

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 is paramount.

St Joseph, the Courageous Father

In this week's gospel, we reflect on St Joseph's call to be the guardian and caretaker of Jesus and Mary.

We often see St Joseph as "A Beloved Father," with care and devotion to Mary and Jesus, as an "Obedient Father" who listened to God's will, and as an "Accepting Father" who embraced his circumstances and lovingly took responsibility for his part in God's plan. But let us consider another attribute of Joseph, that of the "Courageous Father".

"Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife".

Courage helped Joseph to respond to his vocation as father and husband, to care for and protect Jesus and Mary. Pope Francis reminds us, "In the face of difficulty, we can either give up and walk away, or somehow engage with it." Saint Joseph faced up to difficulties, despite his natural fears. That is what courage is—being scared to death, but moving toward, rather than away from the difficulties. His courage was not without fear, it was an affirmative act of the will, despite his fear, by which Joseph could, "Get up, take the Child and His Mother" and work out what was required to keep them safe.

Earlier this week, my family and I visited Phillip Island and went to see the little Fairy Penguins. Each night, these fascinating creatures gather on the shore and make their way, in the safety of numbers, to take food back to their nests. Although they are among thousands of other penguins, they recognise the individual calls of their own loved ones, and return each evening to care for them. They wait until after the sun sets to minimise the risk of being preyed upon by hungry eagles, and show courage as they step out together to reach their families. They are often knocked back by waves, but stand up again and try again, until they make it ashore.

Courage means you don't need to be told all the details of "how" to meet the challenges but use your natural and God-given gifts to overcome difficulties as they arise. God acts through events and people. Joseph was a man chosen by God. He was the "miracle" through whom God protected Jesus and Mary. God acted by trusting in Joseph's courage.

We often give God all the credit, and rightfully so, but often overlook the fact that sometimes our human capabilities are precisely what God is depending on. God can act in any way He wants but He acts through "events and people," through each one of us. Grace perfects nature. Pope Francis says that "If at times God seems not to help us, surely this does not mean that we have been abandoned, but instead are being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions ourselves." This highlights the amazing, reassuring, and mysterious truth that our lives are actually a collaboration or partnership with God.

Joseph was an outstanding example of courage. Taking care of Jesus and Mary did not come with a handbook. It took courage and using God's grace to put his role into action. He is an example to all of us and a reminder to husbands and fathers that they should treasure and care for their wives and children, as Joseph did and as the little Fairy Penguins do, loving them with care and courage.

Deacon Michael Khoury

PARISH NEWSLETTER for the FOURTH SUNDAY of ADVENT Year A
WEEKEND OF 17 / 18 DECEMBER 2022

Proper of the Mass

First Reading: Is 7:10-14 Second Reading: Rom 1:1-7 Gospel: Matthew 1:18-24

Parish Priests

Fr Peter Brannelly PP
Fr William Aupito Iuliano

Deacon

Rev Michael Khoury

Parish Office

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Parish Mass Times This Week

WEEKEND MASSES

Maroochydore
Saturday 6.00pm
Sunday 6.30am,
9am & 5pm

Coolum Beach
Saturday 4.30pm
Sunday 7.30am

Buderim
Sunday 9.30am

Sippy Downs
Sunday 8.00am

WEEKDAY MASSES

No Mass Monday
Tuesday 9.00am
*Stella Maris School,
Maroochydore*

Wednesday 7.00am
Buderim

Wednesday 9.00am
Sippy Downs

Thursday 8.30am
Coolum Beach

Friday 9.00am
Maroochydore

ברוך הבא Velkommen bienvenido

bienvenu baha bonvenigar haere mai 歡迎

However you want to say it

welcome!

**For all our visitors and friends reconnecting with us -
thanks for joining us as we celebrate together the
4th Sunday of Advent.**

You are Invited

This Monday at 5pm at Stella Maris you and your family and friends are all invited as we celebrate our **Christmas Communal Rite of Reconciliation**. There is no more appropriate time of the year than in these days leading up to the birth of the Christ Child to put things right with your God and your neighbour. We are grateful for the priests of the surrounding Parishes for assisting us on Monday.

Set the Alarm

Don't forget to set the alarm early for our annual **Misa de Gallo** next Friday morning. *Misa de gallo* (pronounced MEE-sah day GAH-yoh) means "rooster's mass" in Spanish. Mass starts next Friday morning, December 23rd, at 4am and everyone is welcome to celebrate the Mass and join in the festivities afterwards.

Christmas Masses

We need to finalize our liturgical rosters for the Christmas Masses next weekend. If you are a liturgical minister and will be celebrating Christmas with us next weekend could you please check the roster at the entrance to the church. A big thank you to all our coordinators and volunteers for ensuring that everything will flow smoothly over Christmas.

After Christmas

To take advantage of the post Christmas period and to allow our administrative staff some of their annual leave, the Parish Office will be closed from this Friday afternoon and reopen on Monday morning, January 9th. In case of a pastoral emergency you can call 0455 325 098. Please note the changes to our weekday Masses during this time.

