



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 Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph (A)

28th December, 2025

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

WEEKDAY MASS THIS WEEK

TUESDAY TO 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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Feast Days



**Mary
the Holy Mother
of God
Thursday**

**Sts Basil the Great
and Gregory Nazianzen
Friday**

We invite everyone to our faith community.

PARISH NOTICES

'WELCOME' TO OUR PARISH THOSE VISITING OVER THIS FESTIVE SEASON



BAPTISM : Our parish family *warmly welcomes* into the faith and life of the Catholic Church this weekend :

Olive Rose and Evie Poppy Stephenson
daughters of Jay and Kelsey; and

Violet Margaret and Hilton Larry Platt
children of Timothy and Kristan.

Dear Parishioners,

Beginning **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

THURSDAY 1ST JANUARY 2026

FEAST OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD

MASS 12.00 NOON

ST FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH BALLINA



ST FRANCIS XAVIER

CONNECT

ALL ARE WELCOME ALL BELONG

ST FRANCIS XAVIER CONNECT NEWSLETTER

The fifth edition of the parish 'CONNECT' is now available in our Churches and online. Don't miss out on your **FREE** copy of the final edition for 2025.

CONNECT will be back in 2026.

CATHOLIC WEEKLY available this weekend \$2.00 ea

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

PRESBYTERY: Phone: (02) 6686 2042

AFTER HOURS MOBILE: 0423 445 639

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

Parish Youth Co-Ordinator: Kailani Tiernan Email: ktiernan@sfxballina.org.au

Phone: 02 6681 1048; Email: admin@sfxballina.org.au

Mon to Fri 8:30 am - 4:00 pm - 53-57 Cherry Street - **Postal Address: PO Box 46 Ballina 2478**

PARISH ADMINISTRATION CENTRE:

www.sfxballina.org.au

PARISH LIBRARY:

SCHOOLS:

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

AGED CARE:

Crowley Care Services: 1300 139 099 - 154 Cherry St, Ballina

The Epiphany of the Lord Year A: 3rd/4th January 2026
Readings: Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14 Psalm 127; Colossians 3:12-21; Matthew 2:13-15 19-23

	5.30 pm Saturday Vigil	7.30 am Lennox Head	9.00 am Ballina	11.00 am Ballina
Readers	Bryan Marriott Shyla Gooley Marie Sullivan	Annette Reen Gary Reen	Maxine Cole Maurice Gahan
EMOHC	John Jarzynski Phil Chapman	Sue Hetherington	Deacon Anthony Margaret Tay Cathy Campbell	Leanne Robbins
Offertory Procession			Ron Hughes Joan Hollingsworth	

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: Michael Stokes, Pat Wilson, Greg Shore, Shari McLeish, Armando Bordin, Betty Chandler,

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

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

**POPE LEO XIV
PRAYER INTENTION FOR
JANUARY 2026**

For prayer with the Word of God. Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

<https://www.vaticannews.va> > pope > news



UP COMING PARISH EVENTS 2025

**30th
December**

**Tuesday
10.00 am**

**'Cherry'
Coffee**



**LISMORE DIOCESE
'CATHOLIC LIFE' MAGAZINE**

The latest edition of the
Catholic Life Magazine is now
available in our Churches.

Please take a **FREE** copy home to read about
events happening in the Diocese.

