



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



5TH NOVEMBER 2023:

31ST SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

CALL NO ONE ON EARTH YOUR FATHER,

SINCE YOU HAVE ONLY ONE FATHER, AND HE IS IN HEAVEN

So... am I going to stop calling my dad 'Dad'? No, because that is what he is. I owe him the gift of life (although let's be clear- as far as that goes he would be the first to admit mum had the much more important role!). But more than just being born, he played a crucial role in providing for and protecting me in my younger days. He also helped form me; teaching me respect and to put others first, challenging me to make the most of the gifts I had received, correcting me whenever I needed correction, and showing me by his example what hard work, perseverance, dedication and courage look like. For all of that I am deeply indebted (thanks Dad!), but on top of it there was also the gift of faith. There have been many lessons there, but perhaps the most central was the reality of God's Providential care for us. Even when our plans went astray, or we were confronted by our own limitations, we were always pointed as a family back to the strong Hand that held us, that of our loving Father in Heaven. And that was perhaps the most important lesson of all.

Now no earthly dad is perfect, and my dad is the first to admit his limitations. I know I am also lucky being number four, he had a bit of practice by the time I came around! Like every role of responsibility or authority, dad had to grow into his. And everytime we called out 'Dad', it called him to live up to the role God had given him. Titles can be powerful in that way, but only when understood in the proper context.

So back to the Gospel. Is Jesus dismissing the use of titles completely? I don't think so. He himself is called both 'Rabbi' and 'Teacher' by the crowds, and he doesn't refuse these titles. And while he doesn't call himself father, he identifies as one when by calling us his 'little children.' So the problem isn't so much with the titles themselves, it is with an improper understanding of them. We go wrong when we think the title is there for our own exaltation, or that we ourselves are the source of merit.

A rabbi is entrusted with the task of guiding and governing his community, but he is not its Master, because only God is truly Lord. As long as the rabbi recognises that God is the true authority, he does well. As soon as he seeks to lord it over his charges, he goes astray. And the same for fathers. God the Father entrusts them with the gift of life. As long as they draw from and point back to Him as the source of all life, they do well. But as soon as they think life is their own creation and seek to dominate and control, they go wrong. And finally for Teachers; they are tasked with sharing Light and leading others to the ultimate Truth. But the moment they confuse themselves with the light... they spread darkness instead.

All of us at one stage or another will bear a role of authority and responsibility. Sometimes that authority is stable and long lasting, like that carried by mothers and fathers. Sometimes it is related to our work or chosen vocation. But at other times it is more subtle, like the influence we can carry with our friends, or more fleeting, like when someone comes to us for help. Whatever the case, whenever we find ourselves in a position of authority, Christ calls us to never forget that God is the one truly in charge. If we have been entrusted with a task, we do it in cooperation with him. And that means exercising it just as he does; not for our sake but for the good of those we serve. ***"The greatest among you must be your servant. Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself will be exalted."***

Parish Contact Details:

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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

Donny Demaria, Kelvin Upton
William O'Brien, Les Johnston,
Ashley Maher, Michele Costa
Jean McInerney, Zoe Teague
James Gleeson, Rosa Nasisi

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 (4TH/5TH NOV)
31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday: 6:00pm Swan Hill
Sunday: 8.30am Sea Lake
Sunday: 10:30am Swan Hill

**WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL
Tuesday NO MASS**

Wednesday NB 5.30pm Mass

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

Friday: 11am Adoration, 11.30am Mass

**NEXT WEEKEND (11TH/12TH NOV)
32ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Quambatook
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill
Sunday: 5pm Nandaly

NOTICES

CHANGE TO CULGOA MASS TIME

With the closure of St Michael's Lalbert, Mass will now be celebrated at **Culgoa on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 8.30am**, instead of the Friday before the 2nd Sunday of the month at 5pm. This should be less confusing, and also less prone to interruptions.

World Mission Sunday



WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

Inspired by the Pope's message for World Mission Sunday, this year Catholic Mission is raising awareness of the life-giving work of lay and religious missionaries around the world with the theme "Hearts on Fire, Feet on the Move". In his message, Pope Francis reflects on the resilience that everyday missionaries demonstrate in their life-giving work and the burning passion for God and people that inspires their hearts. Dedicating their lives to others, in partnership with communities, missionaries aim to create a positive change through spiritual care and the implementation of grassroots projects, such as healthcare and education, reaching far beyond Catholic communities.

To support missionaries in their work envelopes are available at the back of the church. You can either give directly via the website or for cash donations use the envelopes and place on the collection basket.

PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES

Lord, fill the hearts of your missionaries with the Holy Spirit.
Guide their steps with your mighty arm and with the power of your grace.
Strengthen them in spirit so that they will not falter though weariness.
Look kindly on your servants, who you have sent forth as messengers of salvation and peace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. 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.au

St Mary MacKillop College

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

Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

This past week we celebrated the great feast of All Saints and the special commemoration of All Souls. In the first we asked for the prayers of those souls already in heaven, and in the second we prayed for those who are still on the way as they are purified by God's love. Both commemorations are connected and not just because we remember the dead. All Saints and All Souls express something of our core belief- that as members of Christ's Body, we are intimately united together. Not even death can truly separate us. The souls who have died before us are still very much a part of the Church. Their earthly pilgrimage may be over, but that did not bring an end to their membership in Christ. They are alive in Christ, and the same Holy Spirit that stirs in our hearts continues to breathe life into their souls, until Christ raises us all body and soul at the final Resurrection. We are united together as members of Christ's body in a deeper way than we can ever imagine. But that intimate communion is not just with those Saints who have gone before us. It is also with each other now, and indeed with all the faithful around the world. Because we too are rightly called saints; we have been washed cleaned by baptism and have the life of Christ within us. Of course, we still have a lot of work to do, our job is far from complete, but still, the Holy Spirit is continually breathing his life and grace into us. That life is God's life, and God is All Holy, so in that sense we too are counted among the 'holy ones' or the 'saints', because his life moves within us. That is what St Paul meant when he wrote to the Corinthians, "To the church of God which is at Corinth, **to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours**" 1 Cor 1:2

