



Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

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Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Incorporating the Communities of St Mary's Sea Lake, Sacred Heart Culgoa, St Michael's Lalbert, St Joseph's Nandaly, S's Peter & Paul Quambatook & St Mary's Swan Hill as well as the Lake Boga Families & Faith Group



19TH MARCH 2023 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT

THE GOSPEL: "I ONLY KNOW THAT I WAS BLIND, AND NOW I CAN SEE"

I love today's Gospel. The 'man born blind' is a cracker of a character. The Pharisees keep bombarding him questions and accusations, and he just keeps responding with his simple, even somewhat brutal honesty. To him the matter is obvious. He was blind, and now he can see. This man Jesus did it, so he must be good, he must have been sent by God. It really is that simple.

We can often face tough questions about our faith and why we believe. At times we might even feel like we are under interrogation. Now there are many good, solid reasons and arguments for our faith. These are good to know and share. But it is hard to think of them when you are under pressure, and still harder to articulate them well. Thankfully there is another way. We don't always need to be like a St Paul. We can just be simple and honest like the blind man. When someone asks, 'Why do you go to Mass?', our answer can be as simple as 'It gives me peace.' Or if they ask 'Why bother praying?', maybe all we need to say is 'Because it gives me the strength to carry on'. Or if they ask 'Do you really believe all that stuff?', it might be enough to just confess 'Well, it seems pretty real to me.' Faith is not an equation to be solved, nor a formula to be explained. It is an invitation into a personal encounter. We are here because God is real to us. It really is that simple.

PARISH BLOCK MURLONG STREET

As you may know, the Parish owns the two vacant blocks either side of St Mary's Primary School, Swan Hill.

The Parish Finance Committee could see that leaving these idle was becoming increasingly unfeasible. A significant chunk of our parish income is currently chewed up in rates for these blocks, and more broadly we needed to rethink how we could make best use of our assets to develop some alternative income streams to support our core Mission into the future. The Finance Committee decided therefore to investigate our options. The Diocese advised us to undertake a Feasibility Study, which then opened up an exciting opportunity for the future use of the Murlong St block in partnership with another Catholic agency. This project is yet to be finalised, so we aren't in a position to share all the details. It does mean however that we have agreed to sell the block, and that the Diocese is now managing the necessary planning applications in preparation for the next step. This process also includes works to free up the Karinie St Industrial block for sale. St Mary's school had been using some of the Murlong St block for staff carparking in an informal arrangement. They are now quite advanced in their plans to fence the boundary and build a new car park within the Parish Land marked and set aside for School-Operations. Kate has informed the school community of these changes. I would like to thank her and the school for their cooperation.

Personally speaking, I know this type of thing is not necessarily my strength. The process has been far more complicated than I expected. I would like to thank the Finance Committee and Diocese for their great support. We are confident the end result will be something we can all be very proud of, and the sale will also help secure the financial position of the Parish into the future.

Parish Contact Details:

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

Parish Priest

Fr James Kerr

Parish Office:

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

Domenica Salvo
Joan Braniff (Livingston)

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Catherine Leggitt, Margaret Nolan, John White
Mary Meehan, Evelyn O'Brien, Lavena Johnston
Maurice McNamara, William Foley, Tony De Maio
Ivor McLean, Valerie Irwin, Bryant (Wangie) Barry
Jeremiah Lucy

SICK LIST

Elizabeth Williamson, Paul Donohue, Jayden
Williams, Margaret Foott, Jarrod Crimmins,
Michael Bourke, Jack Donohue,
Jude Lewis, Susan, Yvonne Annan,
Bridget Phyland, Carmel Ryan

THIS WEEKEND 18TH/19TH MARCH

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday 6pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Lalbert

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

Sunday 5pm Sea Lake

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Monday: 10am Mass (Feast St Joseph)

Tuesday: 5.30pm Mass

Wednesday: 10am Mass followed by Stations

Thursday: Confessions 5pm, 5.30pm Mass
Adoration until 7pm

Friday: 11am Rosary & Adoration, 11:30am Mass
Confessions 5:30, Stations of the Cross 6pm

Saturday: Confessions 9:30am,

Mass 10am (Feast Annunciation)

NEXT WEEKEND 25/26TH MARCH 2023

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Saturday 6pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Quambatook

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

NOTICES

BAPTISM NAMES IN BULLETIN

We've had a few requests to include the names of our
Baptism children in the bulletin. We are happy to
start doing this, but just needed to begin checking
with the families that they are okay for names to be
published. So from now on they will be on the
bulletin (unless we forget, because we are human!).

