



# 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.**

### The Epiphany of Our Lord (A)

**4th January 2026**

#### Weekend Mass Times Ballina

**St Francis Xavier Church**

**Saturday Vigil— 5.30 pm**

**Sunday — 9.00 am**

**Sunday — 11.00 am**

**Lennox Head**

**Holy Family Church**

**Sunday —7.30 am**

#### **NEW WEEKDAY MASS TIMES TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY**

**5.00 PM Ballina**

#### **THURSDAY AND FRIDAY**

**12.00 noon Ballina**

#### **ADORATION FRIDAY**

**11.00 am to 11.45 am**



#### **RECONCILIATION**

**9.00 am Saturday**

**St Francis Xavier Church**

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*We invite everyone to our faith community.*

#### PARISH NOTICES

*Happy New Year 2026*

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

Dear Parishioners,

Beginning **THIS Tuesday, 6th January 2026**, the weekday Mass schedule at St Francis Xavier Church will be adjusted as follows:

**Monday — No Mass**

**Tuesday & Wednesday — 5.00 pm**

**Thursday & Friday — 12.00 noon**

This change has been made to allow for Funerals, Aged Care Masses and visits, and Deanery Meetings for Clergy.

We sincerely thank you for your kind support and understanding as we continue to serve the spiritual and pastoral needs of our community.

Blessings

Father Peter



**THANK YOU** to all who volunteered at our Masses over Christmas. To those who read and assisted with Holy Communion, the musicians who played, the parish choirs, sacristans, our door greeters and our ladies who arranged the beautiful flowers on the church altars and those who assisted with the collection. Thank you also, to our Church cleaner. Your support of the parish over the Christmas Season and throughout the year is greatly appreciated.

#### PARISH ADMINISTRATION OFFICE will

re-open this **MONDAY 5th January 2026.**

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

#### CATHOLIC WEEKLY IS NOT AVAILABLE THIS WEEKEND Printing and distribution will resume next week.



**JUBILEE YEAR 2025 PILGRIMS OF HOPE** concludes with the **Closing of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica and Holy Mass on 6th January 2026.**

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

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

**PARISH ADMINISTRATION CENTRE:**

**PARISH LIBRARY:  
SCHOOLS:**

**AGED CARE:**

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

**Assistant Priest:** Father 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 Head

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

**Baptism of the Lord Year A: 10th/11th January 2026**  
**Readings: Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7; Psalm 28; Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38; Matthew 3:13-17**

	<b>5.30 pm Saturday Vigil</b>	<b>7.30 am Lennox Head</b>	<b>9.00 am Ballina</b>	<b>11.00 am Ballina</b>
<b>Readers</b>	Yvonne Head John Jarzynski	Jean Mackay Angela Beglin	Richard Goss Wendy Hughes	Maurice Gahan Warwick Manning
<b>EMOHC</b>	Trish Bazar Phil Chapman	Maddy Pride	Deacon Anthony Denise Miller Cathy Campbell	Maxine Cole
<b>Offertory Procession</b>			Pam Hanson Gerry Taylor	

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED:**

Daphne Sweeney (*mother of Sr Kathryn*), Margaret Hosking Pippen, Adelaide King, Sgariboldi, Luigi,

**THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME:** Todd Sheahan, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

**AND ALSO FOR:** *Michael Stokes, 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 LeFeve Lynette Holland (*Tas*), Kathleen Young, Loretta Heaton, Graham Clark, Kathy Fraser, Mary Evans, Noline 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, Aunt Julia Paden, Greg Campbell, Jocelyn O'Brien, *unwell residents in Crowley Village, St Andrew's Nursing Home, RSL Life Care, Bupa Aged Care.* (Please advise if a name is to be removed if good health has been restored).

**STARS AND SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH**

Unlike the writers of the horoscope columns in our newspapers, these Wise Men were scholar astrologers, probably from Syria or Iraq. They believed that the stars controlled the destiny of human beings, but they were open enough to the Hebrew scriptures to be led to the amazing discovery of a star-child in Bethlehem.

They knelt before this baby, doing homage, because they realised that the stars did not control *this* infant, but that there was something of this baby which caused the night sky to respond! They preserved the child from the deadly schemes of Herod, and then they returned to their home country, 'by a different way'. They were on a different journey after encountering the Child.

Who can doubt that the Holy Spirit led these wise men from the East to the manger? In fact, the Holy Spirit is at work in every human being, prompting each and every one to become seekers after Truth.

As a person responds to this prompting and tries to lead a good humane life, then the Church teaches that the Holy Spirit can draw them into the saving life of God. Thus, billions in China and India who have never heard the Gospel, can be saved. But, such persons do not savour the fullness of Truth as we do with the privilege of having the scriptures and the sacraments. Where it is possible, we are obliged to offer them the road map to the Truth.

We can take a moment to affirm our faith in the baby in the manger as the One of whom Dante spoke: 'the Love which moves the sun and other stars'. Come, let us adore him.

