



# 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 Joseph's Nandaly, S's Peter & Paul Quambatook & St Mary's Swan Hill as well as the Lake Boga Families & Faith Group*



## 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2024:



### THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT: GAUDETE SUNDAY!

***"A FEELING OF EXPECTANCY HAD GROWN AMONG THE PEOPLE..."***

Christmas is fast approaching! The Lord is near!

It's like the feeling when your long awaited visitor pulls into your driveway... you can hear the tyres crunching the gravel... the car stops... the doors open... it is time to get excited!

And here is the amazing thing; the joy and expectancy in our hearts is nothing compared to the joy our Lord has for us! We hear in Isaiah, *"He will exult with joy over you, he will renew you by his love; he will dance with shouts of joy for you!"* Whatever excitement or yearning we may feel for our great God, his joy over us is immense and inexhaustible; far, far beyond our wildest expectations. If he didn't reveal how great his love is for us, we wouldn't dare to dream it... and yet he has proved it and so we dare to believe!

### SPREAD THE WORD! ***CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES***

Please take some of the little flyers with the Christmas Mass times to share with your family, friends, neighbours & colleagues, and let them know which time you plan to attend. Have hope; you never know how much of an impact a personal invitation can make!

**Christmas Eve (Tues 24<sup>th</sup>):** 4:30pm Sea Lake, 7pm Swan Hill (*With Nativity Play*), 9:30pm Swan Hill

**Christmas Day (Wed 25<sup>th</sup>):** Quambatook 8:30am, Swan Hill 10:30am

#### **Parish Contact Details:**

Po Box 71 Swan Hill, Vic 3585

Phone: 03 5032 4144

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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+**

**ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH**

River Purtill, Gordon Moar, Abby & Bronte Foott  
Glenys Power, Christine Britton, Connie Taverna  
Monica Brady, Jack Barry, Graham Gaylard  
Maggie Stacey, Brian Hogan, Charlie Taverna  
Ada Noble

**SICK LIST**

Pat Croft, Yvonne Richardson, Paul Donohue,  
Jayden Williams, Margaret Foott,  
Jarrod Crimmins, Michael Bourke, Jack Donohue,  
Jude Lewis, Bridget Phyland,  
Carmel Ryan, Peter Amezdroz  
Ken Duryea, Helen Duryea

**THIS WEEKEND 14<sup>TH</sup>/15<sup>TH</sup> DEC**

**3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Sat 6pm Swan Hill  
Sunday 8.30am Culgoa  
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

**WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL**

**Monday: 6pm**

Tuesday: **11am SSMH End of Year Mass**

**5:30pm Mass**

Wednesday: 10am

Thurs: 5pm Confessions, 5.30pm Mass, Adoration

Friday 11.30am Mass, **Confessions 5-6pm**

**NEXT WEEKEND 21<sup>ST</sup>/22<sup>ND</sup> DEC**

**4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

Sat 6pm Swan Hill

**No Mass Quambatook**

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

**Confessions 3pm**

**NOTICES**



**2025 COLUMBAN CALENDARS, CHRISTMAS CARDS**

Are now available. \$10 for the Columban Calendars.  
Christmas Cards are also available \$10 for a pack



**REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR**

Thank you for the wonderful response so far with boxes and donations of goods that have been returned so far. If you haven't yet returned your box it can be returned this week on Tuesday or Friday to the Parish office, between 10.30am and 2pm. Some last-minute suggestions to add to your box: 2-minute noodles; soap/deodorant; crackers/biscuits; Christmas treat eg Christmas cake, shortbread. Nothing fancy, just basic everyday items.



**CHRISTMAS CHOIR PRACTICE**

There will be a combined choir led by Brenda Grace for the 9:30pm Christmas Eve Mass.

All welcome to join.

To prepare, there will be a **practice** for Christmas Carols this **Thursday 19th at 7pm** in the Church.

On Christmas Eve itself, Carols will begin at 8.50pm, followed by Mass at 9.30pm.

**Our Parish Schools**

**St Mary's Primary School Sea Lake**

Principal: Kate Nunn  
47 Hannon Street, Sea Lake  
Ph: 03 5070 1272

**St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill**

Principal: Kate Quin  
2 Murlong St Swan Hill  
Ph. 03 5033 2541

**St Mary MacKillop College**

Principal: Michelle Haeusler  
53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill  
Ph: 5032 9771

[principal@smswanhill.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smswanhill.catholic.edu.au)



## BLUE CHRISTMAS: FRIDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> DEC

Do you find Christmas difficult?

