

Saint Francis Xavier

CONNECT

All Are Welcome All Belong

PARISH EVENTS

BIBLE IN 8 WEEKS - ADAM TO JESUS

Explore Salvation history using a colour coded timeline of the 12 time periods with video presentations by Jeff Cavins. **Commencing Saturday, July 25th from 10.00am to 11.30am.**

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

A Journey Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church video and discussion group. **Come along on Friday Mornings from 9.15am - 10.45am** for Part 1: "What We Believe"

PARISH PILGRIMAGE TO MARIAN VALLEY

Connect with your Parish community on a pilgrimage to the peaceful surrounds of Mary Help of Christians Shrine, Marian Valley - **Sat Sept 5th**

REFLECTION AFTERNOON

Eucharist and Mission Reflection Afternoon with Br Bill Sullivan. Rediscover the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian Life. Coming in October. Afternoon Tea will be provided.

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: Fr Peter Padsungay

Assistant Priest: Fr Erick Quinteros

Deacon: Rev Assoc. Prof Anthony Gooley

Pastoral Associate: Brendon Clarke

Youth Co-ordinator: Kailani Tiernan

From the Parish Priests



As we reflect on the many events and ministries that have enriched our parish so far this year, we are filled with gratitude for the countless ways so many of you generously share your gifts, talents, and time in service to God and our parish community. Whether your contribution is visible or behind the scenes, your commitment helps make our parish a welcoming and vibrant place of faith.

We offer special thanks to Dave Wilson as he retires from the Parish Finance Council. Dave has given many years of dedicated service to our parish, sharing his wisdom, expertise, and commitment with generosity and integrity. His contribution has helped strengthen our parish and ensure its ongoing stewardship for future generations. We encourage you to read more about his remarkable life of service in the Parish Finance Council report elsewhere in this newsletter.



We also invite all parishioners to consider how God may be calling you to become more involved in the life of our parish. Each person has unique gifts given by God, and when those gifts are shared, our whole community is enriched. Whether you have a little time or a lot, there is a place for you and a ministry that can benefit from your talents.

Together, let us continue to build a welcoming, vibrant, faith-filled parish where all can encounter Christ, grow in discipleship, and share His love with others.

May God bless you and your families abundantly.
Fr Peter and Fr Erick

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

From the Parish Pastoral Council

Dear Parishioners,

Murray Deeps, Chair PPC

Faith in Action: Celebrating Community, Vision, and Service in Our Parish

As we look back on the recent weeks, our parish community has been filled with vibrant expressions of faith, milestone sacraments, and forward-thinking leadership. There is a profound sense of gratitude for where we are today, alongside an exciting vision for where we are heading.

Recent Highlights: Faith and Fellowship

Our parish family recently gathered for two deeply moving celebrations that highlighted both our diversity and our growth in faith.

A Vibrant Pentecost Sunday

On Pentecost Sunday, our church came alive with colour, culture, and song for our Multicultural Mass. It was a beautiful reflection of the universal Church, showcasing the rich tapestry of backgrounds that make up our faith community. Seeing so many cultures unite under one roof was a powerful reminder that while we are many, we are one body in Christ.

First Holy Communion

We also extend our warmest congratulations to the young girls and boys of our parish who recently received their First Holy Communion. Watching our youth take this significant step in their sacramental journey is a joy for the entire community. We pray that their love for the Eucharist continues to grow as they are nourished by Christ.

Mapping Our Future: The 2026–2028 Strategic Plan

A thriving parish requires a clear vision, and we are thrilled to announce the completion of the Parish's 2026–2028 Strategic Plan. This roadmap will guide our community's spiritual, pastoral, and practical growth over the next three years. The members of the Parish Pastoral Council are to be highly commended for their invaluable input and tireless work on this project.

Special Recognition

A sincere debt of gratitude is owed to the dedicated subcommittee who steered this project across the finish line. We applaud Leanne Robbins, Michael Vella, Brendan Clarke, Maxine Cole, and Kailani Tiernan for their outstanding leadership in finalising this vital document.

How to Access the Plan:

- In Print: Printed copies of the Strategic Plan will be available at the back of each Church in the coming weeks.
- Digital: The document will soon be uploaded to the Parish website for easy viewing and download.

A Call to Service: Sharing Our Gifts

Through our Baptism, every single one of us is called to be an active member of the Church. To keep our two churches vibrant and welcoming, it is essential that we all step up and volunteer in some capacity.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a proactive community full of individuals who act as the light of Christ in their everyday actions. To everyone currently serving: thank you for your wonderful witness and dedication.

However, for a parish to truly flourish, the joys and responsibilities of stewardship must be shared by all.

Why Volunteer?

- Fulfill Our Baptismal Call: We are the hands and feet of Jesus in our local community.
- Lighten the Load: When everyone contributes a small amount of time, our entire community thrives without burning out our existing leaders.
- Discover Your Purpose: Whether your gifts lie in music, hospitality, reading, maintenance, or youth ministry, there is a place for you.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

Please take some time this week to reflect on how you can share your unique gifts. Together, let us continue to build a parish that is deeply rooted in faith, united in diversity, and actively moving toward a bright future.

Together in Christ,
Murray Deeps
Chairperson

From the Parish Finance Council

A Lifetime of Faithful Service: Honouring Dave Wilson

Michael Shay, Chair PFC

After an extraordinary 60 years of service to the Catholic Parish of Ballina, we take a moment to acknowledge and give thanks for the quiet, faithful contribution of Dave Wilson – an original member of the informal Parish Council which was then formally established as the Parish Finance Council more than 45 years ago.

