



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

Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Love your
neighbor
as yourself.
MATTHEW 22:39

31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME: 31ST OCTOBER 2021

NEW WEBSITE

Thanks to some great work from Alex Huan Pham, our parish now has a website of its own. This will be an easy way for us to share parish news and keep you up to date with the latest announcements. It will hopefully also be an easy way for people to find out about our parish and how they can get connected.

Please have a look at the website by going to northeastmallee.org.au

There will of course be some teething problems as we start up. If you pick up an errors or omissions, please let us know. Likewise, if you have any little stories and/or good photos, please also pass them on. It would be good to fill out some more content on the 'News' page as well as have a greater spread of photos from across the parish. Once again, a big thank you to Alex for his fantastic work in getting us this far.

GOSPEL MESSAGE: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF

There is a lot of anxiety and frustration about at the moment. This is hardly surprising. Some of us are really struggling through a whole range of fears and apprehensions. I am by no means immune from them myself. As well as sharing in all the anxieties that you are wrestling with, I have also been weighed down by another fear; that the conditions placed on our state's reopening have the potential to divide our community. To be honest, this fear has often kept me awake at night over these last few weeks. It's left me flat and dejected, as though nothing I can do will be able to prevent this from happening. Today's Gospel though has given me much hope and peace. *I myself* might not be able to prevent any division, but *we* as a community most certainly can. For all that has been taken out of our hands, the one thing that is truly necessary is firmly in our grasp. No matter what fears are weighing us down, no matter how dire the circumstances we find ourselves in, *the decision to love is always in our control. Nothing and No-one can take that freedom away from us.*

The choice then is ours. Are we ready to love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength? Are we ready to trust in this plan of his to call us together in a communion of love? Are we ready to respond to his call for us to live as *the* Sacrament of Unity for all the world to see? Are we ready to love our neighbour as ourselves? To be the first to make room for each other in our hearts, despite the fears and frustrations that weigh us down? To be the first to let go of resentment and hurt, refusing to seek scapegoats to load with blame? To be the first to listen and try to understand, even when we don't agree?

Are we ready to walk alongside one another in humble faith, with a care not to leave any behind?

All of these choices are at the core of our vocation as followers of Christ. By the grace that he won for us on the Cross, all of them are also firmly within our grasp. The restrictions have already tested many of our relationships. They will place a strain on our communion as a parish. We can't help that. How we respond though is *our choice* and *ours alone*. Our love for one another can only fail when we choose it to. But if we choose love, with Christ as our guarantor, no storm can break us, no power tear us apart, and my greatest fear will come to nought. Christ has called us together from across the world. He can hold us together too.

Parish Contact Details:

St Mary's Presbytery 62 Splatt St
Po Box 71 Swan Hill, Vic 3585

northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Phone: 03 5032 4144

Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Office Hrs: Tues, Thurs, and Fri 10am -2pm

Parish Priest

Fr James Kerr

Parish Admin Officers:

Glenda Klabbers

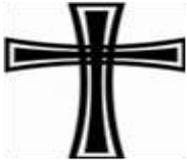
Mary Kennedy

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

Anthony "John" Burns.
Letteria "Lia" Pino

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Phyll Taylor, Jean Eustace, John Betts, Michael Conidi,
Lucia and Ralph Armitrano, Margaret Byrne, Deborah
Anne Elliott, Christina Herson, Jane Scanlon,
Hugh Kelly, Roma Giddings, Rodney Walsh,
Bill Shanahan, Keith Greenham, Patricia O'Loughlin,
Claire Dunstan, Jack McGrath, Lucille Nolan,
James McNamara, Keith Rowe, Renata Corbani

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 (30TH/31ST 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

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

REST OF THE WEEK

Wed 11am Funeral Letteria (Lia) Pino

(You will need to show you are double vaxed to attend)

Thurs Confession 5pm and Mass 5:30pm

Fri 12pm

NEXT WEEKEND (6TH/7TH NOVEMBER)

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

Sunday 8:30am Sea Lake

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND

1st Collection (Presbytery): \$ 532

2nd Collection (Parish): \$ 518

NOTICES

MASS UNDER CURRENT RESTRICTIONS

Slight change, **we can now have 30 at a time.** This limit will continue until the 13th/14th November.

