

When parishioners and visitors walk through the doors of any of our four churches, I sometimes wonder if everyone fully appreciates the vast armada of people involved in ensuring that Mass starts on time! Sure, there are the people we see each week, such as the readers and Eucharistic ministers, the children's church leaders and Mass coordinators, the sacristans and welcomers, not to mention the musicians, singers and those who operate our audio-visual systems - they are the face of our Parish Family. Behind them are also the countless nameless fellow parishioners who vacuum and clean our churches week in and week out, those who wash our vestments and altar linen, those who decorate our churches with floral arrangements and the many who weekly provide food and hospitality after Mass. Others, of course, quietly drive fellow parishioners to and from Mass, while others are commissioned to take Holy Communion to those who can't join us. Finally, I suppose, we are all involved and have a vested stake in our weekly Mass. This is because every time we contribute something financial on the collection plate, we support the ministry of the Finance Committee who keeps our lights on, budgets for the future, ensures the necessary maintenance is carried out and slowly but surely reduces our parish debt of \$1,358,933. *So, this First Holy Communion weekend, as we celebrate Mass together, let's appreciate the generous Parish Community we belong to and the role we all play in celebrating the Eucharist that gives meaning to our lives and hope for our journey.*

Welcome as we celebrate the 21st Sunday of the Church's Year

Our scripture this weekend comes from **Isaiah 66:18-21**, **Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13** and the Gospel is from **Luke 13:22-30**

Embracing the faith communities of **St Mary's Buderim**, **St Peter's Coolumb**, **Stella Maris Maroochydore** and **St Catherine of Siena**, Sippy Downs.

STELLA MARIS CATHOLIC PARISH

Our Parish has zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and is committed to safeguarding everyone involved in its activities, ministries and services. The safety and wellbeing of children and adults-at-risk are paramount.

TRAVEL TIPS FOR FREE

It is no secret that Australians love to travel. In fact, only last week it was reported that, for the first time in more than 30 years, more Australians travelled overseas than overseas visitors reached our shores. These days, you are likely to find Australians everywhere. Certainly, in the West Indies, the novelty of having an Australian as Parish Priest soon wore off, as there was always another Australian passing through as a crew member on a boat or simply exploring the different islands of the Caribbean.

And one thing these travellers have most in common is that they have done some preparation and research on where they are going and what they hope to see and experience. You just have to look in the book store to discover the large number of travel books from *Lonely Planet* to *Europe on Fifty Dollars a Day* – covering the most mundane places to the most exotic locations. If the place exists, odds on there is a travel guide for it!

These travel books urge you to prepare well, but then to take a risk and go off the beaten path. Go beyond the tourist trail and sample local cuisine and customs. Be flexible and be open to a change in your plans if something interesting presents itself.

That's a good summary of the advice for disciples which Jesus gives in today's Gospel. We have all heard these "travel hints" for the discipleship road before: Enter by the narrow gate; be prepared for the Master's coming; be open and flexible. Why? Because the Kingdom of God will include unexpected challenges. The people who will be welcomed to the table in the kingdom might surprise you, especially if you're on the outside, looking in!

Most young people are said to believe in a hell where nobody goes. Many others, perhaps adults, think there is a hell largely populated by their enemies. And among the old are believers who nervously wonder if hell might be populated by the likes of themselves. They, like St Paul at some moments, consider the question of their salvation "in fear and trembling."

I suppose that is why it is timely to reflect upon our own "travel plans" as Christ's disciples. We take seriously the tips in the travel books, but how seriously do we take the tips that Christ offers? How inclusive is our Sunshine Coast Catholic Community? How willing are we to explore new ways of forgiving and being witnesses of the Good News? How have we prepared by study and prayer to speak up for Christian values? Are we making choices for the Gospel, even if they're unpopular with the prevailing cultural values of our Australian society? *The Gospel road may be off the beaten path, but following it is the road to salvation.*

Wishing you every blessing for the coming week,

Fr Peter Brannelly

YOUR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT POWERS THE MISSION, MINISTRY AND OUTREACH OF OUR PARISH
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND TRUST

The Week Ahead

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which our communities celebrate liturgies and live out our faith. We pay respects to leaders past, present and emerging. May their example of stewardship be reflected in our lives.