Dave's journey of service began in the most humble of ways. As he recalls with a smile, "I couldn't say no to a Nun." What started as a simple request in the 1960s to organise a working bee to paint the convent school soon became something much more. Each week, a group of around 12 local volunteers gathered, and what was meant to be a short project stretched into a year of shared effort, camaraderie and generosity as the Nuns kept finding more jobs for them to do. It was the beginning of a lifetime of saying "yes" to the needs of the Parish.

Grounded in a deep faith shaped by his Catholic Irish-Australian mother, Dave's commitment has remained steadfast across six decades. A qualified Building Surveyor by profession, Dave brought not only generosity of spirit, but also valuable expertise to the Parish Finance Council. Yet, in true Dave fashion, he is quick to deflect any recognition. Reflecting on the growth of the Parish, he speaks not of personal achievements, but of collective effort – of dedicated Parish Priests, capable leaders, and a Parish Finance Council made up of qualified professionals in their field willing to share their expertise for the good of the community.

During Dave's time, the Parish has undergone remarkable transformation. From a small church in Ballina and St Francis Xavier Primary School adjacent to the convent building, the Parish of Ballina has grown into a thriving hub of education and community life, now supporting multiple schools and learning centres serving more than 2,000 students. Behind this growth has been a spirit of collaboration – clergy willing to listen, and parishioners willing to step forward and serve. Dave fondly recalls Dean Redford's very informal Finance Council meetings at the Shaws Bay Hotel – gatherings that, unsurprisingly, guaranteed enthusiastic attendance from local parishmen.

Dave's contribution has never been limited to meetings or decisions. His story is one of hands-on service – organising volunteers, improving facilities, and helping to bring practical projects to life. He recalls organising the upgrade of St Francis Xavier Primary School from sanitary pan toilets to a septic system in the late 1960s, which involved employing a licensed plumber but using Parish volunteers for all the trench digging and labouring. This project brought significant improvements for the school children at the time. In 1974, Parish Priest, Father John Dacey agreed to connect the school, Convent, Church and Presbytery to the town sewerage system. Thankfully, the volunteers who helped on the project were able to use machinery for most of the trench digging this time. Over time, these infrastructure efforts grew in scale, benefiting generations of students and parishioners.

Together with his beloved wife Pat, Dave has been deeply woven into the fabric of the Parish community. Their life together raising four daughters, welcoming grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and participating in countless community activities reflects a shared commitment to service and connection. Pat's own legacy, particularly through Ballina Meals on Wheels, St Vincent de Paul Society and the Crowley Care Auxiliary, stands as a testament to a family devoted to caring for others.

Through times of growth, change, and personal loss, the Parish has remained central to Dave's life. Even in reflecting on his many years of involvement, he returns to a simple belief: that communities thrive when people are willing to "put their hand up" and share the load.

"I've had a lot of fun over the years," Dave says. It's a simple statement, but one that speaks volumes. For Dave, service has never been about recognition, it has been about belonging, contribution, and quiet joy. As Dave steps back from his formal role on the Parish Finance Council, we give thanks for his decades of wisdom, generosity and steadfast faith. His legacy is not only found in buildings or developments, but in the spirit of service he has helped to foster – a spirit that will continue to guide our Parish into the future. On behalf of the Parish Finance Council and Parish community we thank you, Dave, for showing us what a lifetime of faithful service truly looks like.

From the Holy Family Lennox Head Committee

Sue Hetherington, Chair HFLHC

Children's laughter reverberated through the Holy Family church carpark last Saturday as the Love Lennox Festival erupted. For many, standing on sacred ground, sharing authentic family fun at the Jumping Castle, was special. Smiling families watched, bringing to mind the faith tenet of welcoming the stranger.

Holy Family church is the heart beat of Lennox Head. It is common to see surfboards and skateboards carried through the church carpark during the week because the carpark is safe and leads to Lennox Beach. It brings to life Bishop Farrelly words of "a little gem by the sea. The Catholic idea of a town was a cluster of buildings surrounding the church with the Cross overlooking everything".

The original Lennox Head Catholic Church was St Matthias, opened in 1906 at Tintenbar. The saying familiar to the Lennox Head community of "Is Ross Lane open?" may have originated in these early years. History tells that it was the infestation of lice in the priest's Sunday vestments stored in the country church that also housed roosting starlings with lice, that caused the priest at the time to say that he heard there were a few people coming to Lennox for holidays. Consequently, erecting a church in Lennox Head might be a good idea.

In 1954 the Alstonville Catholic Parish blessed a new brick church dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, leaving their original wooden church available to be the new church for Lennox Head. Local businesses demonstrated their ingenuity by cutting the church into several pieces and loading them onto two trucks. The procession then made its way to Ballina "via the old Ballina cutting, down River St in Ballina, over the North Creek Bridge and on to Lennox—a trip of approximately 5 hours. To get over the Canal Bridge into River St they had to hacksaw off some sections of the load. A man travelled on the top of the load with a pole in order to raise live electric wires so the trucks could get through. At Lennox Head they unloaded and stood the sections into their rightful places, on an already prepared concrete base and footings." When Bishop Farrelly opened and blessed the Church of the Holy Family in 1955 he closed the quote stated in an earlier paragraph by saying "Here at Lennox Head the ideal has indeed been achieved".

