



Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au 03 50324144

Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Incorporating the Communities of St Mary's Sea Lake, Sacred Heart Culgoa, St Joseph's Nandaly, S's Peter & Paul Quambatook & St Mary's Swan Hill as well as the Lake Boga Families & Faith Group



3RD NOVEMBER 2024: 31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

'WHICH IS THE FIRST OF ALL THE COMMANDMENTS?'

Love is the first of all the commandments. We have heard that so many times, perhaps we can begin to almost take it for granted, as if the idea is so obvious that surely everyone understands and agrees. We might find ourselves thinking, "Tell us something we don't know!". But is it so obvious? Does everyone understand?

Does everyone agree? Well, let's just look at the world around us. It doesn't seem so obvious all of the sudden. And if we are honest, we could also pause to examine our own hearts. We could always do with a refocus and re-anchoring in the primacy of love.

Of course, love in its fullness is so much more than the simplistic idea it is so often reduced to. It involves both giving as well as receiving, self-forgetfulness as well as desire, sacrifice as well as delight, faithfulness as well as freedom, truth as well as compassion, justice as well as mercy... I'm sure you could add many more facets of your own. As an idea we contemplate it is inexhaustible. As a reality we live... well... often it is just plain hard work, the hardest thing we will ever attempt in this life! And yet, at the same time, it is our very reason for living. Life would make no sense without it.

When we speak of the commandment to love, we must always remember that it is not just laid down as a path or way to follow; a 'do this and everything will be good'. Yes, love certainly is our sure path, but it is also something much, much more. It is our foundation, our beginning- we were created in love. And Love is also our end. Our fulfilment. Once we have love in its fullness, we have everything.

We were made for love. We were made for communion. We will be satisfied with nothing less. When Christ points us to the way of love, he is not imposing a command from above or laying down a burden external to ourselves. No. Rather he is helping us to see the truth of who we are in the Father's plan; beloved children born of love and made for love. We will never be fulfilled apart from it.

Just to finish, I think this may also help us understand the fuller significance of the great Sacrament of Love; the Eucharist. The Eucharist not only helps us along the way, strengthening us so that we may follow the path of love. It is also in itself a taste, a preview or teaser of the final fulfilment of God's awesome plan for love to conquer all. When we are joined in Holy Communion, we are also beginning to enjoy love as an end in itself.

We are given a taste of the final completion of things, when Love will be all in all. In our brokenness, that taste may only seem a fleeting thing, at times barely discernable... but it is a lived reality nonetheless. Look around us. When it comes down to it, there is only one reason we are all here; and that is love.

Parish Contact Details:

Po Box 71 Swan Hill, Vic 3585

Phone: 03 5032 4144

northeastmallee@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Website: northeastmallee.org.au

Office Hrs: Tues, Wed and Fri 10:30 -1.30

Parish Priest

Fr James Kerr

Parish Office:

Glenda Klabbers & Mary Kennedy

Child Protection Officers:

Tony and Joelle Whiting

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+**

John Ryan

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Keith Greenham, Bill Shanahan, Hugh Kelly
Jane Scanlon, Roma Giddings, Rodney Walsh
Claire Dunstan, Patricia O'Loughlin, Jack McGrath
James McNamara, Lucille Nolan, Keith Rowe
Kelvin Upton, William O'Brien, Les Johnston
Ashley Maher, Domenico DeMaria, Michele Costa
Donny Demaria, Jean McInerney, Zoe Teague
James Gleeson, Pasquale Carpinteri

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, Peter Amezdroz
Ken Duryea, Helen Duryea

**THIS WEEKEND 2ND/3RD NOVEMBER
31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

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

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL

Tuesday: 10am
Wednesday: 10am
Thurs: 5pm Confession, 5.30pm Mass & Adoration
Friday: 11:30am

**NEXT WEEKEND 9TH/10TH NOVEMBER
31ST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

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

NOTICES



CUPPA AFTER 10.30AM MASS TODAY

CONGRATULATIONS!

to Yvonne Richardson, 50-year member of St Mary's
Swan Hill St. Vincent de Paul Society for being
elevated to Emeritus Vincentian by SVDP State
Council on 12 October 2024.



BAPTISM WELCOME

This Sunday we welcome Noa Emmanuele who is
being presented for Baptism by her parents
Emmanuele and Leorina. Congratulations and
welcome to God's family!

Halloween Family Event

Congratulations to all who helped make this event
such a fun filled occasion.

Thank you to all who helped prepare and cater for the
event, to all who gave us encouragement and to all
who came along to be part of it and shared in the joy!
We look forward to repeating it again next year.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

How do you think Jesus would have felt when he first
saw the scribe approach him?

Of all the commandments, why does Jesus name
these two as first and second?

What does it mean to love your neighbour as
yourself?

How might we better define 'neighbour'?

Who is a 'neighbour' you need to show more love
towards?

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



A VERY SPECIAL VISIT!

FROM THE MISSIONARIES OF GOD'S LOVE!

