



Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

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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



8TH OCTOBER 2023: 27TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

HOW CAN I REPAY THE LORD FOR HIS GOODNESS TO ME? THE CUP OF SALVATION I WILL RAISE

Another Vineyard! . First it was grumpy workers, then petulant sons, now it is some pretty dodgy tenants we have to deal with... but all three stories set in a vineyard. That is three Sundays in a row now! So please, if I am sounding a little repetitive cut me some slack... can you blame me if I run out of ideas?



So first, why Parables? Why can't Jesus just tell us straight? I think the effort we have to put into understanding a parable is a key part of its enduring value. It is like climbing a mountain to enjoy an awesome view. The fact you had to put the work in makes it all the more precious. And in many ways parables are just like that. They are an invitation into seeing as God sees. They help us understand what has been, they reveal to us the choice we have to make and they strengthen us with God's promise for what will be. So, there is a Vineyard. The owner has carefully prepared it for his tenants, just as God has so carefully nurtured his People Israel. When it comes time for the tenants to return the fruits of the Vineyard, they refuse. The owners servants are beaten and killed, just so many of God's prophets

had been. Finally he sends his Son, because surely they will not refuse the Son? And yet, here is Jesus, facing rejection and refusal. Soon he will even suffer death, just like the Son in the parable. Then comes a switch- Jesus pauses the story and throws the question out to his hearers, 'What will the owner do?' That switch is important, because with the question comes the choice. Even now, it is still not too late for the hearers to produce the fruit. They can still back up and welcome the Son. Of course, we know they won't. Jesus will be rejected and killed. But in the great mystery of Easter, even his suffering will become a cause of new hope. He will become the cornerstone of a new reality. The door is thrown open and new tenants are invited in. A new People is formed, the Church. We have been called to take up the work in God's Vineyard, and so we in our own ways are called to now produce fruits for the Lord.

But taking a step back again, why does Jesus keep returning to the imagery of the vineyard? It is right up there with his other favourites; sowing and harvesting wheat and caring for flocks of sheep. Sure, those three images would have been very familiar to the people he was trying to teach, but they were far from the only activities the ancient Israelites participated in. And he does from time to time draw on these other common acts, but grapes, wheat and lambs seem to have pride of place. Why? I might run out of ideas for homilies, but I really don't think that was Jesus' problem. The fact he keeps returning to grapes and wheat is no accident. He does it for a reason. And I propose the reason is this; all three images were central to the celebration of Passover (Pasch), and so all three carry forward into the Eucharist. Christ is the true Paschal Lamb who offered up his life to win our salvation. That awesome mystery is made present to us everytime we offer the Bread and Wine of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is our key to both understanding and participating in Jesus' life, teaching and mission. Consider today's parable. When we break the Bread we remember the Son beaten down for us. When we lift up the Cup in Thanksgiving we return the fruits the wicked tenants had refused to return. Week in, week out, here in the Eucharist we offer up all the efforts of our lives.

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**

Lyla Nolan

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Lucia & Ralph Amitrano, Audrey & Stephen Walsh,
Doreen Greenham, Dom Violi, Murray Grant.

Catherine Gleeson, Donald Nicholson, Maureen Irwin
Theresa Ederson, Christopher Irwin, Giuseppe Nasisi
Noelien Neild, Francesca Sobara, Sam Guastlegname
Shaun Mangiameli, Antonio Pati, John McInerney

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 (7TH/8TH OCT)
26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Friday 5pm Culgoa

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill

Sunday 8.30am Quambatook

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

Sunday 5pm Nandaly

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tuesday: 5.30pm

Wednesday: 10am

1pm Quambatook Funeral Mass for Lyla Nolan

Thursday: 5pm Confessions

5.30pm Mass, Adoration until 7pm

Friday: 11am Adoration, 11.30am Mass

**NEXT WEEKEND (14/15TH OCT)
27TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday: 6:00pm Swan Hill

Sunday: 10:30am Swan Hill

**Sunday 2.30pm Final Mass of Thanksgiving at
Lalbert**

NOTICES



FINAL MASS LALBERT

The date for St Michael's final Mass is now fast approaching! As previously advertised, we will celebrate a **final Mass of Thanksgiving in Lalbert next Sunday 15th October at 2:30pm.**

Mass will be followed by afternoon tea at the Lalbert Community Centre and a chance to catch up with some old friends and share a few yarns. Please bring a plate to share. I'm sure many families with ties to Lalbert might like to be part of this- please pass the word around. We would also appreciate any photos or memories that might be shared- the idea is to set up a display table at the centre.

If you are keen to come, but need a lift, contact the Parish Office. Likewise, if you are planning on going and are able to take on a passenger or two let us know and we can help tee up some lifts.



**2023 PUBLIC ROSARY
NEXT SATURDAY 14TH OCTOBER**

Join us for a nation-wide rosary chain at
Riverside Park 10am next Saturday 14th Oct.

All Welcome: Just BYO Chair if you will need one

For more information contact

Marilyn Foley 0468348484

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

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St Mary MacKillop College

Principal: Michelle Haeusler

53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill

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Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au

OCTOBER IS THE MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY

What is the story behind Our Lady of the Rosary?

Pope Pius V dedicated the day 7th Oct, as one of thanksgiving to Our Lady of Victory. Gregory XIII later changed the name to the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. The story of the feast focuses on the intercessory power of Mary. It shows that when Christians are in danger, they can go to Mary.

WELCOME TO ELLA AND SAM

We thank Zachary and Abby who are presenting their daughter Ella, as well as Sam and Sarah who are presenting their son Sam for Baptism. We welcome Ella and Sam into God's family the Church and pray that God will bless them today and always.

