

Saint Francis Xavier

CONNECT

All Are Welcome All Belong



HOLY WEEK PARISH REFLECTION MORNING

In preparation for Holy Week and Easter join us at 9.00am on Saturday, 23rd March at St Francis Xavier Church Ballina for the 2024 Parish Day of Reflection.

The morning will include:

- Reconciliation
- Reflections
- Adoration
- Benediction

and will conclude with morning tea.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

You are warmly invited to join us as we come together to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus

Palm Sunday - 24th March

Normal Sunday Mass Times

Holy Thursday - 28th March

6pm SFX Ballina

Good Friday - 29th March

3pm SFX Ballina & Holy Family Lennox Head

Holy Saturday Vigil Mass- 30th March

6.00pm SFX Ballina

Easter Sunday - 31st March

Normal Sunday Mass Times

From the Parish Priests:



Welcome to the first edition of our Parish Newsletter "St Francis Xavier Connect". "SFX Connect" is one of the ways we can connect and communicate with all in our parish community. The newsletter will be made available to parishioners, school families and our Crowley Care family.

Communication is important to the vitality of our Parish, to build a thriving and supportive community. The aim of the newsletter is to share information, strengthen relationships, encourage participation and to build trust and connection within the SFX Parish community.

Thank you to all our parish ministries, committees and groups for your contributions to this newsletter. Together, we can continue to strengthen the bonds that make our community a place of love, support, and shared faith.

We invite you to join us in the activities and groups within our parish community, where fellowship, learning, and spiritual growth await you. Jesus said "*where two or three gather in my name, there I am with them*". Together, we can create meaningful connections, share our experiences, and draw closer to Christ. Your involvement is not only welcomed but essential to the vibrant life of our parish.

Blessings

Fr Peter and Fr Anselm

SFX Parish Ballina Contact details:

 admin@sfxballina.org.au

 02 6681 1048

 www.sfxballina.org.au

 PO Box 46 Ballina 2478

 53 - 57 Cherry Street Ballina
Mon - Fri 8.30am - 4.00pm

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

 Holy Family Catholic Church
Ballina Street, Lennox Head

Administrator of Ballina Parish: Fr Peter Padsungay

Assistant Priest: Fr Anselm Okeke

Deacon: Rev Assoc. Prof Anthony Gooley

Pastoral Associate: John Kearney (john@sfxballina.org.au)

Youth Co-ordinator: Kailani Tiernan (ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au)

SFX Primary School: Swift Street Ballina 6686 3370

Holy Family Primary: 40 Isabella Drive Skennars Head 66875311

Xavier Catholic College: 2 Redford Dr, Skennars Head 6687 6484

St Anne's Long Day Care: 42 Isabella Dr Skennars Head 6687 5961

Crowley Care Services: 154 Cherry St Ballina 1300 139 099

For newsletter info or contributions please contact Leanne Robbins: leanne.robbins@lism.catholic.edu.au



From the Parish Pastoral Council

Murray Deeps, Chair PPC

I am pleased to share information about your Parish Pastoral Council with you all. The Parish Pastoral Council is there to represent all the parishioners in the St Francis Xavier Catholic Ballina Parish.

The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to be an advisory group for the Parish Priest/Parish Administrator. That is, the priest uses the Parish Pastoral Council members as a 'sounding board', whereby the priest can run by the Parish Pastoral Council members a variety of ideas, improvements or innovations, and receive constructive feedback from the members. Also, its members can put forward suggestions too. However, the priest's decision is always final.

The current members of the Parish Pastoral Council are Fr Peter Padsungay (Parish Administrator), Fr Anselm Okeke (Assistant Priest), John Kearney (Pastoral Associate), Kailani Tiernan (Parish Youth Co-Ordinator), Murray Deeps (Chairperson), Leanne Robbins (Secretary) and Patricia (Trish) Bazar. The members support all the other groups that are active in our parish.

