



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



7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 20TH FEB. 2022

"MY SOUL ISN'T IMPRISONED ANYMORE; I'M FREE NOW."

A few days ago, a new initiative was observed in places of worship across Sydney. Named simply i4Give Sunday, it was a prayerful invitation to forgiveness and mercy. The back story is a powerful one. On February 1 2020, a speeding car ran off a suburban road and killed four cousins, while also severely injuring a fifth. The driver was both drunk and high on drugs. It was an absolutely devastating tragedy. If the families had come out with anger and hate, you could hardly blame them. But here is the remarkable thing. Leila Abdallah, the mother of three of those children, came out before the media cameras and declared that she was refusing to bow to hate and instead forgave the driver.



"Right now, I can't hate him. I don't want to see him, [but] I don't hate him. I think in my heart to forgive him, but I want the court to be fair. It's all about fairness. I'm not going to hate him, because that's not who we are."

It was an awesome moment of grace in the midst of tremendous hurt and suffering. Leila could never forget what had happened and was very clear that she still wanted justice to be served. However, she was not going to wait on that before she did what she knew she had to do; forgive. Soon after Bridget Sakr, mother to fourth victim Veronique, also came out and joined Leila in her decision to forgive the driver.

There is a tremendous freedom on offer to us in today's Gospel, if only we are ready to place our trust in God. It calls us again and again to mercy. To live that mercy, even when it seems impossible, is to imitate God's own inexhaustible mercy. To live that mercy is to surrender our hearts completely to God and let his love fill us to the brim. To live that mercy is to be free. However, we mustn't make the mistake of hearing this as a naïve call to forget or ignore the requirements of justice. God is the source of all justice. He could hardly ask us to deny its demands. But we need to trust that he will sort it out. Nor is it necessarily a command to hang around for more mistreatment. There are some situations that only God can fix, and the best thing we can do is to simply walk away. Instead, today's Gospel is an invitation to bring God into the picture and focus on what we can control; our decision to choose mercy and entrust God with all the rest. Anger and resentment will only end up hurting ourselves and our families. Letting go of these is our path to freedom.

"My soul isn't imprisoned anymore; I'm free now." Danny Abdallah

Parish Contact Details:

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Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Office Hrs: Tues, Wed, and Fri 10:30 -2:30

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

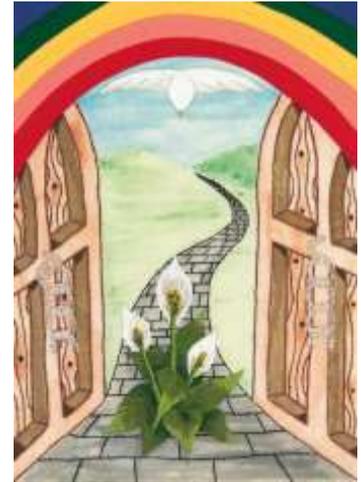
Lorna Phyland

NOTICES

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER-

There is an invitation to join for the annual World day of Prayer which will be hosted this year by the Anglican Church of Swan Hill at **10 am on Friday March 4th**.

This years' service has been prepared by the people of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. All welcome.



ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Ellen Wright, James Ryan, John Bernard Bell, Jan Marie Bell, Honorah Quirk, Johanna (Josie) King, Lorraine Rogers, Barry Power, Jaron Bennet, Adele, Concetta & Pasquale Colombo, Mary Doran, Thomas Irwin, Raffaele Caccavello, Adrian Penno, Frederick Lloyd, Vin Conway, Francis Foott, Ron Free, Claire O'Brien.

SICK LIST

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

Jocelyn Ingram has coordinated our parish's representation in these days for a long time. She is looking for a couple of helpers who might take a representative role in this year's day of prayer, with a view to helping host next year's gathering. There is an established script for the gathering, it just takes a couple of rehearsals with the other representatives to tie it all together. These will take place on this Friday (18th) and the next (25th) at 10am, again at the Anglican Parish. If you are interested in getting involved please let Jocelyn know, or touch base with the us in the Office.

Notices Continued Opposite...

THIS WEEKEND (19/20TH FEBRUARY)

Saturday 6:30pm Swan Hill
Sunday: 8.30am Lalbert
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill
Sunday 5pm Sea Lake

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tuesday 5.30pm
Wednesday 10am
Thurs: Confession 5pm and Mass 5.30pm
Fri: Adoration 11am Mass 12 Noon

NEXT WEEKEND (26/27TH FEBRUARY)

Saturday 6:30pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Quambatook
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

COLLECTIONS LAST 2 WEEKENDS

1st (Presbytery) \$ 1605
2nd (Parish) \$ 2823

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

NOTICES CONTINUED...



LENTEN PROGRAM

Lent is now fast approaching, with Ash Wednesday this year falling on 2nd March. The theme of this year's reflection program is *Remember*. Books are now available from the parish office \$10. We will also be bringing some of these out to the country Churches over the next few weekends.

These programs can be followed as an individual or in groups. We already have a number of groups established across the Parish. If you haven't yet joined one and would like to be part of a group, we will host two sessions in Swan Hill - on Thursdays after 5:30pm Mass and on Fridays after the 12pm Mass. These will begin in the first week of March- (3rd and 4th). We will have a sign-up sheet available after Mass. If these times don't work, there are two other pre-established groups who may be able to welcome new members.

