



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

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1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 28TH NOVEMBER 2021

ADVENT: A TIME OF JOYOUS ANTICIPATION



Now that we can welcome visitors to our homes again, you might be busily preparing to receive some of your family and friends after a long absence. The lead up to them arriving can be a bit hectic, even stressful, but it is tinged with the joy of anticipation. Soon, your loved ones will be here! Growing up in a regional town, those times awaiting guests from far away are among my strongest memories. Mum and Dad would be doing the real work, but you would make yourself busy nonetheless. The toys had to be arranged perfectly to show off to your cousins or friends, games had to be planned and of course someone had to keep an eye out on the driveway, with your head glued to one of the front windows. How else would you know when to run out and greet the guests?

A child's sense of time though is not always accurate. Sometimes I would have parked myself by the window hours ahead of the ETA. And of course, I got bored, almost giving up hope that they would ever come. So I would often slink back to my toys to fill in the time. After all, they would still arrive if I was watching for them or not. But the wonder of a gravel driveway is that you can still hear a car arrive, even if you don't see it. And then the race was back on for who could get out there first.

We all know Advent is a time of waiting. We've gotten used to waiting recently haven't we? We've had to wait to celebrate special events that have been postponed, we've had to defer visits and catch ups with friends and family, we've even had to wait for the opportunity to get a haircut or buy new shoes. Sometimes it has been hard to keep hope, because so much control has been taken from our hands. We have felt almost like spectators on the sidelines. And if we are honest, sometimes Advent can feel a bit like this too; Jesus is coming whether we like it or not. It is easy to feel like a passive spectator. But Advent truly understood is anything but passive. We should be joyfully preparing ourselves in excited anticipation. The image from today's opening prayer sets the scene; we pray that we might be ready "to run forth to meet... Christ." Let's use this time to get our homes ready to welcome Christ as our guest, with our faces glued to the front window ready to see him when he comes.

Parish Contact Details:

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

Parish Priest

Fr James Kerr

Parish Admin Officers:

Glenda Klabbers

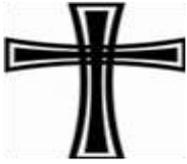
Mary Kennedy

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

Loretta Barry

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Lia Pino- 30 Day

Michael Considine, Antonio Tarascio, Brian Templeton,
Mary O'Connor, Cade Hickey, Carmela Capone,
Mary Considine, Frank Richardson, Frederick Ledwich,
Daniel Rogers, Deanne Ryan, Stan Smith, John Billing,
Caterina Siciliano, Thomas Gleeson, Ruby Egan,
William McInerney,

SICK LIST

Jayden Williams, 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 (27TH/28TH NOVEMBER)

*At the Masses marked with an *DV, adults will need to show you are double vaccinated. Please see posters and separate letter for further explanation.*

Saturday 5pm Swan Hill*DV

Saturday 6:30pm Swan Hill

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill*DV

WEEKDAYS

Tuesday 5.30pm

Wednesday 10am

Thurs Confession 5pm and Mass 5.30pm

Fri 12pm

NEXT WEEKEND (4TH/5TH DECEMBER)

*At the Masses marked with an *DV, adults will need to show you are double vaccinated.*

Saturday 5pm Swan Hill*DV

Saturday 6:30pm Swan Hill

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill*DV

Sunday 5pm Sea Lake

(Note change of time- School Graduation Mass)

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND

1st Collection (Presbytery): \$ 910

2nd Collection (Parish): \$ 1041

NOTICES

NEW MASS REGULATIONS

There is no change to our arrangements for Mass, but our caps on numbers have increased. There is now no limit on numbers when everyone can show they are double vaccinated (not including children). We can also now have 50 without any need to ask or declare.

ON SALE THIS WEEKEND

Now that those who have ordered theirs have had a chance to collect, we will be selling the remaining 2022 Columban Calendars (\$12) and 'God's Word' Scripture Reflection books (\$15) after Mass this weekend. Majellan Christmas Cards also available -\$8 pack of 10

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Thank you for the over whelming response to the Reverse Advent Calendar. We have families, businesses and classrooms participating, so much so that I have received another pack of 20 boxes for anyone who has missed out. Another way you can help is by donating a gift that can be given to children in need. These can be left at the Parish office any time between now and the 17th December.

CUPPA AFTER MASS

There will be a Christmas Cuppa after our 10:30 Mass on 5th December in the Parish Function Centre.

ROSARY IN THE PARK

Saturday 11th December at 109 Werrill St, (Joe & Teresa Taverna). Please note change of venue. No chairs required.

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

53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill

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SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY MARY COLOE PBVM

Stand up; hold your heads high, for your liberation is near . . . Wake up!

Today we begin a new year in the great Christian drama of Salvation. The purple colours of the liturgy announce a mood of waiting and anticipation. Over the next four weeks, we will draw closer to the central mystery of our faith focussed on a small hillside village of Bethlehem. Once again, we will celebrate that God has come to us and joined with us in the common human experiences of birth, anxiety, travel and powerlessness.

