

# St Francis Xavier

## Catholic Parish of Ballina

Respecting the traditional people of this land—past, present and future, the Bundjalung people.



**St Francis Xavier Church,  
47 Cherry Street, Ballina.**

*welcome*

**Holy Family Church,  
94 Ballina Street, Lennox Head.**

### Second Sunday of Advent (B)

**10th December, 2023**



### Weekend Mass Times Ballina

**St Francis Xavier Church**

**Saturday Vigil— 5.30 pm**

**Sunday — 9.00 am**

**Sunday — 11.00 am**

**Lennox Head**

**Holy Family Church**

**(7.30 am from  
next Sunday)**

### WEEKDAY MASS

### TUESDAY TO FRIDAY MASS 12.00 noon

**RECONCILIATION**

**9.00 am Saturday ~ Ballina  
St Francis Xavier Church**

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**Feast Day**

**St Lucy  
Wednesday**

**St John of the Cross  
Thursday**

*We are a community who welcomes everyone without exception.*

### PARISH NOTICES

**'WELCOME' Parents and children of our two Parish Primary Schools to  
this week's Vigil Mass and to all visitors celebrating  
Mass with us this weekend.**

### ADVENT WREATH *Lighting 2nd Candle*

**PRIEST:** Lord Jesus yours is the voice that calls us back from the wilderness

**PEOPLE:** COME LORD JESUS

**PRIEST:** Lord Jesus, you baptise us with water and the Holy Spirit

**PEOPLE:** COME LORD JESUS

**PRIEST:** Lord Jesus, you are the bearer of Good News

**PEOPLE:** COME LORD JESUS



**St Francis Xavier Parishioners:** I would like to provide an update to my message in the Parish Bulletin two weeks ago regarding communication and parishioner input. I am inviting you to a meeting to discuss increased communication methods and ideas. This is an opportunity for me to hear your thoughts and feedback. The meeting will be held **this Monday 11th December at 4.00 pm** in the Upper Room. I look forward to seeing you there.

*Father Peter*

### CHRISTMAS MASSES

**7.30 pm Christmas Eve Vigil Mass one Extraordinary Minister for  
Holy Communion is required.**

**11.00 am Christmas Day Mass 2nd Reader is required and one  
Extra Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion.**

*Please ring the Parish Office 6681 1048 or email  
admin@sfxballina.org.au if you can assist at these two Masses. Thank you.*

**CAN YOU HELP? Private Accommodation required for a 23 year old  
catholic man who will be working in a ministry role in our Parish and in  
our Schools in 2024. If you can assist Brendan please call 0413 384 224.  
Thank you.**

**PARISH VOLUNTEERS MASS TUESDAY 19TH DECEMBER 12.00 NOON**

**PARISH ANOINTING MASS ~ Friday 22nd December  
12.00 noon St Francis Xavier Church, Ballina.**

**ST VINCENT de PAUL CHRISTMAS CARDS**  
are available following weekend Masses.  
\$10.00 each for a pack of 10. *Selling very quickly!!*

**Low Gluten Hosts are available from the Priest at all weekend Masses.**

**PRESBYTERY:** Phone: 6686 2042

**\*AFTER HOURS MOBILE: 0423 445 639\***

**PARISH ADMINISTRATION CENTRE:**

**PARISH LIBRARY:**

**SCHOOLS:**

**AGED CARE:**

**Administrator of Ballina Parish:** Father Peter Padsungay

**Assistant Priest:** Father Anselm Okeke

**Deacon:** Rev Assoc. Prof Anthony Gooley

**Pastoral Associate:** John Kearney Email: [john@sfxballina.org.au](mailto:john@sfxballina.org.au)

**Parish Youth Co-Ordinator:** Kailani Tiernan Email: [ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au](mailto:ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au)

Phone: 6681 1048; Fax: 6686 8774; Email: [admin@sfxballina.org.au](mailto:admin@sfxballina.org.au)