Fr Peter is looking to invigorate the Parish Pastoral Council by calling for new members. Under the By-Laws of the Parish Pastoral Council Constitution, this will take place in August of this year. There will be more details in our weekly Parish Bulletin.

The Parish Pastoral Council members want to hear your voice, as together, we can make a positive difference to our great parish, so please do not hesitate to approach or contact any of its current members.

Not only are we all blessed to live here in paradise, but we are also extremely blessed to have so many caring, knowledgeable, welcoming, compassionate, talented and capable parishioners within our parish.

If God has given you a gift, he wants you to embrace it and use it to further his kingdom. If we carry out what we have been called to do, he will bless us abundantly. I encourage you to make it a goal to use your talents and gifts to serve Christ in your daily life and in our parish.

"How wonderful are your gifts to me; how good they are! I praise the LORD because he guides me, and in the night my conscience warns me. I am always aware of the LORD's presence; he is near, and nothing can shake me." Psalm 16:6-11
Together in Christ

From the Parish Finance Council

Brian Marriott, Chair PFC

The Parish Finance Council is an advisory body appointed to assist and support the Parish Administrator in relation to Parish finances, maintenance of Parish properties, the planning of future capital works and the raising of necessary finances.

In the administration of the temporal goods of the Parish, and the operation of apostolic works of the Parish, both the Parish Administration and the Parish Finance Council are bound by the requirements of canon law and civil law.

The Parish Finance Council meets monthly (or more often if required) on the first Thursday of each month. The current membership is:

Fr Peter Padsungay - Parish Administrator
Fr Anselm Okeke - Assistant Priest
Bryan Marriott - Chairman
Michael Shay - Deputy Chairman
Steve Barnier - Member
Dave Wilson - Member
Michael Penhey - Parish Business Manager (Ex Officio)
Michael LLOYD - Parish Finance Officer (Ex Officio)

ST FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH CATECHISTS

Our catechists volunteer their time each week to share the gift of faith with young people enrolled in our state primary schools, Southern Cross Ballina and Lennox Head Primary.

Catechists assist and support parents as they guide their children to come to know and love Jesus Christ.

Our dedicated catechists serve as educators of faith, nurturing spiritual growth through engaging lessons and activities.

God bless our catechists, and may their light continue to shine brightly in the lives of all they touch.



From the Holy Family Lennox Head Committee

Sue Hetherington, Chair HFLHC

For 137 years Holy Family church has housed God's people. For 69 years Lennox parishioners have loved and cared for the Church and its people. The current Lennox Head Holy Family Committee stands on the shoulders of Parish ancestors who originally repaired and cleaned the Church, and ran Church raffles to buy cleaning products. Today the Committee works with our priests and the Parish Office to ensure the building remains fully functioning for today's world and those who enter feel welcome and cared for.

The Committee honour the Holy Family title by deliberately providing opportunities for parishioners to experience their faith, get to know each other, to feel they are "at home" in their Parish family. It's a place where they can talk about their faith and welcome others into the family, while always mindful that we are all on our own journey.

The Committee has vitality in meeting monthly, setting goals, planning strategically, implementing both traditional and new initiatives, achieving outcomes and evaluating, while remaining transparent by providing meeting minutes to parishioners.

The Committee meets on the last Friday of the month, at 9:30 AM in the Sacred Heart room behind Holy Family Church. Parishioners are invited to input.

Upcoming initiatives

- Devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus is held on Tuesday at 10:00 AM.
- Monthly Dinner for parishioners and children is held on the last Saturday of the month at 6:30 PM, at Club Lennox. The April dinner is on Saturday 27th.
- World Day of Prayer annually unites the world in prayer on Friday March 1st. With a 97- year history in Australia, Holy Family continues to alternate the preparation of a celebration of a nominated country, with both the Ballina Anglican Church and the Ballina Uniting Church. In 2024 the venue will be the Uniting Church.
- Sunrise Beachfront Easter liturgy on Easter Sunday will be held in Lennox Park, opposite Holy Family church, at 7:00 AM, followed by Mass. The presentation is alternated between the Anglican and Catholic Church.
- Divine Mercy Sunday, initiated by St John Paul II, is held on the Sunday after Easter. Confession is available and a liturgy is held, beginning at 2:00 PM.