RAFFLE: ST PATRICK'S PYRAMID HILL

This weekend is the final call for the St Patrick's Pyramid Hill raffle. Last chance to get your tickets! 1st Prize is \$1500, 2nd Prize \$1000, 3rd Prize \$500. The raffle will be drawn on Sat 14th of October in Pyramid Hill, and winners will be notified via text message, call or email. Tickets are \$2 each and will be available after Masses this weekend. **If you have taken any booklets to sell please return them this weekend.**

All the ticket stubs and proceeds will then be delivered to Fr Dean ready for the raffle draw.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

Why does the landowner in the story keep sending messengers and even his son to the tenant farmers?

In what ways is Jesus like the landowner's son?

What is the message of this parable for a modern audience? In what ways do people of the world today act as though God is not the 'landowner'?

In what ways has God shown the patience and benevolence of the landowner in the story?

BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

When looking at a parable it is worth considering it at three different levels. The first level is how the parable might have been used by Jesus and heard by his original audience. Since this parable is found in Mark as well as Matthew and Luke it is likely to be a historical saying of Jesus. In all the Synoptics it is placed on the lips of Jesus at the end of his ministry as he faces the hostility of the religious leaders in Jerusalem. The parable speaks of his own experience of ministry, his sense of being missioned by God and yet his mission being rejected. Before he spoke this parable, you might imagine the hours Jesus spent in prayer contemplating the painful reality of his own mission and pondering why his words receive such a hostile reaction. The parable is likely to have been the fruit of prayer, seeking to understand his own

mission. In the parable, at first servants are sent to collect the produce for the owner. The original Jewish listeners of the parable would recognise in the servants the prophets that God sent to Israel. There are many references in the Old Testament to God sending 'my servants the prophets' for example: 'From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; yet they did not listen to me, or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.' (Jer 7: 25-26) But these prophets were scorned. The hearers of the parable would have recognised this pattern of God sending prophets to call Israel to fidelity, but the prophets being scorned and even killed. They would know this history.

Jesus expands the parable to speak of the owner sending his own son. Jesus, now in Jerusalem in the final weeks of his life, uses this story to hold up to the religious leaders a picture of his own ministry and their rejection of it. In the Sunday reading we do not hear the response, but the parable finishes with a statement that the chief priests and Pharisees recognised in the parable that Jesus was speaking about them and that they were trying to arrest him. The parable has held up a mirror in which they see and recognise themselves. This of course is the purpose of a parable.

The second level for interpreting a parable is to ask how the evangelist has used it, or why he has used it for his community. Matthew is writing at a time when Jerusalem has been destroyed by the Romans and the Gospel message is being received by the Gentiles. For Matthew's community the parable demonstrates that the vineyard has been taken from the original tenants and been given over to others. This parable not only interprets the meaning of Jesus' death at the hands of the religious leaders, but also offers an explanation to Matthew's community about the spread of the Gospel and the destruction of Jerusalem.

The third level is to ask what the parable can say to us today. In our time we are the new stewards of the vineyard. God's Kingdom has been given to us. The parable cautions us that we will be held accountable for our stewardship. Is our tenancy being productive? Are we truly living out the Gospel? Will our tenancy go the same way as Israel's when God calls us to account? Other questions we might consider are: who are the prophets in our midst calling us to greater fidelity? How are we treating these prophets? *@Mary Coloe*

FIRST READING *Isaiah 5:1-7*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The vineyard of the Lord God of hosts is the House of Israel.

Let me sing to my friend
the song of his love for his vineyard.
My friend had a vineyard on a fertile hillside.
He dug the soil, cleared it of stones,
and planted choice vines in it.
In the middle he built a tower,
he dug a press there too.
He expected it to yield grapes,
but sour grapes were all that it gave.
And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah,
I ask you to judge between my vineyard and me.
What could I have done for my vineyard
that I have not done?
I expected it to yield grapes.
Why did it yield sour grapes instead?
Very well, I will tell you
what I am going to do to my vineyard:
I will take away its hedge for it to be grazed on,
and knock down its wall for it to be trampled on.
I will lay it waste, unpruned, undug;
overgrown by the briar and the thorn.
I will command the clouds to rain no rain on it.
Yes, the vineyard of the Lord of hosts
is the House of Israel,
and the men of Judah that chosen plant.
He expected justice, but found bloodshed,
integrity, but only a cry of distress.
The Word of the Lord. ALL: Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *Ps 79:9. 12-16. 19-20. R. Is 5:7*

(R.) *The vineyard of the Lord is the House of Israel.*

You brought a vine out of Egypt;
to plant it you drove out the nations.
It stretched out its branches to the sea,
to the Great River it stretched out its shoots.

Then why have you broken down its walls?
It is plucked by all who pass by.
It is ravaged by the boar of the forest,
devoured by the beasts of the field.

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted.

And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name.
God of hosts, bring us back;
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved. **(R.)**

SECOND READING *Philippians 4:6-9*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

Do these things and the God of peace will be with you.

There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Keep doing all the things that you learnt from me and have been taught by me and have heard or seen that I do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *See John 15:15*

Alleluia, alleluia!

I call you friends, says the Lord,
because I have made known to you
everything I have learnt from my Father. Alleluia!

GOSPEL *Matthew 21:33-43*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

He leased his vineyard to other farmers.

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son," he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance." So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They answered, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him when the season arrives.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures:

It was the stone rejected by the builders
that became the keystone.

This was the Lord's doing *and it is wonderful to see?*

'I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.'

The Gospel of the Lord. ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

**READINGS NEXT WEEK:
28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

First Reading: Isaiah 25:6-10

Second Reading: Philippians 4:12-14. 19-20

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14