



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



THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD: 6TH AUGUST 2023

"LORD, IT IS WONDERFUL FOR US TO BE HERE"

I had fairly strong sense that God might be calling me to be a priest from an early age. There was something appealing in the idea, and it seemed to fit with who I was and what God had planned for me. But there is a whole world of difference between 'might be' and 'is', or between 'seems to' and 'actually does'. What I mean is that when it came to the moment of decision, it was very hard to discern. I wanted God to make it absolutely clear to me. I prayed for a voice to shout from heaven "Yes, go! Enter the Seminary! Become a Priest!" ... but it never came. Or at least, not like that. There was a voice, but a very gentle one. It spoke quietly in my heart. I had to work hard to hear it, and even harder to understand it.

What was true for that time of discernment has also been true of many other moments since then. Confronted with life and all it throws at us, I've often yearned for clarity, for a bright vision of God's presence to say 'I am here', or a booming voice declaring 'This is what I want'. In other words, I wanted things to be a bit like they were for Peter, James and John up there on the mountain when Jesus was Transfigured. Slap me in the face with your glory Lord, make things obvious! Don't wait for this dummy to slowly read the signs!

Wouldn't it be much easier if you just eliminated all confusion and pointed me in the right direction!

Sometimes inspiration does come like a bit of a lightning bolt, but very rarely. Most often God's presence is hidden, or at least very gently felt. His voice is usually subtle, almost whispered, and we have to tune our hearts in to hear it. This takes work on our part, and it can at times be very frustrating. Is God being tricky? Is he trying to be difficult, or hard to get?

Or like the Good Father he is... does he actually just know what is truly best for us?

We may be holding out for big, dramatic signs, but God approaches us and guides us in the way that is best. He knows what we can handle, or how far we can be pushed. Just think, if he came to us with dazzling light and roaring thunder, would we jump up to meet him, or fall down, trembling with fear like Peter, James and John? It is no accident that God came to us as a baby, and continues to come to us under the form Bread. He hides his full glory and makes himself small so that we can handle it. And it is the same with his presence in our hearts; our whole life is wrapped up in his care, and yet he treads softly so that we won't be overwhelmed. Sometimes his quiet presence his drowned out by all the noise and distractions of our lives. But even this is for our sake. If we were confronted straight up with making the choice for him, or for all the 'stuff' that crowds our life, would we be ready to choose wisely? It would be too much for us to surrender it all at once, and so he gives us the time we need to slowly set our hearts on him above all else.

And what of God's will for us? Would it really be better if we heard a loud voice commanding us to 'Do this!' and 'Do that!' at every turn? Or would we simply grow to resent it? After all, God doesn't actually *need* us to do anything, but because he wants what is best for us, he invites us to *cooperate* in his plan as partners. And because he wants us to cooperate, it is better for us to have to seek out his will so that we might come to own it for ourselves. We aren't robots, and so he doesn't treat us like that. He draws us in to see as he sees, so that we might grow into his plans. He knows our hearts, and so knows that we respond best to his gentle call as he carefully guides us to fullness of life. Yes, seeing what Peter, James and John saw on the mountain would be awesome... but even more awesome is the Father's tender love quietly working in our hearts.

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

Mary Burns
Fr Frank Smith CSSR

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Martino Carbone, Tony Carlo, John Bell,
Honora Bunworth, Emily Downes, Edward Fitzgerald,
Jack McMahon, Geoff Henson, Anna Mancinelli,
Florence Wright, Martin Irwin, Albert Cooley,
Matthew McInerney, Peter Walsh, Tim McInerney,
Andrew Walsh, Helena Ryan, James Irwin.

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, Leo Clarke

**THIS WEEKEND (5TH/6TH AUGUST)
TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD**

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

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Monday: 12noon

Tuesday: 5.30pm Feast of St Mary MacKillop

Wednesday 10am

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

Friday: No 11:30am Mass

Graveside Prayers for Mary Burns in Speed

**NEXT WEEKEND (12TH/13TH AUGUST)
19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

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

NOTICES



CUPPA AFTER MASS

Cuppa after 10.30am Mass in Swan Hill today
Sunday 6th August. All welcome.



BAPTISM WELCOME

We thank Andrew and Katrina for presenting their son Henley McDonald for Baptism today. May God bless you today, and in all the days ahead. And Henley, welcome into God's family the Church!

**MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND
"Live Your Best Married Life in Love"**

Every relationship is a journey and the grind of everyday life can easily cause you to lose touch with your spouse.

This weekend gives married couples time to nurture your relationship and some tools to keep passion alive in a gentle, supportive environment, away from pressures and distractions of daily living.

Every married couple deserves a Marriage Encounter weekend!!

The weekend is based around Catholic values and couples of all faiths are welcome.

Please check our website for more details

Date: 3-5 November 2023 in Melbourne

BOOK NOW

Information/Bookings: Phone **Mercy & James 0409 183 676** or

Email: vicbookings@wwme.org.au

Website: wwme.org.au

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



WORLD YOUTH DAY 2023: AUGUST 1-6, 2023

As World Youth Day draws to an end, please pray for all who have attended especially our own parishioners, Grace, Anna and Gerry as well as John-Paul and Laura from Linton Parish (west of Ballarat) who are also representing our Diocese.

WORLD YOUTH DAY PRAYER

God, merciful Father, in your Son, Jesus Christ, you have revealed your love and poured it out upon us in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

We entrust to you today the destiny of the world and of every man and woman.

