



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*



SUNDAY 12TH APRIL 2026

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

'PEACE BE WITH YOU'



So here we are, a week from the huge celebration of Easter Sunday.

But the start of today's Gospel still takes us to that first Easter Sunday, the day Jesus rose from the dead. The disciples have hidden themselves away. They have heard that the tomb is empty, and that Jesus is risen and has appeared to Mary of Magdala... but they are not quite ready to believe the Good News. Jesus doesn't want them to be left in sadness and fear, and so he comes to them.

And the first thing he offers them is his Peace.

How much do we ourselves yearn for that peace today, that deep and lasting peace that only he can give? Christ gives it, and gives it readily. And how much does our world need that same Peace?

Peace to overcome all anxiety, division, conflict and violence? Christ wants the whole world to know his peace, and he always stands ready to give it, but he calls for messengers to share it out.

We are those messengers. Christ sends *us* out. When we were baptised, we were anointed with the oil of Chrism. This was a sign that we are commissioned to be 'other Christs', to take up his work and be his body for the world. And perhaps the greatest gift we can share is the gift of his peace.

When we offer the sign of peace, pray that Christ will fill us up in a special way today, so that all tensions are eased and overcome, all hurts reconciled and healed. And perhaps that calls for forgiveness, but what better day to forgive than on this Feast of Divine Mercy? And when we are sent out in peace, let's really take that peace with us as we go, and share it with all we meet. If we want Christ's peace to reign in the world, it really is as simple as that. He gives it to us. We pass it on.

Am I naïve? Maybe. Don't get me wrong. I certainly don't expect my words today to have any earth shattering effect. But the words of Jesus on that first Easter Sunday, 'Peace be with you'... well, they *did* shake the world.

They have moved countless hearts right down to today, and will continue to do so until their work is complete. They were arguably the most powerful words ever spoken... even if at first hardly anyone was there to hear them. The disciples were in a private room. We don't know exactly how many were there; 10 at least, probably 30 at most... and yet that was enough messengers to receive the words and so change the world. We continue that same mission today.

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Parish Priest

Fr James Kerr

Parish Office:

Glenda Klabbbers & 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+**
Leo Formella

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Antonetta & Vincenzo Massara, Jane McInerney,
Vincent Lavey, Mary Anne Foott
Ian McKay, Michael Clohesy, Moira Ryan
Kathleen Meehan, Kathleen Ledwich
Mary McMurtie, Kath Hogan, Michael Upton
Brian Carty, Gerrard Magee, Irene Learmonth
Elizabeth Williamson

SICK LIST

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

THIS WEEKEND 12TH APRIL 2026
2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER, DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
Saturday 6pm Swan Hill
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

Holy Hour of Divine Mercy 2pm Swan Hill
(Adoration, Rosary, Chaplet, and Confession)
Sunday 5pm Sea Lake (This month Only)

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL THIS WEEK
Tues: Mass 5:30pm
Wed: **Mass 5:30pm (This week only)**
Thurs: Confessions 5pm, Mass 5:30pm, Adoration
Friday: Mass 10:30am

NEXT WEEKEND 19TH APRIL
3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER
Saturday 6pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Culgoa
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

NOTICES



DIVINE MERCY- APRIL 12TH

The Second (or Low) Sunday of Easter is also 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 on Sunday 12th, starting at 2pm and finishing with the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3pm. Confessions will be available during the time of Adoration.

In the Jubilee Year 2000, Pope John Paul II proclaimed that from that year forward the Second Sunday of Easter would be celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday. This was proclaimed at the Canonization Mass of St. Faustina Kawalska, who worked throughout her life to make all aware of the merciful love of God. St. Faustina (1905–1938) was born and raised in Poland. Following a vocation to religious life, she was accepted by the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. As a member of the Congregation, she worked as a cook, gardener, and porter. In her spiritual life, her contemplation on the Mercy of God led her to develop a childlike trust in God and deep love for her neighbour.

In her years in the convent, St. Faustina heard a call from God to make God's mercy known to the world so that the world may more fully receive God's healing grace. St. Faustina promoted the Chaplet of Divine Mercy which consists of the recitation of

Our Parish Schools

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Ph: 03 5070 1272

St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill
Principal: Kate Quin
2 Murlong St Swan Hill
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St Mary MacKillop College
Principal: Michelle Haeusler
53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill
Ph: 5032 9771

prayers to the Eternal Father with the use of the rosary for the sake of Christ's sorrowful passion.

When celebrating Divine Mercy Sunday, we are called to reflect more personally on the graces won through the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this way their hearts may be more fully aware of the mercy of God for them personally and for the sake of the world.

PRAYING WITH THE HOLY FATHER

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer) is an international movement and each month the Pope puts forward a prayer intention and asks Catholics around the world to join him in prayer. "The Pope Video" forms part of the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network www.thepopevideo.org.

Prayer for April - For priests in crisis:

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

Lord, hear us.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

Why were the disciples in hiding at the start of this passage?

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?

READINGS NEXT WEEK

3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 2:14, 22-33

Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:17-21

Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

BACKGROUND ON THE GOSPEL READING

The Gospels tell us that Jesus appeared to the disciples on several occasions after they discovered that his tomb was empty. Part of the mystery of Jesus' Resurrection is that he appeared to his disciples not as a spirit but in bodily form. The bodily form was not one that the disciples recognized though. In John's Gospel, Mary of Magdala does not recognize that the figure standing before her is Jesus until he speaks to her. In Luke's Gospel the disciples who meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus do not recognize him until he breaks bread with them. The resurrected Jesus had a physical presence, but the disciples couldn't recognize Jesus unless he allowed them to. His resurrected body, nonetheless, showed the marks of his crucifixion.

From readings such as today's Gospel, we also see that in his resurrected body, Jesus seems to be free of physical constraints. He appears to the disciples despite the fact that the doors were locked.

Jesus greets his disciples with the gift of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, Jesus commissions his disciples to continue the work that he has begun: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." During the meeting, Jesus also shows the integral connection between forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The story of Thomas illustrates our Christian experience today: We are called to believe without seeing. In fact, all Christians after the first witnesses have been called to believe without seeing. Thomas's doubt is hardly surprising; the news of Jesus' appearance was incredible to the disciples who had seen him crucified and buried. Thomas's human nature compelled him to want hard evidence that the Jesus who appeared to the disciples after his death was indeed the same Jesus who had been crucified. Thomas is given the opportunity to act on that desire. He is our witness that Jesus is really risen.

Our faith is based on the witness of the Church that has preceded us, beginning with Thomas and the first disciples. Through Baptism we receive the same Holy Spirit that Jesus brought to the first disciples. We are among those who are "blessed" because we believe without having seen. © *Loyola Press*

FIRST READING Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

The faithful lived together and owned everything in common.

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 117:2-4. 13-15. 22-24. 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.'

I was thrust, thrust down and falling
but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song;
he was my saviour.

There are shouts of joy and victory
in the tents of the just.

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.

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

SECOND READING 1 Peter 1:3-9

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

He has given us a new birth as his children, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead.

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be

spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

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.*