Mon to Fri 8:30 am - 4:00 pm - 53-57 Cherry Street - Postal Address: PO Box 46 Ballina 2478

**[www.sfxballina.org.au](http://www.sfxballina.org.au)**

Library available to parishioners Mon to Fri 9 am - 4 pm;

St Francis Xavier Primary: 6686 3370 - Swift St, Ballina

Holy Family Primary: 6687 5311 - 40 Isabella Drive, Skennars Head

Xavier Catholic College: 6687 6484 - 2 Redford Drive, Skennars Head

St Anne's Long Day Care Centre: 6687 5961 - 42 Isabella Drive, Skennars Head

Crowley Care Services: 1300 139 099 - 154 Cherry St, Ballina

**ROSTER: 3rd Sunday Advent, Year B: 16th/17th December, 2023**  
**Readings : Isaiah 61:1-2, 10-11; Psalm; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8,19-28**

	<b>Saturday 5.30 pm Vigil Ballina</b>	<b>Sunday ~ 7.30 am Lennox Head If Church is reopened</b>	<b>Sunday 9.00 am Ballina</b>	<b>Sunday 11.00 am Ballina</b>
<b>Readers</b>	Bryan Marriott Mick Vella	Angela Beglin .....	Annette Reen Gary Reen	Maurice Gahan Warwick Manning
<b>EMOHC</b>	Yvonne Head	Deacon Anthony	Denise Miller Cathy Campbell	Leanne Robbins
<b>Offertory Procession</b>			Cathy Andrews Diane Evans	

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED:**

Peter Dignam, Cheryl Dowdell (*Narrabri*), Peter Newport, John Woolbank, Fredrick Ousby

**THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME :** Margaret Pyne,

**AND ALSO FOR:** John Patrick Moreland, Marj & Pat Hobbins, Ted Murphy, James & Mary Rogers, Cath Waddell, C & S Hosie, Mick & Gwynne Waugh, Fay Kerslake, Carolina Bordin, Armando Bordin, Rina, Charlie & James Volpatti, Thama Walker, Bill & Jean Shay, Cecilia & Bill Condon Snr, Stan & Mary McKeough, Members of the SVdP Conference & Auxiliary & for all faithful departed.

**AND FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL:** Patrick O'Mara, Graham Clark, Shari McLeish (*Orange*), Kathy Fraser, Ken Delany, Peter Mazzer, Elizabeth Townsend, Mary Evans, John McCoy, Noeline Conyngham Mick Ronan, Annemarie Higgins, Louise King, Michael Lyons, Neville Johnston, John Keightly (*Inverell*), Pam Murray, Virginia Kohlbach and family, Michael Hains, Ronald Windle, Jones & Skimmings family members, Abby Barrie (*Tasmania*), Joan Flew, Hugo Long, Carmel Hackett, Leila Atken (*Sydney*), Aoife Stephenson (*Brisbane*), David Anderton, Patrick Connelley, Maria Hosking, Kaley Nobbs, Dymna Sheehy, Samantha Anderson, *Aunt* Julia Paden, Greg Campbell, Layla Small, Maree Doolan, John and Conchita Schroder, Gregory Thomas, Jocelyn O'Brien, *unwell residents in Crowley Village, St Andrew's Nursing Home, RSL Life Care, Bupa Aged Care.*

**UP COMING PARISH EVENTS ~ 2023**

<b>11th December</b>	<b>Monday 10.30 am</b>	<b>The Cenacle Anawim Room</b>
<b>12th December</b>	<b>Tuesday 10.00 am</b>	<b>'Cherry' Coffee Club</b>
<b>16th December</b>	<b>Saturday 9.00 am ~ 11.00 am</b>	<b>Parish Advent Reflection Morning tea to follow</b>
<b>18th December</b>	<b>Monday 12.00 noon Final for 2023</b>	<b>Taizé ~ 45 min of praise meditation &amp; music uninterrupted</b>
<b>19th December</b>	<b>Tuesday 12.00 noon</b>	<b>Parish Volunteers Mass</b>
<b>22nd December</b>	<b>Friday 12.00 noon</b>	<b>Anointing Mass</b>

**The Catholic Diocese of Lismore**

**Safeguarding Office** can be contactable if you have any Safeguarding concerns. We will listen to you respectfully; offer support and discuss options you have available to you.

