St Francis Xavier Primary School



Newsletter
Monday 9th December 2024

Term 4 Week 10

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Email: principal@sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au

Term 4 (11 weeks)

Mon 7th Oct - Fri 20th Dec

Thursday 12th December

Yr 1 Excursion Creative Play & Arts Centre & Ballarat Ninja

6pm Year 6 Graduation

Monday 16th December

Year 3 Camp Tuesday 17th December

5pm for 5.30pm start Community Christmas Carols at school

Wednesday 18th December Last 2024 day for students

Wednesday 29th January First 2025 day for students

In the Land of the Wadawurrung People

Dear families,

We are busily enjoying the end of term activities across the school this week. Classes are preparing for Christmas, spending time with each other and celebrating a great year of learning across our school. The third Advent candle was lit at assembly today, and so we definitely know we are on the countdown now!

Last week I was fortunate to be able to attend a special Mass at St. Alipius church with our Year 6 students and friends from St. Alipius, Emmaus and Damascus. It was a memorable event for us all. In coming together as the four Catholic schools of our parish we were acknowledged the 150th anniversary of our diocese. Fr. Justin reminded us that from very humble beginnings with tent schools and churches, our diocese has grown incredibly. Today across the diocese we educate children from kindergarten to university. With more than 60 schools across an area covering 1/3 of the state we have reason to feel proud of faith education and parish celebration in this part of Victoria.

Bishop Paul asked us at the start of the 150th year to give thanks for our many blessings. He also asked us to acknowledge our failures and to plan for a future where the Holy Spirit can remain present in our lives. I was reminded of this as we gathered last week. Our future church and community leaders where present with us and I felt proud and confident of who we are and what our catholic system has to offer.



God bless,

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End of School Year Mass

We celebrated Mass together on Friday with Fr. Justin to give thanks for a great school year and to acknowledge the feast of our patron, Saint Francis Xavier. Thank you to the many parents and friends of our school who came to celebrate with us. It was a very special event.







End of Term - Start of Term

Classes cease for the 2024 school year on Wednesday 18 December at 3.15pm. Our new school year commences on Wednesday 29 January 2025. Happy holidays!

Year 6 Graduation Ceremony

Our Year 6 children will come together on Thursday 12 December to mark the end of their primary school years. This is a very special celebration and we are proud of our graduating class. We wish them well as they enter their final days at Saint Francis Xavier primary school.

Community Carols



Please come along and join in the fun of our Community Carols on Tuesday 17 December from 5pm for a 5.30pm start. We will gather on the oval and you are welcome to bring along a picnic rug, food etc. to enjoy a family evening together. Our Parents & Friends committee has organised for some food vans to be available if you would like to purchase items on the night. See you there!

"Holding the Light"

Remembering Victims and Survivors of Family Violence

This ecumenical service offers an opportunity to remember and mourn those who have been killed as a result of domestic violence, to stand in solidarity with victim survivors and to reflect and commit ourselves to addressing the causes of violence in our communities.

The service will be held on Tuesday December 10th at St Alipius Church, Ballarat East at 5.00pm.

December 10th is the UN Human Rights Day, concluding the 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign from November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women). This ecumenical service will name the dimensions and dynamics of the serious problem of violence in our society. We will name the God present in and through all our efforts to create lives free from violence. We will seek to hold the light for those who are in dark places and for those whose lives are emerging from darkness. Joce Bignold, CEO of McAuley Community Services for Women will be the guest speaker.

All members of the community are invited to gather for this service.

Religious Education News

THIS WEEK'S GOSPEL- Sunday December 8th, 2024 Second Sunday of Advent (Year C)

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

It was the fifteenth year of the rule of the Emperor Tiberius; Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip was ruler of the territory of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias was ruler of Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests. At that time the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. So John went throughout the whole territory of the River Jordan, preaching, "Turn away from your sins and be baptized, and God will forgive your sins." As it is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah:

"Someone is shouting in the desert:

 $\hbox{`Get the road ready for the Lord;}\\$

make a straight path for him to travel!

