



Stella Maris Catholic Parish

Twenty Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Weekend of August 29 & 30, 2026 Year A

First Reading: Jeremiah 20:7-9 Second Reading: Romans 12:1-2 Gospel: Matthew 16:21-27

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 Parish Office

Adjacent to the Stella Maris Church,
Maroochydore

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At Your Service

Fr Peter Brannelly

Fr Gerard Lai

Bishop Brian Heenan

Bishop Emeritus

The Courage to Choose

M. Scott Peck was an American psychiatrist probably better known for his 1978 bestselling book **"The Road Less Travelled."** In it, he wrote that **"problems are the cutting edge between success and failure. Problems call forth our courage and our wisdom; indeed, they create our courage and our wisdom."**

The more you think about that quote, the more profound it becomes. In the midst of what we might consider our boring, mundane everyday lives we are continually confronted by problems which one way or the other, we need to face. For example, imagine you are a senior student at one of our local colleges.

You are eagerly looking forward to the freedom and exciting opportunities and experiences that lie just beyond your grasp. One of your fellow students, a person that your classmates isolate and, for whatever reason, pick on, is falsely accused of stealing \$100 from a teacher's wallet. However, you know that he was not the thief. Instead, you witnessed your friend take the money. Now, is loyalty or truth more important? What do you do? In one sense, it would be easier to do nothing. After all, there is nothing to associate you with the crime. You did not take the money. You can rationalise and justify doing nothing. Bad luck for the other student who got blamed, but you could stay free and stay clear.

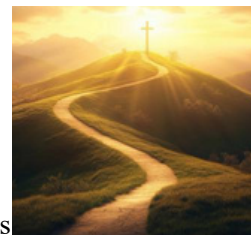
Once again, **"problems are the cutting edge between success and failure. Problems call forth our courage and our wisdom; indeed, they create our courage and our wisdom."**

Sometimes what makes a problem tough is not that we don't know what to do - but rather we know all too well what we should do. Sure, to do nothing is easier - but by taking that easy way out, it has devastating consequences for others.

Grappling with problems and having the courage to face challenges and the consequences of making decisions provides a perfect backdrop to this weekend's gospel. If you listen carefully to the Gospel, you will hear Peter who simply wants to protect Jesus from the suffering that he predicted. Using harsh words, Jesus strongly rebukes Peter for trying to diminish or take a shortcut around the cross because it is too difficult. What Peter is yet to understand is that discipleship is not simply the avoidance of evil. **There are problems to be confronted and choices to be made.** This means, in simple words, that discipleship is also the proactive engagement that actively takes on what is good, seeks out what is right, has the courage to work for justice and does not necessarily run with the crowd because it is safe.

How that young student in the final year of school, with the rest of his life before him, deals with the problem of the stolen \$100 is important. At every stage of life there are problems to be confronted and choices to be made. We are reminded today that there are no short cuts around faith and discipleship - indeed, perhaps the crosses of our lives and the problems we confront and the choices we make are the vehicles for bringing the promise of resurrection to the lives of those with whom we share the journey of life!

Fr Peter



Thank you to everyone for your positive feedback and suggestions as we grapple with the challenge of purchasing the strategic adjoining property beside Stella Maris. Your fundraising ideas were creative, and your enthusiasm is appreciated and contagious! At the moment, your Parish Finance Committee is grappling with the reality that we need to find the 8 million before the 10th September to put in an "expression of interest". Don't be afraid to approach any member of the Finance Committee if you have a suggestion or a way forward. Paying off any loan over 20 years is not the problem - raising the initial capital is! Thanks for your active support. **Please keep your parish in your prayers during this anxious time!**

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, August 31

- Adoration (4:30pm, Stella Maris)
- Benediction (5:15pm, Stella Maris)
- **Mass** (5:30pm, Stella Maris)

Tuesday, September 1

- **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris School Chapel)
- Craft Group (1:00pm, St Peters)

Wednesday, September 2

- **Mass** (7:00am, St Mary's)
- **Mass** (9:00am, St Catherine's)
- Pray & Play (9:30am, The Annex)
- Scripture Study Group (9:30am, Zoom)
- Community Teams Meeting: **Coolum:** 12:00pm, **Buderim:** 2:30pm, **Sippy Downs:** 4:00pm, **Maroochydore:** 6:00pm
- Latin Prayer Group (6:00pm, Stella Maris)