St Vincent de Paul Society Ballina



St Vincent de Paul Society
NSW
good works

The Saint Vincent de Paul Society has always been a part of the Catholic Church and we see ourselves in Ballina as an integral part of this Parish. We have served Christ's poor in Ballina and Lennox since 1936.

There are three Divisions of the Society operating in the Parish, namely, Vinnies Retail, our Community Support Group, know as Conference assisting those in our community who need immediate assistance and the third arm is Mary's Place providing breakfast and take away meals Monday to Friday each week.

When approached about articles for this Newsletter we decided to dedicate each Quarterly article to one of the Divisions. Next Newsletter we will detail the work of Vinnies Retail, followed by information on our Community Support Group and finally Mary's Place.

All Divisions primarily rely on Volunteers, and we need more volunteers due to the demand for our services. If you want to talk about your interest in volunteering let the Church Office know and your details will be passed to one of the appropriate Vinnies Office Bearers who in turn will contact you.



Committee members from left to right are: Bill McMahon, Val Culican, Hilda Carter, Wally Carter, Genevieve Starr, Peter Bowen, Cheryl Bowen, Sue Hetherington, Marie Sullivan, Sue McMahon, with Kevin Sullivan photographer. Absent is Maureen Harper.

PARISH MINISTERIES

Jesus said "for where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them"

Matthew 18:20

PRAYER GROUPS

TAIZE

Everyone is welcome to enjoy 45 minutes of praise meditation and music uninterrupted. Every second Monday SFX Church Ballina at 12 noon

MEN ALIVE

Bringing men together to share their faith journey and renew their faith in God. Groups running in Ballina (contact Richard Goss 0418 356 527) and Lennox (contact Murray Parr 0414 399 658)

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Come and experience meditation in the Christian tradition. We meet every Saturday at 9.30am in the Anawim Room Contact John Cheadle

MARIAN CENACLE

Our Lady invites us into the centicle of her Immaculate Heart to pray for Priests, Bishops, Cardinals and the Pope. We would love you to join us every Monday at 11am in the Anawim Room. Contact the Parish Office

BALLINA CCR

Catholic Charismatic Renewal Come and PRAISE God in song. Listen to His word in SCRIPTURE Speak to Him in PRAYER. Every Monday 2.15pm in the Anawim Room Contact Maxine Cole 0429 669 029

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH AND ROSARY

Every Saturday 9am SFX Church Ballina Every Sunday 7am Holy Family Lennox

ROSARY & CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY

Every Wednesday 8am Holy Family Church Lennox

From the Faith Formation Group *with Maxine Cole, Leader FFG*

The Faith Formation Team aims to support the Parish's mission to deepen relationship with Jesus and to promote discipleship and lifelong understanding of our Catholic faith among parishioners and has been operating since August 2022. At present the team members are: Kathryn Finch, Pauline Fingleton, Richard Goss, John Graham, Leanne Robbins and Maxine Cole. We would welcome your ideas.

Reflection Mornings are held to prepare for Easter and for Christmas. Reserve the date of Saturday 23rd March 2024.

The Bible Timeline video series run in the parish: The Quick Journey of 8 sessions and The Long Journey of 24 sessions, both with Jeff Cavins as the presenter. Contact Maxine 0429 669 029.

The Presence video series: God has always wanted to be present with his people culminating in the Incarnation of Jesus and, since the Resurrection we have not been left without Jesus who is present with us, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Eucharist. Contact Pauline Fingleton 0438 435 566.

Alpha has started in Ballina. Alpha is a series of interactive video sessions where you can explore life, faith and meaning in a conversational atmosphere over a shared meal. Contact Pauline Fingleton 0438 435 566.

