



# 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



## 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2023: 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT



### ***WE THE CLAY, YOU THE POTTER, WE ARE ALL THE WORK OF YOUR HAND.***

The prophet Isaiah gets a good run during Advent. That is because he speaks so powerfully of hope in God's power to save. God *will* come to his people to save and comfort them, but they will need to be patient. A little history here may help; Isaiah is speaking to us from the last days of the kings of Judah. Soon God's little nation will be effectively wiped off the face of the earth and its people driven into exile. The world as they know it is falling apart. Many have given up on God, but a few like Isaiah are striving to keep faith. When he cries out, 'Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down...!', he is not just trying to sound pious or holy, as if that is something God would like to hear him say. No, Isaiah is *desperate*. He is anxious for God's help, he wants it to come straight away... but he is not going to give up on God if he has to wait for it. Isaiah is ready to be patient- he is ready to hope even through the darkest of days. God holds his people securely in his hands. He is constantly working at their salvation, even if for the moment it may be difficult to understand exactly how. He is our loving Father, the patient potter, and we the precious clay being worked by his hands. At the beginning, clay can be stubborn and hard to mould. And so at times a potter has to work firmly, even roughly. It is a messy business, and yet also a very careful and patient task. Trying to rush things only leads to disaster. And it can be a mysterious business too- if you watch a potter, often you don't know what they are actually making until the very last minute. But the potter knows what they are working towards- the vision is clear in their mind, and they know just how they have to work the clay to get there. God is our patient potter. His firm but careful hand is working in our lives, even if when we struggle to understand how. Our hope informs us that he is bringing his good work to completion, according to his wisdom and love. Advent is the special time for us to renew that hope.

#### **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**  
 Graeme Patterson  
 Blessing Abena Ghang

**ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH**

Thomas Gleeson, Ruby Egan, William McInerney  
 Sheila Kelly, Thomas Stutley, Veronica Power  
 Jack Robinson, Catherine Conlan, John Currie  
 James Derham, Donna Gammon  
 Des McDonald, Josie Caccavello,  
 Margaret Joan Brennan, Bernie Ryan,  
 Mary Kelly, Luigi Fedele,  
 Desmond Jones, Reginald Byrne

**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 (2<sup>ND</sup>/3<sup>RD</sup> DEC)**

**1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Saturday: 6:00pm Swan Hill

Sunday: 8.30am Sea Lake

Sunday: 10:30am Swan Hill

**Sunday 5pm Tooleybuc**

**WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL**

Tuesday 5.30pm

Wednesday 10am

Thurs: **9am Mass (This week only)**

Friday: **Feast Immaculate Conception of Mary**

11am Adoration, 11.30am Mass

**Also 6pm Mass**

**NEXT WEEKEND (9<sup>TH</sup>/10<sup>TH</sup> DEC)**

**2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill

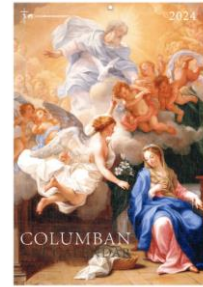
**Sunday 8.30am Balranald**

**Sunday 9:30am Lay Lead Quambatook**

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

**Sunday 4:30pm Sea Lake Graduation Mass**

**NOTICES**



**NOW AVAILABLE: COLUMBAN CALENDARS,  
 GOD'S WORD & CHRISTMAS CARDS**

Advent starts this weekend, and with it the new Liturgical Year (Year B- with the Gospel of Mark as the focus). This also means Christmas is only a few short weeks away! Looking for that something extra special? We have for sale  
**Religious Christmas Cards @ \$10 pk**  
**Columban Calendars @\$10 each**  
**Gods Word 2024 \$20 each**  
 All available from the office.



**SUNDAY CUPPA AFTER MASS**

This Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December after 10.30am Mass.

**THANK YOU!**

A massive thank you to all those who helped make last weekend so special- for all the beautiful food that was prepared to share on Sunday, for the help in setting up and the clean up afterwards, and for all the help with the Saturday night Family event too. I have said it before, but I will say it again- we are just so blessed to have such generous helpers here in our Parish. God bless you and thank you!

**ADVENT**

**A:** Awaiting the Coming of Christ

**D:** Dawn of a new beginning

**V:** Virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son

**E:** Emmanuel-a name which means "God with Us"

**N:** Nativity-the day Christ was born

**T:** Temple - the place where Jesus worshiped.

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:Principal@mackillopsh.vic.edu.au)



### REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

The Reverse Advent Calendar Drive is back. Boxes are available from the office and after Masses next weekend. You can participate by taking a box and filling it with suggested items (list available), donation of goods. Or if you don't have the time, you can also donate money which will be used to help fill the boxes with any missing items.

