

The BAPTISM of the LORD

Weekend of 10th / 11th January 2026

Embracing the faith communities of St Mary's Buderim, St Peter's Coolum, 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.

As the Church celebrates the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, we are invited to pause and reflect on our own Baptism and what it truly means for our lives today. When Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan and was baptised by John, he revealed not only his identity as the beloved Son of the Father, but also the path by which our own lives would be given meaning and direction. That moment, remembered in the Church's prayer this weekend, reminds us that Baptism is not simply a past event, but a living reality that continues to shape who we are.

It is widely recognised that a loss of meaning in life leads to a crisis of purpose and identity. The psychiatrist, Viktor Frankl powerfully illustrated this in his reflections on human suffering, noting that those who could find meaning, even in the most terrible circumstances, were able to endure far more than those who could not. His insight remains deeply relevant today: when people know why they are living, they can face almost any challenge that comes their way.

Yet many voices in contemporary culture deny that life has any deeper meaning at all. If there is no God, then existence is reduced to chance, survival, and personal gratification. As religious faith fades from public life, many people experience a growing sense of emptiness and disorientation. Mental health professionals often note that beneath anxiety, despair, and depression lies a deeper spiritual hunger—a longing for meaning that material explanations alone cannot satisfy.

This sense of emptiness can exist even among the baptised. For many of us, Baptism happened so early in life that it has faded into the background of memory. We speak of it as something completed long ago—"I was baptised", rather than recognising it as something that defines us now. Pope Francis once encouraged Christians to know the date of their Baptism, calling it a blessed day and warning that forgetting it can mean forgetting what the Lord has done within us.

Through Baptism, each Christian is anointed as Priest, Prophet, and King. We are drawn into Christ's own relationship with the Father and invited to share in the Church's prayer for the world. We are entrusted with God's word and called to witness to truth and self-giving love, even when it challenges the prevailing culture. We are also given a personal vocation, a unique mission within God's plan, no matter our age, health, or circumstances.

Baptism assures us that our lives are not accidental or meaningless. Though the full significance of our lives remains hidden in God, Baptism gives us a new horizon and a clear direction. Rediscovering this gift allows us to live with confidence, purpose, and hope, grounded in the knowledge that we belong to Christ.

Reu Fr Isaac Falzon

Back to Work

The Christmas trees are looking a little out of place, the tinsel and decorations are coming down, and the post-Christmas sales are in full swing – it must be time to think about getting back to normal. Our Parish Office reopens this Monday, and we welcome back Lee Coghlan and Trish Kelly, our two eager secretaries. Joining them will be Carrolyn Watt, our Sacramental Coordinator and Georgia Whiteley, our Digital Manager along with all our generous parish volunteers. Welcome back to another exciting year!

When we forgive – we heal When we let go – we grow

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



At Your Service

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

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, 12th January

- ♦ Benediction (5:15pm, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (5:30pm, Stella Maris Church)

Tuesday, 13th January

- ♦ **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris Primary School Chapel)

Wednesday, 14th January

- ♦ **Mass** (7:00am, St Mary's Church)
- ♦ **NO Mass** (9:00am, St Catherine of Siena Church)

Thursday, 15th January

- ♦ **Mass** (8:30am, St Peter's Church)

Friday, 16th January

- ♦ **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ Grief Support Meeting (9:30am, Stella Maris)
- ♦ Community Meal for the Homeless, Vulnerable and Disadvantaged (6:00pm, Stella Maris)

Saturday, 17th January

- ♦ Reconciliation (8:30—9:30am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ Baptisms (10:00am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ Jesus Shine Catholic Charismatic Prayer Group (11:00am, St Catherine's Church)
- ♦ **Vigil Mass** (4:30pm, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Vigil Mass** (6:00pm, Stella Maris Church)

Sunday, 18th January

Second Sunday in Ordinary time

- ♦ **Mass** (6:30am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (7:30am, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (8:00am, St Catherine of Siena Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (9:30am, St Mary's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (5:00pm, Stella Maris Church)

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.

Ordinary Time

This coming week, on Monday in fact, we begin Ordinary Time. The title *Ordinary Time* is a bit misleading. Many people think Ordinary Time refers to parts in the calendar of the Catholic Church that are unimportant. Actually, Ordinary Time is called "ordinary" not because it is common but simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are numbered.

The Latin word *ordinalis*, which refers to numbers in a series, stems from the Latin word *ordo*, from which we get the English word *order*. Thus, the numbered weeks of Ordinary Time, in fact, represent the ordered life of the Church, the period in which we live our lives either in feasting (as in the Christmas and Easter seasons) or in more severe penance (as in Advent and Lent), but in watchfulness and expectation of the Second Coming of Christ. *Nothing ordinary about that!*

So, we set off on this journey, only interrupted by Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday starts late this year, falling on the 18th February.

The anxious faces on many children and the relieved faces on many adults seem to indicate that summer holidays are quickly drawing to a close – relax – you still have 17 days before school starts! To visitors and families enjoying the last of the school holidays, thank you for joining us today.

An Invitation to You

Our Parish Family is blessed with countless people who quietly fulfil ministry roles within our community. We all have been given gifts that differ, and along our pilgrimage of life, we are challenged to share those gifts! From being involved in our weekly liturgical life, to reaching out to our brothers and sisters who cannot join us on a Sunday, to simply helping ensure that our community runs smoothly, and is responsive to the changing challenges we face, we all have a role to play.

At the start of every year, we invite the entire Parish Family to reflect upon the ministerial needs of our community and invite you to consider being involved in one of those ministries. Your chance to recommit to your ministry or sign up for a ministry will be on the weekend of 31st January and 1st February. Between now and then, please consider accepting the invitation to be involved in the ministerial life of our Catholic Family.

Handing on the Faith

The start of another New Year means the start of another Sacramental Program. Handing on the faith is the most important mission of our community, and assisting parents with their task is something we take seriously as a Parish Family. All baptised children in Year 3 or above are welcome to join our Confirmation program and all children in Year 4 or above, who have celebrated their Confirmation, are invited to join our First Holy Communion program. Parents are invited to go to our parish website; maroochydoreparish.com.au, for more information and 2026 dates. Confirmation registration will open on Monday 9th March.

Baptismal Guidelines

Firstly, registration for all baptisms is via our website: maroochydoreparish.com.au

Our online registration is very easy with 4 basic steps:

1. Fill out the online registration form
2. Attend a baptism preparation session; details will be emailed upon receipt of the registration form
3. To comply with government legislation, both parents must sign the parental authority
4. Choose a godparent (must be Catholic, 16 years or older, in good standing with the Church).

Infant Baptism: 0 – 6 years

- ♦ Parent(s) attend Baptismal Preparation on the first Thursday of the month.
- ♦ Baptisms are celebrated Saturday morning, 10:00am at Stella Maris Church or St Catherine of Siena Church. Dates are able to be booked on attendance at the preparation night.

Older Children Baptism: 7 - 15 years

- ♦ Parent and candidate to attend Baptism Preparation session 10:30am, Sunday 22nd March, at Stella Maris Church, Maroochydore.
- ♦ Candidate is required to attend five Masses and complete a baptism workbook.
- ♦ Baptisms will take place during Mass on the first Saturday of the month, 8:00am at Stella Maris Church, Maroochydore.

Older Children: 16- 17 years

- ♦ This age group will participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Youth. Dates will be set according to need.

Adults aged 18 years and over:

- ♦ Register via the Becoming a Catholic/RCIA drop down menu on the website. A new group is about to begin!