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**

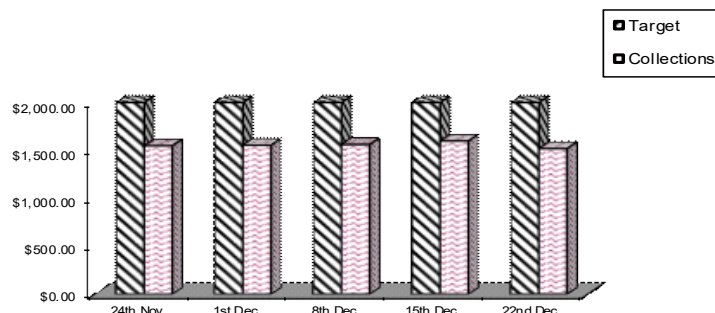
*** 2nd Collection to St Francis Xavier Parish BSB 082 522 A/c 50960 3218 Please use your Planned Giving**

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

THIS WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

First Collection	<i>Support of our Diocese Priests</i>	\$ 2,230.75
Second Collection <i>Support of the Parish & Ministries & School Building & Maintenance Fund</i>	Loose Plate	\$ 1,296.40
	Planned Giving Envelopes Collected	\$ 1,519.10
Planned Giving Envelopes Weekly Target		\$ 2,009.00



Fleeing from their home

The story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt following the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is only told in the Gospel of Matthew which also tells us of the visit of the Magi or wise men from the East.

In fact, it is the visit of the Magi following a star that alerts the paranoid King Herod to suspect a future rebellion against his authority. He therefore orders the death of all male children under two in his jurisdiction of Judea, which included Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Joseph learns about this confronting situation from an angel in a dream telling him to escape into Egypt with Mary and the child Jesus. Egypt was a logical place of refuge. Although part of the Roman empire, it was of outside Herod's control. More than likely, the family would have travelled through current-day Gaza and the northern Sinai coast to relative safety – noting that some cities and towns along the way and in Egypt had had significant Jewish communities.

Joseph had the distinct advantage of being a tradesman which meant he could pick up work in many places. Although we are not given a timeframe of the Holy Family's stay in Egypt, some early Coptic Christian writers suggest they may have been there for several years. Then, as told by Matthew, Joseph receives another dream message telling him to return to Israel in view of Herod's death.

In Matthew's account, there is no evidence of Joseph and Mary living in Nazareth prior to the birth of Jesus. However, on finding that Herod's son Archelaus had replaced his father Herod as ruler of Judea, Joseph decided they should settle elsewhere, namely a town called Nazareth in Galilee. As Nazareth was also within walking distance to nearby Sepphoris – a town being rebuilt at the time – this provided Joseph, and most likely Jesus later on, with carpentry work.

The significance of Egypt in the Jesus' story is stark. After all, it was in Egypt where Jews were made slaves prior to the time of Moses who led them out of slavery to the Promised Land of Israel. Then we note in Matthew's story the prophecy of Hosea 11:1 which states: "Out of Egypt I have called my Son". We also note the significant role Matthew attributes to Joseph as a descendant of King David. As the legal father of Jesus, Joseph provided the Davidic royal line, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies that the promised Messiah would be from the House of David.

In celebrating the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, we are reminded of the many refugee families throughout history and in our world today who seek safety in foreign lands. We also live in a time when there appears to be a growing negativity to immigrants, whatever their reasons for migrating. No doubt Joseph, Mary and Jesus also suffered negativity in view of their Jewish faith and culture.

So, let us pray today for all families and peoples forced from their homelands.

Gerard Hall SM
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Christian Meditation Group: Saturday 9.30 am Anawim Room, Admin Centre for all enquiries please contact John Cheadle by ringing the Parish Admin Office 6681 1048.

Taizé: In recess.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: Recommence
Friday 2nd January

Prayer of the Church & Rosary: Saturday 9.00 am SFX
Church Ballina

CCR: In recess.

Marian Cenacle: In recess.

Parish Youth Group: In recess

Devotion to the Holy Face: In recess until 3rd Feb
menAlive: in recess

You are welcome to our prayer gatherings.

REFLECTION

Herod is seeking to annihilate all the male children in Bethlehem. The child Jesus is in mortal danger. 'Arise, take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt.' And Joseph did so. *That* night and *by* night, such was the urgency.

