

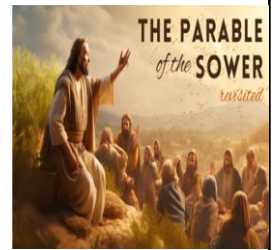


Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee

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*



15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 12TH JULY 2026

IMAGINE A SOWER GOING OUT TO SOW...

A very real challenge we often struggle with is- why don't my friends or family or neighbours come to Church? Our faith is important to us, we feel we are hearing something here that is worth hearing, it is taking root in us and bearing fruit... why isn't it the same for them? We are hearing the same message, the same seed is being sown, and yet it doesn't seem have to the same effect. And when that involves someone like our children, grandkids or students, someone we feel a responsibility for, it can be a real cause of anxiety and even sadness. The challenge is real. I've felt it, I feel it. And then the questions and self-doubts come- Am I failing in my duty? Have I done a bad job? Of course there are things we can improve on and do better, but this hits deeper. Growth needs to be grounded in hope- and when that hope is challenged or exhausted, only Christ and His Spirit can renew us. So Jesus, fill us with hope!

That is why it is so good for us to hear Jesus' Parable of the Sower today. I think it can give us hope. First of all, just think about the fact that we even have this Parable to begin with. Why is Jesus speaking of those who seem to hear and not understand, or who have received initially but have then dropped off and walked away... why is he telling a parable about it? Well, the answer is quite simple- because it is what he himself is seeing right in front of him. Again- just think about that- the Son of God, the very Word made Flesh, is right there in front of people and yet many are still not 'getting it', still not receiving, not accepting, not responding... even God himself cannot just 'make' it so. He is waiting on a free response, and the human heart is a very complicated thing! So the first point to take is this- let's not be too hard on ourselves. Yes, we can always grow in our ability to share the Gospel, and we want to grow in this, but we need to patient and not expect 'results' or strike rates that even Jesus himself doesn't achieve. Be patient! God plays the long game!

The second thing that fills me with hope is this- the Sower continues to sow! He has not stopped casting the seeds, and he will not stop until this world comes to an end. He will keep sowing, and so the future always brings hope. Soil can be loosened; weeds and brambles can be cleared away. The conditions that once blocked or stifled the growth of the Gospel in a person are not necessarily static or fixed- they can change. Big life experiences, shifts in circumstances or responsibilities, new friends or changing relationships- all these can loosen the soil of someone's heart or help clear the weeds that have been choking them. And we can also help too- our love and patient witness can be like the gentle rain that renews the soil and brings it to life.

And finally, let's not be blind to the good growth and abundant fruits that have already come to ripening. Jesus finishes the Parable by naming the fruits, and perhaps we can take a cue from that too! We need encouragement, we need hope, and naming and rejoicing in the good fruits of harvest can help give us both. There is still much work to be done- the Sower continues to sow- but in the midst of our toils and struggles it is good to be reminded that we do not labour in vain. Seeds have sprouted and born rich harvest, and they will continue to sprout and grow under God's watchful care. Be patient. Keep hope.

Parish Contact Details:

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

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+**

Pat Croft

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Rosa Mobilio, Joe Rovere, Gordon Murdoch
John Dunstan, Iris Pye, Kevin McLoughlan
Kevin Hogan, Charlie Taverna, Peter Hoare
Angelo Berlingeri, Bernard Foott, Kathleen
O'Callaghan Ted Meney, Owen Stanley,
Michael "Mick" Casey, Bill Hayes,
Annunziata "Nancy" Maiuto
Girolamo & Giovanna Tuntar

SICK LIST

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

**THIS WEEKEND 12TH JULY
15TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 6pm Swan Hill
Sunday 10:30am Swan Hill
Sunday 5pm Nandaly

WEEKDAYS IN SWAN HILL THIS WEEK

Tues: 5.30pm
Wed: 10.30am
Thurs: Confessions 5pm, Mass 5.30pm, Adoration
Friday: 10.30am
Sat: Confessions 10am, Mass 10:30am

