.50	\$859.00	\$6,716.12
Presbytery	\$3,157.20		\$4,179.00

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

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BALLARAT CLERGY SUPPORT FUND ~COLLECTION FOR RETIRED PRIESTS~

The Ballarat Clergy Support Fund provides for retired priests who have spent a lifetime selflessly caring for others, and who deserve a happy and peaceful retirement. The Fund is currently supporting and caring for seventeen retired priests. This annual collection has allowed the Fund to continue to support our retired priests. Your generous support has enabled us to continue 'caring for those who cared for us'.

Contributions over \$2.00 are tax-deductible. Donation options:

Special envelopes are available for this collection, which will be taken up next weekend. Alternatively you can scan or click the QR code for CDF Pay, select your parish and select "My giving is for Retired Priests Collection".



A DAY OF PRAYER, REFLECTION AND FRIENDSHIP FOR THE SPECIAL YEAR OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

The Catholic Women's League of Victoria and Wagga Wagga Inc are hosting A Day of Prayer and Reflection on Monday October 5, 2026 beginning at the Landsborough Hall from 10am - 2.30pm including Mass and Presentation by Fr James Kerr. Cost \$12pp cash. For catering and dietary requirements please RSVP by September 28 to Margaret Rowe: 5358 2421, Jan Crowe: 0428 916 941 or anna.collins@bigpond.com

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.

PRAYER FOR SEASON OF CREATION



Living Water Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER
Ezekiel 47:8, 12

Holy God, whose Spirit hovered over the waters at the beginning, we gather as part of your community of all creation, thirsty for your grace.

We give thanks for the gift of water, the veins of our common home, that sustains the cedar and the whale, the pasture and the city.

We are grateful for the local waters that nourish our homelands and our fellow creatures.

We give thanks that in your well-watered garden, every drop is a sacred testament to your love.

Yet, we confess that we have treated this gift as a mere commodity.

We have choked the seas with our waste and watched the warming tides rise in judgment.

We lament the cracked earth of the drought-stricken and the salty tears of the climate refugee.

Melt our frozen hearts, O God, and let the waters of repentance flow.

Lord of all Life, you promised that wherever the river flows, everything shall live.

Stir in us a calling to care for the waters — to protect the watershed, defend the rights of water, and honour the dignity of the thirsty.

May your Word be a spring within us, gushing forth for the healing of the nations.

May God our Father who brought water from the rock sustain us in the desert.

May Christ our Lord who is Living Water refresh us for the work of restoration.

And may the Holy Spirit carry us on currents of grace until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amen.

DIOCESAN FORUMS IN HORSHAM

On Tuesday September 8th Frs Justin and Shaiju will participate in a forum of priests serving in parishes across the diocese and then on Wednesday September 9th Cathy Prunty and Jackie Wigglesworth will participate in a forum for parish administration personnel.

'Surrender to the Sky your Heart of Anger'

Reflection on the Gospel

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

(Matthew 18:15-20)

Veronica Lawson RSM

As we celebrate the first Sunday of the Season of Creation, we are conscious of the need for the human community to be reconciled with Earth and with all that inhabits our common home. The theme for the 2026 Season of Creation is "Living Water" and the symbol is "Immersion in Living Water". Both theme and symbol are inspired by Ezekiel 47: 1- 12 "which portrays God's life-giving water flowing from the temple of God. The river grows deeper and deeper restoring barren land, reviving waters, and sustaining flourishing ecosystems. The vision invites human responsibility: recognising ecological damage, embracing interconnectedness, we are called to immerse ourselves in the water...actively safeguarding and working for the renewal of creation so that environmental healing and human well-being may flourish together" (<https://seasonofcreation.org/>).

At the corporate level, we might ask if those who refuse to listen to the science on the climate crisis should be deterred by more stringent legislation and heavy penalties. On the personal level, the shaming of offenders is rarely effective. So, what does a just society do with its persistent offenders, with those whose behaviour continually disrupts the very future of life on the planet? There is no easy answer. What does the gospel tradition offer in this respect? Today's gospel indicates that the power to deal with transgression is firmly in the hands of the community. All care must be taken to allow offenders to recognise and acknowledge their offences without being publically shamed. If that fails, the matter is referred to a group of witnesses, in line with Israel's ancient legal practice (Deuteronomy 19:15). The next step is referral to the assembled community. Those who refuse to listen are to be treated as "Gentiles" or "tax-collectors". Some scholars suggest



that the Matthean Jesus is proposing expulsion of those who refuse to listen. Others consider that he is advocating the sort of compassionate approach he has personally shown to outsiders, to those in need of conversion. Since every one of us needs conversion in relation to planetary health, compassionate persistence and leading by example are attractive options.

We do well to seek the wisdom of others. We have the assurance that Christ, God-with-us, is present in the assembly. We also have the assurance that our failure to deal with transgression can leave perpetrators unreconciled and susceptible to reoffending. We need to "loose" the sins of those who acknowledge their offences. In other words, we are called to forgive them and thus set them free from the burden of their transgressions. While the gospel passage focusses on forgiveness, our first concern must be with those who suffer at the hands of offenders, including the Earth itself. We must "surrender to the sky [our] heart of anger" (James K. Baxter) and, at the same time, work actively to provide our planetary home and all of its inhabitants with the care that is surely needed.

BALLARAT JUNIOR CHESS CLUB

HOLIDAY
PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 2026



WINTER CUP TOURNAMENT
TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
7-ROUND SWISS TOURNAMENT
TROPHIES & PRIZES



HOLIDAY PROGRAM – 3 DAYS OF CHESS FUN!
28th – 30th SEPTEMBER (Mon – Wed)



ALL SESSIONS • 10AM – 3PM



ACTIVITIES:

• Coaching • Puzzles • Endgames • Strategy • Games & Fun



Open to junior players U/18 of all playing levels,
 from beginner to advanced players.

FOUR DAYS OF CHESS!

WINTER CUP



TUE 22 SEPTEMBER

Hooper Room

\$50

MON 28 SEPTEMBER

Humffray Room

\$50

TUE 29 SEPTEMBER

Humffray Room

\$50

WED 30 SEPTEMBER

Humffray Room

\$50

3-DAY PASS
(28–30 SEPT)

\$135

Save \$15 when
 you book the
 3-day pass!



IMPROVE
 THINKING &
 DECISION-MAKING



BLUNDER
 AVOIDANCE &
 CALCULATION



ENDGAME
 TRAINING &
 STRATEGY



TOURNAMENTS
 & FUN CHESS
 ACTIVITIES

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- ✓ Bring your own healthy lunch, snacks and water bottle.
- ✓ Students remain in the club rooms for the entire session.
- ✓ Pick up and drop off is from the Junior Chess Club entrance only.
- ✓ Please be on time for pick up at 3pm.
- ✓ The same Code of Conduct as the Junior Chess Club applies.

SCAN TO BOOK!



Ballarat Chess Club
 Ballarat Mechanics Institute
 117–119 Sturt Street, Ballarat



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BASKETBALL HOLIDAY CAMPS

WEDNESDAY 23RD & THURSDAY 24TH SEP
BUXTON MINERDOME • 9AM - 3PM

WEDNESDAY 30TH SEP & THURSDAY 1ST OCT
SELKIRK STADIUM • 9AM - 3PM

DISCOUNTS
FOR MULTIPLE
DAYS AND
CHILDREN!

SCAN TO SIGN UP



SELECT OUR
SCHOOL AND
WE GET
\$5 BACK