Please continue to book in for weekend Masses in Swan Hill by calling the office or going to

<https://www.trybooking.com/eventlist/swanhillmass>

CRY OF THE EARTH, CRY OF THE POOR

The Ballarat Diocese Social Justice Commission Forum on November 6th, 10am -3pm is available on Zoom, as well as some Hubs across the Diocese, is a response to the Social Justice Statement. To register, go to the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat website, click on the Social Justice window on the front page and follow prompts to register. You will receive a reply.

FEASTS OF ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

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 and All Souls (2nd) for visiting a church. This year both of these indulgences have been again been opened up to the whole month of November. If you bring a little bottle of water this weekend we will 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. We will offer two Masses on each day, at 10am and 5:30pm. There should be plenty of room, but please book in just to make sure we spread the numbers out.

NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE PARISH OFFICE

It is that time of year again!

COLUMBAN Calendars for 2022- \$12 each

Majellan Christmas Cards -\$8 for pack of 10

God's Word \$15 for those who ordered them

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

Principal: Kate Nunn

47 Hannon Street, Sea Lake

Ph: 03 5070 1272

Principal@smsealake.catholic.edu.au

St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill

Principal: Kate Quin

2 Murlong St Swan Hill

Ph. 03 5033 2541

principal@smswanhill.catholic.edu.a

St Mary MacKillop College

Principal: Michelle Haeusler

53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill

Ph: 5032 9771

Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: BRENDAN BYRNE SJ

Today's First Reading from Deuteronomy (6:2-6) follows a long sequence where Moses reminds the Israelites of the commandments (the Ten Commandments) which they had undertaken to observe as the covenant people of God. Faithful observance of these commandments will be a path to life in the land they are about to enter. The actual text for today's reading became the 'Shema', the prayer that every devout Jew recites each morning on rising. The opening word 'Shema' means 'listen'; it also has the sense of 'obey'. The prayer is a daily reminder not only of the covenant obligations but also of the privilege from which those obligations flow. Israel is a people addressed by God, called each day to listen and obey.

[The Pontifical Biblical Commission in its 1993 document, *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, picked up this motif, describing the local Christian community as one 'which knows that it is addressed by God (cf. John 6:45), a community that listens eagerly to the Word with faith, love and docility (Deut 6:4-6)'

This is the wider context of the supreme commandment to love the Lord alone 'with all your heart, and with all your soul and all your might'. 'Love' has the sense of cleaving to God, to the exclusion of all other objects of worship. 'Heart', 'soul' and 'strength' refer not so much to separate capacities but together communicate a loving commitment that engages the totality of a person, including – especially from 'strength' – one's talents and capacity for action, perhaps even one's possessions.

The corresponding command to 'love one's neighbour as yourself' also occurs in the Old Testament, in Leviticus 19:18. Bringing the two commandments – love of God and love of neighbour – together, as Jesus does in the episode that forms today's Gospel (Mark 12:28-34), seems to have been something distinctive of his teaching and ministry, though Jewish parallels are not lacking from a later period.

Scribes are usually hostile figures in the gospels. The one who approaches Jesus in this scene seems to do so as a genuine enquirer. The question he raises – which commandment of the Torah is the 'first'? – was a standard item of discussion amongst the rabbis. He is, then, seeking the opinion of this controversial teacher on the matter.

Jesus initially responds in fairly conventional terms. He points to the commandment preserved in the Shema, citing Deuteronomy 6:5, with the additional phrase 'with all one's mind'. But he then goes on beyond what the scribe had asked to offer a 'second' commandment – 'to love one's neighbour as oneself' – bringing Leviticus 19:18 alongside the text from Deuteronomy.

