

# St Francis Xavier Catholic Parish of Ballina

Respecting a traditional people of this land, the Bundjalung people



St Francis Xavier Church,  
Cnr Cherry & Crane Streets,  
Ballina

welcome

Holy Family Church,  
94 Ballina Street,  
Lennox Head.

## Ascension of the Lord (A)

24th May, 2020

# Alleluia

FROM FATHER PETER  
AND  
FATHER ANSELM

Parishioners please be  
assured of our prayers as we  
comply with the  
government's  
restrictions with social  
distancing.

Every day in our private  
Masses we pray that the  
parish community will be safe  
from the COVID-19 virus, and  
that our way of life and the free-  
dom to attend our Parish Masses  
will resume in the very  
near future.

God Bless and keep each of you.

Father Peter &  
Father Anselm  
Feasts

Our Lady Help of Christians

Monday  
St Phillip Neri,  
Tuesday

**NEW MASS TIMES** during  
COVID-19

**NO WEEKEND MASSES**

**WEEKDAY MASS:**

**TUES – FRI: 9.00am & 12 noon**  
At St Francis Xavier Church  
(Max 10 people)

**MUST REGISTER AT PARISH  
OFFICE TO ATTEND A MASS**  
(during office hours only 9 am – 4 pm)

## The space between science and religion

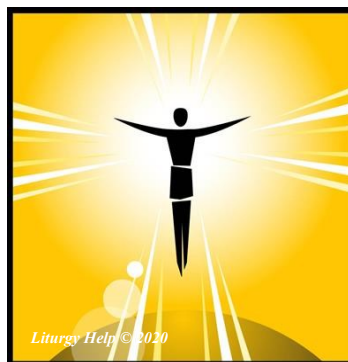
Soviet cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin, was the first man to rocket into space. In 1961 when he returned to earth he said: "I went up into space but I saw no angels and did not meet God." Similarly, Gherman Titov, whose mission followed Gagarin's a few months later, gave speeches to large crowds at the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle that included a similar sentiment.

It is a recurring theme in Western pop culture to oppose science and religion: science gives us concrete, indisputable knowledge, whereas religion gives us stories and dreams. Jesus's miracles, his resurrection from the dead and his ascension to the right hand of the Father: these contradict what science knows about the world. Such beliefs are therefore impossible; they are pie in the sky fantasy.

The world is a closed, coherent system of physical cause and effect; there is no place for God, for spiritual beings like angels or demons; no heaven or hell; no goodness or evil beyond or above the human mind. There is only the world that science studies, the physical world that can be measured and accurately predicted, the world that can be controlled, harnessed for human-specific ends.

Such is the story that scientism, an ideology, tells itself and anyone else who will listen. (Science in itself tells no story at all; it only uses specific methods to make observations and draws conclusions based on specific as-

sumptions.) Scientism is based on a myth. In fact, any ultimate explanation of reality, good or bad, weak or strong, profound (like religion) or unsophisticated (like scientism), demands an organising story-intelligence. We always require "myth" to give a frame and a context that allows us to organise our kinds of knowledge, like science.



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The Ascension: Jesus "was lifted up, and a cloud hid him from their sight." Was Jesus the first spaceman, riding his invisible rocket up into the sky? If so, he would have fallen back down. And if he could have lived to tell, he would have said, like the Soviet cosmonauts, that he did not see God up there above the clouds. Or rather, was the cloud that hid him the

"cloud of glory" that enshrouds the unapproachable Almighty God?

Was the heaven he entered the heaven that the physical sky above symbolises, reflects, points to, makes manifest? I, for one, do not doubt that on that day, two millennia ago, Jesus, risen from the dead, ascended physically into the sky before the eyes of his astounded followers. Science cannot tell me if the Ascension is true or false. The Ascension, however, gives science all the room it requires to do its work. So which approach to reality? Scientism or religion, is the more sophisticated, more coherent, more in touch with the way things really are?

