



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



SUNDAY 26TH APRIL 2026

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER: GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

"I HAVE COME SO THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE, AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL."

Jesus uses two images of himself today. Firstly, he is the Shepherd who calls out his sheep one by one. They recognise his voice. He leads them out and they follow him because they know they can trust him. Jesus knows each of us intimately. He calls each of us by name, and we can confidently follow him because we know and trust him. He will keep us safe and lead us to fullness of life.

So that was the first one, and there is of course much more we could say about Jesus as our Good Shepherd, but we also heard another image too. Jesus speaks of himself as the gate. What might he mean by this? I think we are just meant to understand the image for what it is- Jesus is the door to fullness of life. We gain entrance through him, and only through him. We cannot enter life any other way. It is through him, and only through him, that we can find shelter and safety. It is through him that we will find nourishment and strength. *"Anyone who enters through me will be safe: he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture."* But note that bit in the middle; about how they *'will go freely in and out'*. They are no longer being *let in or led out* like before. They are freely coming and going. Now, that is exactly how we might use a gate... but sheep? Are they going around casually opening and closing gates? Not really. It kind of stretches the initial image of the sheepfold doesn't it? And I think Jesus meant to do this, to give us pause and make us wonder. Because yes, he is our gate, and he is our shepherd, but he is calling us to be something much greater than just mere sheep. We are called to fullness of life in him- he has come so that we might freely live for him and with him; not merely as dumb followers with no agency, but as trusted members of the household, as friends. Yes, we can only enter life through him, but within that he allows a great degree of freedom.

Okay, so why is this important? Today, Good Shepherd Sunday, is held as World Day of Prayer for Vocations. What does vocation mean? It means a calling- Jesus is calling us to life in him. All of us have been called in our baptism to live in and with and for him, but within this primary calling this is also an abundance of particular callings- of different ways that we can serve him and share his love. We might even say they are as many ways to serve him as there are believers, or perhaps even more, as we are by no means limited to one.

Some vocations will be lived out formally through a career, such as a teacher or nurse, some will be more in the background, such as volunteering for charity. Some vocations will be lived on an intimate level within our families or close friends, such as the call of parenthood or of care-giving, some vocations will be directed towards the wider community, perhaps making use of our special talents or gifts. Some will just be for a season, according to circumstance and need. Others will involve a life-long commitment, such as marriage, religious life or holy orders. Jesus lays out so many good choices before us. He has his plans for us, and he will gently call us to serve him in particular ways, but always he leaves us free to choose whether or not to take up those promptings. So let us pray that we can recognise the ways he has called us to live his love in our lives, and that we continue to be open to hearing his voice. And let us pray in a very special way for our young people; that they might have the courage and faith and generosity to hear Jesus' call in their lives, and hopefully some even to take up the call to be religious or priests.

Parish Contact Details:

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Office Hrs: Tues, and Fri 10:30 -2.00

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+

John Moore

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

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

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 26TH APRIL 2026
4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER: GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY
Saturday 6pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Quambatook
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL THIS WEEK
Mon: 12pm *Holy Hour for Vocations*
5pm & 6:30pm *First Reconciliation Celebrations*
Tues: **10:30am Funeral Prayers John Moore**
Also Mass 5:30pm
Wed: 10.30am
Thurs: Confessions 5pm, Mass 5:30pm
Friday: Mass 10:30am
Sat: Confessions 10am, Mass 10:30am, Rosary

NEXT WEEKEND 3RD MAY
5TH SUN OF EASTER
Saturday 6pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Sea Lake
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill

NOTICES

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

This Sunday (26th April), the 4th Sunday of Easter is known as Good Shepherd Sunday and is observed as the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. Christ our Good Shepherd cares for his flock, calling us each by name. May young people hear his voice calling them in their lives, and may they have the courage to take up their calling, whatever it may be. It is also a special day to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life- that Christ may raise up shepherds after his own heart.



HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS

12PM MONDAY 27TH APRIL SWAN HILL

A few priests from neighbouring parishes will join me for a Holy Hour for Vocations at midday on Monday 27th April. We will hold the prayer in the smaller 'Little Lalbert' side chapel. Parishioners are very welcome to join us in this important prayer.