The ministry teams of the Anglican and Uniting Churches of Swan Hill have organised a special service of remembrance and hope for those who find Christmas a hard time, whether due to grief, isolation or estrangement. A simple service of prayer, reflection and song, to bring hope and encouragement, it will be held on Friday Dec 20th at 7:30pm in the Swan Hill Anglican Church, Splatt St. A 'cuppa' will be available afterwards for anyone who would like to stay a while.



*During Advent let us think of others through...*

### RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

- Let someone go ahead of you at the checkout.
- Do some gardening for a friend or neighbour
- Smile and say Merry Christmas to random people in the street.
- Call a friend you haven't spoken to lately just to say hello.
- Leave a happy note on a random windscreen in the car park.
- Visit or ring someone who is alone

### HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

What experience has prompted the people to ask John, 'What must we do?'

How would you summarise John's response to their question?

Why might people have thought that John the Baptist was the Messiah that they were awaiting?

How can you respond to John's call for generosity and justice?

## BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

This Sunday's Gospel continues last week's focus on John the Baptist and his role in preparing the way for Christ. Recall that last week's reading described John's appearance in the desert and established his connection with the prophetic tradition of Israel. If we were to read Luke's Gospel continuously, we would learn about John the Baptist challenging the crowds who came to him and calling upon them to show evidence of their repentance. John tells his listeners that they cannot rely on their lineage as Israelites because children of Abraham can be raised up from stones. Repentance, rather, must be observable in one's actions. Here, Luke is continuing to set up two important themes of his Gospel message: the Christian faith is expressed in one's actions, and the call to salvation is extended to everyone, Jews and Gentiles.

In today's Gospel reading, the crowds ask John the Baptist for specifics. What evidence of repentance is required? John replies by naming concrete actions: crowds should share their food and cloaks; tax collectors should be just; soldiers should act fairly. The concern for justice is a hallmark of Luke's Gospel.

When the crowd begins to wonder if John the Baptist might be the Messiah, John interprets his baptism and makes it clear that his ministry is in preparation for the Messiah. John the Baptist knows his place and role in God's plan of salvation. By encouraging the crowd to act similarly in accordance with their stations in life, John's teaching suggests that each person has a role to play in God's salvation. It is the great mystery of our salvation that God permits and even asks for human cooperation in his divine plans.

The third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete is a Latin word that means "rejoice." This name is taken from the entrance antiphon for Sunday's Mass, which is also echoed in today's second reading from the Paul's letter to the Philippians. Some people mark this Sunday by lighting a pink candle instead of a purple one on their Advent wreath. It is a reminder that the Advent season is a season of joy because our salvation is already at hand.

**FIRST READING** Zephaniah 3:14-18

*A reading from the prophet Zephaniah  
With gladness the Lord will rejoice over you.*

Shout for joy, daughter of Zion,  
Israel, shout aloud!  
Rejoice, exult with all your heart,  
daughter of Jerusalem!  
The Lord has repealed your sentence;  
he has driven your enemies away.  
The Lord, the king of Israel, is in your midst;  
you have no more evil to fear.  
When that day comes, word will come to Jerusalem:  
Zion, have no fear,  
do not let your hands fall limp.  
The Lord your God is in your midst,  
a victorious warrior.  
He will exult with joy over you,  
he will renew you by his love;  
he will dance with shouts of joy for you  
as on a day of festival.  
*The Word of the Lord. ALL: Thanks be to God.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Is 12:2-6 R. v.6

**(R.) Cry out with joy and gladness: for among you is the great and Holy One of Israel.**

Truly, God is my salvation,  
I trust, I shall not fear.  
For the Lord is my strength, my song,  
he became my saviour.  
With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation.  
Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!  
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!  
Declare the greatness of his name.  
Sing a psalm to the Lord  
for he has done glorious deeds,  
make them known to all the earth!  
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. **(R.)**

**SECOND READING** Philippians 4:4-7

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians  
The Lord is near.*

I want you to be happy, always happy in the Lord; I repeat, what I want is your happiness. Let your tolerance be evident to everyone: the Lord is very near. 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.  
*The Word of the Lord. ALL: Thanks be to God.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Isaiah 61:1 (Lk 4:18)

Alleluia, alleluia!  
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** Luke 3:10-18

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke  
What, then, must we do?*

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!' A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

**ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**



**READINGS NEXT WEEK:**

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

First Reading: Micah 5:1-4

Second Reading: Hebrews 10:5-10

Gospel: Luke 1:39-45