Have you ever thought: What if Egyptian border guards had turned back this refugee family? What if, instead of finding safe haven and sanctuary, this desperate family had been denied entry? The Divine plan to rescue Jesus from a murderous tyrant depended not only on Joseph but, also, on the Egyptian people.

And so we discover two Holy Families in this Gospel episode. One is the little Holy Family with Joseph, Mary and Jesus. The other is the larger Holy Family of humanity embodied in those Egyptians who provided sanctuary, who opened their land to allow Joseph, Mary and Jesus to settle out of danger.

We might pause for a moment to ask: Can we be as hospitable and open as the Egyptians of today's Gospel? Another baby in another family of refugees may depend on our answer!

© Fr Michael Tate Liturgy Help



The Calendar-Shattering Mary

It is fitting that on New Year's Day we celebrate *the* calendar-shattering event in human history: the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God's plan for the human race.

In the Western Church, the young woman is titled 'Mother of God'. This signifies a relationship, a loving, nurturing relationship. We know that it encompassed a mother's horror of seeing her son tortured and done to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother, but *Mother of God*.

How can this be portrayed for our minds to grasp? In the Book of Genesis, the creative act which began all reckoning of the passage of time and seasons was signalled by the Divine Wind hovering over the formless void.

When that Holy Gust hovered over Mary, and she responded: 'Be it done unto me according to thy Word', the human existence of Our Lord Jesus Christ began, the fulcrum of history from which our calendar begins.

We could pause for a moment to pray that at the end of all history, at the end of all calendars, we may share in Divine life with Mary of Galilee, Mother of God.

© Fr Michael Tate Liturgy Help

First Reading: Sirach 3:2-6 12-14*A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus*

The Lord honours the father in his children, and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons.

Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins, he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune.

Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays.

Long life comes to him who honours his father, he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord.

My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life.

Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy, do not despise him in your health and strength; for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten but will serve as reparation for your sins.

*The Word of the Lord.***Responsorial Psalm:****(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.**

1. O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. **(R.)**

2. Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table. **(R.)**

3. Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life! **(R.)**

Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-21*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians*

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for

this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated.

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

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live within you

Alleluia!**Gospel: Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23***A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew*

After the wise men had left, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, left that night for Egypt, where he stayed until Herod was dead. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken through the prophet:

I called my son out of Egypt.

After Herod's death, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother with you and go back to the land of Israel, for those who wanted to kill the child are dead.' So Joseph got up and, taking the child and his mother with him, went back to the land of Israel. But when he learnt that Archelaus had succeeded his father Herod as ruler of Judaea he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he left for the region of Galilee. There he settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way the words spoken through the prophets were to be fulfilled:

He will be called a Nazarene.

*The Gospel of the Lord***FOR THIS WEEK'S DAILY MASS****TUESDAY 30th DECEMBER, 2025**

Entrance Antiphon: When a profound silence covered all things and night was in the middle of its course, your all-powerful Word, O Lord, bounded from heaven's royal throne.

Communion Antiphon: From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

WEDNESDAY 31st DECEMBER 2025

Entrance Antiphon: A child is born for us, and a son is given to us; his sceptre of power rests upon his shoulder, and his name will be called Messenger of great counsel.

Communion Antiphon: God sent his Only Begotten Son into the world, so that we might have life through him.

THURSDAY 1st JANUARY 2026 ~FEAST OF MARY THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

Entrance Antiphon: Hail, Holy Mother, who gave birth to the King, who rules heaven and earth for ever.

Communion Antiphon: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

FRIDAY 2nd JANUARY 2026

Entrance Antiphon: Let the peoples recount the wisdom of the Saints, and let the Church proclaim their praise. Their names will live on and on.

Communion Antiphon: We proclaim Christ crucified; Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

- At this time in human history, when so many people find themselves forced to flee their homes, pray this week for all who are refugees:

God of all, you called your Son out of Egypt.

Watch over all who are fleeing death or persecution.

Open our hearts to their plight. May we give the protection that your Son received.