Every valley must be filled up,

every hill and mountain levelled off.

The winding roads must be made straight,

and the rough paths made smooth.

The whole human race will see God's salvation!" (Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation)

Gospel reflection: God speaks to John while he is in the desert. John the Baptist goes round to the people and tells them to be prepared for the coming of Jesus. He offers to baptise them so that their sins will be forgiven.

Advent is a time when we think about our actions and try to make sure that we are ready for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. We think about what we could do better and try to make a change to our lives. Making a change can be really difficult, but nothing is impossible if you set yourself a goal.

Our Challenge: How will you make a difference to your own lives and to the lives of others around the world this week as you prepare for the coming of Jesus this Advent?



A special thank you to our Parish Priest Fr Justin Driscoll, who celebrated our End of Year Mass with us last Friday.

We began with the Foundation children walking in their Year Six buddies to the song "Count on Me" and ended with Year Sixes being given a special blessing, as is the tradition as we begin and leave St Francis Xavier. Congratulations to all the students who participated in our rituals, prayer and songs- their respectful and reverent behaviour was noted by staff and parents alike.

In Fr Justin's homily he spoke about endings and new beginnings are a part of life and how we are never alone if we have God in our lives. He encouraged us to not only SEE, but to BE the change we need in our world, by starting a "revolution of tenderness.

Many thanks also to all the family, friends and community members who joined us for our Eucharist- everyone is always welcome here at St Francis Xavier!



As part of the St Alipius Parish 150 Year Celebrations, the Year 6 students from our Parish schools (St Francis Xavier, St Alipius, Emmaus) and representatives from Damascus gathered to celebrate Eucharist together at St Alipius Church last week.

Many thanks to our fantastic Year Six teachers and children- a fabulous time was had by all. We thank everyone at St Alipius school for their kind hospitality and sharing morning tea with us.





Christine Meneely, Religious Education Leader

Wellbeing News

Child Safety Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

As the school year grows nearer to the end and festivities of cultural and holy celebrations begin, day to day operating can become a little harder for both adults and children who have difficulties with public environments, sensory nervousness or coping with change.

Everyone is getting tired, connections may become strained and demands appear larger. Throw into the mix the end of school commitments (not to mention whose turn it is to host Christmas) and no wonder you feel exhausted already!

It is helpful to think about how we can reduce the orders of day to day activities to ensure we don't completely deplete our energy.

Work out what is significant to your family and plan your activities around these things - by aiming our attention on what's big, we reduce the unnecessary demands which come with "filler" activities or stuff that doesn't line up with your principles.

The following SchoolTV link contains some information about the podcast Radio Headspace and the episode focus of 'Mindfulness as Self-Care'. If you click 'listen' you can check in with yourself, by using this short meditation by Headspace. By clicking the above link, it will take you to the SchoolTV website where you can listen to the podcast!

Sending cheers your way,



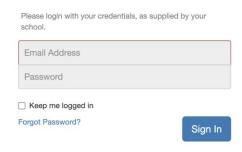
Gemma Johnson, Wellbeing Leader

Curriculum News

Assessment & Reporting – Term Four



Parent Access Module Login



We are pleased to inform you that your child's End of Year School Report will be available for download from the Parent Access Module (PAM) site on **Monday, 16th December**. These reports provide a comprehensive overview of your child's achievements throughout Semester Two.

Each report is carefully prepared by your child's class teacher, reviewed by a year-level team member, and further checked by the Leadership Team to ensure accuracy and clarity. I would like to commend our teachers for their dedication, professionalism, and the personalised comments they have included.

We encourage you to take the time to read the report thoroughly and discuss the feedback with your child. Most importantly, take this opportunity to celebrate your child's efforts and successes throughout the 2024 school year.

Wow what a week with Seesaw!