The building initially cost "about 3,00 pounds and of this, 566 pounds had already been collected, plus another 300 pounds on the day. The altar, statues and some pews came across from Alstonville Other pews came from the old Tintenbar church and the Stations of the Cross came from the convent chapel at St Vincent's Hospital. Because of Lennox Head's growth, Fr Terry Smith, Ballina P.P had an extension built on to the northern side of the church in 1989." The design was from an architect student, the daughter of Lennox parishioners. Father Terry Smith had arrived in Ballina in 1982 and saw the need to shape the direction of the Ballina Parish, when "the laity really took ownership of the Parish and what they could and should offer each other. There was a realisation that Pastoral Ministry was not restricted to the Priests".

The Holy Family Lennox Head Committee continues the tradition of lay people providing Pastoral Ministry by caring for the church and its people. The current Committee members are Cheryl and Peter Bowen, Genevieve Starr, Marie Sullivan and Chair Sue Hetherington. We honour the memory of Kevin Sullivan, a titan Committee member. Kevin not only attended meetings and lived his faith. Kevin was also a person who could fix just about anything, quietly working behind the scenes, precipitating a need before most noticed and readily offering a solution. Our Committee misses him greatly and thanks him for his friendship, sharing his talents and devotion to our church and the parishioners he loved. We continue to pray for Kevin, his wife Marie and their family.

The Committee no longer has to run raffles after Mass to pay for cleaning products and parishioners no longer are asked to join a roster to clean and maintain the church. As is the Lennox tradition, parishioners will soon be invited to consider doing a service for a 12- month period, to help the church community continually flourish. From operating a CD player for the choir, if required, to volunteering to read at Mass, there are many actions that produce a friendly and welcoming church.

Bishop Greg said in 2018 " No one person can be Jesus. But all of us together, in a congregation, and the Christ-like qualities of all of us become Jesus" who welcomes parishioners, newcomers and those returning home to their faith. Night time Taizé will return to Holy Family Church in the winter months. It will be a time of dark, quiet nights, thunderous ocean waves crashing, a silent, pared back church without harsh lights, and silence broken by bells calling us to welcome the Holy Spirit in prayer, song and meditation. We will announce the dates in coming weeks.

PARISH MINISTERIES



From the Hospitality Group *with Denise Miller*

ANZAC Day at Crowley Care

Crowley Care residents, staff and families came together for a special ANZAC Day service, pausing to reflect, share stories and honour those who have given so much for our freedom.

Crowley gratefully welcomed students from our parish schools, Holy Family Catholic Primary School, St Francis Xavier Primary School and Xavier Catholic College. Their thoughtful readings and prayers, along with the respectful laying of wreaths, added a deeply meaningful dimension to the service.



Following the service, residents, families and guests gathered for a morning tea in Crowley's Activity Centre, providing a special opportunity for connection, conversation and shared reflection.

For many Crowley residents, ANZAC Day holds particular significance. Some have lived through times of war, while others carry strong family connections to those who served. Their stories and memories remind us of the personal cost of conflict and the enduring legacy of courage and sacrifice.

Together, we remember their service, their sacrifice, and the enduring spirit of the ANZACs.



We have had an exciting and social term with lots of very enjoyable moments.

We warmly welcome anyone interested in assisting with monthly morning tea to join us, or just come along and enjoy!

Morning tea is served after 9 & 11 am mass on the first Sunday of the month. We also provide morning tea after all special Masses and events as needed.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ASSIST IN SO MANY WAYS.

The weekly morning tea held Tuesdays at 10 am at Cherry St Bowling Club is most enjoyable full of happy chatter. Everyone is very welcome.

We have recently celebrated Pentecost Sunday with a well-attended morning tea. Everyone wore costumes from their country of origin and brought a traditional plate.

The Hospitality group is starting to plan our Annual Parish Luncheon to be held in October. The date to be announced shortly.



Congratulations to all the children in our Parish who made their First Holy Communion on Sunday, June 14th

PARISH MINISTERIES

Faith Formation and Renewal: Growing Together in Faith



The St Francis Xavier Parish Faith Formation and Renewal Team has enjoyed a vibrant and grace-filled year, offering parishioners many opportunities to deepen their relationship with Christ, grow in their understanding of the Catholic faith, and strengthen our parish community.

A Journey Through the Gospel of Matthew

The year began with an inspiring eight-week study, A Journey Through the Gospel of Matthew. In preparation for the Liturgical Year A, which focuses on Matthew's Gospel, parishioners gathered to explore this rich and powerful account of Jesus' life and ministry. Through beautifully produced videos from Ascension Press, guided by renowned Catholic teacher Jeff Cavins, participants discovered how Jesus fulfills God's promises to Israel and establishes His Kingdom on earth. Maxine Cole skilfully facilitated the course, providing thoughtfully prepared handouts and discussion questions that encouraged reflection and lively conversation. A heartfelt thank you to Maxine for the dedication, preparation, and enthusiasm she brought to this enriching program.

Lent: A Time of Reflection and Renewal

As Lent began, parishioners joined small faith-sharing groups using the Wollongong Diocese Compassio Lenten Program. Together they reflected on the Sunday Gospel readings, shared insights, and prepared their hearts and minds for the celebration of Easter. Parishioners also used the resource for private reflections at home.

