



Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au 03 50324144

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



13TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

2ND JULY 2023

"ANYONE WHO LOSES HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE WILL FIND IT."

Oh, the irony... just as I am packing my bags ready to head off on holidays to catch up with my family and friends... Jesus springs this challenging Gospel on us. 'Anyone who prefers father or mother... son or daughter to me is not worthy of me.' Christ has to come first. That is what being a follower of his means. We are called to find in him our security, our heritage and our reward. We are called to share in his suffering, taking up our cross. We are even called to be ready to lose our lives, handing ourselves over to him completely so that we might find life anew. We are called to welcome prophets and those sent in Christ's name, which means opening our hearts to the truth they speak, even if it challenges or convicts us. There is no part of our life that we can section off and keep apart from Christ. To be a follower of his means to hand it all over; right down to the smallest thing, even the gift of a cup of cold water.

Does this sound like too much? Because at first hearing, it definitely should. It is meant to shock us. No mere man could dare to *demand* such extreme commitment. It goes beyond even the faithfulness asked of a spouse. *Only God can demand such a radical response*, because no-one else can ever deserve it, and no-one else can ever guarantee the reward. And that is the point isn't it; to welcome Christ is to welcome the Father who sent him. Christ is God here among us. He shares in the Father's Glory. He can demand what no mere man can demand, because he is the One who gives us life. There is no life apart from him.

Okay, so that is the claim our Faith makes. Christ can ask this of us, because Christ is God. But it is one thing to have that statement there in front of you, and it is quite another to internalise it and let it shape your life. For some, that change can come like a lightning bolt, with the fire of God's love taking a sudden hold of their heart in a drastic conversion experience. From that moment on, their whole life is radically centred on Christ. It really can happen that way, St Paul is a great example. But for most of us, the conversion is perhaps more gradual. It begins with the small things, the cups of water. Keep handing them over and see the space for Christ in your heart grow and grow. And it grows all the more rapidly the more we pause and take stock of how far Christ has already brought us. Look back over your life. Consider all the things you have given over to Christ, no matter how small. And then ask yourself the question, how richly has he repaid your trust?

Speaking personally, this Gospel reminded me of all the wonderful friends and helpers Christ has brought me into contact with. Yes, my vocation has called me to leave behind family in a radical way. And it would be lying to say this calling is never difficult or hard. Isolation and loneliness can hit hard at times, just as I know many of you experience as well. And yet, as difficult the surrender might be, Christ has always repaid my trust. I may not have a family of my own, but instead I've been blessed with so many close friends and live-giving relationships that I would never have had unless I had answered his call. I've been welcomed into so many homes and been privileged to be present at the most pivotal moments of people's lives. I've been entrusted with so much, because together we are walking in trust with the Lord. I hope you can see the rich blessings in your life as well. The shape of them may be different, but the source is the same. Hand your life over to Christ and you will not be disappointed.

Parish Contact Details:

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Phone: 03 5032 4144

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Website: northeastmallee.org.au

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

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Marcelle Thomson, Lui Agosta

Celie Flanagan, Tony Frazzica

Tim Grant, Doreen O'Halloran

Lyla Moar, Luigi Mase, Klay Stevens

Bill Maher, Tom Barry, Ossie Coughlan

SICK LIST

Yvonne Richardson, Paul Donohue,

Jayden Williams, Margaret Foott,

Jarrold Crimmins, Michael Bourke, Jack Donohue,

Jude Lewis, Susan, Yvonne Annan,

Bridget Phyland, Carmel Ryan, Leo Clarke

THIS WEEKEND (1ST/2ND JULY)

13TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Sea Lake

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

No Masses this week- Fr James away

NEXT WEEKEND (8TH/9TH JULY)

14TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Friday 5pm Culgoa

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Quambatook

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

Sunday 5pm Nandaly

READINGS NEXT WEEK:

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Zec 9:9-10

Second Reading: Rom 8:9.11-13

Gospel: Mt 11:25-30

NOTICES

CONGRATULATIONS GABRIELLE AND JOSE!

Congratulations to Gabrielle and Jose who are celebrating 50 years of Marriage. May God's blessings be upon you and all your family this day. Thank you for your special witness to faithfulness and love.

AND CONGRATULATIONS TO FRANKIE SMITH!

We also offer a special congratulations and welcome to Frankie Smith who will be baptised this weekend. We thank Catherine and Brendan for presenting her for baptism, and ask God to bless them in their vocation as parents. And I am sure big sister Willow will also have her role to play!



FESTA DELLA MADONNA DEL MONTE CARMELO

The Annual Festa will be celebrated again this year on Sunday 16th July with Mass at 10:30am followed by a Pasta Lunch and Raffle in the Parish Function Centre.

All are welcome!

FUNERAL NOTICE

A Requiem Mass for Catherine O'Connor (Kelly), who died at Willangie, July 27 1923, will be offered at the Woomelang Cemetery on Saturday July 22 2023 followed by lunch at the Woomelang Memorial Hall.

Descendants, other O'Connor and Kelly relatives, friends of the families and any who wish to commemorate her life are welcome.

Please contact: aldous.julie.a@gmail.com

ADIEU!