Our Christmas Elves



As the countdown to Christmas reaches its crescendo and we get swamped with the busyness and demands of this season, it is important to thank all those behind the scenes who have helped us along our Advent journey. Our sacristans, musicians, liturgical ministers, maintenance volunteers, welcomers, church cleaners and team leaders are the glue that holds our community together during the four weeks of Advent. Especially, we are appreciative of those who have prepared our sanctuaries – the Advent wreaths, nativity scenes, appropriate flowers and liturgical colours are all a powerful visual reminder of what we are really celebrating this Christmas. From the great multitude of parishioners and visitors – thank you.

Exodus 90

I would like to formally invite the men of our Parish to join in a ninety-day spiritual exercise. I think we're at an important cross-roads in the life of our society where we need authentic and masculine men to stand up for the Church and her Mission.

My hope is that through this experience things like discipline and reflection become a bigger part of my life. Come along as I venture out into the unknown and see what God has in store for you. Exodus 90 is based on three pillars: prayer, asceticism, and fraternity. The Exodus 90 experience is no walk in the park, but the spiritual benefits are amazing and life-changing.

Our Parish Exodus 90 journey will begin on January 9th and will run for ninety days until April 9th which is Easter Sunday. If you would like to learn more about Exodus 90 just go to <https://exodus90.com/> and we'll have an information night Thursday 29th December at 6pm, Stella Maris Church.

Fr William

Thank You

The members of the Parish Finance Council held their scheduled meeting last Monday and reviewed our Parish accounts and continued to prepare the Parish budget for 2023. The Finance Committee are particularly grateful for the continued support of parishioners and friends of the Parish which enabled us to reduce the Parish debt from \$1906517 to \$1752543 during the course of this year – thank you.

There are many ways to contribute to supporting our parish mission financially:

- Weekly as an Envelope or Cash Giver – the weekend Mass collection plate
- Our \$10 Tap N Go box in the Church
- Direct Debit: The Parish Office can organise monthly, fortnightly or weekly – Direct Debit or Credit Card transfers (your contributions are withdrawn automatically). Alternatively, you are welcome to do a direct transfer to our parish bank account: BSB 064 786 Acc No. 100000037 - Ref your name and Envelope Number (if you have one).

Once again a huge thank you for your continued support.

The Sounds of Christmas

The annual Ecumenical Carols Service was a great success, with our local Coolum churches participating. Waves of Harmony were at their Yuletide best and refreshments were enjoyed by the festive group.



St Mary's Report

St Mary's Community Team acknowledges the volunteers from the Parish, for donating their energy, skills and time in November, to complete the maintenance tasks of cleaning, repairing, sanding and painting of the decks and woodwork on the outside of the Church.

St Mary's is now 'Sparkling!' Thanks also, to those who assisted with Car Parking at St Mary's during the Buderim Community Carols on Sunday 11th December. Donations received from Patrons contributed to Vinnie's Christmas Appeal!

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.*

Saturday, 17 December

- ♦ **Communal Rite of Reconciliation** (9.00am, Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Caloundra)
- ♦ 10am Baptism of infants (Stella Maris)
- ♦ **Vigil Mass** (4.30pm, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Vigil Mass** (6.00pm, Stella Maris Church)

Sunday, 18 December

- ♦ **Mass** (6.30am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** including Children's Liturgy during Mass (7.30am, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (8am, St Catherine of Siena Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (9am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (9.30am, St Mary's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (5pm, Stella Maris Church)

Monday, 19 December

- ♦ No Adoration or Mass today.
- ♦ **Communal Rite of Reconciliation** (5.00pm, Stella Maris Church)

Tuesday, 20 December

- ♦ **Mass** (9.00am, Stella Maris School Chapel)

Wednesday, 21 December

- ♦ **Mass** (7am, St Mary's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (9am, St Catherine of Siena Church)

Thursday, 22 December

- ♦ **Mass** (8.30am, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ 2pm Rosary & Divine Mercy (Stella Maris)

Friday, 23 December

- ♦ **Misa de Gallo Mass** (4.00am, Stella Maris)
- ♦ **Mass** (9am, Stella Maris)
- ♦ 2pm Stations of the Cross (Stella Maris)
- ♦ Community Meal for the Homeless, Vulnerable and Disadvantaged (6pm, Stella Maris Church)

Sunday, 25 December

- ♦ **Polish Mass** (4.00pm, St Mary's Church)

Christmas Masses are listed below

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS 2022

Christmas Eve - Saturday, 24 December

Maroochydore	4.00pm (carols from 3.30pm)
* Sippy Downs	5.00pm (carols from 4.30pm)
(* bring a blanket or chair)	
Coolum Beach	5.00pm
Maroochydore	6.00pm (carols from 5.30pm)
Coolum Beach	7.00pm
Buderim	7.30pm (carols from 7.00pm)
Maroochydore	Midnight (carols from 11.30am)

Christmas Day - Sunday, 25 December

Maroochydore	6.30am
Coolum Beach	7.30am
Maroochydore	9.00am
Buderim	9.30am

For many in our community the men and women of our local St Vincent de Paul Society are the face of the Church. At Christmas especially their work and ministry, quietly, behind the scenes, makes a world of difference in the lives of so many. It is through your continued generosity that the work of St Vincent de Paul continues and on behalf of the members of Vinnies, thank you. Last Monday, Fr William joined with the members of our local Vinnies Conference to bless the Christmas Hampers that will be distributed to those in need this Christmas.



