

# 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.**

### Fourth Sunday of Advent (B)

**24th 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**

### WEEKDAY MASS

**WEDNESDAY TO FRIDAY**  
**MASS 12.00 noon**  
**~~NO MASS TUESDAY 26TH DEC~~**  
**(THIS WEEK ONLY)**

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

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**Feast Days**

**St Stephen**  
*Tuesday*

**St John, apostle**  
*Wednesday*

**The Holy Innocents**  
*Thursday*

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

### PARISH NOTICES

### 'WELCOME' TO OUR PARISH THOSE VISITING OVER THIS FESTIVE SEASON

### ADVENT WREATH Lighting 4th Candle

*PRIEST: Lord Jesus, you came into the world, sent by the Father to be life to all people*

**PEOPLE: COME, DWELL WITH US**

*PRIEST: Lord Jesus, born to be our unending example of love*

**PEOPLE: COME, DWELL WITH US**

*PRIEST: Lord Jesus heavenly Child and heavenly Gift*

**PEOPLE: COME, DWELL WITH US**



### BAPTISMS

Our parish family *warmly welcomes* into the faith and life of the Catholic Church this week: **Theo Stephen Noakes** son of Reece and Jacobi; **Darnel John Ousby** son of Daryl and Sandy.

### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

**Christmas Vigil**  
**5.30 pm & 7.30 pm ~ Ballina**

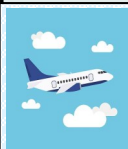
**Christmas Day**  
**7.30 pm ~ Lennox Head**

**9.00 am & 11.00 am**  
**Ballina**



**TUESDAY 26TH DECEMBER ~ BOXING DAY ~ ~~NO PARISH MASS~~**  
**Mass will resume as normal from Wednesday at 12.00 noon**

**MONDAY 1ST JANUARY 2024—MASS 12.00 NOON**  
**FEAST OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD**



### HAPPY HOLIDAYS ~ FATHER ANSELM

We wish Father Anselm a happy and restful holiday as he begins his annual leave following Christmas.  
We look forward to his safe return to us.

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: Christmas Masses, Year B: 24th/25th December, 2023**  
**Readings Vigil Mass: Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17, 22-25; Matthew 1:1-25**  
**Readings Christmas Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18**

	<b>5.30 pm Christmas Eve Vigil</b>	<b>7.30 pm Christmas Eve Vigil</b>	<b>9.00 am Christmas Day</b>	<b>11.00 am Christmas Day</b>	<b>7.30 am Lennox Head Christmas Day</b>
<b>Readers</b>	<i>John Jarzynski Mick Vella</i>	<i>Trish Bazar Pauline Fingleton</i>	<i>Richard Goss Gemma Duffy</i>	<i>Maxine Cole .....</i>	<i>Sue Hetherington Damien Kennedy</i>
<b>E. Ministers Holy Communion</b>	<i>Pauline Fingleton Leanne Robbins Phil Chapman</i>	<i>..... Phil Chapman</i>	<i>Denise Miller Cathy Campbell</i>	<i>.....</i>	<i>Maddy Pride</i>

**ROSTER: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Year B: 30th/31st December, 2023**  
**Readings : Sirach 3:2-6,12-14; Psalm 95; Colossians 3:12-21; Luke 2:22-40**

	<b>Saturday 5.30 pm Vigil Ballina</b>	<b>Sunday ~ 7.30 am Lennox Head</b>	<b>Sunday 9.00 am Ballina</b>	<b>Sunday 11.00 am Ballina</b>
<b>Readers</b>	<i>Trish Bazar Yvonne Head</i>	<i>Jean Mackay Jack McKenzie</i>	<i>Nicole Sullivan Richard Goss</i>	<i>Maxine Cole Leanne Robbins</i>
<b>EMOHC</b>	<i>Mick Vella</i>	<i>Deacon Anthony</i>	<i>Adam Sullivan Cathy Campbell</i>	<i>Maurice Gahan</i>
<b>Offertory Procession</b>			<i>Amy Derrick Frank</i>	

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED:** Shari McLeish (*Orange*), Una Smith, Maureen Collings Genie Enright, Bryan Kassulke, Peter Dignam, Cheryl Dowdell, Peter Newport,

**THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME :** Greg Shore, Betty Chandler, Gruerrino & Elena Gardiman

**AND ALSO FOR:** 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:** Hugo Long (*14 mths*), Patrick O'Mara, Graham Clark, 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, Carmel Hackett, Leila Atken (*Sydney*), David Anderton, Patrick Connelley, Maria Hosking, Kaley Nobbs, Dymrna Sheehy, Samantha Anderson, *Aunty* 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,*

**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.

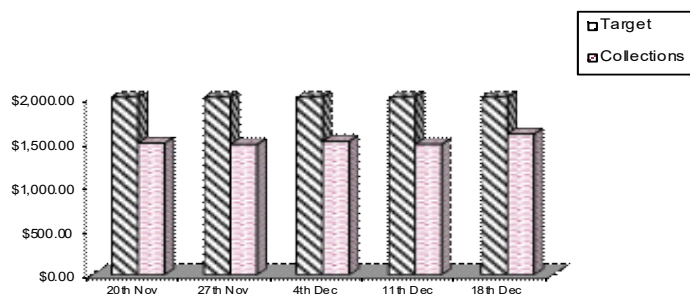
- By completing a form available from the Parish Office to have a credit card deduction each month for your **Planned Giving Donation ONLY**
- By making an EFTPOS donation — **1st Collection** to Ballina Presbyterium BSB: 082 522 A/c 50960 2127 **ref: your name**
- **2nd Collection** to St Francis Xavier 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>	<i>Support of our Diocese Priests</i>	\$ 831.00
<b>Second Collection</b> <i>Support of the Parish &amp; Ministries &amp; School Building &amp; Maintenance Fund</i>	Loose Plate	\$ 387.00
	Planned Giving Envelopes Collected	\$ 1,585.00
Planned Giving Envelopes Weekly Target		\$ 2,009.00



## LIKE MARY WE ARE CALLED TO BE PROPHETS

In preparation for the birth of Jesus tomorrow, today we celebrate the Annunciation, the announcement to Mary that she is being invited to become the mother of the Saviour. Moreover, we hear the story in the Gospel of Luke who portrays Mary as a true believer and first disciple of Jesus. While Mary is not a disciple like the Twelve who accompany Jesus in his ministry, she is presented as the true disciple who hears the Word of God and acts upon it.

Birth announcements play a significant role in the Hebrew Scriptures turning supposed barren wombs into surprising conceptions: Ishmael is born to Hagar; Isaac to Abraham and Sarah; John the Baptist to Zechariah and Elizabeth ["She who was thought to be barren is now in her sixth month!"]. Israel's God is ever full of surprises!

The telling of the Annunciation story is also significant because it follows the pattern of the calling of the Jewish prophets (e.g., Moses and Jeremiah): there is a heavenly messenger or angel; the 'prophet' expresses fear but is told to not be afraid; God's intention is announced; objections are given; finally, a sign of divine power is presented.

Mary's objection to the idea of bearing a son is grounded in biological reality: "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel's answer is that the Holy Spirit will overshadow her and enable this 'miracle' to occur in the same manner the Spirit hovered over the waters at the origin of creation. This same Spirit was again present at the baptism and transfiguration of Jesus.

Mary's final response – "I am the handmaid of the Lord; let what you have said be done to me" – is not an expression of passive servitude. Mary's fiat ('let it be done') demonstrates a conscious and active faith; and it shows an almost outrageous authority as she first questions the angel before making a decision that implies enormous risk and danger. After all, if the law of Deuteronomy was applied, as an unwed mother Mary could be stoned to death!

The birth of the Lord in human flesh coming into the world to deliver us from power and greed relies on this poor, peasant Jewish woman saying yes to God's invitation. Certainly, Mary's call is unique insofar as she alone is invited to conceive and deliver Jesus. Yet, like Mary, we are all called to give Jesus Christ in our own lives.

God's gracious care and desire to repair our lives and planet earth is occurring today. Do we have Mary's faith, hope and courage to say "Yes" to the divine invitation to be missionary disciples of Jesus in the way of Mary. Like Mary, we are all called to be prophets, people who denounce the world's injustices, and cry out to God to bring peace and reconciliation to all peoples. As we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ may we, like Mary, learn to hear the Word of God and put it into practice.