W Chris Hackett

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**Catholics from the Diocese of Lismore are from  
20th March 2020 dispensed from their Sunday Mass  
obligation until further notice.**

**PRESBYTERY:** Phone: 6686 204

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:**

**PARISH ADMINISTRATION CENTRE:**

**PARISH LIBRARY:**

**SCHOOLS:**

**AGED CARE:**

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

**Assistant Priest:** Father Anselm Okeke

**Pastoral Associate:** Sr Kathryn Sweeney rsj, Email: kathryn@sfxballina.org.au

**Email:** parishcouncil@sfxballina.org.au

Phone: 6681 1048; Fax: 6686 8774; **Email:** 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**

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

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED:** Lesley Smith., Ted Murphy, Bernie Scanlon, Sr Martha Casserley pbvm,

**THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME:** Ron Hanlon, Bishop Patrick Farrelly (*2nd Bishop of Lismore*)

**AND ALSO FOR:** *Glorie Kelly, Catherine Kelly, Armando Bordin, James & Mary Rogers, Cath Waddell, C & S Hosie, Mick & Gwynne Waugh, Rina, Charlie & James Volpatti, Thama Walker, Kathleen Kelly, 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:** Kath Young, Barbara Perry, Michael Patch, Gloria Greguric, Pauline McLachlan, Bill Colenso, Michael & Marie Daley, Chanice Wills, Julie Benton, Arthur Potter, Shokat Forghani & family, Margaret Murphy, Robert Sullivan, Terry Moore, Margaret Pyne, Kathleen Campbell, Kaia Randall, Darcy Martin, Charlie Clements, Charlie Scotcher, (*Aunt*) Julia Paden, Rev Ray Fishwick, Glenn Campbell, Jan Kelly, Kay Harth, Maria Gorton, Peter & Reba Smidt, Asha Ousby (*2 yrs*), Jeanie Marie Curry, Fay Kerslake, Darryl Simpkins, Betty Albertini, Hilda Carter, Rosemary Russell, John Moreland, Dympna Sheehy, Greg Shore, John McNamara, Yvonne & Peter Thurtell, Mal Gillies, Cecelia Waldron, Louise Wilson, Michael O'Connor, Moore, Smith, McCowan-Dann, Webber Families, Layton family, Fitch family, Maria Hosking, Kaley Nobbs, Mick O'Brien, Graham Robertson, Gregory Thomas, Gloria Greguric, Joy Hepworth, Leo Lane, Mary Topham, Bob Grant, Leisa Wotton, Michael Everson, Pat Evans, Virginia, Sarah and Peter Kolhbach, Samantha Anderson, Tony Lannan, Kim del-Signore, *Crowley Village, St Andrew's Nursing Home, RSL Life Care, Bupa Aged Care.* (*Due to privacy laws, names are only placed on this list when requested, for six weeks*)

### HOMILY by Richard Leonard

When I was a boy, Sir Edmund Hillary came to speak at my school. I can remember the fuss surrounding the visit of the first person to scale Mt Everest. And though there is now a school of thought that holds that he was beaten to the summit by Tenzing Norgay, his Tibetan colleague, there was an aura around this New Zealander who had been to the top of the world.

Some of my usually dour teachers were in awe of Sir Edmund. There was more than a little hero worship going on that day. Rather surprisingly in his address Sir Edmund did not say very much about his adventure to the peak. He was much more interested in what we do to each other on the plains than what he did on the mountain top. He spoke about justice, peace and the dignity of humanity. I can vividly remember him sending us out at the end of his speech to create a better world for all people everywhere. When questions came, there were several about whether he felt closer to God at the top of Mt Everest, and although he said he did, he mentioned there were life and death moments on the way up and down, where God's presence and companionship were much more real to him.

Hillary's visit to my school is not far from what happened to the disciples in today's Gospel. Matthew tells us that the eleven men who worshipped Jesus were commissioned by him to go out to the world and they were promised that he would stay with them until the end of time.