Catholic Information Evening for adults enquiring about the Catholic faith – June 2024.

Becoming a Catholic: To prepare adults for the Sacraments there is a parish RCIA program. (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults)

Women's Reflection Days: Last years retreat with the MGL's was very successful, and the parish hopes to hold these each year.

Men's Reflection Events: These are now held regularly in the parish.

Advent groups were held last December, and many people bought the booklets for individual reflection. **Lenten groups** continue to be run and the booklets can be obtained from the parish office for individual reflection.

Infant Baptisms: Every month the parish holds preparation gatherings for parents.

Sacraments for children not attending Catholic schools: The parish has programs for specific sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, First Eucharist, and First Reconciliation

PARISH MINISTERIES

Jesus said “for where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them”
Matthew 18:20



Established in 1979, Crowley has grown from a traditional retirement village to a dynamic aged care provider. Named after parishioner, Jim Crowley who in 1976 donated land to Ballina Catholic Parish to construct accommodation for the aged. Crowley is very proud to be a part of the ministry of St Francis Xavier Parish Ballina.

Now 45 years later Crowley has evolved into a vibrant care community with a unique spirit. This spirit can be felt through our people, the staff, residents, clients, families, our Auxiliary and the broader parish community. Together we call ourselves the Crowley Family. And we are proudly led by the Parish Aged Care Board.

At Crowley we provide inspirational living experiences to improve the quality of life for our residents and clients. Our culture of care starts with a genuine interest in others. Crowley is recognised as an award winning leading aged care provider offering Residential Aged Care, Independent Living Accommodation, Home Care services and a Mobile Meal Service.

In this inaugural edition of the Ballina Parish Newsletter we wanted to highlight the Parish Aged Care Board and recognise their contribution to the Parish. The Parish Aged Care Board comprises experienced community leaders from diverse backgrounds and careers who bring their insight and broad expertise. The Board aims to ensure Crowley maintains its position as a leader in aged care services whilst meeting the needs and expectations of the community.

The Board is actively supported by our Parish Priests Fr Peter Padsungay and Fr Anselm Okeke and the Saint Francis Xavier Parish Finance Council.



From the Hospitality Group *with Denise Miller*

The Hospitality Group was formed to offer a welcoming atmosphere to everyone in or visiting our parish. This starts at Mass where all are welcomed at all doors and receive a copy of the Bulletin. Visitors and new parishioners are welcomed and encouraged to fill out a new parishioner form.

On the first Sunday of the month a morning tea is provided after 9 am Mass giving everyone the opportunity to meet and get to know others in the community. All Parish groups are encouraged to serve the morning tea and speak about their work in the Parish on any of the months.

We also organise special parish events during the year eg Parish dinner/lunch, morning tea to celebrate special parish feast days, First Communion and reflection days etc

We hold a coffee morning for ladies at The Cherry St Bowling Club Tuesdays 10 am weekly.



From the Social Justice Group *with Matt Brown*

Inspired by Jesus’ challenge in Matthew 25:40 to reach out to those in need, the Social Justice team are investigating practical ways to minister to the poor and vulnerable in our community. We are still in the planning phase but will be calling for your support and ideas in weeks to come.

Top row (left to right): Carolyn Hunt, Chair, Steve Barnier, Board Member, Cheryl Bourne, Board Member, Paul Lloyd, Parish Finance Manager, Michael Penhey, CEO & Parish Business Manager

Bottom row (left to right): Glenn Joynson, Deputy Chair, Paul Snellgrove, Board Member, Tanya Barun, Board Member, Father Peter Padsungay, Parish Administrator, Father Anselm Okeke, Assistant Priest

PARISH MINISTERIES

All Are Welcome All Belong

MINISTRY IN FOCUS



menALIVE is an Australian Lay Apostolate inspired by the Holy Spirit to foster the spirit of brotherhood in men. menALIVE's way of life encourages the formation of disciples who love Jesus and who form by example disciples or even apostles.