Gerard Hall SM ©Majellan 2023

### 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.***



### SAVE THE DATE

**SATURDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 2024 ~ MEN'S GATHERING**

***Further details will be available in January***



**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](mailto:safeguarding@lismore.catholic.org.au)**

### PARISH ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

will close from Friday 22nd December and re-open on  
Tuesday 2nd January 2024 at 8.30 am.

If you are in need of a priest please call 0423 445 639.

**Christian Mediation Saturday 9.00 am will continue**

**Rosary at Holy Family Church 8.00 am Wednesday**

**Parish Youth Group** is in recess

**Marian Cenacle** is in recess

**Ballina CCR** is in recess

**Sisterhood** is in recess

**Prayer of the Church & Rosary** is in recess

**Taize** in recess

### 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: 2Samuel 7:1-5,8-12,14, 16;**  
*A reading from the second book of Samuel*

Once David had settled into his house and the Lord had given him rest from all the enemies surrounding him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, 'Look, I am living in a house of cedar while the ark of God dwells in a tent'. Nathan said to the king, 'Go and do all that is in your mind, for the Lord is with you.' But that very night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 'Go and tell my servant David, "Thus the Lord speaks: Are you the man to build me a house to dwell in? I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader of my people Israel; I have been with you on all your expeditions; I have cut off all your enemies before you. I will give you fame as great as the fame of the greatest on earth. I will provide a place for my people Israel; I will plant them there and they shall dwell in that place and never be disturbed again; nor shall the wicked continue to oppress them as they did, in the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel; I will give them rest from all their enemies. The Lord will make you great; the Lord will make you a House. And when your days are ended and you are laid to rest with your ancestors, I will preserve the offspring of your body after you and make his sovereignty secure. I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Your House and your sovereignty will always stand secure before me and your throne be established for ever."'

*The Word of the Lord.*

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**(R.) For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.**

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;  
through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.  
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,  
that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **(R.)**
2. 'I have made a covenant with my chosen one;  
I have sworn to David my servant:  
I will establish your dynasty for ever  
and set up your throne through all ages.' **(R.)**
3. He will say to me: 'You are my father,  
my God, the rock who saves me.'  
I will keep my love for him always;  
for him my covenant shall endure. **(R.)**

**Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27**  
*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans*

Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the revelation of a mystery kept secret for endless ages, but now so clear that it must be broadcast to pagans everywhere to bring them to the obedience of faith. This is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is wisdom; give glory therefore to him through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

I am the servant of the Lord: may his will for me be done.

**Alleluia!**

**Gospel: Luke 1:26-38**

*A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke*

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you' the angel answered 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your kinswoman Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her. *The Gospel of the Lord.*

### FOR THIS WEEK'S DAILY MASSES

#### WEDNESDAY 27th DECEMBER ~ FEAST OF ST JOHN, APOSTLE

**Entrance Antiphon:** This is John, who reclined on the Lord's breast at supper, the blessed Apostle, to whom celestial secrets were revealed and who spread the words of life through all the world.

**Communion Antiphon:** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and from his fullness we have all received.

#### THURSDAY 28TH DECEMBER ~ FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

**Entrance Antiphon:** The innocents were slaughtered as infants for Christ; spotless, they follow the Lamb and sing for ever: Glory to you, O Lord.

**Communion Antiphon:** Behold those redeemed as the first fruits of the human race for God and the Lamb, and who follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

#### FRIDAY 29TH DECEMBER

**Entrance Antiphon:** God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.

**Communion Antiphon:** Through the tender mercy of our God, the Dawn from on high will visit us.

### FROM TODAY'S GOSPEL

**DID YOU KNOW?** • From the time of the Exile in Babylon, Israel had longed for the Messiah to come. He was to be the anointed one of God and the prophets foretold that he would come from the House of David and be born in David's home town of Bethlehem.

• According to Luke's Gospel, Mary and Joseph live in Nazareth in the north and travel to Bethlehem to be counted in the census because Joseph is of David's line and must return to his 'home' country.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS** • The 'Hail Mary' is one of the best known prayers of the Church. It echoes the words of today's gospel.

*Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Memorise this prayer and recite it often this week.

• Like Mary, who called on her elderly kinswoman when she was in need, call on someone this week who may be in need of company or support.