



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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FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY 2ND JANUARY 2022



MAY CHRIST BLESS THIS HOUSE!

BLESSING OUR HOMES ON THE EPIPHANY

This Feast in a very special way celebrates Christ making his home among us and bringing us his grace and peace. Or perhaps we could put it another way; it celebrates our eyes being opened to recognise his abiding presence among us. It is a perfect occasion therefore to celebrate Christ as our special guest.

There's a beautiful tradition attached to this Feast. We invite Christ anew into our homes and asking for his special blessing as we begin a new year. This blessing takes the form of a short ritual that a household prays together and concludes with a special 'chalking' over the front door with the symbols **20 + C + M + B + 22**. I'm sure the 2022 bit is obvious, but what does CMB mean? It stands for the Latin *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*; May Christ bless this house! You can't go wrong with that can you, and it is nice to hear our homes described as '*Mansionem*'! CMB also happens to line up with the traditional names attributed to the Wise Men; Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, which fits in well with the Feast.

I will bless some chalk during Mass this weekend that you can take home with you. I will also have some booklets ready with the prayer that you can use while asking for God's blessing. If you would also like to have some water blessed to use at home as well, you can bring some in a little bottle. It is very appropriate for households to lead the home blessing on their own (i.e. you don't need a priest), but if you would like me to join you I'd be delighted. The blessing can take place on the Feast or on any of the days following.

THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN!

A big thank once again to all who have helped make our Christmas celebrations across the Parish so special; by decorating, cleaning, leading music or by helping with the preparations in any way. Thank you too for the many cards, gifts and kind wishes. I have said it before, but it is worth repeating; I am very blessed to be here.

Parish Contact Details:

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Po Box 71 Swan Hill, Vic 3585

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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

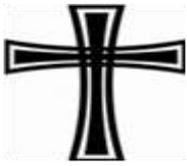
Mary Kennedy

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

Marie Ewart

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Teresa Aiello, Dorothy Tuohy, John Maher, Margaret Foott, Lance Learmonth, Tom & Margaret Bookham, Trish McGrath, Marie Barry, Kenneth McManus, Michael Conlan, Elizabeth Loader, Margaret Cleary, John McLoughlin,

SICK LIST

Jayden Williams, Margaret Foott, Jarrod Crimmins, Jack Donohue, Jude Lewis, Yvonne Annan, Sarah Kenny, Michael Bourke, Bridget Phyland, Carmel Ryan, Tully Williams.

THIS WEEKEND (1ST/2ND JANUARY)

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Saturday 6:30pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Sea Lake

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill



WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tuesday 5.30pm

Wednesday 10am

Thurs Confession 5pm and Mass 5.30pm

Fri Adoration 11am, Mass 12pm

NEXT WEEKEND (8TH/9TH JANUARY)

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Friday 5pm Culgoa

Saturday 6:30pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Quambatook

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

Sunday 5pm Nandaly



NOTICES

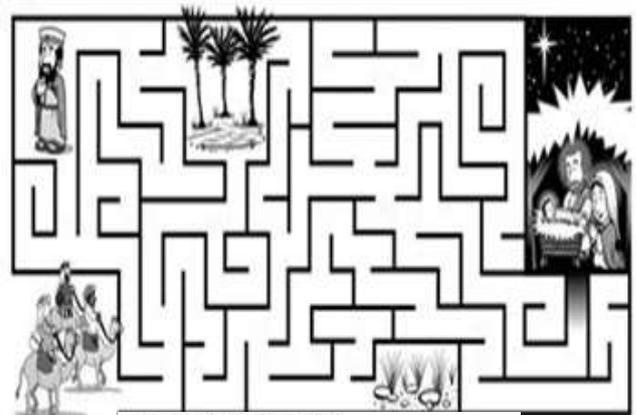
Parish Office hours

Please note that during January the office might be opened during different hours, please send any bulletin notice via email and do leave voice messages on the phone answering machine as this will be checked at different times.

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

A huge thank you for your participation, we received over 65 boxes which were distributed out to families at the Good Kitchen on the Tuesday before Christmas to many grateful families. Also to the schools and individuals for their donations of gifts which found many delighted recipients.

Help the three wise men find their way to Bethlehem - watch out for King Herod!