Week of December 1 - December 8 at St Francis Xavier Primary School - Ballarat East





With the end of our year close, all Specialist subject classes will be posting onto Seesaw. Please keep an eye out and don't forget to make a comment. We know this is a successful way of building Home/ School connections. Thank you in advance.



Moving Up Day

Last Tuesday we had a most successful, happy day with our yearly Moving Up day. Most of our Year 6 students headed off to their new secondary schools and our children from F-5 met their 2025 teacher/s and peers. We know that change can be difficult and we also know that the only thing which is constant is change. Well done children for adjusting to this new change!



Enjoy your week,



Jane Clark, Deputy Principal/Learning Enhancement

Sport/Physical Education News

Thank you and well done to all of the students, staff, parents, families and friends that played a big part in another very successful year of Sport at SFX in 2024.

In 2024,

- There were 129 individual students that represented SFX in Sport.
- We were represented in 10 different sports
- We also had a wonderful Yr 3-6 Athletics Day and F-Yr2 Junior Sports Day
- Students in Yr 1-6 participated in swimming programs at BALC
- Yr 6 students welcomed and visited other schools for InterSchool Sport
- Students in Yr 4-6 participated in Golf Clinics.

A special mention and thank you to the fantastic team of Yr 6 Sports Captains. Your willingness to assist Mr Down and myself at any moment, your encouragement of others and your enthusiasm and energy particularly on Junior Sport Day was inspiring to all of those involved.











2025 SFX SPORTS DATES

Term 1:

- Week 4 Tuesday Feb 18th SFX Athletics Day @ Llanberris (ALL Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 students)
- Week 4 Friday Feb 21st District Swimming @ (venue TBC) (nominated students from Yr 4, 5 & 6)

Term 2:

- Week 3 Wed May 7th Division AFL @ venue TBC (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 4 Mon May 12th Division Cross Country @ Fed Uni (selected students from Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 6 Wednesday May 28th Division Soccer @ Morshead Park, Redan venue TBC (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 7 Friday June 6th Division Netball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)

Term 3:

- Week 4 Friday Aug 15th Ballarat Catholic Primary Schools Athletics @ Llanberris (selected students from Yr 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 5 Friday Aug 22nd Division Basketball @ Selkirk Stadium (selected students from Yr 5/6)
- Week 8 Thursday Sep 11th Division Athletics @ Llanberris (qualifiers from BCPS Aths Yr 4, 5 & 6)

Term 4:

- Week 1 Friday Oct 10th Regional Athletics @ Llanberris (Qualifiers from Division Aths Yr 4, 5 & 6)
- Week 4 Friday Oct 31st SFX Junior Sports Day (all students in F-2)
- Week 5 Wednesday Nov 5th Eureka Division Cricket (selected students from Yr 5/6)

Have a great week.



Shaun Carroll, SFX Sport Coordinator





SS PETER & PAULS 701 FISKEN ST BUNINYONG 3357



ST ALIPIUS 82 VICTORIA ST BALLARAT EAST 3350



PARISH OFFICE 84 VICTORIA ST BALLARAT EAST 3350 PH 5332 6611 OPEN TUE - FRI 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

<u>ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.orq.au</u> www.ballarat.catholic.orq.au/parish/ballarat-east/ 8th December 2024 2nd Sunday of Advent

'All people shall see the salvation of God.'



MASS TIMES

St Alipius

Tues 9.30 am
Wed 11:00 am Mercy Place
(All welcome)
Thurs - Sat 9:30 am

Sat 6:00 PM Vigil Sun 9:00 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th weeks) 10:30 AM (2nd & 4th)

Ss Peter and Paul's
Sunday 9:00 AM (2nd & 4th)
10:30 AM (1st, 3rd & 5th)
Rosary – Thursday 11:00 AM

Our Parish is committed to the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

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

WE PRAY FOR

Faithfully departed:

Anniversaries: Madeleine Ballinger, Jim Power

Unwell: Pam Hill, Kathy Towns, Socorro De Chavez, Peter McLachlan, Sarah McLachlan, Carole Simmons

PARISH TEAM

Parish Priest Fr Justin Driscoll

Assistant Priest Fr Matthew Restall

Parish Coordinator Cathy Prunty

Administrative Assistant Natalie Gleeson

Finance Officer Jackie Wrigglesworth

Child Safety Officer Emily Clarke Principal – St. Alipius School Phone: 5331 1816

PARISH VISION

The combined communities of St Alipius Parish reach out in the spirit of faith, hope, love, and acceptance, as God calls us to in the gospels.

