

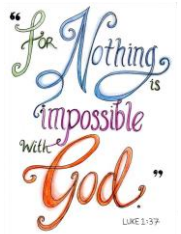


# Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

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*



## 16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025: 6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

### *HAPPY ARE YOU..*

Everyone wants to be happy. Whether we expect to be happy or not, I think it is fair to say we all desire happiness. There is no argument there. But there is when it comes to the questions of; what does true happiness look like? How can we find it? And when can we expect to experience it?

God desires our flourishing. He sends His Son to tell us, "I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full." Or more simply; he wants us to be happy, truly happy, filled up to the brim. We should trust therefore that he wants what is best for us. It is important to remember this as we listen to Jesus' words today, because what he teaches about happiness is in stark contrast to what the world might say. And if we are honest, his words challenge us directly too. I doubt any of us, if we had to tell someone what happiness looks like, would immediately jump to, "Oh, that's easy! Being happy is being poor & hungry, weeping and hated on account of the Son of Man. Simples." And yet, that is what we hear today. Oh, and wait, the things like having money in the bank, food in the belly, laughter in our hearts and a great reputation... the very things we would probably say are happiness... they are all things to woe! How can we make sense of it all?

First, I think it is important to note that none of what Jesus describes in the Beatitudes are straight commands for actions we should take. There is no 'Do this to be happy.' Rather, he simply names the circumstances in which we might find ourselves, the things we might suffer in this life. It is all in the passive tense. Sure, we might give away all we have and trust everything to God's care, we might bravely face ridicule for the sake of his name... but you don't really 'do' poverty or chase persecution, rather they are sufferings or deprivations you may experience as part of following Jesus. Why is that important? I think it says something about the nature of happiness. It is not something you can chase or win directly. It comes as a gift. Our task is to "seek first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Jesus teaches us all about how to seek the Kingdom. Set our hearts on that, and entrust our happiness to him. The giver of every good gift will surely not disappoint. He knows our need and will bless us accordingly.

Secondly, if we think of the sufferings Jesus describes, we can see that he experiences them all for himself. He is not aloof from our trials and hurts. He has faced them all for our sake. And so when we face them, we know we are not alone. He is alongside of us, and that surely counts as true blessedness.

Finally, we should remember that God is eternal, and that he desires that we share everlasting life with him. What the world views as happiness is limited to this life. You can't take riches and worldly comforts with you when you go. Even popularity only lasts as long as the memory of those around you. But the happiness God can give has no limit and no expiry date. Whatever is left unrewarded in this life, we can trust will be rewarded in the next. He has the whole of eternity to shower us with his blessing. Set our hearts on his ways, and he will take care of the rest.

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

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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**

Annunziata Russo, Lorna Phyland, John Bernard Bell  
Patrick McInerney, Henry Simpson, Maude Deagan  
Kath Ritchie, Ellen Wright, James Ryan,  
Lorraine Rogers, Barry Power, Honorah Quirk  
Adele, Concetta & Pasquale Colombo,  
Johanna (Josie) King, Peter Coady, Jaron Bennett,  
Mary Doran, Thomas Irwin

**SICK LIST**

Maureen Allen, 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 15<sup>TH</sup>/16<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025  
5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Sat 6pm Swan Hill

Sunday: 8.30am Culgoa

Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

**Sunday 4.30pm Sea Lake (Beginning of Year Mass)**

**WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL**

Tuesday: 5.30pm

Wednesday: 10am

Thursday: Confessions 5pm

5.30pm Mass, Adoration

Fri: 11.30am Mass

**NEXT WEEKEND 22<sup>ND</sup>/23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY  
6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 6pm

Sunday 8.30am Quambatook

Sunday 10.30am Swan Hill

**NOTICES**



**REFLECTING ON YOUR MARRIAGE VOW  
SUNDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MARCH**

Every Marriage deserves our encouragement and support. Every Marriage deserves the opportunity to grow and flourish. That is why we are so pleased to welcome the Marriage Encounter team to offer a fun and informative presentation called "VOW" after 10:30am Mass on Sunday 2nd March in the Parish Function centre (**beginning 11:30am**).

