

neotēs

by the youth,
for the youth

SUMMER 24/25

ISSUE No 12



**YEAR 6 MINISTRY: THE
CONNECT GATHERING**

**WOMEN'S SILENT
RETREAT REPORT**

**VOCATIONS:
SHANE HYLAND**



PARISH YOUTH COORDINATOR

KAILANI TIERNAN

COLLEGE YOUTH MINISTER

BRENDON CLARKE

YOUNG ADULT CORRESPONDENT

GEORGIA HICKLING

YOUTH MINISTRY CORRESPONDENT

SR. DI MORALDE

IN COLLABORATION WITH

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH

Saint Francis Xavier Catholic
Parish located in Ballina and
Lennox Head, NSW.



BALLINA YOUTH

Catholic Youth and Young Adult
Network located in the Ballina, NSW.

UPPER ROOM YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group for teens occurring Sunday
afternoons 6:00–8:00pm during school
term in the Parish Upper Room.



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From the Editor

Welcome to Neotēs, a magazine born out of faith, creativity, and the belief that young people are not just the future of the Church — we are the Church *right now*.

This magazine is more than a collection of stories; it's a space where faith meets real life, where Catholic teaching is lived out through our struggles, our questions, our passions, and our hope. Every article, poem, photo, and reflection you'll find here is created by youth, for youth — rooted in our shared mission to follow Christ and serve the world.

As young Catholics, we face a unique calling. We're navigating a world full of noise and distractions, but we are also filled with courage, compassion, and a hunger for truth. In these pages, you'll see how our generation is answering the call of Jesus — through acts of service, through prayer, through art, and through speaking out for justice.

Inspired by the words of St. Paul to Timothy, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example... in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12), we offer this magazine as a reminder that your voice, your faith, and your life matter deeply to the Church and to the world.

We pray that what you read here sparks something in your heart — whether it's comfort, challenge, or courage. May this issue remind you that you're not alone on your journey. We're walking this path of discipleship together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kailani Tiernan". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The image shows the exterior of a modern Catholic church. The building features a large, prominent white cross on the roof. The facade is composed of light-colored stone blocks and large windows with colorful stained glass. A statue of St. Francis Xavier stands in front of the church, holding a book and a staff. The sky is clear and blue.

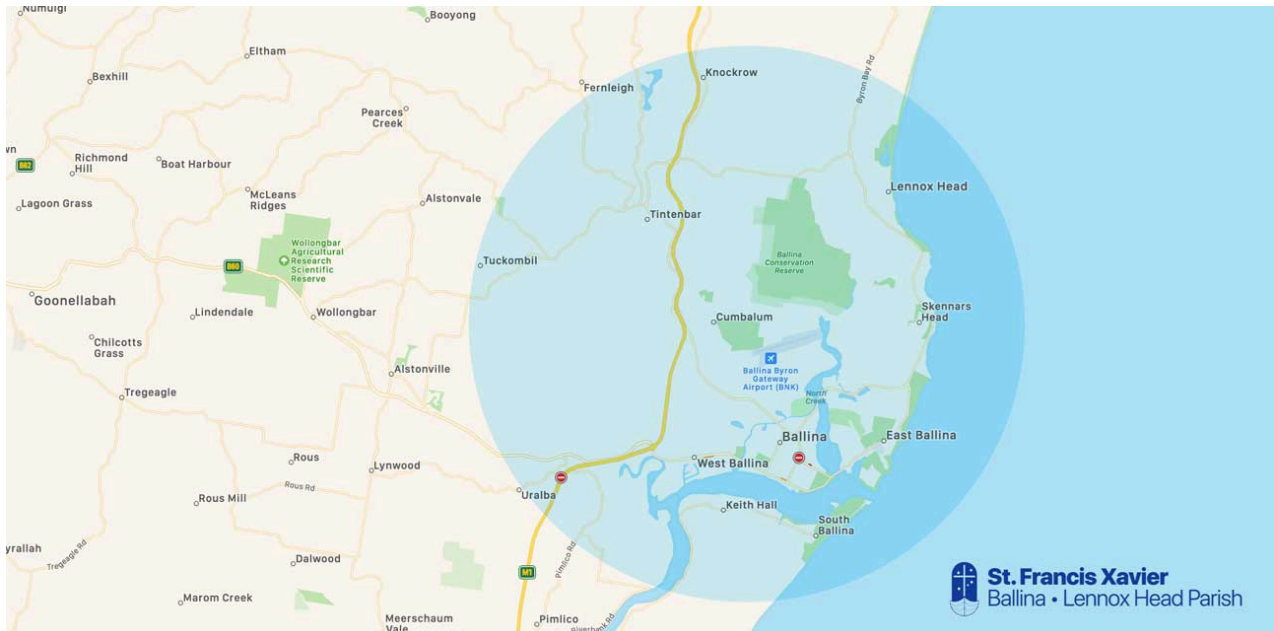
Our History

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC PARISH, BALLINA

The St Francis Xavier Ballina Parish is a vibrant parish where people from all cultures will be warmly welcomed into our faith community; people will share their baptismal calling to witness the love of God in action; people will receive the Sacraments throughout their life journey in a community embraced with encouragement and love.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC PARISH

Ballina Parish



"A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular Church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop" (Catechism of the Catholic Church no. 515).

What is a Parish?

A parish is a community of faithful people who all live in an area. A community of God's people, who come together to pray and celebrate Mass, serve the wider community, and are united in God's love. Parishes can be really small or really large, have at least one church in their area and are looked after by a priest.

Our parish is the St. Francis Xavier Parish Ballina, and we have 2 churches; one in Ballina called the St. Francis Xavier Church and one in Lennox Head called the Holy Family Church. Our parish includes people from Ballina, Ballina Heights, Lennox Head, Skennars Head; and also Tintenbar, Teven, Cumbalum, Knockrow and the surrounding areas.

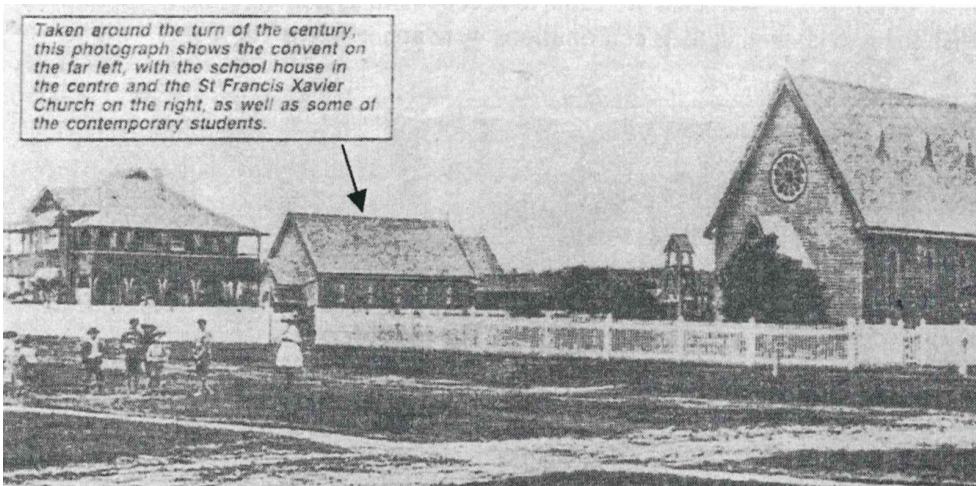
Our Parish Family of Ballina is part of the Lismore Diocese. An even wider community of believers, made up of people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds who are looked after by a Bishop. The Diocese of Lismore starts at Tweed Heads in the north and finishes in Laurieton in the south, and has 22 parishes. We are looked after by Bishop Gregory Homeming who lives at the Cathedral in Lismore, a really big church that people from all around the Diocese travel to visit.