One of the highlights of the season was the Parish Lenten Reflection Morning. Held within the beauty and serenity of our church, the morning provided a sacred space for prayer, silence, and reflection as Holy Week approached. Participants were able to experience Exposition, Adoration, Reconciliation, Reflections and Benediction, before gathering for a delicious morning tea generously provided by our Parish Hospitality Group. The sounds of friendly conversation and joyful laughter reflected the strong bonds of faith and fellowship within our parish family.

Celebrating Pentecost

Pentecost was celebrated with great joy and colour. Following the 9am Mass where parishioners came dressed in traditional costumes, they shared traditional foods representing the many cultures that enrich our parish community. A special Pentecost cake, beautifully designed and baked by Roxanne Nilon, added to the festive atmosphere.

On Pentecost Eve, parishioners were invited to deepen their understanding of the Holy Spirit through two engaging presentations by Maxine Cole. The day also included lunch and a Healing Mass celebrated by Fr Erick. Fittingly, the Church's birthday was marked with a specially prepared birthday cake.

Parishioners also participated in the Youth-led Pentecost Pilgrimage from Lennox Head to Ballina, journeying together in faith and fellowship.

Alpha - Coming Soon

Alpha creates a welcoming space for honest conversations about life, faith, and meaning through a series of interactive sessions held in the same format worldwide. Each session begins with dinner and informal conversation, helping guests build friendships and feel comfortable. Afterward, participants watch a short video exploring topics such as who Jesus is or why we pray, followed by small-group discussions where any question can be asked in a safe, respectful environment. Sessions last about two hours and finish on time.

Alpha is especially valuable for those who may be searching for faith, feeling disconnected from church, or experiencing loneliness. Inviting a friend to attend with you can make them feel more comfortable and open to joining the conversation. So why not invite a friend and come along to our next Alpha sessions.

PARISH MINISTRIES

Faith Formation and Renewal: Growing Together in Faith



Eucharist28: Walking with Jesus

The Faith Formation Team has been actively embracing the vision of Eucharist28, the national movement preparing Australian Catholics for a deeper encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist ahead of the 2028 National Eucharistic Congress in Sydney.

Under the leadership of Fr Peter, several parish initiatives have already been launched. The first was a Holy Hour celebrated in union with parishes across Australia, marking the official launch of Eucharist28.

Another significant event was our Eucharistic Procession on the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Parishioners gathered for a candlelit procession through the streets surrounding our church and school. Beginning and ending at St Francis Xavier Church, the procession included prayers and blessings at St Francis Xavier Primary School before continuing through the local neighbourhood.

It was a beautiful public witness of faith, allowing us to walk with Jesus and proclaim His presence to our wider community.



Eucharistic
Procession
June 2026

PARISH MINISTRIES

Faith Formation and Renewal: Looking Ahead



Pilgrimage to Marian Valley – Shrine of Our Lady Help of Christians

As part of our Eucharist28 journey, parishioners are invited to join a pilgrimage to Marian Valley on Saturday, 5 September 2026.

Marian Valley is one of Australia's most significant pilgrimage destinations and offers opportunities for Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, Rosary, processions, and personal prayer. Pilgrims may also explore the beautiful Marian grottos, peaceful grounds, and outdoor Stations of the Cross.

Free coach transport will be available, departing Ballina at 7:45am and returning at approximately 5:00pm. Places are limited, so early booking through the Parish Office is encouraged.

Pick up a flyer at the doors of both churches for more details.

Foundations of Faith

Beginning this July, Maxine Cole will lead Foundations of Faith: A Journey Through the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This internationally acclaimed study, filmed across forty locations in eleven countries, explores the teachings of the Church through the four pillars of the Catechism.

Part One, What We Believe, is on Friday mornings from 9:15am to 10:45am in the Mother Teresa Room. Morning tea will be provided.

A Journey Through the Bible

Richard Goss will lead parishioners through Ascension Press' inspiring biblical study series based on the work of Scott Hahn. Participants will journey through salvation history, from Creation to the establishment of the Church, gaining a deeper understanding of God's plan for humanity.

Sessions begin on Saturday 25 July from 10:00am to 11:30am and continue weekly until 19 September, excluding 5 September due to the Marian Valley Pilgrimage.

RCIA – Exploring the Catholic Faith

Are you curious about the Catholic faith, considering becoming Catholic, or know someone who may be interested?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) offers a welcoming and supportive environment where participants can explore faith, ask questions, pray, reflect, and learn more about God's love and the teachings of the Church.

Information sessions will be held at the Parish Administration Centre on:

- Monday 3 August at 10:00am
- Wednesday 5 August at 5:30pm

The next RCIA program will commence in mid-August.



The parish is also seeking volunteers who would like to accompany candidates on their faith journey. This may involve offering a friendly welcome, sitting with candidates at Mass, answering questions, or serving as a sponsor.

For more information, please contact Pauline 0438 435 566 or Peter 0421 518 371.

A Parish Alive in Faith

From Scripture studies and prayer gatherings to pilgrimages, Eucharistic celebrations, and faith formation opportunities, our parish continues to grow as a community centred on Christ.

We give thanks to all who generously share their gifts, time, and talents in supporting these ministries, and we look forward with hope and excitement to the many opportunities for spiritual growth still to come.

PARISH MINISTERIES

St Vincent de Paul Society St Francis Xavier, Ballina Conference



The Ballina Conference of Vinnies are very grateful to be supported by such loving, caring and generous parish communities.