Monday 25 August

- ◆ Benediction (5:15pm, Stella Maris Church)
- ◆ **Mass** (5:30pm, Stella Maris)
- ◆ Theology Hub at Stella Maris (7:00pm)

Tuesday 26 August

- ◆ **Communion Service** (9:00am, Stella Maris School Chapel)
- ◆ RCIA All Saints Group (6:00pm, Duffy Room)

Wednesday 27 August

St Monica

- ◆ **NO Mass** (St Mary's Church)
- ◆ **Communion Service** (9:00am, St Catherine of Siena Church)
- ◆ Pray & Play (9:30am Stella Maris)
- ◆ Scripture Study Group (9:30am, Zoom)
- ◆ Latin American prayer group meets every Wednesday in the Duffy Room (6:00-8:00pm)

Thursday 28 August

St Augustine

- ◆ **Mass** (8:30am, St Peter's Coolum)

Friday 29 August

The Passion of St John the Baptist

- ◆ Stations of the Cross (8:00am, Stella Maris)
- ◆ **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris Church)
- ◆ Community Meal for the Homeless

Saturday 30 August

- ◆ Reconciliation (8:30—9:30am, Stella Maris)
- ◆ Jesus Shine Catholic Charismatic Prayer Group meets (11:00am, Sippy Downs)
- ◆ **Vigil Mass** (4:30pm, St Peter's Church)
- ◆ **Vigil Mass** (6:00pm, Stella Maris Church)

Sunday, 31 August

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

- ◆ **Mass** (6:30am, Stella Maris Church)
- ◆ **Mass** (7:30am, St Peter's Church)
- ◆ **Mass** (8:00am, St Catherine's)
- ◆ **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris)
- ◆ **Mass** (9:30am, Blessing of the refurbishment and the dedication of the new altar at St Mary's Buderim—all welcome)
- ◆ Junior Minsters (3:00pm—Stella Maris)
- ◆ 10:10 Youth Group (3:00pm—Stella Maris)
- ◆ **Mass** (5:00pm, Stella Maris)

Gluten-free hosts are available. To arrange, simply contact the sacristan or Mass coordinator before Mass. The priest will always distribute the gluten free host at communion.

This is our First Holy Communion weekend, and as a Catholic Community, we join in the celebrations surrounding the younger members of our Parish Family as they take this important step along their journey of faith. As a community, we need to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of our Sacramental Coordinator, Carolyn Watt and all the generous catechists who assisted her over these past weeks. As families and as a Parish, we continue to support these young members of our Parish along their exciting journey of faith.

Transformation

Quietly, behind the scenes, there has been plenty of work going on at Buderim in preparation for the "Big Week" which starts from this Sunday. In the space of a week, we hope to replace and install the new carpet, install the new pews, place the new sanctuary furniture, while at the same time complete the carpentry, electrical and audio-visual tasks – hopefully next Sunday everyone will walk into a refurbished, bright and welcoming St Mary's! **Please note that because of the refurbishment work, there will not be a 7:00am Wednesday morning Mass this week.** We are all looking forward, in anticipation, to next Sunday, August 31st, when Bishop Brian Heenan will dedicate the new altar and bless the completed refurbishments. It is still a work in progress! Thank you to everyone for supporting the project – if you would like to make a contribution, we have a dedicated account: [Commonwealth Bank BSB 064-786 Account Number 100021388](#)