St Francis Xavier is a vibrant parish where:

- people from all cultures will be warmly welcomed into our faith community
- people will share their baptismal calling to witness the love of God in action
- people will receive the Sacraments throughout their life journey in a community embraced with encouragement and love.

Vision Statement of St Francis Xavier's Parish Ballina/Lennox Head

- *Celebrate:* We are disciples of Jesus and celebrate his presence amongst us.
- *Evangelise:* We are called to recognise Jesus, accept him in our lives and spread the GOOD NEWS of salvation.
- *Develop:* We are committed by developing the life and mission of our parish
- *Collaborate:* We are a community who welcome everyone without exception.
- *Care:* We are a people who acknowledge the worth of every individual and the environment in which we live.



Ballina's First Church (1881)

In the Beginning...

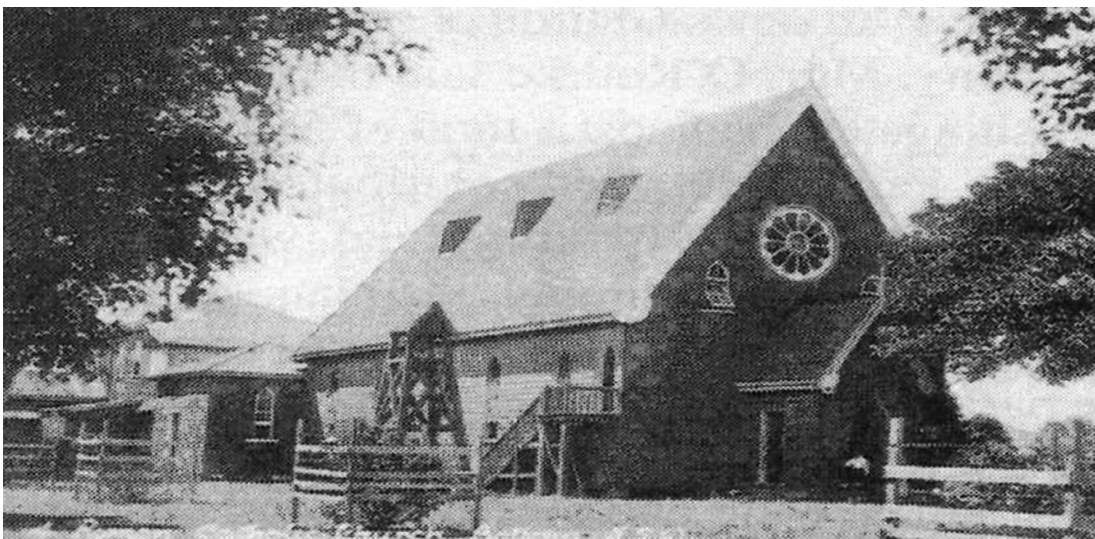
In 1853, Father William McGinty visited Ballina. He travelled from Ipswich via Tenterfield, Grafton, Casino and Coraki and then by boat to Ballina, visiting members of the small flock, baptised 3 children, and returned via Duck Creek, Tatham, and Kyogle. He did it all again in 1854.

Father Timothy McCarthy was appointed priest-in-charge of New England Plains 'east to the Pacific Ocean and north to the Tweed'. He resided in Armidale and over the next eight years made annual visits.

In 1862, Father J Murphy was appointed the first priest-in-charge of a Parish which encompassed Coffs Harbour, Tenterfield, the Tweed and Ballina, this was administered from Grafton.

A Brief History

- 1890: Parish of Ballina established – Ballina population 1000
- 1901: New St Francis Xavier Church opened
- 1955: Holy Family Church opened in Lennox Head
- 1962: New brick church opened at Ballina by Bishop Farrelly



Ballina's Second Church (1901)

OUR PARISH YOUTH MINISTERS



At the beginning of 2024, the Diocese implemented a new approach to Youth Minister employment in our Catholic High Schools. College Youth Ministers with more extensive experience and training in Youth Ministry have been engaged to work more closely with students within individual secondary schools.

The CYM (College Youth Minister) at our local High School, Xavier Catholic College is Brendon Clarke. Brendon was a Youth Ministry Officer at St John Paul College Coffs Harbour and has served the Xavier community as CYM for the last year. Brendon is an active member of our Parish as both the XCC Youth Minister and a Parishoner here in Ballina. He has been involved in leading our Parish Youth Group, Youth Ministry Events in and outside of our Parish, representing the Diocese as a pilgrim at World Youth Day in 2023, altar serving, facilitating youth ministry retreats, and he has been involved in our local and Diocesan young adults groups.

BRENDON CLARKE
COLLEGE YOUTH MINISTER
XAVIER CATHOLIC COLLEGE, BALLINA



Kailani Tiernan began as the Parish Youth Coordinator at the end of 2023 after returning from representing the Diocese as a pilgrim at World Youth Day. Kailani has been involved with youth ministry for many years serving as a Youth Ministry Officer at Xavier Catholic College, assisting on ministry retreats, and representing the Parish at many National and International events over the years including Australian Catholic Youth Festivals (2017, 2019), and World Youth Day 2023. She also participated in the Jesuit and Companion School's Australia (JACSA) Timor-Leste Immersion in 2019.

As the Parish Youth Coordinator, Kailani leads the Upper Room Youth Group on Sunday evenings, organises young adult ministry events, assists in the Sacramental and Catechist programs. She has a passion for learning and is fascinated by the lives of the Saints, who act as role models in faith, and have contributed greatly to the traditions and history of the Catholic Church.

KAILANI TIERNAN
PARISH YOUTH COORDINATOR
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH, BALLINA

thank you

OUR PARISH YOUTH LEADERS



At the end of 2024 we said goodbye to two of our Youth Group Leaders, John Kearney and Oliver Dwyer. We are grateful for the dedication, time, energy, and love that they have given to our Parish Youth Group over the years. Thank you John and Oliver.



JOHN KEARNEY

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH



It is with profound gratitude that we acknowledge John Kearney, who has faithfully served our Parish in Youth Ministry for the past six years. John was one of the original members of our SFX Youth Group and continued to serve as a Youth Leader after his graduation. John worked as a Youth Ministry Officer for two years at Xavier Catholic College before stepping into the role of Pastoral Associate in the St. Francis Xavier Parish.



John has served our Parish in many ways as an Altar Server, Sacramental Preparation, working with both the primary and high schools to prepare our youth for their Sacraments, he has also been an integral leader in both our youth and young adult groups, and has represented the Parish at many National and International events over the years included Australian Catholic Youth Festivals (2015, 2017, 2019), and World Youth Day 2023.



John's passion for guiding and mentoring young individuals has been instrumental in developing youth ministry in our Parish. His leadership has not only provided spiritual guidance but has also fostered an environment where youth feel valued, heard, and inspired to grow in their faith.

As John moves on to new endeavours we extend our deepest gratitude for his years of service, his unwavering faith, and his profound impact on our community. While his presence will be deeply missed, his influence will remain a guiding light for all of us.



