



Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

Incorporating the Communities of

St Mary's Sea Lake, Sacred Heart Culgoa, St Michael's Lalbert, St Joseph's Lake Boga, St Joseph's Nandaly, S's Peter & Paul Quambatook & St Mary's Swan Hill
northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au 03 50324144



30TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: 24TH OCTOBER 2021



"SON OF DAVID, JESUS, HAVE PITY ON ME!"
Today's Gospel story would have to be one of my favourites. Could you ask for a better disciple than Bartimaeus? Even though he may be blind, he can recognise Jesus for who he truly is; the Son of David, the Promised One sent by the Father to deliver his people. So many others have already failed to see what he sees. But even more, he doesn't stop at just 'seeing' Jesus, he cries out to him with all his heart. When Jesus calls him, he jumps up immediately, casting off his cloak, his only possession. The last few Sundays have been dealing with what it means to be a disciple. Bartimaeus now gives us the perfect example.

The Gospel story invites us to follow the example of Bartimaeus; to see Jesus for who he truly is and to cry out to him without any shame or embarrassment. And what I think gives this story special weight is the fact we have a name. It is not just about an anonymous character; it is about Bartimaeus. The fact we have his name suggests very strongly that he himself shared his story with the early Church. His story has continued to move hearts even to this day, and in hearing it ourselves we are invited to share our story of faith too.

Consider this point. How does Bartimaeus know that Jesus is near? He certainly had great faith, and likely great hearing too, but he wasn't a clairvoyant or a mind reader. He knew Jesus was near quite simply because he can hear others calling out Jesus' name. And how did he recognise the significance of this name, if he had never met Jesus before? Well, Bartimaeus survived by begging from the travellers passing by. He must have heard some of them speaking about Jesus. He must have heard the stories of people who had encountered Jesus or who perhaps had even experienced his healing touch.

This is an important point. The Gospel doesn't spread by magic. Grace plays its part for sure, but the Gospel only spreads in being shared. How many other Bartimaeus's are out there, just waiting to hear our story so that they too may come to see Jesus? If we think of all the people that we know and encounter in our own lives, who might be waiting for us to say, "Courage, get up, he is calling you."? Jesus points them out for us. We only have to stand ready to respond to his word.

Parish Contact Details

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Office Hours

Tues, Thurs, and Fri 10am -2pm

Parish Priest

Fr James Kerr

Parish Admin Officers:

Glenda Klabbers

Mary Kennedy

Child Protection Officers:

Damian and Karen Kelly

Child Safe Church

Here in the Parish of Holy Family North East Mallee we follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed by the Ballarat Diocesan Office.



Please keep in your prayers

Recent Deaths

Greta Sherlock

John Ryan

Anne Smith (sister to Mary Livingston)

Marie Hudson (sister to Fr Peter)

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Patricia Pierce, Brian O'Loughlin, John (Jack)

McNamara, Michael O'Connor, Mary Dobeli, Dorothy Bishop, Ronald Hoare, Doreen O'Brien, Patrick O'Reilly, Jack Giddings, Deborah Ann Elliott,

SICK LIST

Margaret Foott, Jarrod Crimmins, Jack Donohue,

Jude Lewis, Yvonne Annan, Sarah Kenny, Michael

Bourke, Bridget Phyland, Carmel Ryan, Tully Williams,

Bill Croft.

SACRAMENTS THIS WEEK

THIS WEEKEND (23RD/24TH OCTOBER)

Please book for all Swan Hill Weekend Masses.

Saturday 4.30pm, 6pm and 7pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8:30am, 9:30am & 10:30am Swan Hill

Holy Communion also available 11:05am-11:30pm

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tues 5:30pm, Wed 10am,

Thurs Confession 5pm and Mass 5:30pm

Fri 12pm

NEXT WEEKEND (30TH/31ST OCTOBER)

Saturday 4:30pm, 6pm & 7pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8:30am, 9:30am & 10:30am Swan Hill