In April the Conference had a membership drive, when we were overwhelmed by the number of parishioners coming forward to show their interest in learning about becoming a Vincentian. Some chose to join the team of volunteers at the Vinnies shops, which is wonderful, while others are joining us at the Conference. If you missed this opportunity to come and chat about becoming a Vincentian, you are welcome to call Maddy any time on 0428 872 014.

The Conference was also grateful to be invited by the Cherry Street Sports Club, to be part of their Purple Friday Community Morning Tea, which enabled us to share the important work the Vinnies does with the wider community of Ballina.

Ballina Conference has had a very busy six months assisting many people in our community doing it tough and struggling to keep up with high living expenses. This financial year up to May, the Conference has assisted 1,039 people in our community, for 78 of these people it was the first time they received assistance from Vinnies. Of the people we assisted 42% shared that they are either homeless or living in temporary accommodation such as in a motel or couch surfing. One single mother of 3 young children is living in a tent; she remains positive and is hopeful that she will soon be placed in public housing.

Every day at Vinnies, we see that ordinary people are able to make an extraordinary difference in their local communities. We are inspired by the joy of the Gospels and our Catholic social teachings to do things that matter. The spirit to feed, heal, shelter, nurture and inspire – the power to change lives – is in everyone.

As we now find ourselves in winter, this is one of the Conferences busiest times assisting people, and also the time of the Vinnies major fundraiser – the Winter Appeal, where your commitment to helping those experiencing disadvantage, poverty, loneliness and homelessness is still very much needed and appreciated.

If you are able to make a contribution to Vinnies Winter Appeal, please do so by either electronic funds transfer to BSB: 062000, Account No 19889862, Ref No 43450, via an envelope in the church and placed in a collection tray at Mass; or dropped into a Vinnies shop. Please know that all donations made this way go directly to the people in our community. Receipts are available if required.

We leave you with a quote from St Vincent de Paul

Since God is satisfied with our good will and honest efforts, let us also be satisfied with the outcome He gives to them, and our actions will never be without good results

Vincent de Paul

Ballina Youth Group Photos



Pentecost
Pilgrimage



Celebrating St Patricks Day

PARISH MINISTERIES

Ballina Youth

Upper Room Youth Group

Making an enthusiastic return in 2026, the Upper Room Youth Group continues to meet Sunday afternoons during the school term from 6:00pm to 8:00pm in the Parish Upper Room. The group aims to provide young people a safe and comfortable environment for them to grow in their faith, build friendships, and participate in a range of engaging social and prayerful activities.

Kailani Tiernan
Parish Youth Coordinator

Throughout the first half of the year, members have enjoyed several memorable events that have contributed to fostering our growing community. In light of global events, we held our very own Winter Olympics in February! Armed with a bbq dinner and moving dollies, our members enjoyed a night of friendly competition as they represented a country of their choice. Due to popular demand we introduced a Karaoke Night, where everyone was invited to choose a song to perform, either individually or as part of a group. We were delighted to be entertained by everyone's musicality, showmanship, and true dedication to authentic storytelling. As term one came to an end we were fortunate to have the presence of Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator, Zac Parnell as he joined us for our annual Saint Patrick's Day celebration. Dressed in green, our youth spent the night working together to solve riddles as they competed in a scavenger hunt.

We returned for term two in the beginning of May, with our annual Star Wars Night. Another favourite, we combined games, activities, and fellowship around a much-loved theme, whilst focusing on our "call" to be disciples, and the early themes of the Book of Acts. In light of bringing back enjoyable themes, we returned for the third year running to our Knights of Ballina Night. With donated cardboard and individual creative flare, our members created outstanding Knights to continue the tradition. We will finish the term with a movie night and visit from a special guest.

Thank you to the Parish, parents, youth leaders, and youth group members who help us make Youth Group a reality, we appreciate and value your continued support. We will return next term on Sunday 26th July at 6:00pm. New faces are always welcome! Come along, bring a friend, and be part of something real. To register attendance or for more information contact Kailani at ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au or scan the QR code shown on the slides before Mass.

Pentecost Pilgrimage

Members of our Youth Group participated in and led our Pentecost Pilgrimage on May 24th this year. Despite the poor weather our group of pilgrims powered through and completed the 15km walk, taking the time to get to know each other, spend time in personal prayer, and reflect on our call to continue to be Pilgrims of Hope. We were greeted by Fr Peter at the St. Francis Xavier Church upon arrival and received a Blessing before moving on to youth group to finish the night. Thank you to all those who participated in, prayed for, and supported us in our Pentecost Pilgrimage.

Exhort: Young Adults' Group

Are you a young adult aged 18-30 and looking for community?

This year we have restarted Exhort. Shortened from the word exhortation, "to urge, strongly encourage, or comfort one in their faith" we aim to continue to spread the Word, evangelise and support one another as we grow in faith. Exhort is a gathering of young adults from the northern parts of our Diocese who meet fortnightly for dinner, discussion, and community. Hosted this year in the Ballina Parish every second Wednesday at 5:30pm, our group continues to take to heart the message of 1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I arrive, give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching."

Our young adults will be travelling to Marian Valley on Saturday the 18th of July. This pilgrimage through the valley, will include the visit to many international shrines, life-size Stations of the Cross, and finish with a picnic lunch.

Register your interest for both Exhort and the Pilgrimage with Kailani at ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au or the QR code shown on the slides before Mass.