Next week we will be inundated with the crowds that somehow only appear at Christmas. For all of us, regular Mass goes or not, Christmas is an important time. The incredible numbers of people of all ages who will join us next week speak volumes for the significance of Christmas in their lives. Before all of that happens, I recently came across an article in the *Commonweal Magazine* called the *Jingle Bell Mass* which reminded me that here in our Sunshine Coast Parish, next week, everyone has a role to play as we celebrate our Christmas Masses.

Almost every parish I know has a Jingle Bell Mass. It's the one celebrated late in the afternoon on Christmas Eve. It might also be referred to as the Christmas Vigil, the Family Friendly Mass, or in some places, the Children's Mass. However, I've called it the Jingle Bell Mass ever since the time I walked over to the church and caught a lady (whom I had never seen before) roping off two entire pews with festive red ribbon, all the while grinning and humming *Jingle Bells*. When I asked her what she was doing, she matter-of-factly explained that she was saving seats for her family. It was three hours before Mass time.

This is the Mass where you try to cram eight hundred people into a church that seats four hundred and pray that the Fire Department doesn't close you down. This is the Mass where you politely ask people to finish their skinny latte and cappuccino and cans of Redhill outside. This is the Mass filled with children who are sugar-high with excitement and adults who are dazed from holiday prep work, where teens are texting their friends who are sitting on the other side of the church—while on their way to Communion. This is the Mass attended by the famous bi-annually faithful. Most of all, this is the Mass that presents a pastoral opportunity like no other all year.

On this occasion the church is like an untouched field of snow. We have a chance to make an impression at the liturgy, a chance to either offer a reason to come back, or (at the very least) not feed anyone's determination to stay away. Priests, cut your homilies. This isn't the time to break out your seminary-trained brilliance, but a chance to make a simple, clear point with a minimum of words. Trust that people have watched enough Hallmark specials to understand symbol. And, please address yourself to the adults, not the kids. If you've done your job, both will understand you, but only those carrying a valid driver's license will make the choice to return to your parish some other Sunday. Be sensitive, too, to the many faiths embraced by those who are sitting in front of you. Remember that some folks are there out of love for their families, not the Church. Finally, do not say how you wish attendance could be this good every Sunday. You don't. Plus, it won't be guilt that brings people back.

Liturgy committees, hold off on the schmaltz. Leave the "Happy Birthday Cakes for Jesus" in the second-grade Religious Education classrooms. Be careful with secular symbol. Many years ago I was in a parish where a certain "visual meditation" would set my teeth on edge. After Communion, in dead silence, Santa Claus would slowly walk down the main aisle, carrying a huge sack. He would stop at the crèche, kneel for a moment, and then walk out the side door of the church. No matter what you're thinking right now, trust me: it's creepier in person. Plus, it confuses the kids – "what's he doing here? Why isn't he delivering toys somewhere in the world? My iPhone app says that Norad is tracking him over Europe right now."

Congregations, give welcome to the strangers. I know that you occupy Pew 35 left side every week of the year and, at this Mass, an entire family from outside the parish has taken up residence there. Be gracious with your real estate, generous with your hospitality. Look for a seat somewhere else. Also, refrain from casting dirty looks at the mother of the crying baby. That small act of asceticism will go a long way towards establishing world peace. Try to do your part. When Mass is over, if you should see a candy cane stuck to a hymnal or a bulletin folded into an origami hat, please help to put things back in order. That would be most appreciated and, after all, you're a "regular". You own the place!

Not every parish can turn Christmas Mass at Midnight into an exquisite production, featuring a choir singing carols in four-part harmony and five languages. But every parish can turn their Jingle Bell Mass into an extraordinary opportunity for hospitality, where there is room for everyone, **even Jesus**.

So you see, here at Stella Maris, St Peter's, St Catherine's and St Mary's, everyone has a part to play as next week we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child.

Celebrating and Remembering

We welcome into God's Family, the Church, **Henry Nielsen** who will be baptised this weekend in our Parish.

We pray for all those who have died, especially **Barbara Currie**, whose funeral rites will be celebrated at the **Stella Maris Church this Monday at 1.00pm** and **Mary Dillon**, whose funeral rites will be celebrated at the **Stella Maris Church this Tuesday at 10.30am**. May their souls and the souls of all our departed priests, religious, parishioners and family members, through the rich mercy of God, **Rest in Peace**.