The four essentials that menALIVE teaches and models are:

1. Encounter Christ every day through personal prayer to develop a friendship with Jesus by which we come into a relationship with the Father and the Spirit. We believe the most confident way to see and hear Jesus is in the daily reading and reflection on the scriptures. As men redeemed, restored, and released, we commit to daily prayer and reflection to help maintain our discipleship.
2. Brotherhood/Fellowship - community is essential for following Jesus. We commit to joining a group of like-minded men and sharing our lives regularly. We commit to regular fellowship with other men.
3. Relationships - We learn to love those we have been given to love. This involves finding out how those we are trying to love NEED to be loved. We commit to love others as we love ourselves.
4. Serve the Church - by being missionaries; by growing in wholeness and holiness; by taking up a role of service at the Parish and/or the Diocesan level; by the support and encouragement of the priesthood and those who serve as brothers. We commit to serving the church and those who serve within her.

At breakfast on February 17, 40 men of the Parish heard the testimony of Robert Falzon, co-founder of menALIVE, about his experiences of Christ in his life.

In Ballina and Lennox Head we meet fortnightly on:

- Wednesday at 8:00 AM in Lennox Head. Talk to Murray Parr 0414 399 658
- Thursday at 8:50 AM in Ballina. Talk to Richard Goss 0418 356 527

If these times don't suit you, talk to us about gathering a group at a time that does.



Robert Falzon, Richard Fox, Moses Chenhomo

SFX Youth Group Update



The St Francis Xavier Youth Group is a warm and welcoming group, who aim to provide a sense of community, culture and belonging to the youth of the Ballina Parish through the development of their social and spiritual needs. Following the Saturday 5.30pm Mass, the youth group is held in the Upper Room from 6.30 - 8pm during the school term for local high school students.

SFX Youth has a social media presence to assist in engaging the wider parish community. Photos and videos can be found on Instagram and Facebook SFX_Youth.

For more information contact Kailani Tiernan the Parish Youth Co-ordinator ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au

Xavier Catholic College update continued

This year, we're starting to plan for our 25th Anniversary celebrations, which we will celebrate in early 2025. We invite our Parish community to support and be a part of these celebrations – more information about our plans will be shared throughout the year.

Parents and families are more than welcome to join us throughout the year for a variety of activities and information sessions, so we can work together in supporting each and every one of our students on their educational journey. In addition, families who are interested in joining XCC and want to learn more about us are warmly invited to join us at our upcoming Principal's Tours on Thursday 29 February and Thursday 7 March. If you'd like to see what's on each term at XCC, please visit: <https://xavierism.catholic.edu.au/term-planners>

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Xavier Catholic College



It has been wonderful to have our students, staff and families back together at Xavier Catholic College for another year of learning and growing as a community. We've welcomed a new group of Year 7 students to the College, most of them joining us from our Parish primary schools, and a number of new students in other year levels have also joined our College family. We're also fortunate to have some fantastic new staff members joining us in teaching and ancillary roles. Our school community started the year off with our annual Opening Mass, where we officially welcomed all new members of our community and set our intentions for the year ahead. We extend a particularly special welcome to our new College Youth Minister, Brendon Clarke, who will work closely with staff and students to support the faith life of our school.

This year's College theme, chosen by our 2024 Student Leaders, is Stand by Me, inspired by Paul's encouragement to the people of Thessalonica: "Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). As a College community, we want to be intentional about helping and supporting each other, inspiring one another to be men and women for others in our Jesuit tradition.

We also hope to build a culture of resilience, generosity and empathy in our students and staff, giving them tools they can use all life long to help themselves and others. To do so, we are working with The Resilience Project in teaching positive mental health strategies in our classrooms, the staffroom, and in our families' homes. Each Wednesday, our students will come together in Community Time to work on activities from The Resilience Project and learn more about the strategies that can support their wellbeing. Our students have engaged positively with the project so far, and we are excited to see the wellbeing of our community flourish throughout the year.