FEASTS OF ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

Please book in for these Masses, all in Swan Hill

All Saints: Mon 1st Nov- 10am and 5:30pm

All Souls: Tues 2nd Nov- 10am and 5:30pm

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND

1st Collection (Presbytery): \$ 441

2nd Collection (Parish): \$ 1214.50

NOTICES

MASS UNDER CURRENT RESTRICTIONS

To put things briefly, **we will still be limited to 20 people at Mass until around mid-November.** This

new stage only allows for slightly more numbers (30) if everyone is vaccinated, which is hardly much of an improvement, and well, I have my second dose booked in for mid-November. I can't bring it forward. So we will have to operate under the alternative limitations (still 20) for the time being. Just to put my vaccine status in context, I am 34 and have not been classified as an essential worker. The rollout prioritised according to age, vulnerability and work. I waited for my turn in good faith. I say this not necessarily to justify my personal status, but simply to suggest that we all have our own stories. I encourage everyone to be understanding of each other as we navigate these new restrictions over the next few months.

In the meantime we will continue as we have done. Please book in for weekend Masses in Swan Hill by calling the office or going to <https://www.trybooking.com/eventlist/swanhillmass>

FEASTS OF ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

These feasts are once again fast approaching. November is held up as a special time to pray for all the departed, and the Octave of All Saints (1st-8th) especially as a time to visit their graves to pray for them. There is also an indulgence available for visiting a church on All Souls (2nd).

If you bring a little bottle of water next weekend we can bless it during Mass. That way it will be ready for you to take on any visit to a cemetery to pray for all the departed.

PARISH PRAYER

God our Father, through the intercession of the Holy Family our patron, we pray that you bless this parish so that we may love you more. Help parents to be a good example to their children and our youth to grow in strength as good Christians.

Encircle our families with your loving care; to the sick and the weak grant health; to the aged bring serenity and to those in sorrow joy. May we grow stronger in faith and may our love for one another become deeper in our daily life. Amen.

Our Parish Schools

St Mary's Primary School Sea Lake

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St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill

Principal: Kate Quin

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St Mary MacKillop College

Principal: Michelle Haeusler

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Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au

REFLECTION BY GREG SUNTER

This passage from the Gospel of Mark draws to a close a significant section of the gospel. It stretches from 8:22 to this passage, 10:52. Like other examples in the Gospel of Mark, the stories at the beginning and end of the section are related and shed light on what they surround. Like this passage, the event at the beginning of the section is an account of the healing of a blind man. Contained within the two healings of blindness, as we have seen over the last six weeks, is an extended lesson on discipleship. Within this section, Jesus speaks about his upcoming death on three occasions and each time the disciples display their own form of blindness when they fail to understand what Jesus is trying to tell them quite explicitly. In this section, we have heard that discipleship involves suffering and hardship; it means placing one's own needs last and the needs of others first; and that discipleship is all about faith.

In this healing of blind Bartimaeus, we see all the hallmarks of what Jesus has been trying to teach the disciples in the preceding episodes. As a blind man, Bartimaeus would be regarded as 'imperfect' – incomplete – and consequently in a permanent state of uncleanness. He would not be allowed to live within the bounds of normal society, nor have contact with people. So it is that Jesus encounters Bartimaeus on the side of the road, outside the city walls as he is leaving Jericho. Learning that it is Jesus passing by, Bartimaeus calls on Jesus to help him and the crowd tries to shut him up and remind him of his status. But Jesus calls Bartimaeus to him and, placing the needs of the other first, asks 'What do you want me to do for you?' When Bartimaeus makes his request, Jesus announces that it is his faith that has saved him and his sight is restored. Bartimaeus, like a good disciple, then follows Jesus on the road.

Scriptural context – Blindness

Blindness is a powerful metaphor that is used repeatedly throughout scripture. It is almost always a metaphor for blindness of heart or blindness of mind rather than a purely physical affliction. There are multiple accounts of healing blindness in the gospel. Saul/Paul is blinded on the road to Damascus and only has his sight restored when he is baptised. The Pharisees are described as being 'blind fools' and there the prophets make numerous references to blind seeing as a sign of the Messiah's arrival. It is a very powerful image of being 'blind' to truth and 'blind' to the teaching of Jesus.

Have you thought? On the side of the road ...

When Jesus encounters Bartimaeus he is sitting by the side of the road – a reject of society sitting off to the side as the world passes him by. There are times in all of our lives when we feel like this: hurt; ashamed; unloved; rejected; cast aside. It is at these moments in our lives that Jesus really wants to 'break through' into our experience. If we allow ourselves to hear his voice calling us to him, then we too can 'throw off our cloak' – our old life – and join him on the road.