Back to Normal

Our First Holy Communion programme has positively impacted every aspect of our Parish life, and we are all the better for it. Our Parish routine returns to its busy normal routine next weekend with our children's church ministry. Every Sunday at our **8:00am Sippy Downs Mass** and at our **9:00am and 5:00pm Maroochydore Masses** we have Children's Church. All our younger children, at the start of Mass, are sent forth with their catechist to celebrate a more age-appropriate reflection on the Gospel before returning to the church towards the end of the Eucharistic prayer. As an adult, if you would like to be involved, please email Carolyn Watt, our sacramental Coordinator, sacraments.suncoast@catholic.net.au. In addition, we have now introduced Children's Church at **St Mary's Buderim at their 9:30am Mass. From little things big things grow!!!** Please let your friends know about these exciting Sunday family options.

A Big Thank You

It was a busy and crowded 9:00am Sunday morning Mass last week with First Communion preparation and the usual influx of visitors. Adding to the drama of last Sunday, our very creative Stella Maris Craft Group held their winter stall, while our youth were raising funds to assist as many as possible to attend this year's Ignite Youth Conference in September. A big thank you to the expert chefs from the Knights of the Southern Cross for flipping the sausages – why need to go to Bunnings when you can get a better sausage and a better price at Stella Maris!!! Thanks once again for your support!!!

In Passing

We remember with fondness and gratitude the 7th anniversary of the death of our foundation Parish Priest, Fr Harry Bliss, that occurred last Friday. Fr Bliss laid the foundation for our Parish and established Stella Maris school along with the Presentation Sisters—may he, and all our pioneering parishioners, Rest in Peace.

Parish Clergy

Fr Peter Brannelly
Fr Isaac Falzon
Deacon Michael Khoury
Bishop Brian Heenan
Bishop Emeritus



Stella Maris Parish Office

Adjacent to the Stella Maris Church
Office Hours 9:00am—2:00pm Weekdays
Telephone: 5443 3488
Email: suncoast@bne.catholic.net.au
Website: maroochydoreparish.com.au

Mums and Dads = Grandmums and Granddads

Every Wednesday morning from 9:30 to 11:00am, parents with pre-school age children gather at Stella Maris for our **Pray & Play group**. It is an excellent opportunity for young children to interact with each other while at the same time for adults to share their wisdom of experience, and in the process have some fun! Grandparents are especially welcome to share their experience and stories while at the same time enjoying the energy and inquisitiveness of those just starting out on the great adventure of life. *Please join us this Wednesday!*



A couple of weeks ago, the women of our community gathered for their annual retreat at Stella Maris school. It was an occasion to reflect on life and the challenges that are part and parcel of living, while at the same time listening to some inspirational speakers and refocusing on priorities.

This year, our annual **Men's Retreat** will be held on **Saturday, October 18th**. The retreat master will be Fr Paul Chandler, a Carmelite priest and currently the Spiritual Director at Holy Spirit Seminary, Banyo. Fr Paul will bring his years of wisdom and experience to us and help us navigate what it means in practical ways to be people of faith living in a very busy, secular world. In the midst of all the demands and pressures that we face here on the Sunshine Coast, this one-day Men's retreat is an ideal opportunity to pause and reflect on what is important and where life is taking us. You can't be too young or too old to be part of this day of reflection and prayer so please mark the date in your diary - Saturday, October 18th—*why not invite a friend?*

Great news for all those making their First Communion this weekend – you are now eligible to join our Junior Ministers Youth Group! Each Sunday of the school term, our Junior Ministers gather **from 3:00pm to 4:30pm** to learn and have fun. They receive training so they can serve during Mass (altar servers, reading, managing the PowerPoint, taking up collections, and acting as welcomers). It is an afternoon of fun, food, formation and faith! This Parish ministry not only helps the students develop valuable skills but also enriches our parish community. For more information, contact Bernie - bbaillie811@gmail.com



Sisterhood is back in September!