OLIVER DWYER

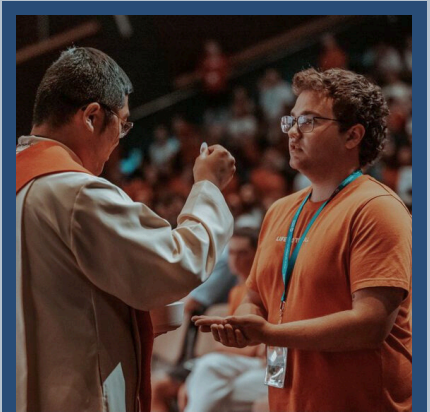
REGIONAL MINISTRY ASSISTANT

RICHMOND REGION

We have been blessed to have Oliver Dwyer on our Parish Youth Ministry Team. A recent school leaver at the beginning of 2024, Oliver Dwyer has been heavily involved in youth ministry since he was a student and School Captain at Xavier Catholic College. Oliver was employed as a Regional Ministry Assistants (RMAs) in our local area for the past year but will be moving on to be a College Youth Minister at St. John Paul College in Coffs Harbour in 2025.

Oliver has been an active member of our Parish Youth Group for many years, and has been involved in leading our Youth Group, Youth Ministry Events in and outside of our Parish, representing our Parish at National events such as the Ignite Conference, facilitating youth ministry retreats, and he has been involved in our local and Diocesan young adults groups. He was also involved in working with the local primary schools and facilitating the Year 6 Connect Gathering in December.

Thank you to Oliver for your hard work and dedication to our Parish.





Youth & Young Adult Ministry

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." - 1 Timothy 4:12

YOUTH MINISTRY

Diocesan Youth Ministry Team



Most youth and young adults in the Diocese of Lismore are multicultural in their values and beliefs. More often, after completing Senior High, they prefer to reside in a bigger city to broaden their horizons and gain new experiences in life.

The start of 2025 has seen the establishment of the monthly meetings between Parish and Diocesan Youth Coordinators across the Lismore Diocese. This group comes together to discuss ministry in their Parishes regarding children's ministry, youth and young adult ministry.

"Our mission in the Diocese is to accompany the young people who are coming from diverse and varied religious affiliations in their search for more meaning in life. We believe in their innate goodness, hence in this digital age, we envision empowering their giftedness and talents by building their self-confidence through various activities, like parish involvement, spiritual formation, missionary activities, spiritual direction, and counselling. These activities can help deepen their self-knowledge and build their self-esteem.

We recognize their importance and we are here to listen to their voice by walking with them, guiding them in their inner longing and search, and helping them mould the Christian values within that can encourage them to appreciate the beauty of life. We want them to deepen their relationship with God and be confident of God's love and mercy, thus sharing it with others, especially with their family and friends."

Find them on social media and at their website:



<https://lismoreyouth.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/dioceseflismoreyouthandyoungadults>

MEET THE TEAM



FR JOY D'SOUZA

DIRECTOR OF DIOCESAN YOUTH MINISTRY

Fr Joy is a Carmelite priest with a strong vision for youth ministry in our Diocese. Embracing his leadership role with humility and dedication, he is passionate about guiding young people toward a deeper relationship with Christ. In addition to his pastoral work, Fr Joy is currently studying psychology and even hosts his own podcast. He is also a keen cricket, technology, and music enthusiast. Fr Joy's wisdom, enthusiasm, and commitment inspire and strengthen us and we are blessed to have him leading our team.



SR. DEDITH MORALDE

CARMELITE MISSIONARY AND DIOCESAN YOUTH COORDINATOR ST. CARTHAGE'S CATHEDRAL PARISH, LISMORE

Since arriving in Lismore in April 2019, I had the blessing of serving as the Diocesan Youth Coordinator, based at the St. Carthage's Cathedral Parish. My heart is filled with joy in journeying with people of all ages, helping them discover and deepen their relationship with Christ. Together, let us walk the path of faith, hope, and love. Please feel free to connect with me - I am here to listen, support, and walk with you on this shared mission.



ZAC PARNELL

MUSIC AND MINISTRY COORDINATOR ST. AGNES' CATHOLIC PARISH, PORT MACQUARIE

I've been in this role for the last 18 months and love seeing young people come to know Jesus, embrace their Catholic faith, and discover how they can use their gifts to build up the Body of Christ. I'm 27 years old, married with two beautiful children, holding a Bachelor of Theology, and years of experience working in youth ministry. I love music, especially live production, and anything to do with exercise. I'm keen to see how we can come together as a Diocese in 2025.



CHRISTA MORROW

PARISH YOUTH COORDINATOR ST. AUGUSTINE'S CATHOLIC PARISH, COFFS HARBOUR

I'm excited to join St. Augustine's as the new Parish Youth Coordinator and assist with Diocese-wide Youth Ministry social media. As a K-12 teacher, I'm most passionate about building community. My youth ministry philosophy is grounded in leading young people to Jesus, especially in the Eucharist at Mass. I look forward to connecting with the youth of the Clarence Region and revitalising Youth Ministry here.



KAILANI TIERNAN

PARISH YOUTH COORDINATOR ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC PARISH, BALLINA

I've been in this role for the last year working with the Parish Youth Group, local primary and high schools, and the Young Adults of the Ballina Parish. I'm extremely passionate about learning from the Saints, our role models in faith, and take great interest in the history of our Church. I've been involved in Youth Ministry roles for the past four years, and am currently studying a Bachelor of Pharmacy at Griffith University. I'm excited to journey together with the young people of this Diocese as Pilgrims of Hope.

Upper Room Youth Group Update

BY THE SPIRIT OF FAITH | SUMMER 2025



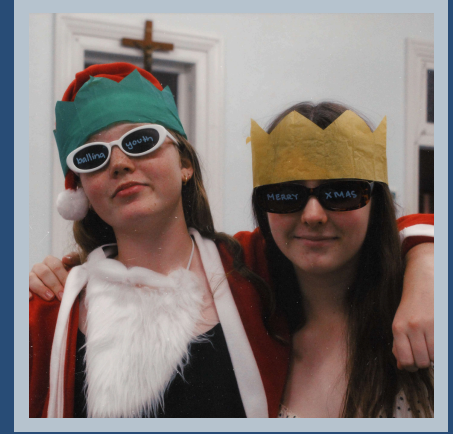
The Upper Room Youth Group occurs Sunday afternoons 6:00–8:00pm during school term in the Parish Upper Room. We are a warm and welcoming group, who aim to provide a sense of community, culture and belonging to the youth of the Ballina Parish through the development of their social and spiritual needs.

After a fun-filled year we had a great time finishing with our annual Christmas party, where we had a chance to dress up, share tasty food, and bring along a small gift for the much loved 'Grinch Grab!'

Over the month of December we focused on the importance of service, the hope for the birth of Jesus, the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love, as well as the true meaning of Christmas for us as Christians.

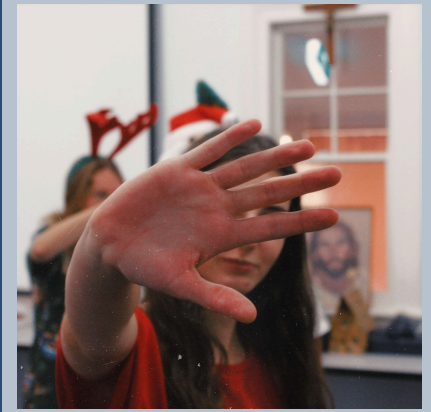
Continuing on with tradition at Youth Group each week, we discussed the life of a particular saint. As learning about the lives of saints is important in inspiring us to lead lives for God. Our Saint of December was non-other than our Parish Patron, Saint Francis Xavier. Born in 16th Century Spain, St. Francis Xavier was one of Saint Ignatius Loyola's first companions and a founder of the Society of Jesus, aka the Jesuits. He was one of the first to use the Spiritual Exercises to deepen his faith and embodied the Jesuit values of compassion, courage, service and stewardship. He is the patron saint of foreign missions, missionaries, navigators, and parish missions. We celebrate his Feast Day on December the 3rd.