Living the Gospel – Bartimaeus, a model?

Bartimaeus is a man who has almost nothing in life. His blindness has made him outcast and he is reduced to begging on the side of the road. When he is called to Jesus he jumps up and casts off what may well be his only real possession – his cloak. Yet what he does have in abundance is faith and hope. When asked what he wants Jesus to do, his answer may seem obvious, but his desire to see goes beyond physical sight. He asks for the sight of one who truly believes and to whom the truth of Jesus is revealed. In this way, he is a model to all who would be disciples. © Greg Sunter



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Why do the crowd try to keep Bartimaeus quiet at first?

How does the attitude of the crowd change once Jesus calls for Bartimaeus?

In what way is physical blindness a symbol or metaphor?

When have you been 'blind' to a situation or truth?

How is this event a story about discipleship?

Which phrase or statement in the passage bears particular significance for you?

Would the impact and message of the story be different if Bartimaeus had some other affliction?

When have you ever experienced a sense of 'sitting at the side of the road'?

How would you answer Jesus' question, 'What do you want me to do for you?'

First Reading Jer 31:7-9

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah:
I shall lead them back in mercy – both the blind and the lame.

The Lord says this:

Shout with joy for Jacob! Hail the chief of nations!
 Proclaim! Praise! Shout:

The Lord has saved his people, the remnant of Israel!
 See, I will bring them back from the land of the North
 and gather them from the far ends of earth; all of
 them: the blind and the lame, women with child,
 women in labour: a great company returning here.
 They had left in tears, I will comfort them as I lead
 them back; I will guide them to streams of water, by
 a smooth path where they will not stumble. For I am
 a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born son.
The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 125. R. v.3

**(R.) The Lord has done great things for us; we are
 filled with joy.**

When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage, It
 seemed like a dream. Then was our mouth filled with
 laughter, on our lips there were songs.

The heathens themselves said: 'What marvels the
 Lord worked for them!' What marvels the Lord
 worked for us! Indeed, we were glad.

Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in
 dry land. Those who are sowing in tears will sing
 when they reap.

They go out, they go out, full of tears, carrying seed
 for the sowing: they come back, they come back, full
 of song, carrying their sheaves. **(R.)**

Readings Next Week

First Reading: Dt 6:2-6
 Second Reading: Heb 7:23-28
 Gospel: Mk 12:28-34

Second Reading Heb 5:1-6

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews:
You are a priest forever in the line of Melchizedek.

Every high priest has been taken out of mankind
 and is appointed to act for men in their relations
 with God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins; and
 so he can sympathise with those who are ignorant
 or uncertain because he too lives in the limitations
 of weakness. That is why he has to make sin
 offerings for himself as well as for the people. No
 one takes this honour on himself, but each one is
 called by God, as Aaron was. Nor did Christ give
 himself the glory of becoming high priest, but he
 had it from the one who said to him: You are my
 son, today I have become your father, and in
 another text: You are a priest of the order of
 Melchizedek, and for ever. *The Word of the Lord.*

Gospel Acclamation See 2 Tim 1:10

Alleluia, alleluia!

Our Saviour Jesus Christ has done away with death
 and brought us life through his gospel.

Alleluia!

Gospel Mk 10:46-52

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
Master, grant that I may see.

As Jesus left Jericho with his disciples and a large
 crowd, Bartimaeus (that is, the son of Timaeus), a
 blind beggar, was sitting at the side of the road.
 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he
 began to shout and to say, 'Son of David, Jesus,
 have pity on me.' And many of them scolded him
 and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all
 the louder, 'Son of David, have pity on me.' Jesus
 stopped and said, 'Call him here.' So they called the
 blind man. 'Courage,' they said, 'get up; he is calling
 you.' So, throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and
 went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, 'What do you
 want me to do for you?' 'Rabbuni,' the blind man
 said to him 'Master, let me see again.' Jesus said to
 him, 'Go; your faith has saved you.' And
 immediately his sight returned, and he followed
 him along the road.

The Gospel of the Lord.