Contact the Safeguarding Office—Phone: **(02) 6621 9444**  
OR

Email: **safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au**



**THANK YOU to all Parishioners** for your continued efforts to maintain your pledge to the Parish Planned Giving program. **Thank you** also for your donations to the Presbyterium collection to assist the priests in our Diocese. Our sincere gratitude to all who give to the Parish and clergy. **Father Peter and Father Anselm**

**SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH ~ \*\*1st & 2nd COLLECTIONS ARE COMBINED IN THE ONE**

**COLLECTION\*\*:** Parishioners are able to continue their contribution to our clergy and the parish if they wish by following the following information.

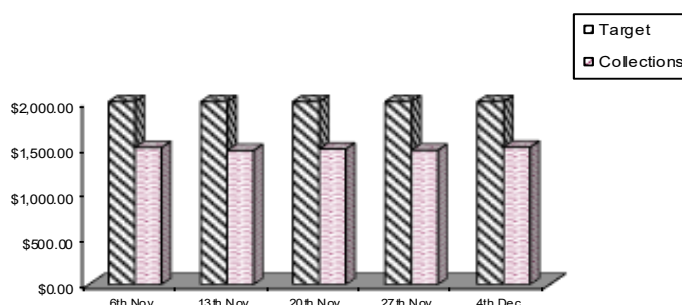
- By completing a form available from the Parish Office to have a credit card deduction each month for your **Planned Giving Donation ONLY**
- By making an EFTPOS donation — **1st Collection** to Ballina Presbyterium BSB: 082 522 A/c 50960 2127 ref: **your name**
- **2nd Collection** to St Francis Xavier Parish BSB 082 522 A/c 50960 3218
- Please ensure you **use your Planed Giving number as reference**, place your envelopes in the collection boxes provided in the church or bring them to the Parish Office at your convenience.

**DIF PAYS 4.15% PER ANNUM**

**BALLINA AGENTS:** Michael Shay, **L J Hooker** 87-89 River St Ballina 6686 2711 - Crowley Admin Office Cherry St Ballina 1300 139 099 or online [www.dif.org.au](http://www.dif.org.au)

**THIS WEEK'S COLLECTIONS**

<b>First Collection</b>	Support of our Diocese Priests	\$ 713.85
<b>Second Collection</b> Support of the Parish & Ministries & School Building & Maintenance Fund	Loose Plate	\$ 328.80
	Planned Giving Envelopes Collected	\$ 1,502.00
Planned Giving Envelopes Weekly Target		\$ 2,009.00



### A voice in the wilderness

I recall a scripture scholar describing John the Baptist as an extremely eccentric character with an odd wardrobe and an unusual diet. However, you imagine him, certainly John must have had a captivating personality, attracting large followings in less than comfortable surroundings, and this surely suggests that his message carried real conviction.

Mark and his fellow gospel writers are in no doubt that John the Baptist is the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecies about the one who would prepare the way for the coming of the messiah. Accordingly, John takes centre-stage in the liturgies of Advent. He invites us to think about our lives and to what extent we have welcomed the Lord into them, and how readily we are responding to his continuing invitation to follow him.

In his second letter Saint Peter is obviously concerned that the enthusiasm of some members of the early Christian community is beginning to wane because the promised Second Coming of the Lord has not arrived, and here are we, two thousand years later, still waiting and wondering. Of course, one of the fascinating aspects of Advent is that it expects us not only to commemorate the First Coming – the birth of the Christ-child in Bethlehem – but also requires us to look forward to his Second Coming in glory.