The Upper Room Youth Group returned in February to begin a new year of faith, fun, and fantastic company!



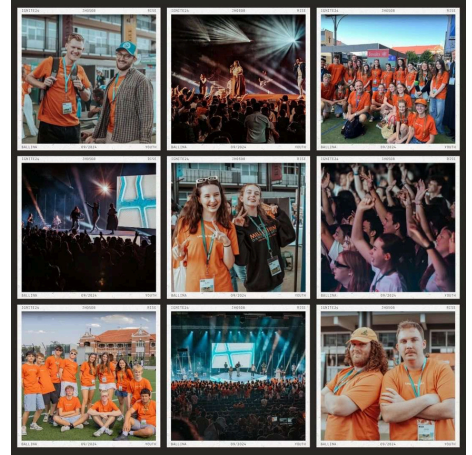
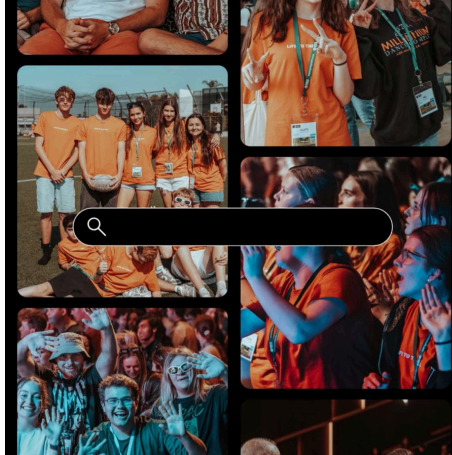
UPPER ROOM YOUTH GROUP GALLERY





UPPER ROOM YOUTH GROUP GALLERY








**2024 NATION WIDE
ROSARY CHAIN**

**11:00AM, SATURDAY
12TH OCTOBER**

**BEACHFRONT PARK
OPPOSITE THE HOLY
FAMILY CHURCH,
LENNOX HEAD**

SAINT OF THE WEEK



**SAINT
MATTHEW**

BALLINA.YOUTH

TERM THREE

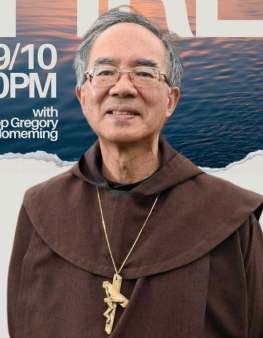


RECAP

ASPIRE

**09/10
5:30PM**

with
Bishop Gregory Homering



Young Adult Spiritual
Formation (18-35 yrs)

Wednesday 5:30-6:30pm
in Lismore

or

Join the Zoom Meeting
ZOOM ID: 299 665 7662

**JUPPER
ROOM**

youth group



SUNDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER
6:00-8:00PM
DINNER : FUN : GAMES

EXPLORE
meaning
life
faith

Alpha

**Thursdays
5:30 to
7:30pm**

connection · content · conversation



Spiritual Formation:
17th October - 5th December

At St. Francis Xavier Admin
Centre Ballina

Dinner will be provided.

Scan the QR code to RSVP by
Monday 14th October

BALLINA.YOUTH

INSTAGRAM AND FACEBOOK

Give us a follow on Instagram @ballina.youth to keep up to date on youth group, young adults and all things youth in our Parish!

YOUTH MINISTRY

Connect Gathering

A Year 6 Ministry Event

BY THE SPIRIT OF FAITH | SUMMER 2025



On Saturday the 7th December, 80 Year 6 students from 16 of our local primary schools travelled to Xavier Catholic College for the day to the inaugural Connect Gathering.

Led by Regional and College Youth Ministers, and staff from our local Catholic Schools, the Connect Gathering was an amazing opportunity for students preparing to attend our local Catholic High School to join together to experience new challenges, lay strong foundations, and be introduced to faith in a High School setting.

The aim of the Connect Gathering was to help make the transition from Year 6 to High School as smooth as possible. This warm and supportive event enabled students to develop connections with new friends, through fun indoor and outdoor games and activities, live music, great food, and new prayer experiences.

Connect emphasised the importance of having a strong spiritual foundation before entering the next stage of life and faith. Students participated in fun, high-energy activities designed to help them feel comfortable and get to know one another, led by members of the Regional worship team, the session included vibrant songs and moments of reflection to engage the students in meaningful prayer.

A variety of fun, team-building games helped develop community and cooperation among participants, and the Year 6 students had the opportunity to listen to current Xavier Catholic College students from Years 7 to 11 speak about their High School experience, where they shared personal stories of faith, offering encouragement and real-life examples of trusting God through the successes and challenges they have encounter in High School.

Kailani Tiernan

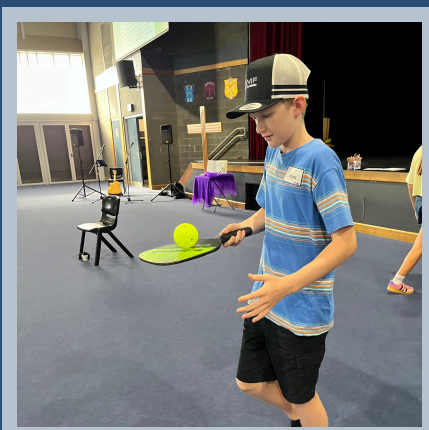


CONNECT GATHERING GALLERY



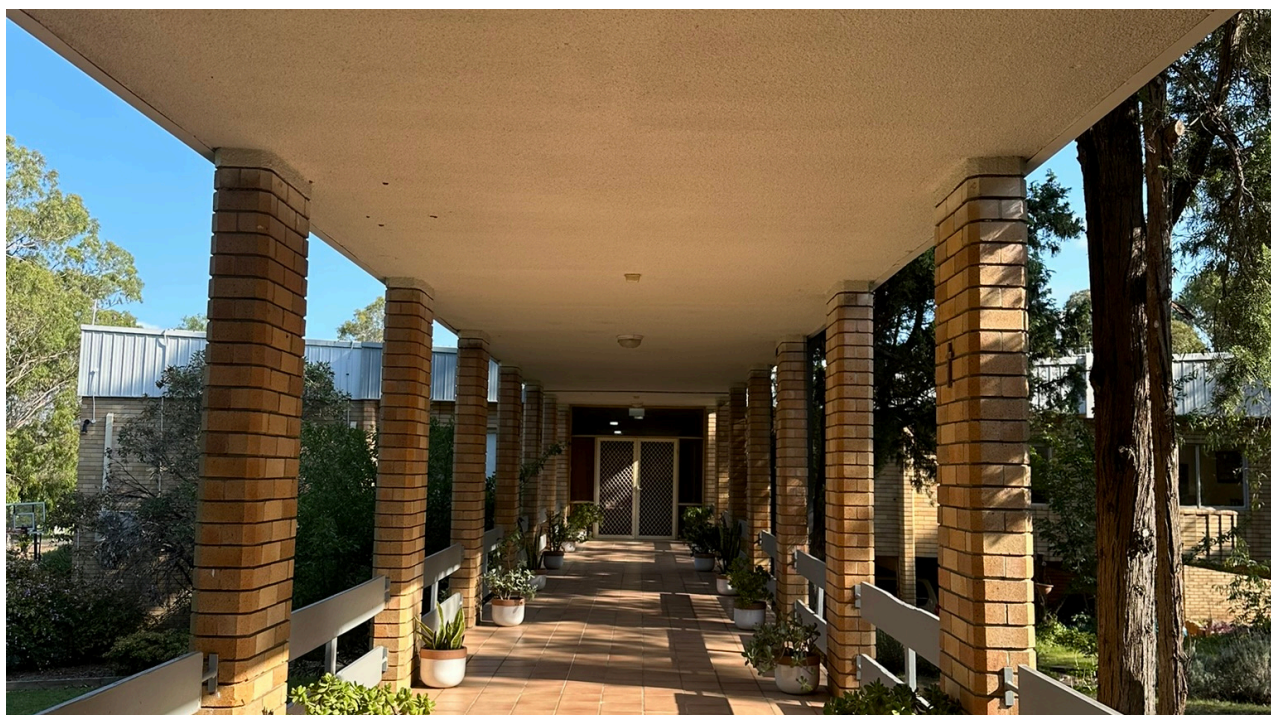


CONNECT GATHERING GALLERY



YOUNG ADULTS' REPORT

Silent Women's Retreat



**"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble...Be still and know that I am God."
(Psalm 46:1-2, 10)**

Silent Women's Retreat – January, 2025

The Silent Women's Retreat at Mount Carmel Retreat Centre in Varroville, NSW, was a sacred pause in the rhythm of daily life. It was a time set apart for deep prayer, reflection and renewal.

