



# Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

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*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*



**27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025**

## **SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER – DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**



For many of us, it was a bit of a shock to hear of Pope Francis' sudden death on Monday. Yes, he had been very sick earlier in the year, but he seemed to be on the improve and even made a couple of public appearances over the Easter period. Our Parish now joins with Catholics all over the world in keeping nine days of prayer for Pope Francis. At Easter we celebrated Christ's victory over Death and our hope of eternal life in him. We now pray that Pope Francis will share in this victory, and that the merciful Christ receives him into the Father's House.

**We will conclude our period of prayer with a special Memorial Mass at St Mary's Church Swan Hill next Wednesday at 10am.**

As successor of St Peter, the Pope is entrusted with the special task of keeping the Church across the whole world in unity and love. Every Mass is celebrated in communion with our Pope. Speaking personally, the Masses this week have been the first

I ever offered as a priest without the words 'in communion with Francis our Pope'. For me, it was a strange feeling and the clearest reminder yet that something is missing, that we have lost our Pope.

The very name 'Pope' simply means father. As Catholics we affectionately name the Bishop of Rome as 'Papa' in recognition of his fatherly care for the whole Church as the Vicar of Christ on earth. Pope Francis' death will be keenly felt by many, akin to losing a beloved father. We give thanks for his dedicated service and for his witness to faith and mercy. This weekend we complete our Easter festivities with the celebration of God's Divine Mercy. That Mercy was right at the centre of Pope Francis' ministry and mission. One of his earliest acts was to call an extraordinary Year of Mercy for the whole world, and among his very last acts in this Jubilee Year was to visit prisoners on Holy Thursday. We now confidently entrust him to the very same Mercy he so ardently tried to live and share.

The best word I've heard to describe Pope Francis as a man is 'heart'; he was himself led by the heart and so his leadership was defined by the heart as well. His last Encyclical Dilexit Nos ('He Loved Us') focused on just this; the heart as a living sign of God's tremendous love for us all and our call to respond with love in turn.

Perhaps it would be fitting to finish with some of his own words from this letter;

*"We cannot attain our fulfilment as human beings unless we open our hearts to others; only through love do we become fully ourselves. The deepest part of us, created for love, will fulfil God's plan only if we learn to love. And the heart is the symbol of that love."*

*(Pope Francis, Dilexit Nos no. 59)*

**Eternal rest grant unto Francis O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.**

### **Parish Contact Details:**

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**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 & 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+**

Pope Francis

**ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH**

Grazia "Grace" Costa, Hubert O'Halloran,  
Sebastian (Ben) Lolicato, Maria (Campagna) Lolicato  
Angela McKay, Giuseppe Raco, Teresa Kelly,  
Michael Walsh, Max Sewell, Mary Beilby, John Rohan  
Matthew Patching, Victor Bryant, Mervyn Bryant

**SICK LIST**

Pat Hoare, Pat Croft, Maureen Allen,  
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 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL  
2<sup>ND</sup> EASTER SUNDAY- DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY**

Saturday Swan Hill 6pm  
Sunday 8:30am Quambatook  
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

**Divine Mercy Holy Hour- 2-3pm Swan Hill  
With Confessions**

**WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL**

Tuesday: 10am Mass

**Wed: 10am Memorial Mass for Pope Francis**

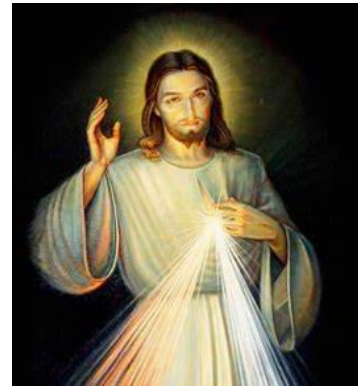
Thursday: Confessions 5pm, 5.30pm Mass,  
Adoration until 7pm  
Friday: 11.30am Mass

**NEXT WEEKEND 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY**

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

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

**NOTICES**



**DIVINE MERCY- APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>**

Today is the Feast of Divine Mercy, a special celebration of our Lord's unending and inexhaustible Mercy. To mark this great feast, we will once again hold a Holy Hour in Swan Hill THIS Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>, starting at 2pm and finishing with the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm. Confessions will be available during the time of Adoration.



**WELCOME INTO GOD'S FAMILY!**

This weekend we welcome Kelly DeSensi as she is received into the Catholic Church.

We also welcome Madeline and Xavier Costa and Gracie Taverna as they are as they are presented for Baptism into God's family, the Church.

May God's blessings be upon you today and always.

Welcome into God's family!

**PROJECT COMPASSION**

Thank you to all who donated to the Project Compassion. You can still support Project Compassion either by placing your donation in an envelope marked "Project Compassion" in the collection basket or going to the website <https://www.caritas.org.au/>

**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)

## HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

Why do you think Thomas was reluctant to believe what his friends told him about the Risen Jesus?

How might the other disciples have reacted to Thomas' unbelief?

Despite his earlier demand, why doesn't Thomas touch the wounds of Jesus?

What does Thomas' experience say to 21st Century Christians?