As we mature through life, we may well, like those Christians of the first century begin to wane in our zeal and commitment. It can prove difficult to capture the magic of Christmas as we experienced it in our childhood, and the Second Coming may seem like a dim and distant prospect. However hard we try "to live lives without spot or stain", we may be growing weary, wondering how the Lord is going to fulfil his promises for us personally and for the whole of his creation.

Perhaps one of the lessons we can learn from this Sunday's liturgy is that we are not likely to find the answers in the hustle and bustle of everyday life. We do need to withdraw into the desert within ourselves if we are to hear the voice in the wilderness calling us to "make a straight highway for our God". The temptation is to allow the cacophony of voices to distract us and crowd out the one voice that wants to clarify our thinking and give us the inner peace that will put everything into perspective.

Entering the mind of God, we will discover that a day can mean a thousand years, while a thousand years are like a day. With that perspective we may be able to recapture the joy of our youth and the sense of wonder that infused our minds at Christmas in those days. Remember: we need the trust of the little child to be ready for the Kingdom. A very happy Christmas to one and all.

Timothy J Buckley CSsR

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#### ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY Ballina Conference 'JESSE TREE'



The Society will be distributing **FOOD VOUCHERS** to needy people this Christmas, which allows our clients to purchase food of **their own choice** for themselves and their families. They will not be able to purchase non-food items such as alcohol or tobacco with our vouchers.

If you wish to help us in assisting these families, please take one of the envelopes from the 'Jesse Tree' in the Church of St Francis Xavier.

The envelope with donation may be returned to the Vinnies shop at 7 Martin Street, during week days, business hours 9.00 am to 4.00 pm, Saturday 9.00 am until 12.00 noon.

Please return envelope by:

**MONDAY 18th DECEMBER, 2023** for distribution before Christmas.

We **thank you** for your generosity in sharing of God's gifts and helping to make a family's Christmas this year a little brighter. Every dollar goes directly to those most in need in our local community.

**St Vincent de Paul Society  
St Francis Xavier Conference Ballina**

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
CATHOLIC PARISH BALLINA

**2023  
PARISH DAY  
OF REFLECTION**

**16TH  
DEC. 2023  
9AM**

**FEATURING:**  
ROSARY . RECONCILIATION . REFLECTION . ADORATION . BENEDICTION

ALL PARISHIONERS ARE WARMLY INVITED TO JOIN THIS PARISH EVENT IN  
PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS

#### CATECHISTS MATTER *Volunteers NEEDED for 2024*

**An invitation to consider and reflect upon if you are able help in this rewarding mission.**

Can you spare 30 minutes a week to help sow the seeds of **FAITH, HOPE and LOVE** in **GOD** into the hearts of the children in our local State Schools? Our parish needs Catechists and Helpers to assist in the faith development of children in the State schools in our community. For more information on becoming a Catechist contact the Parish Office 6681 1048 or Peter Bowen Parish Catechist Co-ordinator phn 0421 518 371.

**Please give some thought to this important invitation. You will be supplied with resources and be part of a very enthusiastic and vibrant team.**

#### CHRISTMAS DUES ARE BEING RECEIVED AT THIS TIME

The Christmas Offering is made to the Bishop and clergy of the diocese. In the same way as all those in receipt of an income have an obligation to support the works of the Church through the Planned Giving Program, it is a responsibility of all of us to support the clergy, keeping in mind that they need to eat too. We offer this support by giving to the first collection on Sundays and through Christmas and Easter Dues. Those with Planned Giving envelopes will find a special envelope in the box, and others can place an offering in an envelope and write "Christmas Dues" on the outside. By the way, the offering doesn't go to individual priests, but is added to the overall Clergy Fund collections for the whole year for the whole diocese.

Thank you for your support.

