



# 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

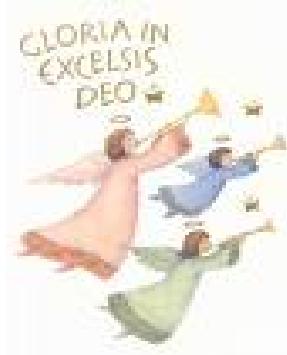
Holy Family Church,  
94 Ballina Street,  
Lennox Head.

**Christmas Year A**

**25th December, 2025**



*As we celebrate  
Christmas 2025  
may you know in  
your heart  
the peace and joy  
of Christ.*



*We invite everyone to our faith community.*



Dear Parishioners

As we gather to celebrate the birth of Christ, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who make our parish a vibrant community of faith. To our parishioners, our dedicated parish staff, the parish finance council, the parish pastoral council, and the many ministers, ministries, and prayer groups—thank you for your generosity, service, and devotion throughout the year.

Your commitment is a true blessing.

This Christmas, we also hold in prayer the victims of the Bondi Beach Tragedy, their families, and all who mourn. May the light of Christ bring comfort, healing, and peace.

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful and grace-filled Christmas, and every blessing in the New Year.

*"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5)*

With love, prayers,  
Fr. Peter and Fr. Erick



***Hosanna in the Highest***

**PRESBYTERY:** Phone: (02) 6686 2042  
**\*AFTER HOURS MOBILE:** 0423 445 639\*

**PARISH ADMINISTRATION CENTRE:**

**PARISH LIBRARY:**  
**SCHOOLS:**

Head

**AGED CARE:**

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

**Assistant Priest:** Father Erick Quinteros

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

**Pastoral Associates:** email: [pastoralassociate@sfxballina.org.au](mailto:pastoralassociate@sfxballina.org.au)

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

Phone: 02 6681 1048; 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: Principal: Mr Tony Hunter - 02 6686 3370 - Swift St, Ballina

Holy Family Primary: Principal: Mr Murray Deeps - 02 6687 5311- 40 Isabella Drive, Skennars Head

Xavier Catholic College: Principal: Mr Lee MacMaster - 02 6687 6484 - 2 Redford Drive, Skennars

St Anne's Long Day Care Centre: Director: Mrs Narelle Dewhurst - 02 6687 5961- 42 Isabella Drive, Skennars Head

Crowley Care Services: 1300 139 099 - 154 Cherry St, Ballina  
Independent Living Village, Residential Aged Care, Home Care Services

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED:** Daphne Sweeney (mother of Sr Kathryn), Margaret Hosking Pippen, Adelaide King, Sgaribaldi, Luigi, Gino Bordin, Mary Evans,

**THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS** Ester Raicevich, Beatrice Flood, Jack & Marie Flood, Kitty Tyler, William (Podge) Holwell, Camilla McCoy, Maureen O'Connor, Irene Kearney,

**AND ALSO FOR:** Patricia Holwell, Kim Holwell, Peter O'Connor, Maureen O'Connor, Alane Atangana-Etundi, Jack & Marie Flood, Phillip Dykes, Marj & Pat Hobbins, Carolina Bordin, Armando Bordin, John Patrick Moreland, Margaret Moreland, Ted Murphy, James & Mary Rogers, Cath Waddell, C & S Hosie, Mick & Gwynne Waugh, Fay Kerslake, Rina, Charlie & James Volpatti, Thama Walker, Bill & Jean Shay, Cecilia & Bill Condon Snr, Stan & Mary McKeough, Members of the SVdP Conference & Auxiliary & for all the faithful departed.

**AND FOR THOSE WHO ARE SERIOUSLY ILL:** Daniel Freeman, Luke Willett, Gloria Bordin, Veronica Bennett (Gold Coast), Nancy and Joan Obonyo, Nate Doolan, Joy Long (Sydney), Paddy Mulgrew (Northern Ireland), Joy Schneider, Alisha Nobbs (Brisbane), Severina Nady Verdeflor, Gloria Greguric, Steven Kennessey & family, Kevin Sullivan, Matt Ritchie, Issac Kruger, Craig Cunneen Annemarie Higgins, Michael Hains, Kellie Savage, Lorraine Ball, Helen Johnston, Phyl Cullinane, Shirley Kirkland, Nell Anderton, Doreen McIntyre, Semmens family (Tas), Janice McNair, Michael Townsend, Peter Groom (Dalby), David Le'Fevre Lynette Holland (Tas), Kathleen Young, Loretta Heaton, Graham Clark, Kathy Fraser, Mary Evans, Noeline Conyngham, Louise King, Michael Lyons, Pam Murray, Virginia Kohlbach & family, Ronald Windle, Jones & Skimmings family, Carmel Hackett, David Anderton, Maria Hosking, Kaley Nobbs, Samantha Anderson, Aunty Julia