Jesus does not reduce both commandments to a single 'greatest' commandment. Though inextricably bound together, they remain 'first' and 'second'. This signals that God is worthy of love and worship in an absolute sense; God is to be loved for Godself alone. Love of God, though necessarily finding expression in love of neighbour, cannot simply be reduced to loving action on behalf of the neighbour.

Loving one's neighbour 'as oneself' may not, at first sight, seem all that demanding. It does not require putting the interests of the neighbour before oneself but simply putting them on an equal level. The commandment presupposes, then, a healthy love and valuing of oneself. But what it also asks is, on closer inspection, quite radical, an act of imagination in high degree: to ask myself, What do I really want from another person? – understanding, tolerance, respect, loyalty, compassion? – then to ensure that all my actions in regard to that person enact, rather than run counter to such qualities.

The friendly scribe goes on to offer a lengthy commendation, repeating virtually word for word all that Jesus had said concerning the two commandments and adding a further comment: that all this is 'much more important than burnt offerings or sacrifices'. He is, then, a learned Jew who has come to accept that what God wants from the covenant people is loving service of the neighbour rather than the sacrificial ritual, which was in any case soon to disappear with the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 C.E. The scribe has come close, then, to that radicalisation of the Torah associated with the onset of the Rule ('Kingdom') of God proclaimed by Jesus. This is why Jesus can commend him for being 'not far from the Kingdom of God'.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How do you think Jesus would have felt when he first saw the scribe approach him?

Of all the commandments, why does Jesus name these two as first and second?

What does it mean to love your neighbour as yourself?

How might we better define 'neighbour'?

Who is a 'neighbour' you need to show more love towards?

What is significant about a scribe asking Jesus about the Law?

What does it mean to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?

Why is the qualifier of 'as yourself' important in the commandment to love your neighbour?

How would our world be different if people genuinely loved their neighbours?

Which aspect/s of the commandments Jesus named do you need to work on at the moment?

First Reading Dt 6:2-6

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy

Hear Israel, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

Moses said to the people: 'If you fear the Lord your God all the days of your life and if you keep all his laws and commandments which I lay on you, you will have a long life, you and your son and your grandson. Listen then, Israel, keep and observe what will make you prosper and give you great increase, as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you, giving you a land where milk and honey flow.

'Listen, Israel: The Lord our God is the one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength. Let these words I urge on you today be written on your heart.'

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 17:2-4. 47. 51. R.v.2

(R.) I love you Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength, my rock, my fortress, my saviour. My God is the rock where I take refuge; my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold. The Lord is worthy of all praise: when I call I am saved from my foes.

Long life to the Lord, my rock! Praised be to the God that saves me. He has given great victories to his king and shown love for his anointed.

(R.) I love you Lord, my strength.

Second Reading Heb 7:23-28

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

This one, because he remains for ever, has an eternal priesthood.

There used to be a great number of priests under the former covenant, because death put an end to each one of them; but this one, Christ, because he remains for ever, can never lose his priesthood. It follows, then, that his power to save is utterly certain, since he is living for ever to intercede for all who come to God through him.

To suit us, the ideal high priest would have to be holy, innocent and uncontaminated, beyond the influence of sinners, and raised up above the heavens; one who would not need to offer sacrifices every day, as the other high priests do for their own sins and then for those of the people, because he has done this once and for all by offering himself. The Law appoints high priests who are men subject to weakness; but the promise on oath, which came after the Law, appointed the Son who is made perfect for ever. *The Word of the Lord.*

Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them. Alleluia!

Gospel Mk 12:28-34

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
This is the first commandment, and the second is similar to it.

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken, said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Readings Next Week

First Reading: 1 Kgs 17:10-16

Second Reading: Heb 9:24-28

Gospel: Mk 12:38-44

Now Available from the Parish Office

COLUMBAN Calendars for 2022- \$12

Majellan Christmas Cards -\$8 pack of 10

God's Word \$15 for those who ordered them

LOVE with all your heart,
with all your soul,
THE LORD YOUR GOD with all your mind,
and love your neighbor as yourself.
MAT. 22:37-39