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

REFLECTION BY FR MICHAEL TATE

Stars and Seekers after Truth

Unlike the writers of the horoscope columns in our newspapers, these Wise Men were scholar astrologers, probably from Syria or Iraq. They believed that the stars controlled the destiny of human beings, but they were open enough to the Hebrew scriptures to be led to the amazing discovery of a star-child in Bethlehem.

They knelt before this baby, doing homage, because they realised that the stars did not control this infant, but that there was something of this baby which caused the night sky to respond! They preserved the child from the deadly schemes of Herod, and then they returned to their home country, 'by a different way'. They were on a different journey after encountering the Child.

Who can doubt that the Holy Spirit led these wise men from the East to the manger? In fact, the Holy Spirit is at work in every human being, prompting each and every one to become seekers after Truth.

As a person responds to this prompting and tries to lead a good humane life, then the Church teaches that the Holy Spirit can draw them into the saving life of God. Thus, billions in China and India who have never heard the Gospel, can be saved. But, such persons do not savour the fullness of Truth as we do with the privilege of having the scriptures and the sacraments. Where it is possible, we are obliged to offer them the road map to the Truth.

We can take a moment to affirm our faith in the baby in the manger as the One of whom Dante spoke: 'the Love which moves the sun and other stars'. Come, let us adore him. © Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

HAVE YOU THOUGHT? – EPIPHANY

The feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus to humankind. The wise men are the representatives of humanity bearing witness to this revelation. However, the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus as not only the Messiah of Israel but the Saviour of the whole world. Interestingly, in this gospel that emphasises the 'Jewish-ness' of Jesus, the witnesses to the birth are gentiles from a foreign land. Their inclusion is a powerful declaration that the revelation of Jesus is for all people. Regardless of the liturgical year, this reading is always used on the feast of the Epiphany to celebrate this pivotal moment.

GOSPEL FOCUS – GOING HOME

The wise men, or Magi, are warned in a dream not to go back to Herod and they go home by a different way. How could they do anything but go home another way – indeed, go home as different people? They are changed by their encounter with the child Jesus and they go home a different way; in a different state; in a whole different frame of mind. When we genuinely encounter Jesus – in scripture, in life, in prayer, in ourselves – then we cannot go home the same way; we must go home by a different way as the Magi did.



HISTORICAL CONTEXT – THE MAGI

In some translations, the 'wise men' of this passage are referred to as 'Magi'. Magi was the name given to the Persian priestly caste. Persia (now, Iran) lies to the east of Israel. These wise men are also sometimes portrayed as astrologers, but that is largely because of the reference 'We saw his star as it rose'. It is interesting that the passage describes 'some' wise men; tradition has developed a specific number of three – based on the three gifts presented. These anonymous (and purely literary) figures have been given names and their 'relics' lie in honour beneath the Cathedral of Cologne.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Why does Herod appear to take a great interest in the birth of Jesus?

What might Mary and Joseph have thought to see the wise men bringing gifts to their baby?

In what way was the journey of the wise men a journey of faith?

What is the significance of the wise men presenting earthly 'treasures' to the Christ child?

Why did the wise men approach Herod to ask about the infant king of the Jews?

Why is it significant that Jesus' birth be witnessed by important men from a distant land?

In what ways do you 'bear witness' to Jesus?

First Reading Is 60:1-6

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The glory of the Lord shines upon you.

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples. Above you the Lord now rises and above you his glory appears. The nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness. Lift up your eyes and look round: all are assembling and coming towards you, your sons from far away and your daughters being tenderly carried. At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you; the wealth of the nations come to you; camels in throngs will cover you, and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; everyone in Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing the praise of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 71:1-2. 7-8. 10-13, R. see v.11

(R.) Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people in justice and your poor in right judgement.

In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails. He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Great River to earth's bounds.

The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts shall pay him tribute. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring him gifts. Before him all kings shall fall prostrate, all nations shall serve him.

For he shall save the poor when they cry and the needy who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and save the lives of the poor. **(R.)**

Second Reading Eph 3:2-3. 5-6

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

The revelation means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body.

You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance, that they are parts of the same body, and that the same promise has been made to them, in Christ Jesus, through the gospel.

Gospel Acclamation Mt 2:2

Alleluia, alleluia!

We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord. Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 2:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
We have come from the East to worship the king.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him, 'For this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said, 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod and returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord.



EPIPHANY

Readings Next Week : *Baptism of Our Lord*

First Reading: Is 42:1-4. 6-7

Second Reading: Acts 10:34-38

Gospel: Lk 3:15-16. 21-22

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