That broader use of 'saints' is what is meant when we pray in the Creed 'I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, **the Communion of Saints...**' When we pray that we are confessing that we are all united together; joined together in a living communion that crosses both time and space, even the little distance of the gap in the pews! Neither distance, nor cultural differences, nor trivial disagreements nor even death can separate us. If we are united with Christ, we are in Communion with each other. Again, we still have a lot of work to do, but whatever our personal failings, the Communion is real. And it is real because the Holy Spirit makes it so. It is no accident that the 'Communion of Saints' comes right after the Holy Spirit. The Communion is His special ongoing work, and perhaps one of the clearest signs of His active presence in the world.

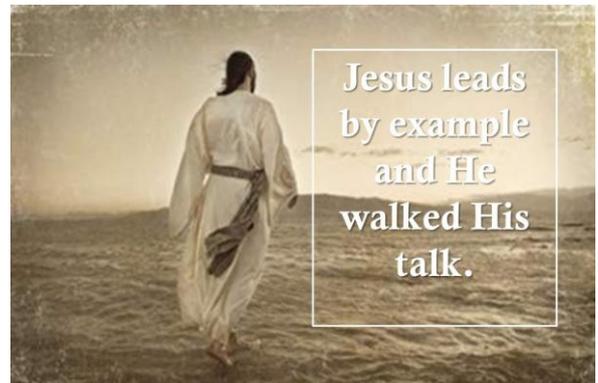
HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

How might the people and disciples have responded to Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees?

How do you respond to someone you feel is not 'practising what they preach'?

In what ways did Jesus model a different style of leadership?

What everyday opportunity do you have to follow Jesus' style of leadership? What styles of good and poor leadership have you experienced / practised?



REFLECTION BY DIANNE BERGANT CSA

Since Vatican II the responsibilities of leadership have been spread throughout the community. This has not happened simply because there are fewer priests and religious. It has occurred primarily because the Council itself insisted that by virtue of their baptism all Christians are called to discipleship, which includes active participation in the mission of the church. While those who are ordained continue in specialised forms of leadership, other people have stepped forward to assume their newly recognised responsibilities. Sometimes they have more influence in the church than do the ordained.

We derive the connection between pharisaical and hypocritical from Jesus' description of the Pharisees found in today's reading. His condemnation, along with the condemnation of the priests in the first reading, should be a warning to all who in any way exercise leadership. We must always be on our guard lest the trappings of leadership ensnare us and we fail in our responsibilities toward God and the community we serve.

There is a mode of leadership that reflects the very meaning of authority. This way of leadership authors life. It is characterised by the striking image of a nursing mother who both gives and sustains life. Those who exercise leadership in this way create a community where life is fostered, not stifled, where talents serve all of the members, and the talents of all of the members are invited to serve. Such a community not only nurtures its members, it is itself the author of life in the world. © Dianne Bergant

FIRST READING Malachi 1:14 – 2:2. 8-10

A reading from the prophet Malachi

You have strayed from the way, you have caused many to stumble by your teaching.

I am a great king, says the Lord of hosts, and my name is feared throughout the nations. And now, priests, this warning is for you. If you do not listen, if you do not find it in your heart to glorify my name, says the Lord of hosts, I will send the curse on you and curse your very blessing. You have strayed from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your teaching. You have destroyed the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts. And so I in my turn have made you contemptible and vile in the eyes of the whole people in repayment for the way you have not kept to my paths but have shown partiality in your administration.

Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why, then, do we break faith with one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 130

(R.) In you, Lord, I have found my peace.

O Lord, my heart is not proud
nor haughty my eyes.

I have not gone after things too great
nor marvels beyond me.

Truly I have set my soul
in silence and peace.

A weaned child on its mother's breast,
even so is my soul.

O Israel, hope in the Lord
both now and for ever. **(R.)**

SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9. 13

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

We were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our lives as well.

Like a mother feeding and looking after her own children, we felt so devoted and protective towards you, and had come to love you so much, that we were eager to hand over to you not only the Good News but our whole lives as well. Let me remind you, brothers, how hard we used to work, slaving night and day so as not to be a burden on any one of you while we were proclaiming God's Good News to you.

Another reason why we constantly thank God for you is that as soon as you heard the message that we brought you as God's message, you accepted it for what it really is, God's message and not some human thinking; and it is still a living power among you who believe it.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Matthew 23:9. 10

Alleluia, alleluia!

You have one Father, your Father in heaven;
you have one teacher: the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 23:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
They do not practise what they preach.

Addressing the people and his disciples Jesus said, 'The scribes and the Pharisees occupy the chair of Moses. You must therefore do what they tell you and listen to what they say; but do not be guided by what they do: since they do not practise what they preach. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but will they lift a finger to move them? Not they! Everything they do is done to attract attention, like wearing broader phylacteries and longer tassels, like wanting to take the place of honour at banquets and the front seats in the synagogues, being greeted obsequiously in the market squares and having people call them Rabbi.

'You, however, must not allow yourselves to be called Rabbi, since you have only one Master, and you are all brothers. You must call no one on earth your father, since you have only one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor must you allow yourselves to be called teachers, for you have only one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you must be your servant. Anyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and anyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you lord Jesus Christ.



READINGS NEXT WEEK:

32ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Wisdom 6:12-16

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13