



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*



17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 26TH JULY 2026

"HE GOES OFF HAPPY, SELLS EVERYTHING HE OWNS AND BUYS THE FIELD."

My first placement as a priest was in Ballarat. I lived in the Cathedral presbytery with 2 or 3 other priests. Being in the middle of town, we had a pretty constant flow of people knocking at the door for assistance and help. I even had someone try and sell me a fish one time, which I suppose was resourceful at least. Anyway, if I am honest, it could get pretty tiring. Every time the doorbell rang it was hard to resist the cynical feeling of 'here we go again, what do they want this time?!' Enthusiasm could definitely run low, and patience and generosity was often tested. Anyway, I'm not saying that for you to feel sorry for me, but just to set the context for this next bit. An old Polish priest, Fr Henry, had been in that presbytery for years and years, and he loved telling me stories about the different guys who had been there. One of them took a very different approach to the interruptions coming at our door. Every time the bell rang or door knocked, this priest would excitedly proclaim, 'Jesus is at the door!', and would drop everything to go and meet him. You can maybe imagine the very dignified Fr Henry, playfully acting out the little dance that would go along with this proclamation; 'I'm going to meet Jesus at the door!' It was really quite funny seeing him act the whole thing out, but the memory has stuck with me for a different reason. Every time I have found myself challenged to go out of myself, to drop everything and to answer that knock, I have Fr Henry in my head excitedly acting out, 'Jesus is at the door!' And so I drag myself up, perhaps not so enthusiastically, and go to meet him.

We have that great little pair of parables today, of the Kingdom of God being like the treasure in the field or a pearl of great price. The fella who finds the treasure 'goes off happy' and sells everything he owns to buy that field and to secure the great treasure. I dare say his friends probably thought he was a bit mad or crazy, but he knew exactly what he was doing. The treasure he had found was worth it all and far more. And because he knew how valuable it was, he was not only ready to give up all he had, he was also delighted and overjoyed in doing so. He was investing everything he had, but he knew he was making the bargain of the century and couldn't wait to see it through! There is a great urgency in the story, but an urgency rooted in confidence and clear sight, and over and above it all a real sense of joy.

When I sat with the parable, I asked myself, 'Is that how I always feel in answering God's call?' And that's not just about the people who might come to the door. When I start a new day, do I rush out of bed full of joy to face a new day with Him? How urgently and joyfully (or how slowly or hesitantly) do I answer those little prompts that come each and every day; to leave behind my own wants, and to step out in generosity and love; to forget myself and choose patience and forgiveness instead; to think of God instead of being caught up in myself, to turn to him in prayer...? And if I'm honest, it is probably with the enthusiasm of a wombat. So the parables certainly challenge me. But as always, parables both challenge us and give us hope. So, what is our cause for hope? Where can we find it? Quite simply, in the awesome treasure that awaits us when we do say our yes. If we can have the clear sight of faith, we can see that whatever we are called on to give up or leave behind simply pales in comparison to what we seek to gain. What we seek to find and gain is worth far, far more. There is an awesome treasure that awaits us, a pearl of fantastic price. Jesus himself is at the door!

We only have to get up and go to meet him.

Parish Contact Details:

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Website: northeastmallee.org.au

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+**

ANNIVERSARIES OF DEATH

Pauline Kelly, Rosa Puglisi, Margaret Elliott
Fr Declan Duggan, May Lewis
Wendy Bennett-Teague, Anne Kelly
Salvatore Castelli, Ian Thomson, Noel Hickey
Concetta Castelli, Jack Meney, Veronica Deagan
Brian Richardson, Gavin Polinelli

SICK LIST

Jacqueline Power, 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 26TH JULY
17TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME**

Saturday 6pm Swan Hill
Sunday 8.30am Quambatook
Sunday 10.30am Swan Hill

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 2ND AUGUST
18TH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME**

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

NOTICES

HOLY HOUR FOR PRIESTS

On **Monday 3rd August** some priests from our region will gather in Swan Hill for a special Holy Hour at **12pm**. Close to the Feast of St John Vianney, the patron saint of Parish Priests, we will offer this time for all priests. If you are able to join us, we would very much appreciate your prayerful presence too.

**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



ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY WINTER APPEAL

With fuel, the cost of living and rental prices higher than ever, an unexpected bill, the loss of a job or a relationship break down can be enough to push someone into homelessness. For more and more people, homelessness is just one sudden crisis away. And this winter, more people than ever before are facing homelessness and poverty in Australia. Your generous gift today can help people at risk of or experiencing homelessness get the support they need to find and keep a safe place to stay. To donate online, go to <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/winter-appeal> or phone [131812](tel:131812).