Thessalonians is the earliest of Paul's letters, written to a community he had already visited. To these believers, predominantly Gentiles, Paul had preached his message of Jesus who had been crucified but who God raised, and who would soon return to usher in the final reign of God. This community apparently welcomed Paul's message with much enthusiasm for Paul's letter is filled with thanksgiving: 'We always give thanks to God for you and mention you in our prayers (1Thess 1:1); we also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God, you heard it not as a human word, but what it really is – God's word' (2:13). They seem to be Paul's success story – 'you are our glory and our joy' (2:20). In the small section of his letter we hear today, Paul reminds them of the central tenet of his message – 'abound in love for one another, just as we abound in love for you.' Paul is an amazingly courageous teacher, where he holds up his own life as a living example of how Christians are to live – 'just as you learned from us how you ought to live, you should do so more and more.' In the television series *Kath and Kim*, we heard repeatedly, 'Look at me! Look at me!' Well, that's the way Paul taught his communities and is the only genuine teaching anyone can offer another. If someone wanted to know what Christianity was about, would we have Paul's courage to say, 'Look at me'.

The first Christians lived in a time of waiting as they looked towards the completion of God's saving action when Jesus would return and usher in the glorious reign of God at the end of time. It seemed to these first disciples that with the raising of Jesus and the outpouring of the Spirit the world was coming to its end. They thought that they were living in the last days and so their message was preached with great urgency and joy – get ready, wake up, Jesus is coming back to us. To announce this urgent news they used images familiar to their listeners such as cataclysmic events on earth and in the sky. This was how they imagined the end of time.

Luke is particularly interested in history. You might remember that it is Luke who begins his Gospel by giving us the historical context: the events he records took place during the days of

Herod the Great, while the Emperor was Caesar Augustus, and Quirinius was the Governor of that region. He understands that Jesus has inaugurated events that will bring this world's history, with all its struggles against evil powers, to an end, so that God's reign can begin. In the Jewish traditions about the final days, they thought that God would send someone from heaven who is called in the book of Daniel a 'Son of Man' (See Daniel 7:13-14)

Jesus saw himself as a prophet of the End Times and all the Gospel record that he named himself 'The Son of Man'. This title gives us some insight into Jesus' self-perception of his mission – to announce the defeat of the powers of evil, and to inaugurate the reign of God.

Two thousand years later, do we sense in our hearts the urgency that Jesus and Paul felt, an urgent desire for God to come to us? This is what Advent time is for – a time for our hearts to awaken and to know our own personal need for God to come and share the journey of our lives.

© Mary Coloe

REFLECTION BY GREG SUNTER © Greg Sunter

We are, perhaps, used to thinking of the season of Advent as a time of preparation for the celebration of Christmas. But this week's readings, and the readings of the next few weeks, remind us that the notion of preparation extends well beyond the celebration of the birth of Jesus. We are reminded that we are, in fact, living in an 'in-between time'. From this week's first reading we are reminded that the expectation of a Messiah was a very long-standing hope for Israel. The coming of the Messiah would usher in a new prosperity and a divine reign of God. The earliest Christians began to see that the ancient prophecies could all be applied to Jesus and they began to regard Jesus as the promised Messiah – the fulfilment of prophecy. However, Jesus also promised that he would come again, and the expectation of the first followers of Jesus was that his return would be in their lifetime. In our second reading from the letter to the Thessalonians, we can see the growing realisation that perhaps Jesus' return will not occur within the current generation. This realisation had a dramatic effect on the life and faith of the community. Imagine living with the belief that the end of time was going to occur not just in your lifetime but literally any day now. Slowly, they realised that Jesus' words were not that specific and the time of return had not been identified. What Jesus had called for was a state of readiness, a state of preparedness. This didn't mean he was coming immediately; what it meant was that there was need to get the house in order because he would be coming at some time. Advent is a time to remember that we still haven't really got the house in order.

First Reading Jer 33:14-16

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

I will cause a good seed to spring forth from David.

See, the days are coming – it is the Lord who speaks – when I am going to fulfil the promise I made to the House of Israel and the House of Judah:

‘In those days and at that time, I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David, who shall practise honesty and integrity in the land. In those days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell in confidence. And this is the name the city will be called:

The Lord-our-integrity.’

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 24:4-5. 8-9. 10. 14. R. v.1

(R.) To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths. Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour.

The Lord is good and upright. He shows the path to those who stray, he guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor.

His ways are faithfulness and love for those who keep his covenant and will. The Lord’s friendship is for those who revere him; to them he reveals his covenant. **(R.)**

Second Reading 1 Thes 3:12 – 4:2

A reading from first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians
When Christ comes may he strengthen your hearts in holiness.

May the Lord be generous in increasing your love and make you love one another and the whole human race as much as we love you. And may he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus Christ comes with all his saints.

Finally, brothers, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus to make more and more progress in the kind of life that you are meant to live: the life that God wants, as you learnt from us, and as you are already living it. You have not forgotten the instructions we gave you on the authority of the Lord Jesus. *The Word of the Lord.*

Gospel Acclamation Ps 84:8

Alleluia, alleluia! Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 21:25-28. 34-36

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
Your redemption is near at hand.

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand.

‘Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

Readings Next Week

First Reading: Bar 5:1-9

Second Reading: Phil 1:3-6. 8-11

Gospel: Lk 3:1-6

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOR ADVENT

Donate a toy or gift to charity.

Do a chore for someone.

Give someone a compliment.

Clean up litter outside.

Bake a treat for a neighbour .

ADVENT

A: Awaiting the Coming of Christ

D: Dawn of a new beginning

V: Virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son

E: Emmanuel-a name which means "God with Us"

N: Nativity-the day Christ was born

T: Temple - the place where Jesus worshiped.