The Sacred Vows that couples exchange at their wedding are packed full of meaning. Every couple deserves the opportunity to reflect on the Vows they have made to each other so that they may deepen their relationship and love for each other as husband and wife.

This fun and informative presentations will help couples explore the vows they have made to each other in Marriage (or perhaps even the ones some of you are planning to make in the future), and also those we made to God. We would also like to share with the couples how the Church is being a part of our relationships.

The presentation will last for about an hour and will be followed by a light luncheon. We warmly invite couples to take up this opportunity. If you have little children and have no-one to mind them, that is okay.

They are welcome to come along with you- we will have a play space set up in the corner. And if you are married but your spouses cannot make it due to shift work or other circumstances, don't let that stop you.

Please still come along and learn what Marriage Encounter is all about.

For further questions and to register your interest please see Jordan and Ah Kwi Lan or contact the Parish Office. We will have a sign-up sheet after Masses this weekend and next (please note any dietary requirements).

**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)

**LENT IS ONLY 3 WEEKS AWAY  
LAST CHANCE TO ORDER YOUR BOOK**

We will be getting *Metanoia*—Lenten Program 2025! With Fr John Corrigan whose beautiful and challenging Gospel reflections illuminate Christ's teachings and Mother Hilda Scott OSB, spiritual director, who invites us into a deeper encounter with God's love. Please contact the parish office – 50324144 or call in on a Tuesday or Friday.

**FLOURISH WITH MARY'S HEART**

Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of St Mary MacKillop's beatification with a free commemorative prayer book, "Flourish with Mary's Heart", written by the Sisters of St Joseph that inspires us all to 'do the extraordinary' as Mary so often did. The prayers offer an opportunity to understand the values that are key to the heart of Mary – a woman of compassion & courage. Copies available through the Parish Office.

**HAVE YOU THOUGHT?**

Why was it significant that both Jews and Gentiles were present to hear this sermon?

What is the significance of Jesus 'fixing his eyes on his disciples' before beginning his sermon?

Why does Jesus regard the poor and rejected as being favoured by God?

Does Jesus suggest that having wealth or success is automatically negative?

What aspect of your own life does this gospel challenge?

**READINGS NEXT WEEK:**

**7TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**

First Reading: 1 Samuel 26:2. 7-9. 12-13. 22-23

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

Gospel: John 13:34

**BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING**

Last Sunday we heard Jesus' call Peter to be his disciple. Jesus then travels with Peter and the other disciples. Luke reports acts of healing (a person with leprosy and a paralytic man) and the call of Levi, the tax collector. Jesus also replies to questions from the Pharisees regarding fasting and the observance of the Sabbath. In the verses immediately before today's gospel reading, Jesus is reported to have chosen 12 men from among his disciples to be apostles. Apostle is a Greek word that means "one who is sent."

Today's gospel reading is the beginning of what is often called the Sermon on the Plain. We find a

parallel to this passage in Matthew 5:1-7,11 that is often called the Sermon on the Mount. As these titles suggest, there are differences and similarities between these gospel readings.

When spoken from the mountaintop in Matthew's Gospel, we can't miss the impression that Jesus is speaking with the authority and voice of God. The mountaintop is a symbol of closeness to God. Those who ascend the mountain see God and speak for God; recall the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments. As Luke introduces the location of Jesus' teaching, Jesus teaches on level ground, alongside the disciples and the crowd. Luke presents Jesus' authority in a different light. He is God among us. Another distinction found in Luke's version is the audience. Luke's Sermon on the Plain is addressed to Jesus' disciples, although in the presence of the crowd; Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is addressed to the crowd. In keeping with this style, the Beatitudes in Luke's Gospel sound more personal than those in Matthew's Gospel—Luke uses the article "you" whereas Matthew uses "they" or "those." There is also a difference in number: Matthew describes eight beatitudes; Luke presents just four, each of which has a parallel warning.