[Continued on previous page](#)

St Francis Xavier Primary



Welcome Back

Early February, we warmly welcomed our new students and families, and those students returning to St Francis Xavier Primary, to another year of fun, faith and learning for 2024! It has been wonderful to see so many smiling and happy faces as our Kindergarten to Year 6 students greeted both old and new friends and settled into their new classrooms with their 2024 teachers. We are blessed to have a talented team of staff who are committed to supporting the growth of each child and we look forward to watching our students grow and learn throughout the 2024 school year.

Ash Wednesday

On Wednesday 14 February we marked the beginning of a season of repentance, fasting and awaiting Christ's Resurrection - Lent. Our Kindergarten to Year 2 students shared in a Liturgy at school, whilst our Year 3 to Year 6 students attended the 12pm Parish Mass. On Ash Wednesday we launched our Project Compassion appeal, where through generous donations, we as a school community are able to support those in need.

Induction Mass

Our Year 6 Leaders for 2024 were inducted into their roles on Wednesday 21 February at 12pm in the Church. The Parish and our school community joined together for this very special Mass as we celebrated not only our Leaders, but also the beginning of the new school year.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place for students in Year 4 and above who have completed their Sacrament of Confirmation. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will take place on Tuesday 19 March at 5:30pm in the Church.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS AND DAY CARE CENTRE

Holy Family Primary



Ash Wednesday

To mark the beginning of Lent our staff and students celebrated two special Ash Wednesday liturgies. This was an opportunity to reflect on the importance of Lent and how we can each deepen our relationship with God and reflect on the sacrifice that Jesus made for us as we lead up to the Season of Easter.

Ash Wednesday allowed our school community to reflect on our call to be disciples of Jesus and to follow in his footsteps. With God's help, we are reminded to reach out to others with more love and kindness, especially in our own families, our school and in the world and think about how we can be servants to God's people.

Year 6 CSYMI Junior Retreat and Formation of our Leadership Ministry Teams

Early this term our Year 6 students took part in a discipleship formation retreat. The aim was to support the students in their role as student leaders of Holy Family in 2024.



The day involved working in small groups to reflect upon ideas presented in videos, journaling and a variety of fun games. During the day's activities the students were encouraged to invite Jesus on their journey, consider the people, values and attitudes that could help guide them on their journey and understand the importance of receiving and giving forgiveness as we journey through the ups and downs of life. The day concluded with each student selecting a CSYMI Junior ministry that they would like to be a part of. Throughout the year our Year 6 students will meet in their Pastoral Care, Social Service and Worship ministry teams to decide upon initiatives they would like to support to make a difference in our school and community.

Religious Education

This year our Stage 3 students will engage in project based learning for their Religious Education units. Students will be learning about the mission of Jesus and explore ways in which they can be missionary disciples. Our Year 6 students will be volunteering in the community and will analyse their own actions according to the values of Jesus.

Year 5 students will be taking a close look at the liturgical calendar and will create a news clip to educate our younger students about the different seasons within the liturgical year. They will focus on scripture stories, rituals, signs and symbols and the importance of each season in their everyday lives.

St Annes Long Day Care Centre



St Anne's Long Day Care Centre is a Children's Centre educating and caring for children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age in their early years before school. St Anne's opened on 27 January 2010 and has become an important part of the St Francis Xavier Parish of Ballina as an early childhood education and care facility alongside the Parish Primary Schools and High School.

The 34 staff include qualified Educators, Early Childhood Teachers, an Administrative Assistant, a Centre Director/Manager, and an on-site "chef" providing nutritious meals for the children, who all work in partnership with families. Everything we do at St Anne's is based on the building of positive, warm, nurturing and respectful relationships with all who come to St Anne's. Children are supported to recognize the connectedness between mind, body and spirit, caring for each other, for our earth and all on it.

Play-based learning, intentional teaching, and including children's voices, are fundamental elements in our work with the young children in our care. We invite you to come by and say hello!