MINISTERS NEEDED FOR READING, OFFERTORY AND COMMUNION ROSTERS.

Our rosters are in need of more people to assist in helping at Mass. Saturday night Mass is especially short of assistance as our current roster has lost helpers due to no longer living here/age/health. The more people we have involved the less frequent you will be called upon. Training will be provided. If you are interested please talk with Fr James or Glenda after Mass, drop by the Office Tues, Wed or Fri or email northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au.

REFLECTION BY DIANNE BERGANT CSA

Perhaps one of the most difficult lessons to learn is forgiveness of those whom we consider our enemies, those who have wronged us. As challenging as this may be, the Gospel calls us to a very high standard: we must be merciful as God is merciful. If such perfection can become a reality in our lives, we will be able to forgive. Paul assures us that we can indeed attain such perfection, not by ourselves, but through the power of the risen Lord whose image we bear.

Paul plays with the theology of creation. In the beginning, we were made like the first Adam, earthly, limited, weak, concerned about the things of this world, and committed to our own wellbeing. Through baptism we have been fashioned after the image of the second Adam, Christ the risen Lord. Being like Christ, we become godlike, empowered with his saving power, transformed with him into new beings. It is now in our power, which is really the power of the resurrection, to be merciful as God is merciful. In the risen Lord we experience a mystical transformation. From now on, all of our actions can flow from this new reality.

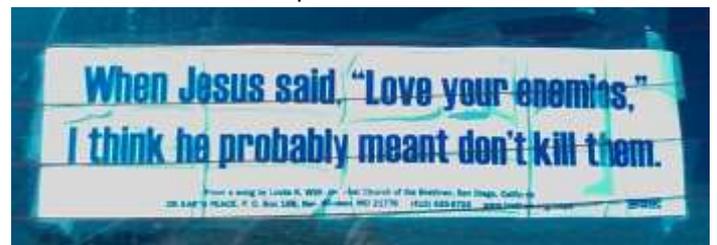
Transformed by the power of the resurrection, we are capable of unprecedented, good works. We can live without retaliation; we can render good for evil. We can be prodigal in our generosity toward others; we can relinquish any rights of proprietorship that we might enjoy. We can live with others without unfairly judging them. We can be like God, boundless in our forgiveness. © Dianne Bergant CSA

Readings Next Week:6th Sunday Ordinary Time

First Reading: Sir 27:4-7

Second Reading: 1 Cor 15:54-58

Gospel: Lk 6:39-45



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Which line of today's gospel do you find most challenging for your own life?

When have you ever tried to treat someone positively when they were treating you badly?

What consequences can flow from treating others as you would like to be treated?

When have you experienced genuine compassion from another person?

What does it mean to you to know that God is willing to forgive anything and not judge you?

First Reading 1 Sm 26:2. 7-9. 12-13. 22-23

A reading from the first book of Samuel

The Lord has put you in my power, but I will not raise my hand against you.

Saul set off and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, accompanied by three thousand men chosen from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph.

So in the dark David and Abishai made their way towards the force, where they found Saul asleep inside the camp, his spear stuck in the ground beside his head, with Abner and the troops lying round him.

Then Abishai said to David, 'Today God has put your enemy in your power; so now let me pin him to the ground with his own spear. Just one stroke! I will not need to strike him twice. David answered Abishai, Do not kill him, for who can lift his hand against the Lord's anointed and be without guilt?' David took the spear and the pitcher of water from beside Saul's head, and they made off. No one saw, no one knew, no one woke up; they were all asleep, for a deep sleep from the Lord had fallen on them.

David crossed to the other side and halted on the top of the mountain a long way off; there was a wide space between them. David then called out, 'Here is the king's spear. Let one of the soldiers come across and take it. The Lord repays everyone for his uprightness and loyalty. Today the Lord put you in my power, but I would not raise my hand against the Lord's anointed.'

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 102:1-4. 8. 10. 12-13. R. v.8

(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name. My soul, give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings.

It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion.

The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. He does not treat us according to our sins nor repay us according to our faults.

As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins. As a father has compassion on his sons, the Lord has pity on those who fear him.

(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful.

Second Reading 1 Cor 15:45-49

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians
Just as we have carried the earthly image, we must carry the heavenly image.

The first man, Adam, as scripture says, became a living soul; but the last Adam has become a life-giving spirit. That is, first the one with the soul, not the spirit, and after that, the one with the spirit. The first man, being from the earth, is earthly by nature; the second man is from heaven. As this earthly man was, so are we on earth; and as the heavenly man is, so are we in heaven. And we, who have been modelled on the earthly man, will be modelled on the heavenly man.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 13:34

Alleluia, alleluia! I give you a new commandment; love one another as I have loved you. Alleluia!

Gospel Lk 6:27-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke
Be merciful as your Father is merciful.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too; to the man who takes your cloak from you, do not refuse your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and do not ask for your property back from the man who robs you. Treat others as you would like them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks can you expect? For even sinners do that much. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what thanks can you expect? Even sinners lend to sinners to get back the same amount. Instead, love your enemies and do good, and lend without any hope of return. You will have a great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

'Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged yourselves; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned yourselves; grant pardon, and you will be pardoned. Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.'

The Gospel of the Lord.