**REFLECTION:** For people surrounded by department store decorations, commercials, Christmas carols, special foods, and the like, believing that today's Christmas celebration actually evolved from the humble story of a young woman giving birth in the straw is a stretch. It might help to focus on the characters involved.

What do you think went through Joseph's mind as he witnessed Mary giving birth to a baby? What do you think went through Mary's mind as she struggled with the birth experience?



The Christmas story is full of symbols. Jesus, who becomes our bread and wine – our nourishment – is laid in a manger, the feeding trough for the animals. Jesus, who is the champion of poor people, is born into a homeless family. Poor shepherds were the first to welcome the Messiah that the Jewish people had been awaiting for generations. The symbol of angels singing, praising God, and flying madly all over the sky was a good clue that something out of the ordinary was happening.

Modern Christmas stories use different symbols to make the same points: Rudolph, the 'poorest' reindeer, becomes the champion; and Frosty, a snowman, transforms children's lives.

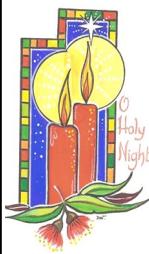
What story from your own personal Christmas experiences has special meaning or symbolism?



#### **'Come you nations and adore the Lord.'**

*With Mary, Joseph and the shepherds, with the Magi and the countless host of humble worshippers of the new-born Child, who down the centuries have welcomed the mystery of Christmas, let us too, brothers and sisters from every continent, allow the light of this day to spread everywhere: may it enter our hearts, may it brighten and warm our homes, may it bring serenity and hope to our cities, and may it give peace to the world. This is my earnest wish for you who are listening.*

*A wish that grows into a humble and trustful prayer to the Child Jesus, that his light will dispel all darkness from your lives and fill you with love and peace. May the Lord, who has made his merciful face to shine in Christ, fill you with his happiness and make you messengers of his goodness.*



Today the Christmas celebration gains a new depth of theological meaning. At midnight, the birth in history was proclaimed. At dawn, the initiative of God's gift was declared and the community's joyful gratitude was announced. In this third celebration, the identity of Christ and the new way of life that he brings is announced.

If our eyes are open and alert, we can see that God has won a victory for us, one that is tangible and realised in our midst. It is an overwhelming victory, one that permanently conquers the enemy. This victory has a profound impact on every place, every time and every people. The birth of the infant, the king in David's line, promises salvation to all who long for it. This salvation is a new vision of wisdom, one that has been realised in Christ, God's agent of grace in the world. It is a new world, one of inclusivity and of righteous honour. It is a new age, one that is ushered in by the child who is leading a victory procession.

Ultimately, only eyes of faith allow us to see the fullness of God's revelation. The glory of the infant king is the very presence of God made flesh. Jesus is the eternal incarnate Word who has pitched his tent among us. Ours is not a distant God; the incarnate wisdom of God is among us, and we are called to a change of heart that will allow us to see this wonder.

Reflection © Dianne Bergant CSA

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVALUABLE SUPPORT THIS YEAR TO EMPOWER THE WORLD'S MOST MARGINALISED AND VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF POVERTY TODAY, AND TO CREATE CHANGE FOR A BETTER TOMORROW.**  
**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS**  
*From Caritas Australia*



**DON'T BE ALONE THIS CHRISTMAS**  
Free Community Christmas Lunch  
Christmas Day 12.00 noon - 2.00 pm  
at St Mary's Anglican Church Hall,  
Cnr Norton & Burnet Streets, Ballina.  
Ham, Turkey, Salads and Dessert  
*This is an alcohol free event.*  
All are welcome.