On Monday I'm off for the next three weekends. All the best for the meantime, and see you when I am back (in time for Mass on Sat 29th July)

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

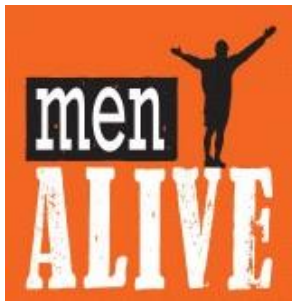
St Mary MacKillop College

Principal: Michelle Haeusler

53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill

Ph: 5032 9771

Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au



TESTING THE WATERS- MEN ALIVE

Just in case you missed this notice the from two weeks ago, I would like to get a feel for interest in running a 'Men Alive' retreat here in our Parish.

'Men Alive' is an Australian initiative. It is open to all men, young or old, working or retired, married or single, and is aimed at encouraging and empowering men to become the best version of themselves by providing a platform to come together, share their experiences and build each other up. We aren't always the best at providing such a platform in the average parish in Australia- 'Men Alive' is aimed at filling that important gap. Perhaps it would be helpful for us here in Holy Family Parish too?

My hope would be to find a core group of 4-5 men who are interested and keen, who can come together to help host and promote a retreat weekend. There is a team that comes in to help run the retreat, but they need boots on the ground to build up the momentum and make it successful.

I will put this invite out again once I am back from my annual leave next month, but for now I would encourage any man who is interested to do a little research. Start by having a look at menalive.org.au If you are keen to know more, let me know and I can share some other materials I have, and even help put you in touch with the Echuca group so you can get a feel for what it looks like in practice.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

How do you imagine Jesus' original audience might have reacted to this teaching?

How might a person's faith place them in conflict with their family?

What 'sacrifices' have you had to make to achieve something important in your life?

What does it mean for you to 'welcome' the gospel messages of Jesus?

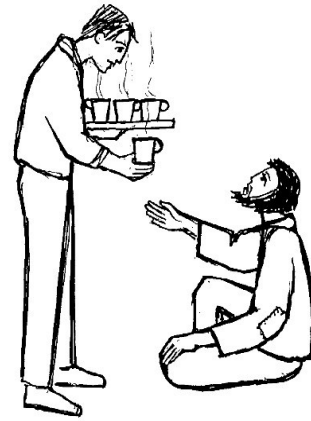
What was your immediate reaction to hearing or reading this passage?

Continued...

When have you had to choose between conflicting priorities in your life?

How might you 'offer a cup of water' and welcome a disciple who comes in an unlikely form?

How might you discuss these 'hard teachings' of Jesus with a modern audience?



GOSPEL REFLECTION

Today's Gospel is the conclusion of the instructions and consolations that we have heard Jesus offering to his disciples during the past few weeks. In this passage, Jesus summarizes both the costs of discipleship and its rewards. Once again our understanding of the Gospel is strengthened by considering the context in which it was written and the perspective of Matthew's audience.

The conditions of discipleship outlined in Matthew's Gospel may appear harsh. Yet they underline for us a truth—choosing anything with one's whole heart has consequences. Choosing life with Christ means that every relationship we have must be understood from a new perspective. For many in Matthew's community, this choice brought division to their family.

Matthew also outlines the reward of hospitality offered to Jesus' followers. In today's Gospel, Jesus explains the difficulties of discipleship, yet reveals that those who welcome the disciples have also welcomed him.

Today's Gospel also highlights for us the importance of hospitality in the Christian life. To welcome another in Jesus' name is to extend hospitality to Jesus himself. We have many opportunities in our daily life to reach out to others, to be a welcoming presence and a sign of God's love. (C) Loyola Press

FIRST READING 2 Kgs 4:8-11. 14-16

A reading from the second book of the Kings
That is the holy man of God, let him remain there.

One day as Elisha was on his way to Shunem, a woman of rank who lived there pressed him to stay and eat there. After this he always broke his journey for a meal when he passed that way. She said to her husband, 'Look, I am sure the man who is constantly passing our way must be a holy man of God. Let us build him a small room on the roof, and put him a bed in it, and a table and chair and lamp; whenever he comes to us he can rest there.'

One day when he came, he retired to the upper room and lay down. 'What can be done for her?' he asked. Gehazi (his servant) answered, 'Well, she has no son and her husband is old.' Elisha said, 'Call her.' The servant called her and she stood at the door. 'This time next year,' Elisha said 'you will hold a son in your arms.' The Word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 88:2-3. 16-19. R. v.2

(R.) Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, that your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

Happy the people who acclaim such a king, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face, who find their joy every day in your name, who make your justice the source of their bliss.

For it is you, O Lord, who are the glory of their strength; it is by your favour that our might is exalted: for our ruler is in the keeping of the Lord; our king in the keeping of the Holy One of Israel.

(R.) Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

SECOND READING Rom 6:3-4. 8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans
Having been buried with him through baptism, we shall walk in a new life.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life. But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know,

having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus. The word of the Lord.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation 1 Pt 2:9

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people. Praise God who called you out of darkness and into his marvellous light. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mt 10:37-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
Anyone who does not accept his cross is not worthy of me. Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me.

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.

'Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me.

'Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man because he is a holy man will have a holy man's reward.

'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.' The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