© Fr Michael Tate; Liturgy Help

**URGENT: PLEASE CONSIDER THIS REQUEST**

**LAPTOP OPERATORS REQUIRED FOR 5.30 PM VIGIL MASS  
9.00 AM SUNDAY MASS & 11.00 AM SUNDAY MASS.  
WE ARE IN NEED OF PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER TO BE  
WELCOMERS AND ANNOUNCERS AT OUR WEEKEND MASSES.  
A roster will be completed in the next few weeks. Thank you.**

**THANK YOU to all Parishioners** for your continued efforts to maintain your pledge to the Parish Planned Giving program. **Thank you** also for your donations to the Presbyterium collection to assist the priests in our Diocese. Our sincere gratitude to all who give to the Parish and clergy. **Father Peter and Father Erick**

**SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH ~ \*\*1st & 2nd COLLECTIONS ARE COLLECTED SEPARTELY AT MASS COLLECTION\*\*.** Parishioners are able to continue their contribution to our clergy and the parish if they wish by following the following information. By completing a form available from the Parish Office to have a credit card deduction each month for your Planned Giving Donation ONLY By making an EFTPOS donation —  
\***1st Collection** to Ballina Presbyterium BSB: 082 522 A/c 50960 2127 ref: your name  
\***2nd Collection** to St Francis Xavier Parish BSB 082 522 A/c 50960 3218 Please use your Planned Giving number as reference.

**DIF PAYS 3.40% PER ANNUM - BALLINA AGENTS: Michael Shay, L J Hooker**  
87-89 River St Ballina 026686 2711 - Crowley Admin Office Cherry St Ballina 1300 139 099 or online [www.dif.org.au](http://www.dif.org.au)

### Wise counsel for these times

When we read the Scriptures, as with all great literature, it is often helpful to learn to read between the lines. As we celebrate the great Feast of the Epiphany, we have a perfect illustration of why this is important.

In providing us with the readings for this week, the Church is concerned that we see the connections and recognise that the significance of the visit of the 'wise men' is more important than the event itself. The way is prepared by the Prophet Isaiah, who foresees 'the glory of the Lord' breaking through the darkness that covers the earth. Moreover, Isaiah also sees that this will attract the nations of the world, and gifts of gold and frankincense will be among those loaded onto their camels.

At the same time our attention is drawn by Paul to the fact he has been specially chosen to assure the world that God's promise, revealed in the gospel of Christ Jesus, is not just for his own Jewish people but for everyone. Matthew too was at pains to remind his readers that Christ's salvation was not just for his own countrymen and women, but for all men and women of all time.

So, while Luke's infancy narrative concentrates on the actual birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the visit of the local shepherds, Matthew moves the story forward and links it with that prophetic vision of Isaiah, noted above. Bethlehem is still centre stage, but there is no mention of a stable: now, we are told, Jesus and Mary are in a house.

The wise men were able to read the signs and trusted in God's guidance. Their gifts are truly symbolic. The gold speaks to us of the new Kingdom of reconciliation, peace and love that is to be established in our hearts. The myrrh reminds us that Christ's body will be anointed after his death. He will literally love us to death and, as a result, break the bonds of sin and death once and for all. The frankincense points us to the wonder of this child, who is truly the Son of God.

As we ponder the meaning of this feast, we will do well to remember the call of the Second Vatican Council 'to read the signs of the times.' Our world needs wise men and women who can discern the will of God and know how and when to respond to the challenges of our troubled times. The more conscious we become of our dignity as adopted brothers and sisters of the Lord and therefore, with him, sons and daughters of the Father, the more likely we are to reach out in compassion to our neighbour and help build the Kingdom of God here on earth.

The wise men in the story epitomise the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They had wisdom, knowledge and understanding. They made wise judgments and had the courage to make their pilgrimage. Filled with awe in the presence of God, they worshipped him. We are called to do the same.

