



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

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
Jesus, Matt 22:37*

29TH OCTOBER 2023: 30TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

YOU MUST LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND... AND YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF...

Let's not complicate things. It's pretty simple, and simple in the truest sense of the word, simple in the way that we describe God as simple (does that surprise you?). We are called to love, and not just with a part of ourselves, but with everything we have and everything we are. That is how God loves. God is described as Simple, because God is not made up of lots of little bits and pieces. God is One. When he wills something, he wills it perfectly, without any division. When he loves, he loves with his whole self, holding nothing back. Unlike God, we are made up of lots of parts. And sometimes those parts need to learn to act in union with each other. How often do we find ourselves saying; 'I want to do this good thing, but I just don't have the energy'. Or, thinking 'I clearly need to avoid this thing, because it will lead to hurt,' but then our heart confuses things with... 'maybe it isn't all that bad after all...?' We can experience real confusion, at times even division within ourselves, and that is a challenge we have to face.

There is a solid wisdom in the commandment to love with all your heart, soul and mind... it is a reminder that we need to work towards a pure and simple love that incorporates our whole self. True love for God incorporates every fibre of our being and touches every aspect of our lives, especially our relationships with the person right next to us. Of course, we are changeable, and so living that kind of love is a work-in-progress. But the good news is, we are changeable, and so Christ can help bring that growth. He has shown us that it is possible to love with a pure and simple love. He shows us it is possible to give ourselves over entirely in love. Our married couples are living that call in a special way, as do our parents, day in, day out. Your witness is a living sign for all of us. And I see so many other examples too, of individuals living selflessly for the people around them, whether caring for their friends, neighbours or family, or for the dedication they put into their work. All of us are called to the same pure and simple love, but it will be lived out in a special way according to our circumstances. We will also all face our own challenges and struggles to live that call, but all of us can find strength in the Eucharist- the living sign of Christ's total self gift of love.

ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

This week we celebrate two special days; All Saints and All Souls. All Saints commemorates all the souls who have fought the good fight and are now in heaven. There are simply too many to name individually, and perhaps some (for now at least) are known only to God. Perhaps you might have a few special people you have known who you count among the saints? Well, All Saints is there day too. We give thanks for the witness they gave, we rejoice that they have come to their reward, and we ask that they pray for us who are still in the fight. All Souls is a special invitation to pray for all those who have died and gone before us. You are invited to pray for the people you have known, but also for those who have no-one to pray for them. I sometimes wonder whether I need to pray for some individuals, as I feel surely they are in heaven already? Pray for them anyway- God will sort it out. And it is not like time as we know it is a reality after death- they are now in eternity, beyond the counting of days and weeks. Perhaps they are 'already' in heaven, and yet in the great mystery of God's love our prayers today have helped them along.

Eternal Rest Grant to Them O Lord, and Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them. May They Rest in Peace.

Parish Contact Details:

Po Box 71 Swan Hill, Vic 3585

Phone: 03 5032 4144

northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Office Hrs: Tues, Wed 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

Doreen O'Brien, Deborah Ann Elliott,
Raffaele Mollo (1 yr), Phyll Taylor, Margaret Byrne,
Jean Eustace, John Betts, Christina Heron,
Keith Greenham, Bill Shanahan, Hugh Kelly,
Jane Scanlon, Roma Giddings, Rodney Walsh,
Claire Dunstan, Patricia O'Loughlin, Jack McGrath,
James McNamara, Grace Pati (1 yr), Lia Pino (2 yr)

SICK LIST

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

**THIS WEEKEND (28/29TH OCT)
29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday: 6:00pm Swan Hill

**After Mass- Special Opportunity for Prayer with Sr
Rosie & Sr Mel**

Sunday: 10:30am Swan Hill

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tuesday (Vigil All Saints): 5.30pm Mass

Wednesday (All Saints): 10am Mass

Thursday (All Souls): 10am Mass

Also 5pm Confessions

5.30pm Mass, Adoration until 7pm

Friday: 11am Adoration, 11.30am Mass

Saturday: 9:30am Confessions, 10am Mass
10:30am Rosary

**NEXT WEEKEND (4TH/5TH NOV)
30TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Sea Lake

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

NOTICES



SPECIAL VISIT OF SR ROSIE & SR MEL

This week we welcome Srs Rosie Drum and Mel Edwards from the Missionaries of God's Love. They have already helped run our Confirmation Retreat, and visited MacKillop, and this weekend they offer a special opportunity for prayer after the Saturday evening Mass (28th Oct).

PLENARY INDULGENCES

ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

There is a Plenary Indulgence available for visiting a cemetery and praying for the dead during the entire Octave of All Saints (1st-8th). There is also another special indulgence for devoutly visiting a Church on All Souls (2nd Nov) to pray the Our Father and Creed. All the other usual conditions apply.

BAPTISM WELCOME

This weekend we welcome Bowie Dean Wild into God's Family, and thank parents Ricky and Jenna for presenting him for baptism.