Under the gentle guidance of Bishop Greg Homeming and Sr Dedith Moralde, paired with the seamless coordination and inspiration of Leanne Hyland, sixteen women from across the Lismore Diocese gathered in stillness, representing a beautiful diversity of ages and life experiences. Each day began with the quiet harmony of Lauds, where our voices lifted in prayer before we entered into silence. As Bishop Greg shared his wisdom on silence, humility, relationships and prayer, we carried our personal reflections throughout our day, allowing them to settle deep within our hearts.

Set against the backdrop of Mount Carmel's vast 300-acre sanctuary – where cows, ducks and swans roamed lazily – we found a sacred refuge. The land itself seemed to echo the peace we sought, offering space to breathe, ponder and simply be. In the shared silence, there was an unspoken communion – a bond that transcended words. Though we entered the retreat as individuals, we left as sisters bound by a shared encounter with the Divine.

This retreat was not merely an absence of noise but rather an invitation into the fullness of God's presence. It is an experience that will continue to shape our hearts long after we have returned back to our regular routines and busy lives.

Georgia Hickling
Young Adult Correspondent



**Poem from Nina Emilio - Port Macquarie
Parish**

**There is magic in Silence, when you shut
the noise out.**

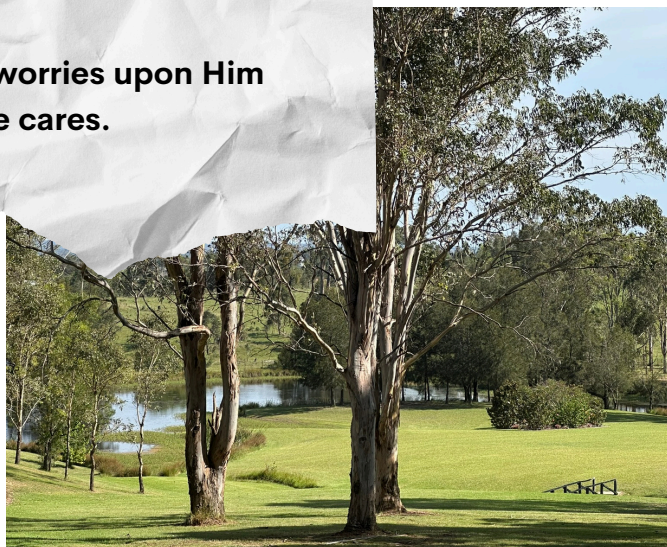
**If your thoughts are too loud,
Go outside, take deep breaths or go
walkabouts.**

**Go on, shut that noise out.
God is reaching out.**

**Listen... can you hear that?
There is a knock at the door.
No, not that door, this door (heart)
Turn that key, unlock that door.**

**God is there
He's got so much love for you.**

**So cast all your worries upon Him
Yes, He cares.**



VOCATIONS REPORT

Ordination of Deacon Shane Hyland



On Sunday the 23rd February, Port Macquarie celebrated the ordination of Shane Hyland as he became a Permanent Deacon at St. Agnes' Catholic Church.

Becoming a deacon in the Catholic Church involves a specific process of discernment, formation, and ordination, rooted in the Church's understanding of Holy Orders. The diaconate is one of the three degrees of the sacrament of Holy Orders, alongside the presbyterate (priesthood) and the episcopate (bishopric). Those who receive this sacrament are marked with an indelible character, consecrating them to serve the People of God.

The sacrament of Holy Orders is conferred through the laying on of hands by a bishop and a specific consecratory prayer, which invokes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the gifts necessary for the ministry to which the candidate is being ordained.

This sacrament enables the ordained to exercise a sacred power in the name and with the authority of Christ for the service of the People of God.

Deacons are empowered to serve the People of God in various capacities. Their ministry includes assisting at the altar during Mass, proclaiming the Gospel, preaching homilies, administering baptisms, witnessing marriages, and presiding at funerals and burial services. They also engage in works of charity and service within the community.

Father of three and devoted husband to Leanne, Shane serves as the Leader of School Evangelisation at St. Joseph's Regional College. Shane is dedicated to serving people and has responded to God's call to the diaconate, the ministry of presence. We wish Shane and his family the best of luck and keep them all in our prayers.

If you wish to hear more from Shane and learn about his vocation, he and his wife Leanne will be speaking at the St. Augustine's Vocations Panel on the 23rd April, 5:00–7:00pm at St. Augustine's Catholic Church in Coffs Harbour.

deacon shane hyland



deacon shane hyland





Jubilee Year

"MAY THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING, SO THAT BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT YOU MAY ABOUND IN HOPE" – ROMANS 15:13

In 2025, the Catholic Church is celebrating a Jubilee Year, also known as a Holy Year, which is a special time of spiritual renewal, forgiveness, and pilgrimage. This Jubilee, themed "Pilgrims of Hope," began on Christmas Eve 2024 with the opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica and will conclude on January 6, 2026.

Jubilee Year 2025

Pilgrims of Hope



"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" – Romans 15:13

What is a Jubilee Year?

"Jubilee" is the name given to a particular year; the name comes from the instrument used to mark its launch. In this case, the instrument in question is the yobel, the ram's horn, used to proclaim the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). This (Jewish) holiday occurs every year, but it takes on special significance when it marks the beginning of a Jubilee year. We can find an early indication of it in the Bible: a Jubilee year was to be marked every 50 years, since this would be an "extra" year, one which would happen every seven weeks of seven years, i.e., every 49 years (cf. Leviticus 25:8-13).

Even though it wasn't easy to organise, it was intended to be marked as a time to re-establish a proper relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation, and involved the forgiveness of debts, the return of misappropriated land, and a fallow period for the fields.

Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the Gospel of Luke describes Jesus' mission in this way: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord," (Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isaiah 61:1-2). Jesus lives out these words in his daily life, in his encounters with others and in his relationships, all of which bring about liberation and conversion.

In 1300, Pope Boniface VIII called the first Jubilee, also known as a "Holy Year," since it is a time in which God's holiness transforms us. The frequency of Holy Years has changed over time: at first, they were celebrated every 100 years; later, in 1343 Pope Clement VI reduced the gap between Jubilees to every 50 years, and in 1470 Pope Paul II made it every 25 years.

There have also been “extraordinary” Holy Years: for example, in 1933 Pope Pius XI chose to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the Redemption, and in 2015 Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Mercy as an extraordinary jubilee.

The way in which Jubilee Years are marked has also changed through the centuries: originally the Holy Year consisted of a pilgrimage to the Roman Basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, later other signs were added, such as the Holy Door. By participating in the Holy Year, one is granted a plenary indulgence.