For more information and regular updates, we have a social media presence on Instagram and Facebook under the handle @ballina.youth, as well as a quarterly magazine, which can be found on the Parish website under the name Neotēs.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS

St Francis Xavier Primary



Lismore Staff Proclaim

On Monday 25 May we came together as a staff to share in our mission of education and evangelisation. The theme of this year's Proclaim is 'Keep the Light Shining'. It is a call to action, a reminder, and a promise. It's about nurturing the hope, the passion and the resilience within each of us. To conclude the day, we joined with the staff from Xavier Catholic College to share in a celebration of the Eucharist. We thank Fr Peter for presiding over our Parish schools Mass and for helping us 'keep the light shining'.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

On Friday 12 June, together with students from Holy Family Primary School, we shared in a Reflection Day around the Holy Eucharist. During this day, students came together in prayer, learnt more about the Eucharist and the story of where Mass began and practised receiving the Eucharist for the first time.

On Sunday 14 June, 14 of our students completed their initiation into the Catholic Church as we celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We look forward to seeing our Sacramental students and their families at our weekend Masses into the future.

Learning and Teaching News

Students from St Francis Xavier Primary School, Ballina, have lent their voices to a special song recognising the dedication and sacrifice of first responders and their families as part of FORTEM Australia's Thank a First Responder Day campaign. FORTEM Australia supports the mental health and wellbeing of first responders and their families.



The opportunity came about after Claire from Ballina RSL heard the St Francis Xavier choir perform at a school Mass. Inspired by their singing, she shared the idea with FORTEM Australia, whose Chief Executive Officer, Kerryanne, had written the song. Every term, St Francis Xavier teacher Kelly Ons and Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School, South Lismore, Assistant Principal Mission Chris Hosie lead the music at school Masses, with Mr Hosie accompanying the choir on guitar. Their dedication helped prepare students for the memorable recording experience. Surrounded by microphones, cameras and professional studio equipment, the students spent more than two hours perfecting the performance and recording multiple takes of the song. 'I was excited and surprised. I was so happy because we were the only school that did it,' said Year 1 student Louis. 'I was really happy and proud because the first responders do so much for us,' said Year 5 student Mia. 'I felt really happy to be with my friends and sing because I love singing. It's important to thank all of the first responders who sacrifice their lives for us,' said Year 4 student Victoria.

Following the song's radio debut on 3 June, the students also did a live performance at Ballina RSL on 10 June for Thank a First Responder Day, in front of first responders and their families. Congratulations to the talented students and staff who supported them during this exciting experience.

Maths Olympiad Competition

The Maths Olympiad is an inter-school competition for Australian and New Zealand students, specifically designed to stimulate and challenge high potential and high achieving Stage 3 learners. At St Francis Xavier Primary School, we are very proud of our mathematicians who are representing our school in this competition.

Year 6: Max Mitchell, Nathan Hoang, Joy Meany, Ruby Hernage, Lilly-May Budnick, Rafael Samaradellis, Spencer Baldwin, Leo Wilson, Ella Piercy and Mac Downie.

Year 5: Maxon Andrews, Leo Marboeuf, Mason Hordern, Lenox Loadsman, Madison Aslin, Ben Girardi Paciello, Annabelle O'Rourke, Eli Bogetti, Enzo Conomos, Koah Matheson, Emerson White and Lara Dowden.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Holy Family Primary



First Holy Communion

On Sunday the 14th of June, over 30 students from Holy Family from Year 4 to Year 6 received their Sacrament of First Holy Communion. Preparation for our students included two Family Sessions with parents, a whole day Reflection Day with all children from local schools also preparing for their First Holy Communion.



We keep all our Holy Family girls and boys how celebrated their First Holy Communion in our prayers and wish them all the best as they continue their sacramental journey.

Ten:Ten Whole School Retreat

Ten:Ten is a high-energy experience focused on enabling students to achieve the fullness of life and students from Holy Family had the opportunity on Thursday 7th May to enjoy this special experience. Inspired by the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John, "I came so that they may have life, life to the full" (John 10:10), this experience was an opportunity for students to celebrate life with their peers and hear of the relevance of the Gospel from a team of faithful youth ministers.

Each of the Ten:Ten sessions are an invitation for students to encounter Jesus through music, talks, interactive activities and prayer.

At the heart of the Ten:Ten experience is the proclamation of the Gospel through contemporary Christian music played by the Proclaim Lismore Wildfire Worship Team. The session themes of friendship with God, God's love and encountering Jesus are brought to life by the Regional Ministry Assistants from the surrounding regions.



Staff Proclaim Day

On Friday 29th of May, all staff at Holy Family took part in their Staff Proclaim Day. The aim of this Staff Development Day was to reinvigorate our staff with purposeful prayer and passionate commitment toward their vocation of accompanying students in choosing the fullness of life in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

Throughout the day staff were able to renew their understanding of Catholic Identity and Mission as central to the operation of our Holy Family school. Staff were also able to engage in dialogue and planning on Mission initiatives to support school improvement.

Our Staff Proclaim Day concluded with a special celebration of the Eucharist celebrated by Fr Erick.

Sacrament of Baptism

All children from Holy Family who were interested in being Baptised and beginning their sacramental journey were invited to express their interest and participate in the preparation towards this special sacrament.

Preparation for Baptism will involve 2 family sessions with the children and a parent/s. The first session will be at Holy Family School and the second at our Holy Family Church in Lennox.

Children and their families will learn what Baptism and the Sacraments are, knowledge of the Catholic Faith, and answer any questions they might have about the Church, Jesus and our Faith.