Next weekend we are very blessed to welcome Sisters Melanie, Fiona and Isobel from the Missionaries of God's love for a special visit to our Parish. They are here firstly to help lead the Confirmation retreat next Monday, but while here they will also offer a number of other special opportunities for growth and renewal for the wider Parish. As well as speaking at our weekend Masses in Quambatook and Swan Hill, they will also host three special events.



SATURDAY 9TH AM

'HEART TO HEART': SESSION ON PRAYER

On **Sat 9th at 10:30am** the Sisters will run a session on prayer in the Swan Hill Church.

Would you like to learn more about prayer? Sr Mel will lead you in a meditation based on imaginative prayer with the Scriptures, before opening up some other methods of prayer. An opportunity for fellowship to follow. All welcome.



SATURDAY 9TH PM

'FAITH THAT CONNECTS': YOUNG ADULTS

In a world where it seems hard to be a young Catholic or Christian, can my faith really fulfil me?

Come and explore the whys and hows with the MGL Sisters after **6pm Mass on Saturday 9th**.

Join the Sisters for an informal gathering centred around some food, fun & sharing as a special opportunity to connect you in your faith.



TUESDAY 12TH PM

'ADORE': AN HOUR OF WORSHIP & PRAYER

On **Tuesday 12th**, starting with Mass at **5:30pm**, the Sisters will lead us in an hour of Adoration, Reflection and Worship with the opportunity for Individual Prayer Ministry. All are welcome to attend, even if you can't make it on time for Mass. It should be a beautiful conclusion to the Parish Mission.

BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

As we continue to read from Mark's Gospel, our Lectionary skips a chapter that helps set the context for today's reading. If we were to read the sections skipped (chapter 11 and part of chapter 12), we would hear about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, his cleansing of the Temple, and the questioning of Jesus' authority by the chief priests, scribes, and elders. The context, therefore, for this Gospel is Jesus' growing exposure before the Jewish authorities. Jesus is being questioned and tested by the Jewish authorities, yet the scribe who addresses Jesus in today's Gospel seems to be an admirer; he is not testing Jesus.

The question posed in today's Gospel requires Jesus to interpret the Law of Moses. The Mosaic Law consists of the Ten Commandments and many additional commandments, numbering into the hundreds. For a devout Jew, adherence to the Mosaic Law is an expression of faithfulness to God's covenant with Israel. The ranking of these commandments was regularly debated among the teachers of the Law.

Jesus was not the only Jewish religious teacher to connect these two commandments, love of God and love of neighbour. Both of these commandments were central elements of the religious tradition that Jesus learned from his Jewish community. Indeed, these commandments continue to be central aspects of contemporary Jewish religious understanding. Jesus' response to his questioners proposed an integral connection between these two aspects of the Jewish Law. Love of God finds its expression in our love for our neighbour. Many believe, however, that this connection was heard in a new and fresh way when spoken by Jesus.

The scribe who questions Jesus in today's Gospel engages in a positive dialogue with Jesus. He agrees with Jesus' teaching that the commandments to love God and love neighbour stand above the commandment to offer worship and sacrifice in the Temple. With this dialogue, Jesus appears to close the debate with the Jewish authorities. Mark reports that no one dared to question Jesus further.

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FIRST READING Deuteronomy 6:2-6

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy

Hear Israel, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

Moses said to the people: 'If you fear the Lord your God all the days of your life and if you keep all his laws and commandments which I lay on you, you will have a long life, you and your son and your grandson. Listen then, Israel, keep and observe what will make you prosper and give you great increase, as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you, giving you a land where milk and honey flow.

'Listen, Israel: The Lord our God is the one Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength. Let these words I urge on you today be written on your heart.'

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 17:2-4. 47. 51. R.v.2

(R.) I love you Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.

My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.

The Lord is worthy of all praise:
when I call I am saved from my foes.

Long life to the Lord, my rock!

Praised be to the God that saves me.

He has given great victories to his king
and shown love for his anointed. **(R.)**

SECOND READING Hebrews 7:23-28

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

This one, because he remains for ever, has an eternal priesthood.

There used to be a great number of priests under the former covenant, because death put an end to each one of them; but this one, Christ, because he remains for ever, can never lose his priesthood. It follows, then, that his power to save is utterly certain, since he is living for ever to intercede for all who come to God through him.

To suit us, the ideal high priest would have to be holy, innocent and uncontaminated, beyond the influence of sinners, and raised up above the heavens; one who would not need to offer sacrifices every day, as the other high priests do for their own sins and then for those of the people, because he has done this once and for all by offering himself. The Law appoints high priests who are men subject to weakness; but the promise on oath, which

came after the Law, appointed the Son who is made perfect for ever.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION John 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 12:28-34

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

This is the first commandment, and the second is similar to it.

One of the scribes came up to Jesus and put a question to him, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.' The scribe said to him, 'Well spoken, Master; what you have said is true: that he is one and there is no other. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself, this is far more important than any holocaust or sacrifice.' Jesus, seeing how wisely he had spoken, said, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' And after that no one dared to question him any more.

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



READINGS NEXT WEEK:

30th Sunday in Ordinary time

First Reading: 1 Kings 17:10-16

Second Reading: Hebrews 9:24-28

Gospel: Mark 12:38-44