PARISH MISSION

Our mission in the Parish of St Alipius is to actively engage and serve our combined communities, embodying the teachings of the Gospel. Strengthened in the spirit of faith, hope, love acceptance and Mercy, we strive to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. Guided by God's call to service, we aim to build strong connections, provide spiritual nourishment, promote social justice, and offer support to individuals and families in their journey of faith. Through our dedicated interactions, we seek to deepen our relationships with God, inspire transformation, and make a positive impact in the lives of those we encounter, spreading God's love and compassion to all.



PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

Thank you to all parishioners who contribute to our planned giving program. Your generosity is appreciated.

Supporting our parish priests	\$1003
Maintenance of parish buildings, office and administration expenses, grounds maintenance etc.	\$643.20

Counting Team this week: No. 2

UPCOMING DATES

Anniversary Mass & Picnic

December 14th @ 6pm – Church and Grounds

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES ACROSS THE MINISTRY DISTRICT

Following consultation with the Bungaree and Gordon Parish Leadership Teams and the Ballarat East Parish Liturgy Team, the schedule for 2024 will be:

Christmas Eve (Tuesday December 24th)

4.00pm Mercy Place Ballarat East

5.30pm Ballan

6.00pm Ballarat East

6.30pm Clarkes Hill

7.00pm Gordon

7.30pm Buninyona

9.00pm Ballarat East

Christmas Day (Wednesday December 25th)

9.00am Ballarat East

9.00am Dunnstown

The above schedule is reliant on the generosity of Frs Kevin Maloney and Wally Tudor assisting Frs Justin and Matt.

CHRISTMAS GIFT TAGS

On the Christmas tree down the back of the church are tags for the residents at Mercy Place to receive a gift for Christmas. We invite people to take a tag and return the gift back ASAP.

NAZARETH HOUSE AUXILLARY CHRISTMAS STALL

Saturday and Sunday 14th and 15th December. Foyer of Nazareth House 218 Mill St 9am - 2pm.

Baked goods, Christmas Gifts & Decorations and much more. Great Christmas Hamper raffle to be drawn on the Sunday.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL

◆Summer Appeal◆

The Ballarat East Conference of SVdP invites you to support our Christmas Appeal.

Please do so by donating

- 1. Via envelopes found on pews, please place completed envelopes on collection plate
- 2. Online vinnies.org.au
- 3. By phone 13 18 12

Donations greater than \$2 are Tax deductible

◆Christmas Raffle◆

A Christmas raffle will be held with tickets being sold for \$2 each or 3 tickets for \$5. Winners will be announced at the Anniversary Picnic on December 14th.

PRIZES - first drawn parishioner chooses from three prizes:

BIKE for 6 - 8 year old

HAMPER - including fruit cake, meat voucher and other goodies

DOLLS - porcelain dolls

◆Piety stall - cards and calendars◆

The stall will be open after Masses commencing 23rd November for sale of:-

SVdP Christmas Cards \$5 for pack of 5

St Columban's Calendar \$10

BAPTISMS

Joe Lucas Hobbs Child of Nicholas Hobbs and Georgia Smith

> Patrick James Eldridge Child of Greg and Carmel Eldridge

'You are precious in my sight and I love you'
Isaiah 43:4

♦ INVITATION ◆



Next Saturday night, December 14th
we will acknowledge our parish
anniversaries. Everyone is invited
to join Bishop Paul who will celebrate
6pm Mass. Following Mass please
stay and share a meal. This is a

wonderful opportunity for all parishioners to come together and we hope to see you there. The displays will be a wonderful talking point and we expect a number of our previous priests from the parish to join us. For more information please call the parish office.

