



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

4TH FEBRUARY 2024:

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION

"A LIGHT TO ENLIGHTEN THE NATIONS!"



You may remember that for a couple of years now, we have been celebrating the Feast of the Presentation on the first Sunday in February. With the Bishop's permission, this acts as our new Parish Feast Day. The Feast commemorates Mary and Joseph presenting the infant Jesus at the Temple, where he is recognised by Simeon and Anna as the promised Saviour and 'Light to the Nations.' Today we bless candles for us to take away as a symbol of our taking the Light of Christ with us into our lives and our homes. At our baptism, all of us were entrusted with that light to be kept burning brightly in our lives. We are called to share that light, each in our own unique way.

When we hear those kinds of statements, we might jump to thinking, 'But I am not the type of person who stands up the front. I'm not a big talker. I am more the 'one-on-one', quiet, background kind of person. So I don't know what "sharing the light" looks like for me.'

Well, if you are feeling that, take a closer look at today's Gospel and pay special attention to the character of Anna, the prophetess. When you first read it, you can fall into assuming she starts shouting out to the crowds about Jesus, sort of like Simeon with his big public statement. And so we can mistakenly think that unless we make big public statements we aren't sharing the light. But read it again carefully. The Gospel says 'she *spoke* of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem'. I think that suggests Anna's testimony was more a background witness, quietly moving from person to person and pointing out the great hope that had awakened with the coming of Jesus. I know many great witnesses who work just like that; quietly but powerfully sharing their testimony of the hope we find in our faith. Each of us is called to share the light in our own special way, according to our nature and our strengths.

SCHOOL STAFF COMMISSIONING

Aligned with the Feast of Presentation, this Sunday 4th February we also welcome many of the staff from MacKillop College and St Mary's Swan Hill for a special commissioning as we begin another school year. This is in recognition of the important role they have in sharing the Light of Christ, especially for the young people of our school communities. We thank all our staff, and ask God's blessing for them this year.

The staff of St Mary's Sea Lake will also have their own commissioning during their beginning of year Mass in a couple of weeks' time.

Parish Contact Details:

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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

Audrey Walsh, Fred DeLeux, Mary Shirley
Marjory Bormann, Domenic Costa, Marianne Costa
Pasquale Milazzo, John Francis Maher, Maria Peluso
Gavin Currie, Robert Burns, Keiran Brennan
Patrick Shepherd, Francesco & Concetta Marotta
Kevin Quinlan, Patrick Casey, James King
Beatrice Curran, Geoff Stephenson,
Darren Mc Kenzie

SICK LIST

Pat Croft, 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 FEB)
CELEBRATED AS FEAST OF PRESENTATION**

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Sea Lake
Sunday 10.30am Swan Hill

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tuesday 5.30pm
Wednesday: 10am
Thurs: Confessions 5pm, Mass 5.30pm, Adoration
Friday: 11.30am Mass

**NEXT WEEKEND (10TH/11TH FEB)
6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 6:00pm Swan Hill (In Vietnamese)
Sunday 8.30am Quambatook
Sunday 10.30am Swan Hill
Sunday 5pm Nandaly

READINGS NEXT WEEK:

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2. 44-46
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1
Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

NOTICES



THIS SUNDAY: CUPPA AFTER THE 10.30AM MASS
In the Parish Function Centre. All Welcome!

**NEXT WEEK: 6PM MASS SAT 10TH FEB
LUNAR NEW YEAR (TÊT)**

This year, Lunar New Year falls next Saturday 10th February. Our Vietnamese community have come together to celebrate with Mass for a few years now.

This year, as it falls on a Saturday, we thought it would be a special opportunity to incorporate this celebration into the 6pm Parish Mass. Fr Paul Lu will travel from Finley to celebrate the Mass in Vietnamese. All are welcome.

This will be a great way for us all to share this celebration with our Vietnamese community, and indeed all those who celebrate the Lunar New Year. The Mass will be in Vietnamese, but even if you may not understand all the words, it will still be easy to follow the Mass. We can all find a home in its familiar movements and rituals, and the readings will be in English on our bulletins.



**CHÚC MỪNG NĂM MỚI: XUÂN GIÁP THÌN 2024
Thông tin**

V/v. Thánh lễ mừng Xuân Giáp Thìn 2024

Được sự chuẩn thuận của cha sở James, cha Phaolo Lữ Văn Phú sẽ đến cử hành Thánh lễ tạ ơn và cầu bình an cho năm mới.

Thời gian: **18:00 thứ Bảy ngày 10 tháng 02 năm 2024**
(chiều mừng Một Tết)

Địa điểm: **nhà thờ St Mary's**

Trong Thánh lễ, Cộng đoàn sẽ nhận Lộc thánh (Lời Chúa).

Sau Thánh lễ, cộng đoàn sẽ cùng tham dự buổi họp mặt Tân niên tại Hội trường giáo xứ.

Rất mong Cộng đoàn sắp xếp thời gian để tham dự Thánh lễ."

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

ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES 14TH FEBRUARY

Lent is fast approaching! To mark the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, each our schools will be celebrating special liturgies. Mass will also be celebrated in Swan Hill Church at 10am and then again at 6pm for any who would like to join. Our other Church communities can then distribute the ashes on the first Sunday of Lent.