Thursday, September 3

- **Mass** (8:30am, St Peter's)
- SVDP Meeting (following Mass, St Peter's)
- Baptism Preparation (6:00pm, Stella Maris)

Friday, September 4

- **Mass & Anointing** (9:00am, Stella Maris)
- Craft Group (9:30am, Stella Maris)
- Pilgrimage Talk (10:30am, Stella Maris)
- Community Meal (6:00pm, Stella Maris)

Saturday, September 5

- **First Saturday Mass** (8:00am, Stella Maris)
- Reconciliation (8:30—9:30am, Stella Maris)
- Rosary Making Group (9:30am, Stella Maris)
- Jesus Shine Prayer Group (11am, St Catherine's)

- **Vigil Mass** (4:30pm, St Peter's)
- **Vigil Mass** (6:00pm, Stella Maris)

Sunday, September 6 *23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time*

- **Mass** (6:30am, Stella Maris) *Father's Day*
- **Mass** (7:30am, St Peter's)
- **Mass** (8:00am, St Catherine's) *(Children's Church)*
- **Mass** (9:00am, Stella Maris) *(Children's Church)*
- **Mass** (9:30am, St Mary's) *(Children's Church)*
- **Maronite Mass** (10:00am, St Catherine's)
- No Junior Ministers or 10/10 Youth Group today
- **Mass** (5:00pm, Stella Maris) *(Children's Church)*
- Veritas (6:00pm, 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.



An assisted hearing loop has been installed at Stella Maris – please contact the Mass coordinator or sacristan to access the system.

Appeal

The annual **Catholic Campaign** will be held across our parish this weekend. It will be our chance to think beyond the borders of our parish and support agencies that reach out and support the homeless, the marginalised, the elderly, our future priests in formation and families in dire circumstances. Five key ministries that provide care to those who need it most:

The **Mary MacKillop Brisbane Catholic School Access Fund**, which helps ensure that children whose families are experiencing severe hardship have access to Catholic education.

Holy Spirit Seminary, which prepares future Queensland priests for ministry, fostering faith, humility, collaboration and service.

The Priests Foundation, which ensures that priests who have spent their lives in service are themselves supported with care and dignity in their retirement.

Centacare's Pastoral Ministries, which offers support through domestic and family violence support, in hospitals and prisons, through counselling and through servicing families most in need.

The Annual Grants Program, which supports a range of parish and community initiatives through funding for grassroots programs that make a profound difference in local communities.

There are envelopes on your seats or at the entrance to the church – your generous support is appreciated. Please place the appeal envelopes on the collection plate either today or next weekend.

Baptismal Preparation

This coming week, being the first of the month, we host our baptismal preparation meeting this Thursday, September 3, 6:00pm at Stella Maris Church. This short meeting, intended for parents with infant children, is our chance to describe and explain some of the symbols of baptism and their meaning while at the same time confirming the time and location of the baptism. Please visit our parish webpage and complete the baptism registration details before attending the meeting.

Leadership

As the largest parish in the state, coordination is vital in ensuring that our Parish Family runs smoothly while at the same time ensuring that new and exciting faith initiatives are also explored. This task falls largely onto the shoulders of the generous members of our four local groups. At these meetings we not only address current and pressing local issues but also look to the future and plan for ministry outreach and programmes that strengthen our Parish Family. Coolum meets at: 12:00pm; Buderim: 2:30pm; Sippy Downs: 4:00pm and Maroochydore: 6:00pm this Wednesday, September 4.

First Friday

On the first Friday of every month, we celebrate a special healing Mass at our 9:00am Stella Maris Mass. Please let your neighbours and friends know about this Special Mass, especially if transport is an issue! At the conclusion of the Mass, everyone is invited to morning tea. Fr Gerard is giving his talk after morning tea.

The next Rosary Making Ministry Group will be gathering on next Saturday 5th September from 9.30 to 11.30am in the Bliss Room. New members always welcome – please join us

WHERE FAITH AND LIFE MEET

We welcome into God's Family, the Church **Louie Polsen** who will be baptised this weekend.