How do you respond to disbelief and doubt – within yourself or others?



### NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

BY MARY COLOE PBVM

*Receive the Holy Spirit*

**Revelations 1:9-13, 17-19; John 20:19-31**

*Written that we may believe*

The Easter Gospel last Sunday finished with the disciples realising that Jesus was not in the tomb, that he was no longer among the dead. But where was he? The second location of the Johannine Easter story answers this question. Jesus is not in the tomb for he is now to be found in the midst of his disciples. If you wish to locate Jesus this is where you must look. Seek him with you now, risen in the midst of your community. Jesus' Easter gift to his disciples and to disciples of all times is 'Peace'.

Unlike the Synoptic Gospels which have a scene of Jesus missioning disciples within his own ministry in Galilee, in John's Gospel disciples are only now sent on mission. With the gift of the Spirit breathed onto them they are sent to continue the mission of Jesus in the world. 'As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' (20:21)

There are two aspects of this mission. First, they are sent to forgive sin (20:23), and second, they are to take hold of people, in the sense of keeping people firm in their faith. This phrase (20:23) is often read in the light of the Synoptic expression that speaks of binding and loosing, in relation to Peter's authority (Matt 16:19). While the first part of the phrase clearly states, 'if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven,' the second part does not mention the word sin and is better understood to mean holding firm to one another in the community. The Greek word that is often translated as 'retain' means more accurately to hold firm. Here is a definition from a dictionary: 'krateo': to cause a state to continue, on the basis of some authority or power – 'to hold, to keep, to cause to continue.'

In Jesus' prayer on the eve of his 'hour' he had prayed, 'While I was with them I kept them in your name...; I have guarded them and none of them is lost.' (17:12) Now the task of 'keeping' and 'guarding' is passed onto his disciples.

The problem for Thomas is the problem that all later Christians face. Can we believe the Easter Gospel when we do not see the body of the Risen One? There is a Thomas within all of us, wanting to believe but sometimes finding faith difficult. Thomas' response is not to reach out to touch Jesus, but rather to recognise now the fullness of Jesus' divinity; 'My Lord and my God.' Only in John's Gospel do we find such an absolute statement of Jesus' divinity.

The final words of Jesus in this Gospel reach past Thomas to us, as Jesus pronounces a blessing for those who do not see and yet believe. The evangelist also reaches across time to us when he writes, 'These things are written that you may believe.'

The presence of Jesus, his words, and the words of this Gospel writer live on in the Christian communities of our time. Whenever Christians gather, Jesus rises in our midst. Not even our fears and doubts are sufficient barriers, for Jesus comes to frightened and disbelieving disciples. The Easter gifts of peace and the Spirit are now available to all and blessed indeed are those who believe. ©

### READINGS NEXT WEEK:

#### 3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 5:27-32. 40-41

Second Reading: Revelation 5:11-14

Gospel: John 21:1-19

**FIRST READING** Acts of the Apostles 5:12-16

*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles*

*The numbers of men and women who came to believe in the Lord increased steadily.*

The faithful all used to meet by common consent in the Portico of Solomon. No one else ever dared to join them, but the people were loud in their praise and the numbers of men and women who came to believe in the Lord increased steadily. So many signs and wonders were worked among the people at the hands of the apostles that the sick were even taken out into the streets and laid on beds and sleeping-mats in the hope that at least the shadow of Peter might fall across some of them as he went past. People even came crowding in from the towns round about Jerusalem, bringing with them their sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and all of them were cured. The Word of the Lord. *ALL: Thanks be to God.*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Ps 117:2-4. 22-27. R. v.1

**(R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
his love is everlasting.**

Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say:

'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.'

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord;  
we rejoice and are glad.

O Lord, grant us salvation;

O Lord grant success.

Blessed in the name of the Lord  
is he who comes.

We bless you from the house of the Lord;  
the true God is our light. **(R.)**

**SECOND READING** Revelation 1:9-13, 17-19

*A reading from the book of the Apocalypse*

*I was dead and now I am to live for ever and ever.*

My name is John, and through our union in Jesus I am your brother and share your sufferings, your kingdom, and all you endure. I was on the island of Patmos for having preached God's word and witnessed for Jesus; it was the Lord's day and the Spirit possessed me, and I heard a voice behind me, shouting like a trumpet, 'Write down all that you see in a book.' I turned round to see who had spoken to me, and when I turned I saw seven golden lamp-stands and, surrounded by them, a figure

like a Son of man, dressed in a long robe tied at the waist with a golden girdle.

When I saw him, I fell in a dead faint at his feet, but he touched me with his right hand and said, 'Do not be afraid; it is I, the First and the Last; I am the Living One. I was dead and now I am to live for ever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and of the underworld. Now write down all that you see of present happenings and things that are still to come.' The Word of the Lord. *ALL: Thanks be to God.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** John 20:29

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me;  
happy those who have not seen me, but still believe!  
Alleluia!

**GOSPEL** John 20:19-31

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

*After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them.*

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

'As the Father sent me,  
so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.

For those whose sins you forgive,

they are forgiven;

for those whose sins you retain,

they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name. The Gospel of the Lord.

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