And so to start us off...

WELCOME INTO GOD'S FAMILY

A special welcome to **Hennie May Wiseman**, who is
being presented for baptism by her parents Nicole
and Brent. May God fill you with his love and grace
and watch over you always!



MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

"LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE IN LOVE"

28 – 30 APRIL 2023 IN MELBOURNE

Every relationship is a journey and the grind of
everyday life can cause you to lose touch with your
spouse. This weekend gives married couples the tools
to keep passion alive in a gentle, nurturing
environment, away from pressures and distractions of
daily living. The weekend is based around Catholic
values and couples of all faiths are welcome.

Please check our website for more details.

Book early to avoid disappointment.

Information/Bookings:

Phone Mercy & James 0409 183 676 or

Email: vicbookings@wwme.org.au

Website: wwme.org.au

*PS- Note from Glenda and Mary: We have been part
of these encounters in the past. They were a good
experience and we drew a lot from them. Happy to
speak to any couples with any questions.*

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND

1st (Presbytery): \$1035

2nd (Parish): \$1550

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.au

St Mary MacKillop College

Principal: Michelle Haeusler
53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill
Ph: 5032 9771

Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au

SWAN HILL HARMONY DAY

Will be celebrated again next Saturday 25th March from 4-8pm in Riverside Park, Swan Hill. Many of our parishioners are a big part of this day, celebrating and sharing the many wonderful cultures which have made our region their home.



WORLD YOUTH DAY LISBON- *SPECIAL LAST-MINUTE OFFER!*

World Youth Day is an opportunity for young Catholics from all around the world to gather with the Pope and be strengthened in their faith. I had spoken about it earlier, but I just received word of a last-minute offer from our Diocese to sponsor half the cost for 18-35 year olds to join the Sandhurst (Bendigo) Diocese pilgrimage. Catch me if this might appeal to you or anyone you know. They need to know within a few days.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOR LENT

- Start a giving jar and collect loose change or donate some of your pocket money
- No Complaining Day: find yourself complaining? Put a forfeit into your giving jar.
- What are you really good at? Could you use your talent to help teach someone?
- Have a proper chat! Catch up with someone you haven't spoken to for a while.
- What have you promised to do and then forgotten? Try and remember and put your words into actions.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

Why might the Jews have associated physical affliction with punishment from God?

Why might Jesus have performed this miracle in such a physical, 'hands-on' way?

What reasons can you suggest for the apparent reluctance to accept the miraculous healing?

In what ways can you relate your own experiences to one of the characters in the passage?

What are the areas of 'blindness' in your life?

However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we don't know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may see and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?' Jesus replied:

'Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, "We see", your guilt remains.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

READINGS NEXT WEEK: 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

First Reading: Ez 37:12-14

Second Reading: Rom 8:8-11

Gospel: Jn 11:1-45

FIRST READING 1 Sm 16:1. 6-7. 10-13

A reading from the first book of Samuel:

In the presence of the Lord God, they anointed David king of Israel.

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on. The Word of the Lord. **ALL: Thanks be to God**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 22 R. v.1

(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me In the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

SECOND READING Eph 5:8-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything

exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,

rise from the dead,

and Christ will shine on you.

The Word of the Lord. **ALL: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Jn 8:12

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;

whoever follows me will have the light of life.

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL Jn 9:1-41

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

The blind man went off and washed himself and came away with his sight restored.

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered, 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

'As long as the day lasts

I must carry out the work of the one who sent me; the night will soon be here when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world

I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

Continued on inside of bulletin