Worship is a word Catholics don't use all that often. While other denominations describe their liturgy as 'worship', we tend to use it only in a more secular way like in 'hero worship' or 'not an altar at which I worship'. The concept behind this word, however, is an important one. To worship God is to admit that we are not God. We are creatures and our worship is directed toward our Creator, Saviour and Sustainer.

Whether we realise it or not we are commissioned to go out to the world at the end of every liturgy, 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.' This changes our worship. We are not here just for ourselves. Mass, which comes from a word meaning 'to be sent', indicates that our liturgy is about celebrating what God has done in the world in and through us, and is a preparation for what God still wants to accomplish.

Finally, we continue to experience the abiding presence of Christ in our daily lives or else we wouldn't be here. God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is not distant to our lives or impervious to our needs; we believe in a Companion-God who seeks our company as much as we need his.

In this Mass, then, let's thank God for the mountain top of Christ's Ascension that lifts us up out of our everyday life to celebrate that we are creatures, not the Creator. Let us hear again Christ's call to each of us to move away from the complacency of a spiritual cafeteria to a church moving out to change the world. And let's rejoice in Christ's presence which abides before us, behind us, over and in us, within and without, now and forever. **Amen.**

© Richard Leonard SJ

**Richard Leonard SJ** is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.

<https://liturgyhelp.com>

### DIF PAYS 1.10% 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

**SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH BALLINA - PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM:** If you are a new parishioner to Ballina or an existing one and you would like to participate in the Planned Giving Program, cards are available for completion at the Parish Administration Office. Your details will be processed and a tracking number provided. Contact SFX Parish Admin office on 6681 1048 Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 4.00 pm.

For your convenience we have the option of Direct Debit and/or Envelope contribution.

# Parish Notices

**'THANK YOU'** from the family of Ted Murphy.

Maureen and her family would like to sincerely **'thank'** all those who have offered their sincere sympathy in the passing of Ted. Your prayers and support has been a great comfort.



## SINCERE SYMPATHY

Our parish extends sincere sympathy to the family of **Lesley Smith** who has passed away. A private funeral was held on Thursday 21st May.



## National Reconciliation Week 2020 Theme

In 2020 **Reconciliation Australia** marks **twenty years** of shaping Australia's journey towards a more just, equitable and reconciled nation.

Much has happened since the early days of the people's movement for reconciliation, including greater acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights to land and sea; understanding of the impact of government policies and frontier conflicts; and an embracing of stories of Indigenous success and contribution.

2020 also marks the twentieth anniversary of the reconciliation walks of 2000, when people came together to walk on bridges and roads across the nation and show their support for a more reconciled Australia.

As always, we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us, and Australians now benefit from the efforts and contributions of people committed to reconciliation in the past.

Today we work together to further that national journey towards a fully reconciled country.

**Reconciliation is a journey for all Australians – as individuals, families, communities, organisations and importantly as a nation. At the heart of this journey are relationships between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.**

We strive towards a more just, equitable nation by championing unity and mutual respect as we come together and connect with one another.

On this journey, Australians are all **In This Together**; every one of us has a role to play when it comes to reconciliation, and in playing our part we collectively build relationships and communities that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures.

[www.reconciliation.org.au/](http://www.reconciliation.org.au/)



## BISHOP GREG'S SUNDAY MASS ON YOUTUBE LIVE

You are invited to view the Sunday Mass live and on demand from your devices. You can access the livestream by following the link from [lismorediocese.org](http://lismorediocese.org), or by going straight to the 'Lismore Diocese' channel on YouTube, or by pointing the camera on your smart device to this



digital code:

**Time of Live Streaming:**

**Sunday ~ 8.00 am**

## MASSES AVAILABLE ONLINE

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### CATH NEWS

[www.cathnews.com](http://www.cathnews.com)

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**Google Catholic Masses and click your choice**

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**AVAILABLE FREE TO AIR ON TV**