We pray for all those who have died, especially **Roy & Nola Thompson** and **Marion Crothers**. May their souls and the souls of all our deceased priests, Religious, family members and members of our parish community, through the rich mercy of God,

Rest in Peace.

Celebration

Congratulations to the 109 younger parishioners of our Parish who celebrated their First Holy Communion last weekend. Especially we want to acknowledge our sacramental coordinator, Carolyn Watt, the catechists and families that journeyed with our First Holy Communicants during their five week journey of preparation. There are photos of our celebrations posted on our parish webpage and the 9:00am and 5:00pm First Communion Masses can also be accessed via our parish web page.

Everyone is Welcome

On the first weekend of the month the special focus of our community is hospitality – remembering and recognising how important it is to welcome the visitor as well as the fellow parishioner. Next weekend, being the first of the month, please accept this invitation and help make hospitality real in our parish family – why not bring along a plate of finger food and invite a neighbour?

A Great and Meaningful Day

Congratulations to the leadership team of Sisterhood, our parish ministry for women, who successfully coordinated this weekend's Women's Retreat. A lot of unseen work and preparation goes into hosting an event of this size and nature and many people are involved to ensure the success of the day. Photos of the day, including highlights of Guest speaker Geraldine Doogue's presentation and insights will be posted on our parish webpage during the week.

Don't forget our 9:00am & 5:00pm Sunday Masses are live streamed – *just go to our parish web page and follow the links.*

Safeguarding

Safeguarding Training is an Archdiocesan requirement for those volunteers who need a Blue Card or Police Check for their ministries. The Parish Safeguarding Team will be holding face to face training at 10:00am, Monday, September 7, in the Bliss Room at Stella Maris Church for those who have not completed their online training. If you have any questions, please call a member of our Safeguarding Team who are in the Parish Office every Monday from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Please register your attendance by emailing: lsr.suncoast@bne.catholic.net.au

Our parish school holiday programme **Fun Days With God** will be on Tuesday, September 22. We only have limited numbers, so it is important to register now to reserve a place. The programme is designed for children between Prep and Grade 6 and the cost is \$10.00 per child or \$20.00 per family. Please follow the link via the QR code to register.



A Journey to Medjugorje

Join Fr Gerard as he shares about his recent pilgrimage to Medjugorje, the well-known Catholic pilgrimage destination in southeastern Europe associated with reported apparitions of Our Lady.

Friday, September 04 – Stella Maris Church
9:00am – Mass & Anointing (optional)

10:00am – Morning Tea *kindly sponsored by Holy Cross Funerals*

10:30am – Presentation; Concluding at 11:30am

Come along for Mass, morning tea, fellowship and stories about Medjugorje!



It's Good To Know.....

The red sanctuary lamp, hanging in the Blessed Sacrament chapel, signifies that Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament, reserved in the tabernacle. The lamp, found in some form in all Catholic churches, is an echo of the instruction in Exodus 20:20-21, when God tells Moses that a perpetual lamp should burn outside the veil in front of the ark of the covenant, the most holy place. The flame also reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12) and remains with us in the Eucharist, as we hear in Matthew 20:20 - 'I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

If you are new to our Parish and have just started joining with us as we celebrate the Eucharist each week, these are some of the simple questions that sometimes confound and confuse. On the first and third Sunday of each month, following the 5:00pm Sunday evening Mass, **our Veritas group** gathers specifically to help answer some of these questions. Everyone is welcome to join us next Sunday as we explore some of the symbols and habits that as Catholics we take for granted, but for others can be confusing! *Please join us!*

Next Sunday at the 9:00am Mass, we welcome members of our local Order of **St. John of Jerusalem Knights Hospitaller**, Sunshine Coast Priory. The Grand Priory of Australasia is part of the ancient Order of chivalry, the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, an ecumenical Christian Order with a focus on charitable and humanitarian service, particularly serving the sick, the poor and those in need.

MUMS & DADS GRANDMUMS & GRANDDADS

Every Wednesday morning from 9:30am to 11:00am, parents with smaller 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 and, in the process, have some fun. Grandparents are especially welcome to share their experiences and stories while, at the same time, enjoy the energy and inquisitiveness of those just starting out on the great adventure of life.