FIRST RECONCILIATIONS: MONDAY 27TH APRIL

Could you please pray for the children who are preparing for their First Reconciliations this Monday 27th April. This Sacrament is given to us as a special encounter with God's love and mercy. We open our heart. He listens. He loves! May we never forget his great love for us and know and trust in it always.

Our Parish Schools

St Mary's Primary School Sea Lake
Principal: Kate Nunn
47 Hannon Street, Sea Lake
Ph: 03 5070 1272

St Mary MacKillop College
Principal: Michelle Haeusler
53 McCrae Street, Swan Hill
Ph: 5032 9771

St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill
Principal: Kate Quin
2 Murlong St Swan Hill
Ph. 03 5033 2541



**MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS RETREAT DAY
DONALD, MONDAY MAY 25TH**

Celebrating Australia's Patroness

All are welcome to St Mary's Church, Donald
on Monday, May 25, 2026

to celebrate Australia's Patroness:

10.00am - Morning tea

10.30am - Mass

11.30 - Guest speaker: Fr James Kerr to talk on his
sabbatical to Rome with question and discussion
opportunities

12.30 - Lunch

1.30pm - Prayers

1.45 - 3.00 - Discussion led by Margaret Rowe,
Diocesan President of the CWL & Anna Krohn OAM

Please reply for catering purposes by Friday, May 18 to
Margaret Rowe at margrowe@bigpond.com or
Noeline Hogan ph. 0427 922 988.



COINS OF THE WORLD-

***Calling all Collectors or
Those Looking for Foreign Change***

We've built up quite a collection of foreign currency
from the collection plate over the years. Some
currencies are very well represented (including some
notes as well as the coins), like the USD, NZD, UK
Pound Sterling, Euro, Filipino Peso and SGD. But there
are plenty of others too in there.

Perhaps you are planning to travel or like collecting
and might like to make a trade for Australian Dollars?
All the money we receive will then be donated on to
the Aid to the Church in Need.

THE SHEPHERD, THE SHEEPFOLD & THE GATE
Commentary by Mary Coloe PBVM

The imagery of shepherd, sheep and gate of the
sheepfold suggests a close, almost familial,
relationship that is lost outside its Middle Eastern
context. Even today, on the hillsides of Judea one can
see a Bedouin boy, or perhaps an old man, leading his
small flock numbering between three and ten sheep.
The shepherd walks in front, guiding the flock along
the craggy paths seeking whatever grass there may
be. In a country such as Israel, where arable land is
scarce, fenced paddocks are used for crops not for
mobs of grazing sheep. Sheep wander on the hillsides
foraging where they can and the shepherd must keep
an eye out for danger, and to prevent any from
straying. When a lamb is born it could be named
according to its physical features, or other
characteristics – 'snowy', 'hungry', 'scamp.' A village
might have a communal sheepfold protected by one
gatekeeper. In the morning each shepherd would call
out his sheep, by voice, or using a pipe. The sheep
would recognise the sound and follow their
shepherd. In the summer, temporary shelters could
be made outside the village using briars and stones.
This type of shelter has no door so the shepherd
would sleep across the doorway, acting as the door
protecting his flock.

GOSPEL FOCUS – LIFE TO THE FULL

Commentary by Greg Sunter

John 10:10 is a very famous quote from this gospel
passage. Having life to the full does not imply life
filled with every convenience, comfort and wealth.
Rather, it is about living a life filled with purpose and
intent. If we fail to live with purpose and meaning
then our life is a hollow shell of what it could be. Jesus
came that we may have life – a life that is at its fullest
when it is lived in such a way as to be an expression
of what Jesus taught and lived.

READINGS NEXT WEEK

5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Gospel: John 14:1-12

FIRST READING Acts of the Apostles 2:14. 36-41

*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles
God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.*

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: 'The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.'

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, 'What must we do, brothers?' 'You must repent,' Peter answered 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.' He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.' They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 22:1-6. R. v.1

**(R.) The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.**

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.

You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

**(R.) The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.**

SECOND READING 1 Peter 2:20-25

*A reading from the first letter of St Peter
You had gone astray but now you have come back to the
shepherd and guardian of your souls.*

The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty.

This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION John 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me. Alleluia!

GOSPEL John 10:1-10

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
I am the gate of the sheepfold.*

Jesus said: 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them.

I am the gate.

Anyone who enters through me will be safe:

he will go freely in and out
and be sure of finding pasture.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

I have come so that they may have life
and have it to the full.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.