Diocesan  
Investment  
Fund

**Interest Rate – 3.40% For further information and our current rate, Please visit our website [www.dif.org.au](http://www.dif.org.au) or contact us on 1800 802 516**

# HAPPY and a HOLY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL

*Our prayer is that the year 2026 may be brighter, hopeful, and happier! Thank you all for your greetings and support. Have a wonderful Christmas. Fr Peter and Fr Erick*



## I said a Prayer for You at Christmas

*I said a special prayer for you,  
As Christmas Day drew near,  
That God would bless you richly  
Throughout the coming year.  
I did not ask for Him to send  
You gifts of worldly wealth;  
But prayed that He would fill your life  
With peace and joy and health.*

*I asked that you would know His love;  
Be comforted in strife;  
Seek wisdom and His guidance,  
And have abundant life.*

*God sent His Son at Christmas,  
That happiest of days,  
And most of all I pray that you  
Will walk with Him always.*



## Parish Notices



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



**THURSDAY 1ST JANUARY 2026**  
**FEAST OF**  
**MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD**  
**MASS 12.00 NOON**  
**ST FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH**

**PARISH ADMINISTRATION OFFICE** will re-open on **MONDAY 5th January 2026**.

To contact a priest over the holiday period please call the Presbytery mobile **0423 445 639**.

### CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING:** Is 62:1-5  
*A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

About Zion I will not be silent,  
about Jerusalem I will not grow weary,  
until her integrity shines out like the dawn  
and her salvation flames like a torch.  
The nations then will see your integrity,  
all the kings your glory,  
and you will be called by a new name,  
one which the mouth of the Lord will confer.  
You are to be a crown of splendour in the  
hand of the Lord, a princely diadem in the hand  
of your God; no longer are you to be named 'Forsaken',  
nor your land 'Abandoned', but you shall be called 'My  
Delight' and your land 'The Wedded'; for the Lord  
takes delight in you and your land will have  
its wedding.

Like a young man marrying a virgin, so will the one  
who built you wed you, and as the bridegroom rejoices  
in his bride, so will your God rejoice in you.

The Word of the Lord.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

**Response:** *Today is born our Saviour Christ the Lord.*

1. O sing a new song unto the Lord.  
Sing to the Lord all the earth,  
O sing to the Lord bless his name. **(R.)**
2. Proclaim his mercy day by day.  
Tell among the nations his glory,  
His wonders among the peoples. **(R.)**
3. Let heav'n and earth rejoice and be glad.  
The sea and its creatures thunder praise.  
The land and its fruit show forth their joy. **(R.)**
4. Let the trees and forests shout for joy at the  
presence of God for the Lord is come.  
At the presence of God who rules the earth. **(R.)**

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**SECOND READING** Acts 13:16-17, 22-25  
*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles*

When Paul reached Antioch in Pisidia, he stood up in the synagogue, held up a hand for silence and began to speak: 'Men of Israel, and fearers of God, listen! The God of our nation Israel chose our ancestors, and made our people great when they were living as foreigners in Egypt; then by divine power he led them out.

'Then he made David their king, of whom he approved in these words, "I have selected David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, who will carry out my whole purpose". To keep his promise, God has raised up for Israel one of David's descendants, Jesus, as Saviour, whose coming was heralded by John when he proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the whole people of Israel. Before John ended his career he said, "I am not the one you imagine me to be; that one is coming after me and I am not fit to undo his sandal".

The Word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth will be destroyed:

**CHRISTMAS DAY MASS READINGS:**

**FIRST READING:** Is 52:7-10

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

How beautiful on the mountains,  
are the feet of one who brings good news,  
who heralds peace, brings happiness,  
proclaims salvation, and tells Zion,  
'Your God is king!'

Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices,  
they shout for joy together,  
for they see the Lord face to face,  
as he returns to Zion.

Break into shouts of joy together,  
you ruins of Jerusalem;  
for the Lord is consoling his people,  
redeeming Jerusalem.

The Lord bares his holy arm  
in the sight of all the nations,  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

**(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.**

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders.  
His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation.

**(R.)**

2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. **(R.)**

3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy.  
**(R.)**

4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp, with the sound of music. With trumpets and the sound of the horn acclaim the King, the Lord. **(R.)**

**SECOND READING:** Heb 1:1-6  
*A reading from the letter to the Hebrews*

At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit every-

the Saviour of the world will be our king.

**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL:** Mt 1:18-25

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet: The Virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do: he took his wife to his home and, though he had not had intercourse with her, she gave birth to a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.

thing and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.

The Word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth.

**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL:** Jn 1:1-5, 9-14

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower.

The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world.

He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him.

But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself.

The Word was made flesh, he lived among us. And we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