Pope Francis marked the beginning of the 2025 Jubilee Year by opening the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2024.



Hope is a recurring theme in the pontificate of Pope Francis. In his letter for the promotion of the Jubilee Year the Holy Father stated:

“We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire; that is why I have chosen as the motto of the Jubilee, Pilgrims of Hope. This will indeed be the case if we are capable of recovering a sense of universal fraternity and refuse to turn a blind eye to the tragedy of rampant poverty that prevents millions of men, women, young people and children from living in a manner worthy of our human dignity. Here I think in particular of the many refugees forced to abandon their native lands. May the voices of the poor be heard throughout this time of preparation for the Jubilee, which is meant to restore access to the fruits of the earth to everyone.”

The Jubilee Logo

The logo shows four stylised figures, representing all of humanity, coming from the four corners of the earth. They embrace each other to indicate the solidarity and fraternity which should unite all peoples. The figure at the front is holding onto the cross. It is not only the sign of the faith which this lead figure embraces, but also of hope, which can never be abandoned, because we are always in need of hope, especially in our moments of greatest need.

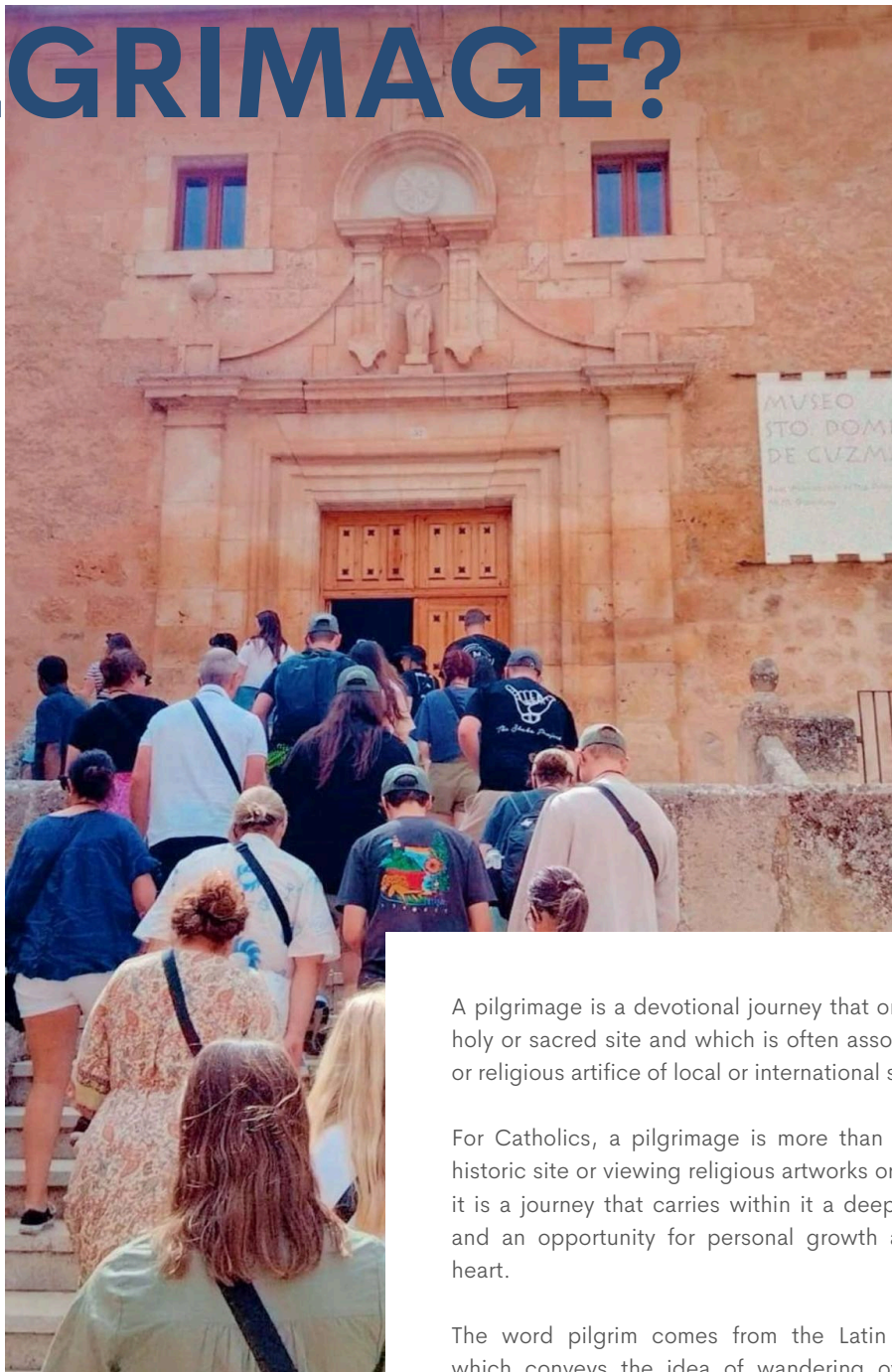
There are the rough waves under the figures, symbolising the fact that life's pilgrimage does not always go smoothly in calm waters. Often the circumstances of daily life and events in the wider world require a greater call to hope. That's why we should pay special attention to the lower part of the cross which has been elongated and turned into the shape of an anchor which is let down into the waves.



The anchor is well known as a symbol of hope. In maritime jargon the ‘anchor of hope’ refers to the reserve anchor used by vessels involved in emergency manoeuvres to stabilise the ship during storms. It is worth noting that the image illustrates the pilgrim's journey not as an individual undertaking, but rather as something communal, marked by an increasing dynamism leading one ever closer to the cross.

The cross in the logo is by no means static, but it is also dynamic. It bends down towards humanity, not leaving human beings alone, but stretching out to them to offer the certainty of its presence and the security of hope. At the bottom of the logo is the motto of the 2025 Jubilee Year: Peregrinantes in Spem (Pilgrims in hope), represented in green letters.

WHAT IS A PILGRIMAGE?



A pilgrimage is a devotional journey that one undertakes to a holy or sacred site and which is often associated with a saint or religious artifact of local or international significance.

For Catholics, a pilgrimage is more than just traveling to a historic site or viewing religious artworks or relics. At its core, it is a journey that carries within it a deep spiritual meaning and an opportunity for personal growth and conversion of heart.

The word pilgrim comes from the Latin word peregrinum which conveys the idea of wandering over a distance. A pilgrimage is not purposeless wandering. It is a focused and intentional journey with a higher purpose and that purpose is, specifically, to honour God.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, summarises the understanding of pilgrimage in this way: "Pilgrimages evoke our earthly journey toward heaven and are traditionally very special occasions for renewal in prayer. For pilgrims seeking living water, shrines are special places for living the forms of Christian prayer" (2691).

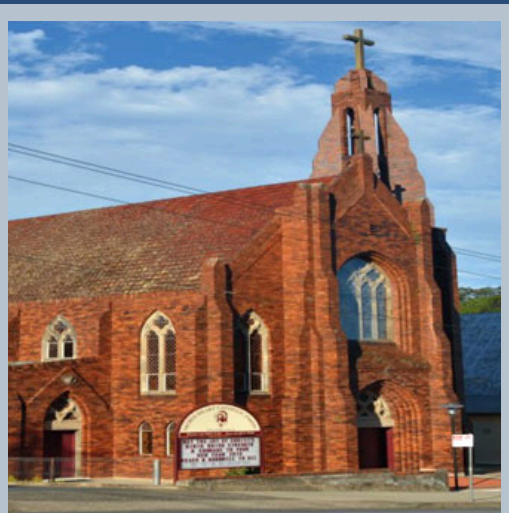
pilgrim churches

For the Jubilee, four churches in the Diocese of Lismore — St. Carthage's Cathedral, Lismore; St. Augustine's Catholic Church, Coffs Harbour; St. Agnes' Catholic Church, Port Macquarie; and Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Murwillumbah — have been designated as places of hope. People are encouraged to visit these sites to worship, pray, and deepen their relationship with God.