Sunshine Coast Catholic Education

Siena Catholic Primary School

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



Book Week 2026 – A Symphony of Stories

Our Book Week celebrations brought this year's theme, Symphony of Stories, to life as students, staff and families came together to celebrate the joy and wonder of reading. Our Book Week Parade was a colourful highlight, with imaginative costumes inspired by much-loved characters and stories.

Thank you to our staff for embracing the fun and helping to create such a joyful celebration. Some staff acted out the classic story, 'I'm Going on a Bear Hunt'. Our Semitone choir and the whole school also raised their voices together in a spirited Book Week song, adding another wonderful note to our symphony.

The celebrations continue with Meerkat Productions presenting a live, interactive adaptation of a CBCA-shortlisted book for our Prep to Year 3 students. This year's performance is based on Dear Broccoli by Jo Dabrowski.

Students in Years 4 to 6 will enjoy a special visit from author Dave Lowe, creator of the Stinky & Jinks series and a writer for Bluey. His visit will offer our older students an engaging insight into storytelling and the creative writing process.

We sincerely thank Mrs Tonkes, and our families for supporting the parade and nurturing a love of reading at home. Book Week reminds us that every story contributes its own unique voice and that, together, they create a rich and joyful symphony that connects our school, parish and wider community.

Stella Maris Primary School

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



Book Week at Stella Maris was nothing short of miraculous!

For one glorious day, our school was transformed into a gathering of storybook adventurers, wizards, animals and characters of every description. Students and staff proudly paraded their favourite literary heroes, proving that a good book can generate almost as much excitement as hearing there's no homework!

Throughout the week, students enjoyed reading activities, book-themed challenges, author-inspired learning and plenty of opportunities to celebrate the joy of stories. As a Catholic community, we recognise the power of stories to teach, inspire and reveal truth. Just as Jesus used parables to share God's love, books help us grow in wisdom, imagination and understanding.

A huge thank you to our families for their creativity and support. We are grateful for another wonderful Book Week that reminded us that every great adventure begins by opening a book... and occasionally by dressing as one!

Siena Catholic College

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



It was a little quieter around the College last week, as our Year 8s travelled to Emu Gully at Helidon, where they had the opportunity to develop their teamwork and leadership skills by participating in a program focused on the values of courage, mateship, sacrifice and perseverance. They arrived home on Wednesday very keen to enjoy a home-cooked meal and to relax in their comfortable beds.

Last Friday saw us gather for our annual Siena Day celebrations. It was a little soggy underfoot, but that didn't stop the fun. We began the day with prayer, moved on to tabloid sports and then enjoyed time together to relax. The day concluded with the hotly contested House races and the much-anticipated Red Faces competition and, if you have checked out our socials, you might also have seen some fancy dance moves from our teachers!

This Wednesday, all students engaged in a Safe on Social Program, which taught them how to navigate the realities of technology and AI and showed them how online crises can unfold. Our Year 7 and 12 students also attended the St Catherine's Community Mass. During his homily, Fr Gerard challenged them to ensure that they act with integrity, ensuring that they match what they do with what they believe and know to be right and just.

Every Sunday afternoon, 3:00pm at Stella Maris, our parish **10:10 High School Youth Group** gathers – if you are in high school, come along and join us! Coordinated by our NET team, it is an afternoon of fun, faith and friendship, with a bit of food thrown in! Don't be shy – we would love to hook up with you and meet you.

Visit our Facebook page! There is just too much happening in our Parish to fit into our weekly newsletter! You will receive updates on what's happening within the parish, religious articles and content of interest. It is also a way we contact you with urgent news. "Like" our Facebook page, and you will be kept notified of new posts and help to promote the Parish page to more viewers. Just go to www.facebook.com/mission.stella/ and click on the 'thumbs up' under any of our posts.



The first weekend of the month is also the time when we have the trailer at the lower carpark at Stella Maris to accept your empty bottles and cans. We take your empties to the local Containers for Change, and the process supports our youth program. There are orange Containers for Change bags at the entrance to the church to assist you, but bringing your bottles and cans in any container will work just as well. Thank you to Knights of the Southern Cross, who completed the process by taking the trailer full of bottles and cans to the local Containers for Change depot. Alternatively, a better way to support this initiative is to take your bottles and cans directly to one of the local Containers for Change centres and quote our **number C10193859**. Every little bit helps! *Thanks for your continued thirsty support.*