We are keeping all these children and their families in our prayers as they prepare for this special sacrament.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Holy Family Primary



Acknowledgment of Year 6 Students' Social Service Activities

We would like to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate our Year 6 students for their outstanding commitment to social service activities this year. Once a term, these dedicated students embark on a journey to Ballina, where they engage in meaningful acts of service within our local community.

One group visits St. Andrews and Crowley Aged Care, where they foster intergenerational connections through games and conversations with the residents. This valuable interaction enriches the lives of both the students and the residents, creating cherished memories and friendships.

Another group heads to St. Anne's Long Day Care, where they play a crucial role in assisting younger children with their learning and development. By engaging in play, our Year 6 students help nurture a love for learning in the younger generation, making a lasting impact on their growth.

Additionally, a group visits St. Vincent de Paul, gaining insight into the importance of donating items to support those in need. During their time there, they actively participate in sorting donations, preparing them for sale, and learning the significance of generosity in our community.

Another group takes to the outdoors to support 'Clean Up Australia Day.' By cleaning up a designated area in Ballina, they contribute to keeping our community tidy and beautiful, demonstrating their commitment to stewardship for God's creation.

The anticipation of Social Service Day each term brings excitement not only to our Year 6 students but also to their teachers and the venues they visit. At Holy Family, we value supporting our students in understanding the role of service in "Living our Life to the Full in Christ." Your commitment to service is commendable, and we are proud of the positive impact you are making in our community.



Invitation to a Cursillo 'Three Days' Thursday 15th – Sunday 18th October Marian Valley Retreat Centre

The Cursillo opens with an introductory dinner and a short retreat as preparation for the three days. A combination of presentations, discussions, prayer, meditations, celebrating the Sacraments, friendship, and living in a Christian community help draw each person into a closer relationship with Jesus and with each other. For more information phone Maxine 0429 669 029 or contact LISMORE DIOCESAN CURSILLO MOVEMENT cursillolismore@gmail.com



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS

Xavier Catholic College

A Jesuit Companion School



Walk as One in 2026

Our College theme for 2026, Walk as One, is grounded in the words of Scripture: "If we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another." (1 John 1:7) This theme was brought to life at our Opening Mass, where Fr Anthony challenged our students to live the message of the Good Samaritan in their daily interactions, walking together with compassion, responsibility and care for others. Celebrating the Eucharist as a faith community remains at the heart of our mission at Xavier, strengthening the relationships that bind us as one.

Trivia for Timor Quiz Night

On Saturday, 23 May, our Timor-Leste Immersion group hosted a highly successful Trivia for Timor Quiz Night. With more than 200 attendees, the evening was a vibrant celebration of community spirit and generosity.



The event raised an outstanding \$5,264.62, which, combined with our recent Casual Clothes Day donations of \$1,039.80, brings our total to \$6,304.42. These funds will directly support our sister school in Turiscai, Timor-Leste, making a meaningful difference in the lives of students and teachers.

LEAD

During Term 1, a group of our Year 11 students attended the 2026 LEAD Conference at Camp Drewe. Over three days, our students participated in a range of workshops and seminars designed to strengthen their leadership and ministry skills. It was a valuable experience of discipleship, connection, and personal growth. The students returned inspired and invigorated, with a deeper understanding of how to lead within the life of the College.



We are proud of the way these young leaders engaged with the experience and the insight they have gained. They return with a clear vision for contributing to the spiritual life of our school, and we look forward to seeing this reflected in their leadership throughout the year.

Bake Sale for Marine Rescue

Responding to a local community need and driven by our mantra to be "Men and Women for Others," a group of student leaders proposed, promoted, and facilitated a College Casual Clothes Day and Bake Sale. This initiative was a powerful movement of both the Holy Spirit and student solidarity in response to the tragic events impacting our community and the local Marine Rescue Ballina. Through their dedication, our students turned empathy into action, providing vital support to our local rescue squadron when it was needed most. The initiative raised \$1727.45

Xavier Catholic College Honoured with Timor-Leste's Highest Civilian Award

In a beautiful testament to the power of Christian solidarity, the Timorese government officially bestowed the Order of Timor-Leste upon XCC. This prestigious award is the highest civilian honour that can be given by the nation of Timor-Leste, recognizing extraordinary service to its people.

Leanne Broadley was present at the ceremony in Timor-Leste to proudly accept the insignia on behalf of the college, accompanied by two XCC school alumni. The award comes in recognition of a beautiful, 10-year journey of unwavering support for remote mountain communities, celebrating the deep, life-changing relationship XCC has cultivated with its sister school in Turiscai.

As a community, we celebrate this incredible recognition of XCC's commitment to Catholic social justice - reminding us that when we reach out a hand to our global neighbours, we truly live out the Gospel. Please keep the staff and students of XCC, alongside our brothers and sisters in Turiscai, in your prayers as this partnership continues to flourish.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT St Annes Long Day Care Centre



January 27th marked St Anne's 16th Birthday. As we tend to say when we look back on time...where did all of those years go to and what have we achieved? Our Early Childhood Education and Care service has educated and cared for so many of the community's young children, including some from just a few months old leaving us when they turned 5 to go to school, and others for briefer periods of time. We have developed relationships with hundreds of families, with all of our Educators and staff team members aiming for the highest quality of care, for our families' children, that we can provide. Surely that's an achievement!