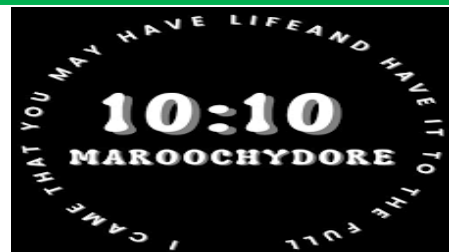
Mark your calendars, ladies! Our next Sisterhood Meeting is happening on Tuesday, September 9th at 6:00pm at Stella Maris Church, Maroochydore, and you won't want to miss it! We had a very prayerful and inspirational annual retreat and building on that experience, we continue on the journey of being faithful witnesses of the Good News here on the Sunshine Coast.

It's an evening of connection, inspiration, and a whole lot of laughter (plus maybe a few cheeky snacks). Whether you're a regular or it's your first time, there's a seat with your name on it! Bring a friend, bring a smile – *we can't wait to see you there!*



Calling All High Schoolers

Every Sunday afternoon at **3:00pm at Stella Maris**, our Parish **10/10** High School youth group gathers, and all students are invited. It is an afternoon of fun, faith, and friendship, with a bit of food thrown in! Inspired by John 10:10 – *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* – why not bring your friends and be part of something awesome? See you there! For more info, contact maroochydore@netministries.com.au



Important Meeting

Mandatory Communion Training – All Extraordinary Ministers of Communion and Mass Coordinators are asked to attend a **training session on Saturday, September 6th, at 10:00am at Stella Maris Church**. This short meeting is to address recent concerns and ensure the Eucharist is handled with the utmost care and reverence. Your attendance is essential, so please record this date and time.

Celebrating and Remembering

We welcome into God's Family, the Church,

Thérèse Kerr, River Lawler and *Enzo Verunque* who will be baptised this weekend in our parish.

Not only this weekend we remember Fr Harry Bliss, our first Parish Priest, but also we pray for all those who have died, especially *Kathleen Brenton*. May Kathleen's soul, and the souls of all our deceased priests, religious, parishioners and family members, through the rich mercy of God,

Rest in Peace.

Catholic Education in our Sunshine Coast Parish

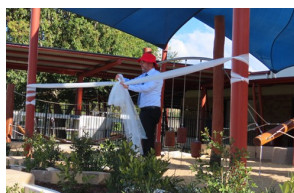
Siena Catholic Primary School

58 Sippy Downs Drive,
Sippy Downs
psippydowns@bne.catholic.edu.au
Principal: Eric Ellems



Siena Catholic Primary School officially opened and blessed its new natural playground, Wunya Grove, in a joyful ceremony Monday afternoon. The event was attended by the school community, parents, Mr Michael Stack, President of the P&F advisory and our Senior Leader, Mr Chris Thomas, who cut the ribbon to mark the occasion. Wunya Grove, named through a community-wide competition, draws from the Kabi Kabi language—"Wunya" meaning hello or welcome, and "Grove" referring to a small group of trees—symbolising a warm and inclusive space for play and connection. The ceremony included an Acknowledgement of Country, prayer, and blessing, honouring the land and the spirit of community that brought this project to life.

This beautiful new space is more than just a playground—it's a place where imagination, adventure, and learning come together. We are deeply grateful to our Parents & Friends Advisory Group for their generous support, which helped make Wunya Grove a reality. Special congratulations to Mrs O'Sullivan and her daughter, Poppy, for their winning name entry. As students begin to explore and enjoy this space, we pray it will be a source of joy, friendship, and discovery for many years to come.