**Channel 10 ~ every Sunday ~ Mass 6.00 am**

## REFLECTION

The feast of the Ascension is really a kind of liminal moment in the Easter season. It is a time between times, a moment when we have left one place in our journey but have not yet arrived at a second. The glory of the Risen Christ has already been revealed in us, but not yet totally. The feast itself celebrates the exaltation of Jesus. Today we stand awestruck, watching Jesus ascend into the clouds of heaven, there to be enthroned at the right hand of God. Today we are overwhelmed by the reality of the divinity of the one whom we have known in his humanity. Like the conquering creator-god, he has overcome his enemy (death) and now reigns over his new creation (the church).

Christ who ascended into heaven in his body carries on what he began on earth through his new body, the church. He teaches through its apostles and evangelists. He ministers through its prophets and pastors. In and through the church, Jesus continues to heal and to comfort; to forgive and to include. We have not been left alone; we have his power, the same power with which he performed marvels when he walked the earth. We have not been left alone; we have each other. Together we make up the new body of Christ. Together we await the fullness of this body. It is this new body that stands in between the times, secure in what we have, confident of what we will be given.

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## ENTRUSTING AUSTRALIA TO MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS during COVID-19

O Immaculate Mary, Help of Christians Queen of Heaven and earth, and tender Mother of humanity, at this time when a pandemic threatens all your children, we entrust to you our nation, Australia, and all who live in this country.

We commit to your intercession all the members of our community, beginning with the weakest ones, from the unborn to the sick, the disabled and the elderly.

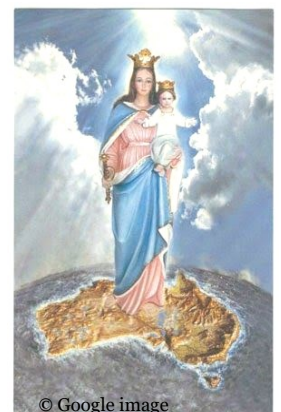
We commit to your our families, our young and old, and all who are vulnerable, those who are quarantined or anxious.

We entrust to your Immaculate Heart those who have lost their livelihood or employment, our pastors and other essential service workers, and our leaders at this time.

We implore your intercession especially for the protection of doctors and nurses and those who minister to the contagious sick in this crisis.

Reign over us, Mother of God, and teach us how to make the Heart of Jesus reign and triumph in us and around us, as it has reigned and triumphed in you!

*Catholic Bishops of Australia,*



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**First Reading: Acts 1:1-11***A reading from the Acts of the Apostles*

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

The Word of the Lord.

**Responsorial Psalm**

**(R.) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:  
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.**

1. All peoples, clap your hands,  
cry to God with shouts of joy!  
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,  
great king over all the earth. **(R.)**

2. God goes up with shouts of joy;  
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.  
Sing praise for God, sing praise,  
sing praise to our king, sing praise. **(R.)**

3. God is king of all the earth.  
Sing praise with all your skill.  
God is king over the nations;  
God reigns on his holy throne. **(R.)**

**Second Reading: Ephesians 1:17-23**

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians*

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

The Word of the Lord

**Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Go and teach all people my gospel.  
I am with you always, until the end of the world.

**Alleluia!**

**Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20**

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew*

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

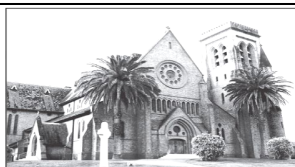
**An Act of Spiritual Communion** : My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You; never permit me to be separated from You. Amen. [melbournecatholic.org.au](http://melbournecatholic.org.au)

**SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH ~ 1st & 2nd COLLECTIONS**

**Due to not being able to attend weekend Masses, parishioners with envelopes wishing to continue their contribution to the parish collection can use alternative methods.**

- **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**
- **By completing a form that allows your bank to deduct your gift from your account into the account of the Parish, available from the Parish Office or, continue with your envelopes and drop them to the office, perhaps once a month.**

**Thank you**



**Invest** with peace of mind

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



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