LENTEN BOOKS

Pieta, an exquisite book containing short daily reflections (from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday) perfect for individual devotional reading in addition to the longer-form Sunday Scripture readings, reflections, prayers, questions and visio divina that traditionally form part of Lenten group gatherings. Lenten Books will be available from the Parish office next week. Cost \$10

ROSTERS FOR SUNDAY MINISTRIES SWAN HILL

have been emailed out and are also available at the back of the church. We are looking for people to assist in the Ministries of reading, taking up the gifts at the offertory and Eucharistic Ministers as some people have moved on and some of our older members would like to step down. If you know of someone, please contact the office and we will follow it up.

OLD TESTAMENT RECOGNISES THE NEW

The feast of the Presentation of Jesus thus concludes the initial introduction to Jesus. You can see that after the two annunciations (John and Jesus), and the two births (John and Jesus) Luke constructs a scene which I have called a recognition by the Old Testament of the New. In the first of these scenes, old Elizabeth, once thought to be barren, recognises in Mary the mother of the child that Israel has been waiting for. Thus, Elizabeth speaks for ancient Israel and all her longings. In the Feast of the Presentation something similar happens.

Simeon is described as upright, devout, looking forward to the promised Messiah of Israel, and it is suggested that he is old. Simeon represents ancient faithful Israel. Jesus is brought to the Temple as a faithful child of Israel to fulfil the Law of Moses that every first-born male shall be presented to the Lord forty days after birth. When Simeon sees the child, he speaks a prayer on behalf of Israel, the servant of God. 'Now Lord, you may let your servant (Israel) go in peace, as you have promised.'

With the coming of Jesus, God is offering a new way,

and the past way of Israel's Law is now being fulfilled. Israel's mission is over, and she can depart in peace. This child is to be a light for the Gentiles, and to bring glory to Israel.

In these few verses Luke sums up the ministry of Jesus and who he is to be for both Jew and Gentile. Here there is no conflict, no degradation of the past, rather a peace filled, prophetic recognition that one's role is now completed. For Luke, this is his understanding of Israel's role in the long history of salvation. Israel was God's servant, through whom God's blessings would be made known to the Gentiles.

Anna too, like Simeon is described emphasising her age, her fidelity and her prophetic insight. She too represents Zion as she speaks of the child who will bring deliverance to Jerusalem.

In this scene we observe a concern of Luke, to show the continuity between God's promises to Israel, and what God is now doing in Jesus. Even though scholars consider that Luke's gospel is written for a predominantly Gentile community, it is still essential to show that God is faithful, and God keeps promises. So, both Simeon and Anna, representative of Israel, speak of the blessings now being brought to Israel and beyond through this child, Jesus.

At the end of this episode Luke states that the child grew to maturity and was filled with wisdom. When speaking in parishes I sometimes come across people who are so emphatic on the divinity of Jesus, that they completely overlook his humanity. Jesus grew, as any child grows, into knowledge and wisdom. For him this meant the knowledge of Judaism, and the understanding of the world of his time. As a human, Jesus did not know everything. He too needed to be taught and the next scene in Luke shows Jesus at later age being taught by the teachers of Israel when he goes up to the Temple in Jerusalem.

The letter to the Hebrews expresses this belief in Jesus' humanity, emphasising his descent from Abraham and his likeness to others of the same flesh and blood. The essential humanity of Jesus is then reflected on theologically by this author as a necessary condition if Jesus was to be our mediator, or High Priest before God. He too had to know the vulnerability of being human and the power of temptation.

In presenting Jesus as a child, Joseph and Mary offer to God their most precious gift. Their offering will be continued in Jesus' adult life as he continues to offer himself to God by seeking always to do as God wants.

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FIRST READING Malachi 3:1-4

A reading from the prophet Malachi

The Lord whom you seek will come to his temple.

The Lord God says this: Look, I am going to send my messenger to prepare a way before me. And the Lord you are seeking will suddenly enter his temple; and the angel of the covenant whom you are longing for, yes, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he is like the refiner's fire and the fuller's alkali. He will take his seat as refiner and purifier; he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and then they will make the offering to the Lord as it should be made. The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be welcomed by the Lord as in former days, as in the years of old.

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 23:7-10. R. v.10

(R.) Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

O gates, lift up your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is the king of glory?
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant,
the Lord, the valiant in war.

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is he, the king of glory?
He, the Lord of armies,
he is the king of glory. **(R.)**

SECOND READING Hebrews 2:14-18

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

He had to be made like us in all things.

Since all the children share the same blood and flesh, Jesus too shared equally in it, so that by his death he could take away all the power of the devil, who had power over death, and set free all those who had been held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For it was not the angels that he took to himself; he took to himself descent from Abraham. It was essential that he should in this way become completely like his brothers so that he could be a compassionate and trustworthy high priest of God's religion, able to atone for human sins. That is, because he has himself been through temptation he is able to help others who are tempted.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Luke 2:32

Alleluia, alleluia!

This is the light of revelation to the nations,
and the glory of your people Israel.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

My eyes have seen your saving power.

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God, and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

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