Stella Maris Primary School

Stella Maris Way,
Maroochydore
pmaroochydore@bne.catholic.edu.au
Principal: Mark Ballam



We are very proud of the strong Arts culture we have at Stella Maris School. Recently we have had students perform at two regional competitions. We congratulate all our Speech and Drama students for their outstanding performances at the recent Sunshine Coast Junior Eisteddfod. Special thanks to Ms Harvey for her dedication in preparing and supporting the students, encouraging them to embody Commitment, Confidence, Creativity, Courage, and Compassion. Highlights for our school included:

- 🏆 First Place – Memorised Set Verse (8yrs and Under)
- 🏆 Second Place – Original Character Recital (12yrs and Under)
- 🏆 First Place – Prepared Prose Reading (11–18yrs)

🏆 Third Place – Duologue (13yrs and Under)
Our students have also represented Stella Maris with pride at the Queensland Catholic Schools and Colleges Music Festival in Brisbane. For many, it was their first time performing at this event, and they did so with great spirit and our school values on full display. We congratulate our students in the following areas.

- String Ensemble – Silver
- String Club – Silver
- Concert Band – Silver
- Guitar Ensemble – Gold
- Stella Fellas – Silver
- Stella Bellas – Silver

A heartfelt thank you to the teachers (in particular Mrs Durrer), staff, and families who supported the students, and to the students for sharing their God-given talents, their hard work and dedication.

Siena Catholic College

60 Sippy Downs Drive,
Sippy Downs
ssippydowns@bne.catholic.edu.au
Principal: Sharon Collins



Last week was the National Week of Action Against Bullying and Violence, which is Australia's leading school-based initiative for bullying prevention. It's a time for schools across the country—government, Catholic, and independent—to come together and build a shared understanding of bullying behaviours, while showcasing their policies and strategies to prevent them. This annual event unites school communities in a powerful stand against bullying. By working together, we can foster practical, inclusive approaches that make our schools safer and more supportive for every student.

This year's theme of *"Be bold. Be kind. Speak Up"* reminds us that it takes courage to spark change. Bullying is everyone's responsibility—students, teachers, families, and the wider community all play a role in creating environments where kindness and respect thrive.

- **Be bold** and say something.
- **Be kind** and support someone.
- **Speak up** and take a stand.

Whether in the classroom, in the playground, or online, we want our school to be a place where everyone belongs, where diversity is celebrated, and where bullying is never accepted. Our students completed an array of activities and actions, including making a personal pledge on coloured paper. These were used to create beautiful, coloured chains which are still being displayed on the prayer wall outside Our Wellbeing Centre.

At Siena College, we're proud to be part of this national movement. We encourage our students to be brave and support their peers, and we empower our staff and families to guide young people in positive behaviour. Together, we can build a culture of respect and inclusion—within and beyond the school gate.

Catholic Campaign

The annual Catholic Campaign, which supports our retired priests, seminary, Centacare and the Mary MacKillop Education fund, will be held in our Parish on the weekend of September, 6th and 7th, 2025.

You might have heard us talking about the **RCIA**. The initials simply stand for the **R**ite of **C**hristian **I**nitiation of **A**dults. When people decide they would like to know more about the Catholic Faith, we invite them to COME AND SEE by joining the **RCIA** Group. The **RCIA**, also called the Catechumenate, is the process by which adult persons are brought into membership of the Roman Catholic Church. Over the past two years, we have welcomed over 60 adults into the faith and currently have an **RCIA** group journeying towards baptism and full communion towards the end of the year.

We have received several inquiries from adults wanting to discover more about what we believe as Catholics, so we are in the process of starting a new **RCIA** group, probably in late September – are you interested? If you would like more information, please talk to either Fr Peter or Fr Isaac or email Dylan Asmus, asmusd@bne.catholic.net.au

Available at the entrance of all four of our churches, we have new information envelopes containing details about our **Parish Planned Giving** programme and the many ways you can support your Parish and our **Endowment Fund**, which will provide your Parish Family with financial security into the future. For new and returning members of our Parish, there is a **Welcome Pack**. It contains valuable information about your new Parish Family. Please feel free to take an envelope home with you today. The Parish **Funeral Preparation Pack** is also available at the entrance to the Church. To all new members of our Parish Community, you are welcome—*thanks for being part of our Parish Family.*