The good ship 'Hope' will also be visiting Catholic schools within the Diocese. The boat is based on the Jubilee logo and is being constructed by students and staff at Newman College in Port Macquarie.

Whether through local pilgrimages or daily acts of kindness, the 2025 Jubilee Year provides everyone, as Pilgrims of Hope, to be united in faith and strengthened by God's enduring love.

pilgrim churches



PLENARY INDULGENCES IN THE JUBILEE YEAR



What is a Plenary Indulgence?

An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. All our actions, including sins, have consequences. While the forgiveness of the guilt of mortal sins is offered to us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation the consequences ('temporal punishment') of those sins remain. An indulgence removes the temporal punishment due to sin.

Pope Francis teaches in *Spes Non Confundit*, his Bull on the Jubilee Year:

"As we know from personal experience, every sin 'leaves its mark'. Sin has consequences, not only outwardly in the effects of the wrong we do, but also inwardly, inasmuch as 'every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death, in the state called Purgatory'. In our humanity, weak and attracted by evil, certain residual effects of sin remain. These are removed by the indulgence, always by the grace of Christ, who, as Saint Paul VI wrote, 'is himself our 'indulgence'".

Therefore, according to Pope Francis "the indulgence is a way of discovering the unlimited nature of God's mercy. Not by chance, for the ancients, the terms "mercy" and "indulgence" were interchangeable, as expressions of the fullness of God's forgiveness, which knows no bounds." (Par. 23)

What indulgences are available in the Jubilee Year 2025?

A plenary indulgence in the Jubilee Year is available to those who:

- visit any designated Jubilee church
- participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- engage in Eucharistic Adoration and Meditation, then
- conclude their time of prayer with the Our Father, the Profession of Faith and the Hail Mary (or any other invocation to Mary the Mother of God)

By fulfilling these conditions while at a Jubilee church, the grace of the Jubilee indulgence is granted.

Ordinarily, only one plenary indulgence can be received per day. However, for the duration of the Jubilee Year, it is possible to obtain a second indulgence which can be offered for a deceased person if the member of the faithful:

- carries out an act of charity offered for the souls in purgatory, and
- receives Holy Communion a second time that day (this needs to happen during Mass).

What if I am unable to visit any Jubilee church due to physical illness or other serious factors?

A document from the Apostolic Penitentiary on the indulgences in the Jubilee Year 2025 issued on 13 May 2024 states that:

"The faithful who are truly repentant of sin but who cannot participate in the various solemn celebrations, pilgrimages and pious visits for serious reasons (especially cloistered nuns and monks, but also the elderly, the sick, prisoners, and those who, through their work in hospitals or other care facilities, provide continuous service to the sick), can obtain the Jubilee Indulgence, under the same conditions if, united in spirit with the faithful taking part in person, (especially when the words of the Supreme Pontiff or the diocesan Bishop are transmitted through the various means of communication), they recite the Our Father, the Profession of Faith in any approved form, and other prayers in conformity with the objectives of the Holy Year, in their homes or wherever they are confined (e.g. in the chapel of the monastery, hospital, nursing home, prison...) offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives."



Jubilee Prayer 2025



Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your Son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth, To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.

The Lenten Season

ASH WEDNESDAY AND THE START OF LENT: A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a significant season in our liturgical calendar. Observed by millions of Christians around the world, particularly within Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and some Protestant traditions, it serves as a solemn reminder of human mortality and the need for repentance.

LENTEN SEASON

Pope Francis' Lenten Message 2025



Image: *The Pilgrim of the Cross at the End of His Journey* by Thomas Cole (c.1846–1848)

Dear brothers and sisters, We begin our annual pilgrimage of Lent in faith and hope with the penitential rite of the imposition of ashes. The Church, our mother and teacher, invites us to open our hearts to God's grace, so that we can celebrate with great joy the paschal victory of Christ the Lord over sin and death, which led Saint Paul to exclaim: "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Cor15:54–55). Indeed, Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is the heart of our faith and the pledge of our hope in the Father's great promise, already fulfilled in his beloved Son: life eternal (cf. Jn10:28; 17:3).

This Lent, as we share in the grace of the Jubilee Year, I would like to propose a few reflections on what it means to journey together in hope, and on the summons to conversion that God in his mercy addresses to all of us, as individuals and as a community.

"LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER IN HOPE"

First of all, to journey. The Jubilee motto, "Pilgrims of Hope", evokes the lengthy journey of the people of Israel to the Promised Land, as recounted in the Book of Exodus. This arduous path from slavery to freedom was willed and guided by the Lord, who loves his people and remains ever faithful to them. It is hard to think of the biblical exodus without also thinking of those of our brothers and sisters who in our own day are fleeing situations of misery and violence in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. A first call to conversion thus comes from the realisation that all of us are pilgrims in this life; each of us is invited to stop and ask how our lives reflect this fact.

LEAVE OURSELVES BEHIND AND KEEP WALKING TOWARDS GOD AND OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

Am I really on a journey, or am I standing still, not moving, either immobilised by fear and hopelessness or reluctant to move out of my comfort zone? Am I seeking ways to leave behind the occasions of sin and situations that degrade my dignity? It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathize with their experiences and in this way discover what God is asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father. This would be a good "examination of conscience" for all of us wayfarers.

Second, to journey together. The Church is called to walk together, to be synodal Christians are called to walk at the side of others, and never as lone travellers. The Holy Spirit impels us not to remain self-absorbed, but to leave ourselves behind and keep walking towards God and our brothers and sisters. Journeying together means consolidating the unity grounded in our common dignity as children of God (cf. Gal3:26-28). It means walking side-by-side, without shoving or stepping on others, without envy or hypocrisy, without letting anyone be left behind or excluded. Let us all walk in the same direction, tending towards the same goal, attentive to one another in love and patience.

This Lent, God is asking us to examine whether in our lives, in our families, in the places where we work and spend our time, we are capable of walking together with others, listening to them, resisting the temptation to become self-absorbed and to think only of our own needs. Let us ask ourselves in the presence of the Lord whether, as bishops, priests, consecrated persons and laity in the service of the Kingdom of God, we cooperate with others. Whether we show ourselves welcoming, with concrete gestures, to those both near and far. Whether we make others feel a part of the community or keep them at a distance. This, then, is a second call to conversion: a summons to synodality.

Third, let us journey together in hope, for we have been given a promise. May the hope that does not disappoint (cf. Rom5:5), the central message of the Jubilee, be the focus of our Lenten journey towards the victory of Easter. As Pope Benedict XVI taught us in the Encyclical *Spe Salvi*, "the human being needs unconditional love. He needs the certainty which makes him say: 'neither death, nor life, nor

angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Rom8:38-39)". Christ, my hope, has risen! He lives and reigns in glory. Death has been transformed into triumph, and the faith and great hope of Christians rests in this: the resurrection of Christ!

This, then, is the third call to conversion: a call to hope, to trust in God and his great promise of eternal life. Let us ask ourselves: Am I convinced that the Lord forgives my sins? Or do I act as if I can save myself? Do I long for salvation and call upon God's help to attain it? Do I concretely experience the hope that enables me to interpret the events of history and inspires in me a commitment to justice and fraternity, to care for our common home and in such a way that no one feels excluded?