Unlike a regular Advent Calendar where the focus is on receiving a treat every day the Reverse Advent Calendar takes the focus off receiving and places the focus on giving to others.

A Reverse Advent Calendar begins as an empty box. Each day during December you place one item (non-perishable food, toiletries, Christmas treat food) into the box. Your filled Reverse Advent Calendar is returned to the parish office by **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> Dec** ready for it to be distributed through A Good Kitchen and St Vincent de Paul.

Some of the suggested items for the box are canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned tuna, baked beans, soups, long life milk, juice, coffee, tea and milo, spreads such as vegemite, peanut butter or jam. Rice, pasta and noodles, cereal, muesli bars, toiletries, Christmas treat food. Regular everyday items.

### HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

What does the call 'Stay awake!' mean for your life?

What appear to be the things that challenge the importance of religious belief in society today?

How do you nurture your spirituality and faith?

During this time of Advent, how can you encourage others to properly prepare for Christmas?

### RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOR ADVENT

- ❖ Help fill a box for Reverse Advent Calendar
- ❖ Compliment a friend or relative.
- ❖ Make a card for an elderly neighbour.
- ❖ Volunteer to help a neighbour with gardening or car washing.
- ❖ Make some cakes or biscuits and take to St Vinnies, Salvation Army, A Good Kitchen to distribute to the homeless.

### BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL

Today we begin the season of Advent, which marks the start of a new liturgical year for the Church. The readings for Sunday Mass are arranged on a three-year cycle. Each year features a different Gospel—Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Readings from the Gospel of John are interspersed throughout all three years. With this year's first Sunday of Advent, we begin Cycle B of the Lectionary, which focuses our attention on the Gospel of Mark. This week and next week, our readings from Mark's Gospel present two important Advent themes: the Lord's return at the end of time and John the Baptist's preparation for Jesus.

Today's Gospel is taken from the end of Mark's Gospel, the chapter that immediately precedes Mark's account of Jesus' Passion. Having been questioned repeatedly by the scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus is now questioned by his disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—who want details about his prediction of the destruction of the Temple. Jesus answers with many warnings about the difficulties that the disciples will face.

Today's passage comes at the conclusion of Jesus' warnings to his disciples. Jesus emphasizes the need for watchfulness. The Son of Man will come without warning; only the Father knows the exact hour. The disciples must not be caught unprepared when this time comes.

Scholars believe that Mark's Gospel was written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Mark's audience consisted of Christians who were living in difficult social and political times, times of conflict. They were likely beginning to face persecution as followers of Jesus. In this difficult time, it helped to recall that Jesus had foretold of such difficulties. Early Christian communities took courage from Jesus' warning to remain alert and watchful, and they found in his words a way to persevere through suffering.

Today's Gospel reminds us that Advent is about more than our preparation for the Church's celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas. Advent is also about preparing ourselves for Christ's return in glory at the end of time. Like the disciples and the faithful in Mark's community, we must also stay alert and watchful. Our faithfulness to God, through the good times as well as the difficult times, shows us to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man.

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**FIRST READING** *Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8*

*A reading from the prophet Isaiah*

*Oh, that you would tear the heavens apart and come down.*

You, Lord, yourself are our Father,

Our Redeemer is your ancient name.

Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways

and harden our hearts against fearing you?

Return, for the sake of your servants,

the tribes of your inheritance.

Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down.

– at your Presence the mountains would melt.

No ear has heard,

no eye has seen,

any god but you act like this,

for those who trust him.

You guide those who act with integrity,

and keep your ways in mind.

You were angry when we were sinners;

we had long been rebels against you.

We were all like men unclean,

all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing.

We have all withered like leaves,

and our sins blew us away like the wind.

No one invoked your name,

or roused himself to catch hold of you.

For you hid your face from us

and gave us up to the power of our sins.

And yet, Lord, you are our Father;

we the clay, you the potter,

we are all the work of your hand.

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

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** *Ps 79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19 R. v.4*

**(R.) Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.**

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,

shine forth from your cherubim throne.

O Lord, rouse up your might,

O Lord, come to our help.

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.

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,

the man you have given your strength.

And we shall never forsake you again:

give us life that we may call upon your name. **(R.)**

**SECOND READING** *1 Corinthians 1:3-9*

*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians*

*The revelation we looked for, Christ Jesus our Lord.*

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace.

I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

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

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *Psalm 84:8*

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord, show us your mercy and love,

and grant us your salvation. Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** *Mark 13:33-37*

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark*

*Stay awake! You never know when the Lord will come.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

*ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.*



**READINGS NEXT WEEK:**

**2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

First Reading: Isaiah 40:1-5. 9-11

Second Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-14

Gospel: Mark 1:1-8