ECUMENICAL SERVICE

"Holding the Light" Remembering Victims and Survivors of Family Violence

This ecumenical service offers an opportunity to remember and mourn those who have been killed as a result of domestic violence, to stand in solidarity with victim survivors and to reflect and commit ourselves to addressing the causes of violence in our communities. The service will be held on *Tuesday December 10th at St Alipius Church, Ballarat East at 5.00pm.* December 10th is the UN Human Rights Day, concluding the 16 days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign from November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women). Joce Bignold, CEO of McAuley Community Services for Women will be the guest speaker. All members of the community are welcome!

END OF YEAR SCHOOL MASSES

Year 6 Graduation for St. Francis Xavier will be held on Thursday December 12th at 6.00pm.

St Alipius School Ballarat East will celebrate their end of school year Mass on Tuesday December 17th at 1.30pm in St Alipius Church.

Emmaus, Mt Clear will celebrate their end of school year Mass on Thursday December 16th at 11.30am in St Alipius Church as well as staff Mass celebrated on Friday December 17th at Ss Peter and Paul Church Buninyong at 2.00pm.

CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

Following the appointment of Fr Andrew Hayes as Parish Priest of the Parishes of Apollo Bay, Cororooke & Colac, Bishop Paul has appointed Fr Neville Stanislaus, Parish Priest of Gariwerd (Ararat, Lake Bolac, Landsborough & Stawell) from January 15th . Priests of the Diocese have now been invited to express interest in being appointed Parish Priest of the Parishes of Camperdown (Cobden & Lismore), Hampden (Mortlake & Terang) and Timboon (& Simpson). These three parishes will form a Ministry District, cared for by one Parish Priest, with the assistance of another priest or priests who will help particularly with Sunday Masses.

WORKING BEE

Following the 6pm Mass this weekend (Dec 7th) we encourage parishioners to stay around and help to set up the Nativity Scene in the church yard. We will also have some cleaning equipment available and ask people to do a little dusting or wipe down some surfaces if they are able.

BISHOP PAUL WRITES ON THE HIGH COURT JUDGEMENT AND VICARIOUS LIABILITY

In cases where there is evidence that the Diocese of Ballarat has been negligent in the duty of safeguarding children, the Diocese accepts liability and provides compensation to victims.

In the case considered by the High Court, Victorian courts had found that the Diocese of Ballarat was not negligent but still held that the Diocese was liable – vicariously. The High Court set aside this decision of the Victorian courts

I would like to make it clear that the Diocese of Ballarat will continue to accept liability and provide compensation in cases where there is evidence that the Diocese has been negligent in safeguarding. In addition, the Diocese will continue to provide compensation through the Federal Government's Redress Scheme and through the state-wide Church process called Pathways Victoria. As well as providing compensation in these ways, the Diocese will continue to provide assistance to those who have suffered abuse by funding counselling and other pastoral help.

MORE FROM THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

A formal report on the Assembly held at Federation University Mt Helen on Leadership and Governance for a Missionary Synodal Church will be released in the coming weeks. In the meantime, our newsletters for the coming weeks will include reflections from parishioners in attendance as either delegates or facilitators.

Sr Berenice Kerr (Mercy Sister, Ballarat East) Delegate

The Assembly gave me hope. I went, not sure where we were going, but ready to trust the process. I made a commitment to myself to be open to the promptings of the Spirit and the 'word' coming from the gathered members. I believe the Spirit was present and active. Some aspects of people's behavior and attitudes disappointed me but remembering that I did not have to control the responses of others was liberating. The Diocese of Ballarat has chosen a direction from which we cannot turn back. No matter how small nor how faltering the steps we take from here on, our public, diocesanwide resolution cannot be ignored, nor can it be negated. The Wild Goose will ultimately have her way. My prayer now is not 'Come, Holy Spirit' but 'Stay, Holy Spirit, and continue to chase us'.