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

**SPIRITUAL DAY RETREAT –
ST PETER'S DAYLESFORD
SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2026**

You are invited to a day of prayer, formation, and fellowship in the beautiful setting of St Peter's Catholic Church, Daylesford.

Led by Fr John Corrigan and Fiona Bradley, the retreat day **A Pierced Heart: The Path of Our Lady of Sorrows** will include Mass and Eucharistic Adoration (with Confession available). Morning tea and a light lunch will be provided.

The retreat is open to all men and women.

Date: Saturday 12 September, 9.30am–4pm

Cost: \$30

Bookings essential: www.trybooking.com/DNJOM

Contact: Fiona 0402 474 074,

fiona.bradley@ballarat.catholic.org.au

**PRAYER FOR THE 5TH WORLD DAY FOR
GRANDPARENTS & THE ELDERLY (JULY 26)**

Holy Father, who watches over every person,
watch over me too when I am elderly.

You have revealed your name to me in Christ,
and You were not discouraged by my frailties.

You hold me tenderly in your hands, and You caress
my lines. You will never forget me! (Is 49:15).

Grant that I may not fear my weakness; Help me learn
to love it, just as You love it. Help me learn to listen to
it, just as You listen to it. Help me embrace it, just as
You have chosen it – You who, though all-powerful,
clothed yourself in humility.

May growing old strip away all our pride and all
division so that we may live these years united in You.
You will never forget us! Amen.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT?

What evidence suggests that the parables of the
treasure and the pearl were always intended as a
couplet?

Why might Jesus have given dozens of different
descriptions of what the kingdom is 'like'?

In what ways can we get 'glimpses' of the kingdom?

In what ways can you be a 'glimpse of the kingdom' for
others?

**READINGS NEXT WEEK:
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-3

Second Reading: Romans 8:35. 37-39

Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

Today's Gospel concludes three weeks of readings from the 13th Chapter of Matthew's Gospel. Throughout these three weeks we have heard Jesus teaching crowds about the kingdom of heaven, and we have heard Jesus interpret some of his teachings for the disciples. In this week's Gospel, Jesus offers three more short parables.

The first two parables describe the great value of the kingdom of heaven. In the first parable, Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a buried treasure that is worth possessing even if it means giving up everything else. In the second parable, Jesus proposes that the kingdom of heaven is like a pearl of great worth for which one will sell everything else to possess. These parables teach us that we are to place everything we value in the service of the pursuit of the Kingdom of God.

The third parable that Jesus proposes in today's Gospel is different from the first two, but it is reminiscent of the parable of the sower heard in last week's Gospel. The kingdom of heaven is compared to fishing with a wide net. After the fish have been collected, the good fish are kept and the bad fish are thrown away; so too, in the final judgment, will the wicked and the righteous be separated.

Today's Gospel concludes with a curious statement about the scribe who understands the kingdom of heaven. Here a metaphor is offered: this scribe is like the head of a household who "brings from his storeroom both the new and the old." The scribes referred to here are experts of Mosaic law. It is possible that Jesus is here instructing the early Christian community on how to proceed in the interpretation of Jewish law with respect to Jesus' "new" teaching. Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of heaven does not replace the Jewish tradition; it interprets it in a different light. © **Loyola Press**



FIRST READING 1 Kings 3:5.7-12

*A reading from the first book of the Kings
You have asked for wisdom.*

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, 'Ask what you would like me to give you.' Solomon replied, 'Lord, my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father. But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership. Your servant finds himself in the midst of this people of yours that you have chosen, a people so many its numbers cannot be counted or reckoned. Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil, for who could govern this people of yours that is so great?' It pleased the Lord that Solomon should have asked for this. 'Since you have asked for this' the Lord said 'and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself, here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you has had and none will have after you.'

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

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 118:57. 72. 76-77. 127-130.R.v.97

(R.) Lord, I love your commands.

My part, I have resolved, O Lord,
is to obey your word.

The law from your mouth means more to me
than silver and gold.

Let your love be ready to console me
by your promise to your servant.
Let your love come to me and I shall live
for your law is my delight.

That is why I love your commands
more than finest gold.

That is why I rule my life by your precepts:
I hate false ways.

Your will is wonderful indeed;
therefore, I obey it.

The unfolding of your word gives light
and teaches the simple.

(R.) Lord, I love your commands.

SECOND READING Romans 8:28-30

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans
He predestined us to become true images of his Son.*

We know that by turning everything to their good God co-operates with all those who love him, with all those that he has called according to his purpose. They are the ones he chose specially long ago and intended to become true images of his Son, so that his Son might be the eldest of many brothers. He called those he intended for this; those he called he justified, and with those he justified he shared his glory.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION See Matthew 11:25

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;
you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 13:44-52

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
He sells everything he owns and buys the field.*

Jesus said to the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

'Have you understood all this?' They said, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Well, then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.'

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