**ENVELOPES CAN BE PLACED ON THE COLLECTION PLATES AT ANY WEEKEND MASS.**



## Invest with peace of mind

[www.dif.org.au](http://www.dif.org.au) 1800 802 516



The Diocesan Investment Fund (DIF) is not subject to the provisions of the Corporations Act 2001 nor has it been examined or approved by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. Deposits with the DIF are guaranteed by CDPF Limited, a company established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference for this purpose. We welcome your investment with the DIF rather than with a profit oriented commercial organisation as a conscious commitment by you to support the Charitable, Religious and Educational works of the Catholic Church. Neither the DIF nor the Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church for the Diocese of Lismore are prudentially supervised by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority; contributions to the DIF do not obtain the benefit of the depositor protection provisions of the Banking Act 1959; the DIF is designed for investors who wish to promote the charitable purposes of the DIF.



**First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11;***A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

Console my people, console them' says your God.

'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert.

Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low, let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion.

Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem.

Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.' Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him.

The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him.

He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

*The Word of the Lord.***Responsorial Psalm:****(R.) Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.**

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say,  
a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people.  
His help is near for those who fear him  
and his glory will dwell in our land. **(R.)**

2. Mercy and faithfulness have met;  
justice and peace have embraced.  
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth  
and justice look down from heaven. **(R.)**

3. The Lord will make us prosper  
and our earth shall yield its fruit.  
Justice shall march before him  
and peace shall follow his steps. **(R.)**

**Second Reading: 2Peter 3:8-14***A reading from the second letter of St Peter*

There is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget:  
that with the Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and a

thousand years is like a day. The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and everybody to be brought to change his ways. The Day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.

Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and saintly lives while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. What we are waiting for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where righteousness will be at home. So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace.

*The Word of the Lord.***Gospel Acclamation:****Alleluia, alleluia!**

Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths; all people shall see the salvation of God.

**Alleluia!****Gospel: Mark 1:1-8***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark*

The beginning of the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah: Look, I am going to send my messenger before you; he will prepare your way.

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight,

and so it was that John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. All Judaea and all the people of Jerusalem made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. John wore a garment of camel-skin, and he lived on locusts and wild honey. In the course of his preaching he said, 'Someone is following me, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.

*The Gospel of the Lord.***FOR THIS WEEK'S DAILY MASSES****TUESDAY 12th DECEMBER**

**Entrance Antiphon:** Behold, the Lord will come, and all his holy ones with him; and on that day there will be a great light.

**Communion Antiphon:** The Just Judge will bestow a crown of righteousness on those who eagerly await his coming.

**WEDNESDAY 13th DECEMBER ~ FEAST OF ST LUCY**

**Entrance Antiphon:** Behold, now she follows the Lamb who was crucified for us, powerful in virginity, modesty her offering, a sacrifice on the altar of chastity.

**Communion Antiphon:** The Lamb who is at the centre of the throne will lead them to the springs of the waters of life.

**THURSDAY 14th DECEMBER ~ FEAST OF ST JOHN OF THE CROSS**

**Entrance Antiphon:** May I never boast, except in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

**Communion Antiphon:** Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me, says the Lord.

**FRIDAY 15th DECEMBER**

**Entrance Antiphon:** Behold, the Lord will come descending with splendour to visit his people with peace, and he will bestow on them eternal life.

**Communion Antiphon:** We await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our mortal bodies, to conform with his glorified body.

**FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL**

**DID YOU KNOW?** • John's clothing of homespun camel hair tied with a leather thong around the waist is the explicit garb of a prophet.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS** • The wilderness or the desert can be a silent and frightening place—and yet it is into this silence that both John and Jesus withdraw to pray. For them it became a place of deep intimacy with God. Is Advent a time to retreat into the wilderness within and listen for the voice whose cries are often missed in the busyness of life?

• Repeat this often this week and act on it in a small way each day.

*Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight his paths**www.cam.org.au/summit*