THE HOLY ROSARY

The Rosary draws its mysteries from the New Testament and is centred on the great events of the Incarnation and Redemption with each decade referring to an event in the life of Jesus and Mary. The Mysteries of the Rosary give us "thumbnails" of the life of Christ and his Mother.

The Joyful Mysteries are taken mostly from Saint Luke's Gospel in the New Testament. They involve the joyful events of Jesus' childhood.

The Luminous Mysteries bring a deeper understanding to the public life of Jesus. They fill in the blanks between the childhood of Jesus and His suffering and death on the cross.

The Sorrowful Mysteries remind us of how much Jesus loves us. They recall how He suffered and died just for us.

The Glorious Mysteries tell us what happened after

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

Jesus died-His Resurrection, the descent of the Holy Spirit and the love Jesus had for his Mother.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

Why would Jesus' answer have been challenging to the Pharisees?

How might loving God with all your heart, soul and mind affect the way you live your life?

In your local situation, who are the 'neighbours' not loved as we love ourselves?

What actions can you take to better love your neighbour as you love yourself?

What actions can you take to better recognise the importance of God in your life?

NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY BY MARY COLOE PBVM WHAT BELONGS TO GOD?

Before looking at the Lectionary reading it is helpful to place this passage in its Gospel context. In the Gospel last Sunday we read about the Herodians and Pharisees trying to trap Jesus with a trick question about taxes. The Gospel follow this incident with a further trick question this time asked by the Sadducees about the resurrection, since they do not believe in resurrection. Then today's Gospel returns to the Pharisees.

In these disputes we get a small glimpse into the type of disputes Jesus would have experienced with those in religious leadership. While others could claim some sort of credentials for their leadership roles – either the school where they were taught or their membership within a priestly tribe – Jesus had no such claims. He did not rely on learned credentials, or on a recognised position. And yet he gathered crowds to hear him and he spoke with the authority of his own personal experience of God and integrity. No wonder he was unpopular with the religious leaders of his time.

The Pharisees were a lay group within Israel. They were not priests and they sought to live a pattern of life devoted to the teaching of Moses. They were not necessarily legalists for they were open to re-interpretations of the written law and they tried to answer new questions that the written law had not spoken about e.g. resurrection. In many ways Jesus would have looked somewhat like a Pharisee in that he also was a lay person and was re-interpreting the Law of Moses. By the time Matthew is writing his Gospel the Temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed and so the Sadducees, the party of the priests, no longer had a significant role to play.

It was the Pharisees who were leading the people of Israel to a new way of living without the Temple. The early Christians would therefore have had most struggles with this group. Some of the conflicts between Jesus and the Pharisees we see in the Gospels most likely reflect the later conflicts between the early Church and the Rabbis after the destruction of Jerusalem – as both groups claim to be the true heirs to Israel.

The question the Pharisees put to Jesus lies at the very heart of the Torah – the Law. Jesus' response is the great prayer of Israel, the Shema. 'This then is the commandment... that the Lord your God has commanded, "Hear Oh Israel! The Lord your God, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength."' (Deut 6:1, 4). Jesus ties to this the command from Leviticus, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'. (Lev 19:18) Love of God and love of neighbour is the essence of the Law. If you recall last week I asked the question 'What belongs to God?' This week Jesus gives the answer – your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole mind. That's all!

I find the above paragraph quite overwhelming. God wants so much and there seems no room for compromise – your whole heart, whole soul, whole mind. I want to negotiate this a little. 'How about you have 90% and leave me with 10%? That sounds reasonable and very generous really.' But God's reply is unequivocal – 'whole, 100%'. When I hear these words I am reminded of weddings I have attended and the marvel I feel as two people give themselves entirely to each other without reserve – sickness and health, richer or poorer, till death. This is 100%, whole heart, whole soul, whole mind. Love makes such total surrender both desirable and possible.

Perhaps this is what this Gospel is expressing. God desires us with such 100% love and wants us to respond to this love wholeheartedly. Again I consider that marriage offers the best image of such mutual self-giving and receiving. Part of the problem with God's love is that it seems so unbelievable. How could God possibly love me 100% when my life is so messy; parts of it I don't like so how can I expect God to like it? Surely God just likes the good bits, the successful bits, the public bits. But then I come back to the marriage commitment and the Gospel words. Love means the whole of me; richer or poorer, good times and bad; whole heart, whole soul, whole mind.
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FIRST READING Exodus 22:20-26

A reading from the book of Exodus

If you are harsh with the widow or the orphan, my anger will rage against you.

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

"If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

"If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 17:2-4. 47. 51. R. v.2

(R.) I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise:
when I call I am saved from my foes.

Long life to the Lord, my rock!
Praised be the God who saves me.
He has given great victories to his king
and shown his love for his anointed.

(R.) I love you, Lord, my strength.

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians
You turned away from idols to serve God and await his Son.

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread

– and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION John 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 22:34-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.' *The Gospel of the Lord.*

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

READINGS NEXT WEEK:

31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Malachi 1:14 – 2:2. 8-10

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9. 13

Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12