The form of the Beatitudes found in Luke's and Matthew's Gospel is not unique to Jesus. Beatitudes are found in the Old Testament, such as in the Psalms and in Wisdom literature. They are a way to teach about who will find favour with God. The word blessed in this context might be translated as "happy," "fortunate," or "favoured."

As we listen to this Gospel, the Beatitudes jar our sensibilities. Those who are poor, hungry, weeping, or persecuted are called blessed. This is, indeed, a Gospel of reversals. Those often thought to have been forgotten by God are called blessed. In the list of "woes," those whom we might ordinarily describe as blessed by God are warned about their peril. Riches, possessions, laughter, reputation . . . these are not things that we can depend upon as sources of eternal happiness. They not only fail to deliver on their promise; our misplaced trust in them will lead to our demise. The ultimate peril is in misidentifying the source of our eternal happiness.

The Beatitudes are often described as a framework for Christian living. Our vocation as Christians is not to be first in this world, but rather to be first in the eyes of God. We are challenged to examine our present situation in the context of our ultimate horizon, the Kingdom of God. © *Loyola Press*

**FIRST READING** Jeremiah 17:5-8

*A reading from the prophet Jeremiah*

*A curse on those who trust in humanity; a blessing on those who trust in the Lord.*

The Lord says this:

‘A curse on the man who puts his trust in man,  
who relies on things of flesh,  
whose heart turns from the Lord.

He is like dry scrub in the wastelands:  
if good comes, he has no eyes for it,  
he settles in the parched places of the wilderness,  
a salt land, uninhabited.

‘A blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord,  
with the Lord for his hope.

He is like a tree by the waterside  
that thrusts its roots to the stream:  
when the heat comes it feels no alarm,  
its foliage stays green;  
it has no worries in a year of drought,  
and never ceases to bear fruit.’

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

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Ps 1:1-4. R. Ps 39:5

**(R.) Happy are they who hope in the Lord.**

Happy indeed is the man  
who follows not the counsel of the wicked;  
nor lingers in the way of sinners  
nor sits in the company of scorners,  
but whose delight is the law of the Lord  
and who ponders his law day and night.

He is like a tree that is planted  
beside the flowing waters,  
that yields its fruit in due season  
and whose leaves shall never fade;  
and all that he does shall prosper.

Not so are the wicked, not so!  
For they like winnowed chaff  
shall be driven away by the wind.

For the Lord guards the way of the just  
but the way of the wicked leads to doom. **(R.)**

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20

*A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians*  
*If Christ is not raised from the dead, your faith is in vain.*

If Christ raised from the dead is what has been  
preached, how can some of you be saying that there  
is no resurrection of the dead? For if the dead are not  
raised, Christ has not been raised, and if Christ has

not been raised, you are still in your sins. And what is  
more serious, all who have died in Christ have perished.  
If our hope in Christ has been for this life only, we are  
the most unfortunate of all people.

But Christ has in fact been raised from the dead, the  
first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep.

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

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Luke 6:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

Rejoice and be glad;  
your reward is great in heaven.  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** Luke 6:17. 20-26

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke*  
*Happy are the poor. Woe to the rich!*

Jesus came down with the Twelve and stopped at a piece  
of level ground where there was a large gathering of his  
disciples with a great crowd of people from all parts of  
Judaea and from Jerusalem and from the coastal region  
of Tyre and Sidon who had come to hear him and to be  
cured of their diseases.

Then fixing his eyes on his disciples he said:

‘How happy are you who are poor: yours is the kingdom  
of God.

Happy you who are hungry now: you shall be satisfied.

Happy you who weep now: you shall laugh.

‘Happy are you when people hate you, drive you out,  
abuse you, denounce your name as criminal, on account  
of the Son of Man. Rejoice when that day comes and  
dance for joy, for then your reward will be great in  
heaven. This was the way their ancestors treated the  
prophets.

‘But alas for you who are rich: you are having your  
consolation now.

Alas for you who have your fill now: you shall go hungry.

Alas for you who laugh now: you shall mourn and weep.

‘Alas for you when the world speaks well of you! This  
was the way their ancestors treated the false prophets.’

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