Timothy J Buckley CSsR © Majellan Media 2026

ST FRANCIS XAVIER <b>CONNECT</b> ALL ARE WELCOME ALL BELONG		UP COMING PARISH EVENTS 2026		
<b>ST FRANCIS XAVIER CONNECT NEWSLETTER</b> The fifth edition of the parish 'CONNECT' is now available in our Churches and online. CONNECT will be back later in 2026.		<b>6th January</b>	<b>Tuesday 10.00 am</b>	<b>'Cherry' Coffee</b>
		<b>26th January</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Australia Day Public Holiday</b>
		<b>1st February</b>	<b>Sunday 9.45 am &amp; 11.00 am</b>	<b>Parish Cuppa Grounds of the Church</b>
		<b>3rd February</b>	<b>Tuesday 10.00 am</b>	<b>Devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus Lennox Head</b>
<b>CATECHISTS MATTER</b> <i>Volunteers NEEDED for 2026</i> <b>An invitation to consider and reflect upon if you are able help in this rewarding mission.</b> Can you spare 30 minutes a week to help sow the seeds of <b>FAITH, HOPE and LOVE in GOD</b> into the hearts of the children in our local State Schools? Our parish needs Catechists and Helpers to assist in the faith development of children in the State schools in our community. For more information on becoming a Catechist contact the Parish Office 6681 1048 or Peter Bowen Parish Catechist Co-ordinator phn 0421 518 371. <i>Please give some thought to this important invitation. You will be supplied with resources and be part of a very enthusiastic and vibrant team.</i>		<b>COLUMBAN 2026 CALENDARS</b> are available from the Parish Office. \$10.00 each		
		<b>NEW PARISHIONER?</b> If you are a new parishioner of St Francis Xavier Parish, <b><i>we welcome you to our faith community.</i></b> Please take the time to fill in a card at the back of the Church and place in the box provided or contact the parish office. If you would like to participate in the Planned Giving Program, cards are available for completion at the Parish Administration Office. Your details will be processed and a tracking number provided. Contact SFX Parish Admin office on 6681 1048 Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 4.30 pm. For your convenience we have the option of Direct Debit and/or Envelope contribution and monthly deductions by Credit Card. <b><i>We look forward to meeting you.</i></b>		
<b>Thoughts for the New Year:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May this New Year be a time of deep personal renewal and a closer connection with the divine spirit".</li> <li>"May your faith be bigger than your fears this New Year and trust in God's plan".</li> </ul>		<b>CCR:</b> In recess. <b>Marian Cenacle:</b> In recess. <b>Parish Youth Group:</b> In recess <b>Devotion to the Holy Face:</b> In recess until 3rd Feb <b>menAlive:</b> in recess <b><i>You are welcome to our prayer gatherings.</i></b>		
<b>Christian Meditation Group:</b> Saturday 9.30 am Anawim Room, Admin Centre for all enquiries please contact John Cheadle by ringing the Parish Admin Office 6681 1048. <b>Taizé:</b> In recess. <b>Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:</b> Friday 11.00 am <b>Prayer of the Church &amp; Rosary:</b> Saturday 9.00 am SFX Church Ballina				



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

**First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6***A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come,  
the glory of the Lord is rising on you,  
though night still covers the earth  
and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises  
and above you his glory appears.  
The nations come to your light  
and kings to your dawning brightness.  
Lift up your eyes and look round:  
all are assembling and coming towards you,  
your sons from far away  
and your daughters being tenderly carried.  
At this sight you will grow radiant,  
your heart throbbing and full;  
since the riches of the sea will flow to you;  
the wealth of the nations come to you;  
camels in throngs will cover you,  
and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;  
everyone in Sheba will come,  
bringing gold and incense  
and singing the praise of the Lord.

*The Word of the Lord.***Responsorial Psalm:****(R.) Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.**

1. O God, give your judgement to the king,  
to a king's son your justice,  
that he may judge your people in justice  
and your poor in right judgement. **(R.)**

2. In his days justice shall flourish  
and peace till the moon fails.  
He shall rule from sea to sea,  
from the Great River to earth's bounds. **(R.)**

3. The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts  
shall pay him tribute.  
The kings of Sheba and Seba  
shall bring him gifts.  
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,  
all nations shall serve him. **(R.)**

4. For he shall save the poor when they cry  
and the needy who are helpless.  
He will have pity on the weak  
and save the lives of the poor. **(R.)**

**Second Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6***A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians*

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God  
with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a  
revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This  
mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his  
holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past  
generations; it means that pagans now share the same  
inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the  
same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus,  
through the gospel.

*The Word of the Lord.***Gospel Acclamation:*****Alleluia, alleluia!***

We have seen his star in the East;  
and have come to adore the Lord.

***Alleluia!*****Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12***A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew*

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the  
reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from  
the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked.  
'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.'  
When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was  
the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief  
priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them  
where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,'  
they told him, 'for this is what the prophet wrote:  
And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,  
for out of you will come a leader  
who will shepherd my people Israel.'  
Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He  
asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared,  
and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the  
child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so  
that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to  
what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of  
them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and  
halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the  
star filled them with delight, and going into the house they  
saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees  
they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they  
offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But  
they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and  
returned to their own country by a different way.

*The Gospel of the Lord***FOR THIS WEEK'S DAILY MASS****TUESDAY 6th JANUARY 2026 ~ MASS AT 5.00 PM****Entrance Antiphon:** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord: The Lord is God and has given us light.**Communion Antiphon:** Because of that great love of his with which God loved us, he sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.**WEDNESDAY 7th JANUARY 2026 ~ MASS AT 5.00 PM****Entrance Antiphon:** A people who walked in darkness has seen a great light; for those dwelling in a land of deep gloom, a light has shone.**Communion Antiphon:** That life which was with the Father became visible, and has appeared to us.**THURSDAY 8th JANUARY 2026 ~ MASS AT 12.00 NOON****Entrance Antiphon:** In the beginning and before all ages, the Word was God and he humbled himself to be born the Saviour of the world.**Communion Antiphon:** God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish, but may have eternal life.**FRIDAY 9th JANUARY 2026 ~ MASS 12.00 NOON****Entrance Antiphon:** A light has risen in the darkness for the upright of heart; the Lord is generous, merciful and just.**Communion Antiphon:** By this the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his Only Begotten Son into the world, so that we might have life through him.