MAKING A SCENE AT CHRISTMAS

Making a Scene at Christmas will be held in the Bridge Mall from Wednesday December 4th until Friday December 20th, 2024. Entry by gold coin donation.

Prepare the Way

Reflection on the Gospel- 2nd Sunday of Advent (Luke 3:1-6)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Since the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis has called us to look into our hearts and to bring the compassion and mercy of God to our troubled planetary home. Care of our common home and of all that inhabits our planet is both a gospel imperative and an urgent call to the whole human community. Our courageous pope gives extraordinary leadership in this respect. Like Luke, author of the third gospel, Pope Francis recognises that the message is for the whole world and not simply for the Church community. Luke situates his gospel drama on a national and international stage and in relation to global events. He wants to insist that religion is no private affair and that the story of the movement around Jesus of Nazareth is no ordinary, everyday story. It is, rather, a story with momentous political and religious significance. His references to Herod Antipas and to Pilate foreshadow the imminent fate of John and the eventual fate of Jesus. Luke is strong on dramatic impact and less concerned about the facts. He situates events in the "pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas", implying that there were two high priests at the same time. In fact, Caiaphas succeeded his father-in-law Annas as high priest, even if the influence of the latter persisted into Caiaphas' pontificate.

Luke presents John the son of Zechariah as a prophet in the long line of prophets that culminates in the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the global stage. Jesus is the one who truly brings the salvation of our God. It is worth noting that prophecy in Luke is not reserved to the male characters. With the shift from private to public space in Luke 3, however, women

> THIS WEEK'S READINGS 2nd Sunday of Advent (Year C)

> > Baruch 5:1-9 Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11 Lk 3:1-6

prophets who featured prominently in the earlier chapters (Elizabeth, Mary, and Anna) now disappear from the narrative.

Luke 3:1-6 contains some of Luke's favourite themes: prophecy and its fulfilment; the word of God; reversal of expectations; conversion



or repentance; proclaiming the good news; forgiveness of sins; salvation. As in Israel's past, the wilderness or desert is the locus of God's revelation. The prophet John calls on the people of the region around the Jordan River to turn their hearts and their lives around, to accept "a baptism of metanoia/conversion for the forgiveness of sins'.

We listen to the Isaiah citation that follows ("Prepare the way...") against the backdrop of the first reading from the prophet Baruch. While we might critique the violent metaphorical language that speaks of God's salvation in terms of filling the valleys and levelling the hills, we yearn for a time when "all flesh", human and other-than-human, will see the salvation of God. God's way involves putting on the "cloak of integrity" or the "robe of righteousness" and allowing God to provide an escort of mercy and right relationship. If we take seriously the call to live the gospel, we shall surely search for ways to heal the broken relationships within our ailing planet.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

3rd Sunday of Advent (Year C)

Zephaniah 3:14-18 Philippians 4:4-7 Lk 3:10-18



Power FM's Junior Miners Holiday Camps are held during each school holidays for children aged 5-14 years old of all genders and abilities.

Improve your skills, develop techniques, enhance your game, meet new friends and ultimately have fun! Our camps cater for the beginner who has never picked up a basketball to the most experience 14-year-old in the land!

All participants can expect:

- Meet your favourite Miners players
- Expert instructions from professional coaches including Miners player and coaches
- Develop new basketball skills and training methods
- Fun and inclusive learning environment
- Structured session content including great games and prizes at every camp
- Learn how to be a great team mate and help others succeed

Registrations for the Summer Holidays are now open, with the camp being held on Tuesday Jan 14th, Wednesday Jan 15th, Wednesday Jan 22nd, Thursday Jan 23rd from 9:00am till 3:00pm at Selkirk Stadium.

For more information and to register: https://www.ballaratbasketball.com/holiday-camp/

For further details please contact Zack Cummins via email programs@ballaratbasketball.com or for urgent enquiries call reception on (03) 5338 1220