We entrust to you in a special way young people of every language, people and nation: guide and protect them as they walk the complex paths of the world today and give them the grace to reap abundant fruits from their experience of the Lisbon World Youth Day.

Amen.

NATURAL FERTILITY AWARENESS WEEK

This year, 2023, marks the 70th anniversary of the commencement of Dr John Billings' research in finding a natural, reliable method of Fertility Awareness for couples.

During Natural Fertility Awareness Week, in August, a special, free webinar in recognition of Dr John Billings' work, entitled "*Understanding Couple Fertility: the Male Perspective*" will be held on Monday 21st August 2023 at 7.30pm AEST.

As well as highlighting the male perspective in using the Billings Ovulation Method®, couples will reflect on how it has helped them in understanding their joint fertility, as well as benefiting their relationships and family life. For more information visit billings.life and follow the link to register for the Webinar on Eventbrite, or go straight to...

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/understanding-couple-fertility-the-male-perspective-webinar-tickets-678382479257?aff=oddttdtcreator>

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

Why did Jesus invite only three disciples to witness the Transfiguration?

Why was the appearance of Moses and Elijah significant?

When have you ever had the experience of not wanting to 'go back down the mountain'?

In what way/s was Jesus the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets?

Why do we sometimes struggle to recognise transformative experiences when they occur?

Have you ever had a life-changing moment that you were conscious of as it occurred?

Do you think the disciples were transformed by witnessing this event?

REFLECTION BY FR MICHAEL TATE *TRANSFIGURED BODYSOULS*

We have to get rid of the idea that the soul is a dot of energy in some hidden core of our body. In fact, the body is in the soul. There is no part of my body which is not immersed in my soul. It is my whole person, bodysoul, which needs to be saved. As Thomas Aquinas says: 'If only my soul is saved, I am not saved.'

Today's Gospel does not portray an out-of-body experience of religious ecstasy. Jesus' body was translucent, totally radiant with Divine Light. Further, this transfiguration was not a solitary experience for Jesus. Peter, James and John witnessed it precisely because it told them what our Heavenly Father desired as their destiny beyond martyrdom, if only they would listen to Jesus.

Heavenly salvation will involve my whole person, bodysoul, being transformed. But could a person, during their earthly existence, share in the transfiguration experience of Christ?

We could pause for a moment to 'Google' or otherwise get hold of my favourite story of a saint – St Seraphim of Sarov – and pray that we may share with his disciple the bodily experience of 'immeasurable wellbeing' – 'infinite joy in our hearts'. © Fr Michael Tate; mtate@bigpond.com

In the story of the Transfiguration, Jesus instructed the disciples to keep secret what they had seen until after "the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." Until they witnessed Jesus' Passion and Death, the disciples could not possibly understand what he meant by being "raised from the dead." We, however, have the benefit of hindsight. In our hearing of the Transfiguration Gospel, we see an anticipation of Jesus' Resurrection, a foreshadowing of Christ's glory in Heaven, and the promise of our own resurrection.

FIRST READING Daniel 7:9-10. 13-14

A reading from the book of Daniel
His raiment was as white as snow.

As I watched:

Thrones were set in place
and one of great age took his seat.
His robe was white as snow,
the hair of his head as pure as wool.
His throne was a blaze of flames,
its wheels were a burning fire.
A stream of fire poured out,
issuing from his presence.
A thousand thousand waited on him,
ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
A court was held and the books were opened.
I gazed into the visions of the night.
And I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven,
one like a son of man.
He came to the one of great age
and was led into his presence.
On him was conferred sovereignty,
glory and kingship,
and men of all peoples, nations and languages became
his servants.
His sovereignty is an eternal sovereignty
which shall never pass away,
nor will his empire ever be destroyed.
The word of the Lord. *ALL: Thanks be to God.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 96:1-2. 5-6. 9. R. vv.1. 9.
(R.) The Lord is king, the most high over all the earth.

The Lord is king, let earth rejoice,
let all the coastlands be glad.
Cloud and darkness are his raiment;
his throne, justice and right.

The mountains melt like wax
before the Lord of all the earth.
The skies proclaim his justice;
all peoples see his glory.

For you indeed are the Lord
most high above all the earth
exalted far above all spirits.

(R.) The Lord is king, the most high over all the earth.

SECOND READING 2 Peter 1:16-19

A reading from the second letter of St Peter
We heard this voice from out of heaven.

It was not any cleverly invented myths that we were repeating when we brought you the knowledge of the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; we had seen his majesty for ourselves. He was honoured and glorified by God the Father, when the Sublime Glory itself spoke to him and said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour.' We heard this ourselves, spoken

from heaven, when we were with him on the holy mountain.

So we have confirmation of what was said in prophecies; and you will be right to depend on prophecy and take it as a lamp for lighting a way through the dark until the dawn comes and the morning star rises in your minds.
The Word of the Lord. *ALL: Thanks be to God.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Matthew 17:5

Alleluia, alleluia!

This is my Son, my beloved, in whom is all my delight:
listen to him. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 17:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
His face was shining like the sun.
Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone. There in their presence he was transfigured: his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him.' When they heard this, the disciples fell on their faces, overcome with fear. But Jesus came up and touched them. 'Stand up,' he said 'do not be afraid.' And when they raised their eyes they saw no one but only Jesus. As they came down from the mountain Jesus gave them this order, 'Tell no one about the vision until the Son of Man has risen from the dead.'



READINGS NEXT WEEK:

19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:9.11-13

Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33