Sisters and brothers, thanks to God's love in Jesus Christ, we are sustained in the hope that does not disappoint (cf. Rom5:5). Hope is the "sure and steadfast anchor of the soul". It moves the Church to pray for "everyone to be saved" (1 Tim2:4) and to look forward to her being united with Christ, her bridegroom, in the glory of heaven. This was the prayer of Saint Teresa of Avila: "Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one" (The Exclamations of the Soul to God, 15:3).

May the Virgin Mary, Mother of Hope, intercede for us and accompany us on our Lenten journey.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 6 February 2025

Memorial of St Paul Miki and Companions, martyrs.



A photograph of a modern church building with a large cross on the roof and a group of people walking towards the entrance. The church has a distinctive design with a large, multi-paned stained glass window above the entrance. The walls are made of light-colored stone or brick. A group of people, including men, women, and children, are walking towards the entrance. A man in a blue plaid shirt is in the foreground, and a woman in a white dress with a large bow in her hair is also visible. The sky is overcast.

What's On

IN AUTUMN AND WINTER

Upcoming groups, events and occasions in our Parish. Including the Upper Room Youth Group, Sacramental Programs, Young Adult Formation and more...

UPPER ROOM

Youth Group



High School Students:

Years 7 - 12

Every Sunday during term time

6:00pm - 8:00pm

St. Francis Xavier Parish Upper
Room



Term 2 Dates:

4th, 18th & 25th May

1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th June

8th June Pentecost Pilgrimage



"Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High, will rest in the shadow of the Almighty." - Psalm 91:1

ASPIRE

Young Adult Spiritual Formation with Bishop Greg Homeming, OCD (18-35)

5:30 - 6:30 PM

MAR

06

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

APR

03

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

MAY

21

WEDNESDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

JUN

12

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

JUL

03

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

AUG

05

TUESDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

SEP

11

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

OCT

02

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

NOV

20

THURSDAY

*Doyle House,
Lismore*

Join us in person or via the ZOOM ID: 299 665 7662

For more information contact Sr. Di, CM 0405 327 153 youth@stcarthages.org.au

IGNITE CONFERENCE 25 NATIONAL CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

In the Light



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE.

Streams for kids, high schoolers, young adults and deeper formation for adults 25+



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Inspiring Rallies

greater
sydney
JULY 10-13

brisbane
SEPT 25-28



Hosted in & supported by
The Diocese of Broken Bay



Hosted in & supported by
The Archdiocese of Brisbane



**Be in the room
Bring a group
Sponsor a delegate
Bring a friend**

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY



Commitment to Safeguarding Statement

The emotional, physical and spiritual well-being and dignity of all people is an integral part of the Catholic Church. The Diocese of Lismore is committed and dedicated to safeguarding all those within our community, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Diocese of Lismore is committed to fostering communities of safety and care. We acknowledge our legal, moral, and spiritual responsibilities to care for - and uphold the dignity and rights of - children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

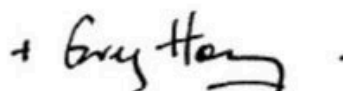
The Diocese of Lismore has;

1. a zero tolerance to the abuse or neglect of children, young people or vulnerable adults and commits to acting in their best interests at all times;
2. established a policy and developed a range of procedures that work together to protect, and, where required, to respond immediately and compassionately to any harm, or risk of harm; and
3. safeguarding procedures and practices underpinned by legislation – ensuring ongoing compliance, accountability and transparency in all ministries undertaken by the Church.

Creating safe environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by parishes, schools, families and communities. Safe environments are marked by collaboration, vigilance and a proactive approach to safeguarding. Workers have a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and the vulnerable through promoting their welfare, health and development in a safe and caring environment. All workers, including clergy, employees and volunteers are to be educated as to their responsibilities to undertake their roles in a way that enhances a safe and caring environment.



BISHOP of LISMORE
— GREGORY HOMEMING OCD —



19th May, 2020



Diocese of Lismore

is committed to implementing the Child Safe Standards



STANDARD 1

Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture



STANDARD 3

Families and communities are informed and involved



STANDARD 2

Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

STANDARD 4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account



STANDARD 5

People working with children are suitable and supported



STANDARD 6

Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused



STANDARD 7

Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training



STANDARD 8

Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur

STANDARD 9

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved



STANDARD 10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

For more information on the
Child Safe Standards visit
www.ocg.nsw.gov.au



Office of the
Children's Guardian



SUPPORT SERVICES



care | protect | act

Child Protection Hotline
13 21 11 (24 hours/7 days)

NSW Police Emergency
000 (24 hours/7 days)

NSW Victims Access Line: 1800 633 063

NSW Victims Support Scheme:
www.victimsservices.justice.nsw.gov.au
Counselling, financial support and a recognition payment to victims of a violent crime in NSW.

Child Wise
1800 991 099

Phone and online counselling for all forms of childhood abuse - www.childwise.org.au



Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

Information and support for mental health.

www.beyondblue.org.au



Headspace: Free counselling services to help young people with mental health, physical health (including sexual health) alcohol and other drug services - headspace.org.au/



Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800.

24/7 phone and online counselling for young people aged 5-25.

www.kidshelpline.com.au



Lifeline: 13 11 14

Crisis support 24/7.

www.lifeline.org.au



Link Up NSW
Aboriginal Corporation

1800 624 332

(not available to mobiles)
or **02 9421 4700**. Counselling, healing and culturally appropriate support for Indigenous Australians - www.linkupNSW.org.au



MensLine Australia

1300 789 978

Phone/online support.
www.mensline.org.au



Youth Beyond Blue

1300 224 636

Information and support for young people about issues associated with mental health conditions.

www.youthbeyondblue.com



ABUSE OF ELDERLY / DISABLED

NSW ageing and disability Abuse Hotline
1800 628 221

BULLYING

Bullying No Way:
bullyingnoway.gov.au/



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence Line: 1800 656 463

1800 Respect: 1800 737 732

www.1800respect.org.au/



Services Australia

www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/family-and-domestic-violence



ONLINE SAFETY

eSafety Guide: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>



SEXUAL ABUSE

NSW Rape Crisis: 1800 424 017

Health Sexual Assault Services.

www.health.nsw.gov.au/

Sexual Assault Counselling Australia

1800 211 028. Telephone counselling.

www.sexualassaultcounselling.org.au

Bravehearts Inc

1800 272 831

Advice and support to those affected by sexual assault.

www.bravehearts.org.au



Blue Knot Foundation

1300 657 380. For adult

survivors of child abuse. blueknot.org.au



Survivors and Mates

Support Network

1800 472 676.

For male survivors of childhood sexual abuse and their families.

www.sexualassaultcounselling.org.au



Interrelate: 1300 473 528

Counselling and support for those affected by institutional

child sexual abuse. www.interrelate.org.au



SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment |

SafeWork NSW

www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/sexual-harassment



PARISH MASS TIMES

BALLINA ST FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH

- SATURDAY VIGIL, 5.30 PM
- SUNDAY, 9.00 AM
- SUNDAY, 11.00 AM
- TUESDAY TO FRIDAY, 12:00 PM

LENNOX HEAD HOLY FAMILY CHURCH

- SUNDAY, 7.30 AM

RECONCILIATION TIMES

- SATURDAY, 9:00AM — AT THE ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH BALLINA

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

- FRIDAY, 11:00 AM

MONTHLY PARISH CUPPA

- FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH, 10:00 AM

UPPER ROOM YOUTH GROUP

- SUNDAY, 6:00 PM

PARISH ADMINISTRATION

- MONDAY TO FRIDAY,
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Phone: 6681 1048

Fax: 6686 8774

Email: admin@sfxballina.org.au

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