But what is quality of care? What does a quality Early Childhood Education service look like?

The National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care Services tells us that it is about:

- Ensuring the Educational programs enhance each child's learning,
- Ensuring children's health and safety is supported,
- Ensuring the physical environment allows inclusivity and supports the exploration of play-based learning
- Ensuring staffing arrangements enhances children's learning and development, and that professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
- Ensuring all relationships with children are respectful and responsive, and that the dignity and rights of every child are maintained, helping them feel secure, confident and included
- Ensuring respectful and collaborative relationships and partnerships with families
- Ensuring that Governance (management) supports the operation of a service that is child safe and effective leadership that builds and promotes a positive organisational culture

At St Anne's, the team works purposefully and intentionally toward providing a service of quality, planning sound programs of learning for all of the children – from babies to Preschoolers.

Each day a snippet of each of the Learning Rooms' programs is communicated to families via our HubHello Message Centre (a government compliant web-based software system and mobile app used to connect us with all of our families). I read them daily, with both respect and delight, as we continue to feel privileged to be "the daily guardians" of so many children on their early childhood education journey with us.

Today the messages went like this:

Pebbles Room (Birth-1 year olds) – As we gather together for morning tea (at the low tables and in the low chairs just right for our size) we sing our Good Morning song together (Educators singing for little ones whose language is still developing), greeting each other .. "It's good to see that Jack is here today...we'll all have fun today!" The children are starting to recognise their peers and Educators' names...we know this because we see each child look around for that particular child or Educator. Then..... we explored water and paint brushes (dip, dip, wipe, brush) on different surfaces, making "water marks" everywhere! 'Mark making' develops the children's gross and fine motor co-ordination and skills – grasping, moving wrists and little hands....exploring...learning...growing.

Pippies Room (1-2 year olds) – A sunny day for "cooking" in the sandpit, making "pancakes and muffins", stirring, mixing, dressed up like "chefs"...then...making REAL muffins during our inside learning program using an egg from one of our Educator's chooks, freshly laid this morning. We count the patty cases (how many muffins), we talk about all the ingredients, we measure, we taste, smell, take turns – so much to do and learn. After morning tea and lunch we scrape our scraps into a bucket to be taken home for the chooks (the Educators lead the children through sustainability practices every day).

Shells Room (2-3 year olds) – Making brown playdough was perfect for using our fine motor skills to roll our own meatballs for our "Italian restaurant"...pretend play helps us make sense of the world around us. . (It serves as a natural rehearsal for real life, allowing children to safely process their environment, boost their communication abilities, and develop empathy). Then we used straws to blow paint across a big piece of paper (but we were really working on our 'oral motor development' – the movement and co-ordination of muscles in lips, cheeks, tongue, mouth and jaw, responsible for speaking and chewing food, managing saliva and swallowing).....creative artwork, AND such an important part of children's development.


Rockpools Room (3-4 year olds)–We have been learning about Australian landscapes and talking about how we can care for Country and our oceans. Play trays with sand, sea creatures, vehicles and machinery helped us take on the role of 'ocean warriors', helping (pretending) clean up the beach and the ocean, and protect the marine life. We worked together, sharing and co-operating to remove rubbish with boats, then we practiced our numeracy skills counting how many bits of rubbish. Such hands-on play experiences helps strengthen children's understanding of unique marine ecosystems and helps develop a responsibility towards protecting them.

St Annes cont:

Seabirds Room (4-5 year olds)-Today the children participated in a science experience that extended their interest in cracking open rocks and discovering crystals hidden inside. Together, we followed a step-by-step process to create our own crystal solution, discussing what might happen and making predictions about the outcome. Over the coming week, we will observe the mixture as the water gradually evaporates and investigate whether crystals begin to form. This experience supports curiosity, inquiry, prediction, and an emerging understanding of scientific processes.

So, as St Anne's works through its 17th year, and while the regulatory landscape is ever changing, children continue to need responsive Educators who support their learning and development, no matter how simple or complex... children need to be with Educators who care about them, who are there for them, and who support the fact that they are capable and competent individuals.



**Men's Morning Coffee & Scripture
at Rise A Time to Reflect, Connect
& Be Led by the Spirit** 

Our Lennox Head menAlive group continues to gather every second Wednesday morning at Rise Café, where good coffee, great conversations, and God's Word bring us together.

Each fortnight, we open our Daily Scripture books and spend time reflecting on the day's readings. It's always inspiring to see how the Holy Spirit speaks uniquely to each person. While our life journeys may be very different, we are united by a shared faith, genuine friendship, and a deep respect for one another.

As we discuss the Scriptures, everyone is encouraged to share what stood out to them and how God's Word is speaking into their lives. Questions are welcomed, insights are shared, and together we grow in wisdom, understanding, and faith. What begins as a simple conversation often becomes a powerful reminder that none of us walks this journey alone.

There is something special about sitting together in a local café, openly reading Scripture and supporting one another. It's a quiet but meaningful witness to the hope and love we have found in Christ.

The hour always seems to pass far too quickly, and we leave encouraged, refreshed, and grateful for the opportunity to spend time in God's Word and lift one another up in prayer.

Whether you're new to faith, returning after some time away, or simply looking for authentic Christian fellowship, you are warmly welcome to join us. We'd love to meet you.

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 cenacle 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

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY FACE OF JESUS

Every Tuesday 10am Holy Family Church
Lennox Head. For more information contact
Hilda Carter 0458 662828