**NEXT WEEKEND 19TH JULY
16TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**

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

NOTICES



STELLA MARIS

SUPPORTING SEAFARERS AND FISHERS
AROUND THE WORLD

This weekend is Sea Sunday - a time to remember, celebrate, pray for seafarers and their families and give thanks for their lives and work. Seafarers work tirelessly in the high seas throughout the year, bringing us more than ninety percent of the goods we need. Stella Maris Australia is the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church and cares for the spiritual, social and material welfare of all seafarers regardless of colour, race or creed. Knowing that people recognise and appreciate the efforts and difficulties for seafarers, is a great source of comfort and support. Please support this appeal. For more information go to <https://stellamarisaustralia.org/>



THE FESTA DELLA MADONNA MONTE CARMELO

We invite everyone to join us as we celebrate the
Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel
NEXT Sunday the 19th of July
Place: St Mary's Catholic Church Swan Hill.
Time: 10.30 Mass with Shared Lunch to follow in the
Parish Function Centre. Bring a plate to share!

CONGRATS & BLESSINGS TO SAM & JO BRADY!
As they celebrate their 50th Anniversary of Marriage
this week. May God continue to bless you 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

CHOSEN 2026 – NATIONAL CATHOLIC CONFERENCE FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

Chosen is a four-day Catholic Conference for young Australians who are open to encountering God in a real and personal way. Hosted by Jesus Youth Australia, the conference brings together teens (16+), young adults (18-35) and young couples (married up to 5 years) from across the country. Over four days, 19-22 November at La Trobe University, Bundoora, you'll experience worship, talks, prayer, Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, workshops and more. More info <https://chosenconference.org.au/> or contact Emil Mary Tom Ph: 0406256263, email: emilmarytom@gmail.com

PRAYING WITH THE HOLY FATHER

Prayer for July – For respect for human life:

Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognising it as a gift from God. Lord, hear us.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

What explanation does Jesus give for speaking in parables?

What reason/s can you suggest for Jesus not teaching in a more explicit way?

What are the 'thorns' in your life that fight for your attention with your faith?

What is a contemporary metaphor that might adequately replace the image of a sower?

READINGS NEXT WEEK:

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Wisdom 12:13.16-19

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-27

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-43

GOSPEL Matthew 13:1-23

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
A sower went out to sow.*

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables.

He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?' 'Because' he replied 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you, but they are not revealed to them. For anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So in their case this prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled:

You will listen and listen again, but not understand, see and see again but not perceive.

For the heart of this nation has grown coarse, their ears are dull of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, for fear they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and be converted and be healed by me.

'But happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

'You, therefore, are to hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the man who received the seed on the edge of the path. The one who received it on patches of rock is the man who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But he has no root in him, he does not last; let some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, and he falls away at once. The one who received the seed in thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this world and the lure of riches choke the word and so he produces nothing. And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'

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

FIRST READING *Isaiah 55:10-11*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The rain makes the earth fruitful.

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 64:10-14 R. Lk 8:8

(R.) The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

You care for the earth, give it water,
you fill it with riches.

Your river in heaven brims over
to provide its grain.

And thus you provide for the earth;
you drench its furrows,
you level it, soften it with showers,
you bless its growth.

You crown the year with your goodness.
Abundance flows in your steps,
in the pastures of the wilderness it flows.

The hills are girded with joy,
the meadows covered with flocks,
the valleys are decked with wheat.
They shout for joy, yes, they sing. (R.)

(R.) The seed that falls on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest.

SECOND READING *Romans 8:18-23*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

All creation is waiting for the revelation of the children of God.

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to

reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;
all who come to him will live for ever.

Alleluia!

FOR GOSPEL READING, PLEASE TURN OVER



LIVING THE GOSPEL – SCATTER THAT SEED!

The teaching of the parable of the sower is as true for us today as it was in its original context. The word of the kingdom continues to fall on people who are at various stages of readiness to receive it. What Jesus suggests to his disciples – and to us – is that the 'good soil' can't always be predicted. Jesus doesn't tell his disciples to only sow the word in people who are receptive. Rather, he wants them – and us – to scatter the word everywhere and to rejoice when it does find good soil and yields a rich harvest.