

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT—GAUDETE SUNDAY

Weekend of 16/17 December 2023

First Reading: Is 61: 1-2, 10-11 Second Reading: 1 Thess 5:16-24 Gospel: Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

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

GAUDETE SUNDAY

It is hard to believe that we have already reached the third Sunday of Advent which is also called "Gaudete or Rejoice Sunday." This week we light the rose-coloured candle on the advent wreath, as a sign of joy and hope. We focus on Jesus' coming as the reason to rejoice and we celebrate the joy that comes from knowing that 'God is with us'.

There are so many issues in the world today that may challenge our need to rejoice. Natural disasters, wars, crime, injustice, hatred, poverty, domestic violence and political strife, may leave us questioning why we should rejoice.

Despite all these troubles, we can find joy in the salvation that comes to us through Jesus Christ. Joy is not just a feeling of happiness or pleasure. It is a deeper sense of peace and gratitude that comes from trusting in God's love and promises. Joy is not dependent on our circumstances, but on our relationship with God. Joy is powerful. Joy fills us with life, confidence, excitement, love, energy, power! It is a gift that God gives us through His Holy Spirit, and that we can share with others through our words and actions.

We await Jesus' coming, which brings new hope, new joy, and a new way of being present to each other. We reflect on Jesus' first coming at his incarnation, but also invite Him to reveal Himself to us in our everyday life, as we wait for His second coming.

On this third Sunday of Advent, the words from the scripture give us a reason to rejoice. Mary's song of praise to God, "*My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour*", and in the reading from the prophet Isaiah, "*I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God for He has clothed me in the garments of Salvation*". Jesus is our salvation and our hope.

Dea Michael Khoury

At Your Service

Fr Geoff Baron
Fr Isaac Falzon
Fr William Aupito Iuliano
Deacon Michael Khoury



Stella Maris Parish Office

Adjacent to the Stella Maris Church
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CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Please familiarise yourself with our Christmas Mass times. Remember that the morning of Sunday 24 Dec considered the **Fourth Sunday of Advent** but then the evening Masses on Sunday 24 Dec will be considered **Christmas Eve Masses**, which means that Parishioners are encouraged to attend both the **Fourth Sunday of Advent** (in violet) Masses and then the **Christmas Masses** (in green).

Saturday 23rd Dec

4:30pm St Peter's, Coolum
6:00pm Stella Maris, Maroochydore

Sunday 24th Dec

6:30am Stella Maris, Maroochydore
7:30am St Peter's, Coolum
8:00am St Catherine's, Sippy Downs
9am Stella Maris, Maroochydore
9:30am St Mary's, Buderim

Christmas Eve 24th Dec

4pm Stella Maris, Maroochydore
5pm St Peter's, Coolum
5pm St Catherine's, Sippy Downs
6pm Stella Maris, Maroochydore
12am Stella Maris, Maroochydore

Christmas Day Monday 25th Dec

6:30am Stella Maris, Maroochydore
7:30am St Peter's, Coolum
9am Stella Maris, Maroochydore
9:30am St Mary's, Buderim

OFFICE CLOSURE

The Parish Office will close down on Friday 22nd of December and will reopen on Monday 8th of January. Please note that all Masses will run as usual beginning on Thursday 28th of December, except that there will be NO MASSES on Tue 26th Dec and Wed 27th Dec. The normal Mass schedule will resume on Thursday 28th of Dec. If there is an emergency, follow the voicemail prompts and contact the Parish Emergency Phone.

SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION

Last year we had a phenomenal response to the Second Rite of Reconciliation both in Lent and Advent. This time around we hope to cater for another grand event where we humbly come before the Lord in the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a way of preparing for Christmas. We've partnered with the Caloundra Catholic Parish for this time. They will have Reconciliation on **Saturday 16 December, Our Lady of the Rosary, Caloundra at 9am**. This means on **Tuesday 19 December, Stella Maris, Maroochydore at 5pm** we will have the Second Rite. Parishioners are to note that there will **not** be any Confessions on Saturday morning 16 Dec at Maroochydore because the priests will be at Caloundra. We warmly invite all parishioners to be part of this spiritual exercise.

MISA DE GALLO

Mark your calendars for the Annual Misa De Gallo. Sunrise these days is before 5.00am so it is not too much of a challenge to get up a bit earlier and come to Stella Maris Church for our annual Misa de Gallo on Saturday 23 December at 4am. The Misa de Gallo translates as "Rooster Mass" and as the first cockcrows are heard at dawn on Saturday 23 December, you are invited to join us for Mass and then a fantastic breakfast. The Misa de Gallo tradition is strong in predominately Spanish speaking countries and our local vibrant Filipino community coordinates this celebration. Tell your friends! Everyone is welcome!

RECONCILIATION AT ST MARY'S, BUDERIM

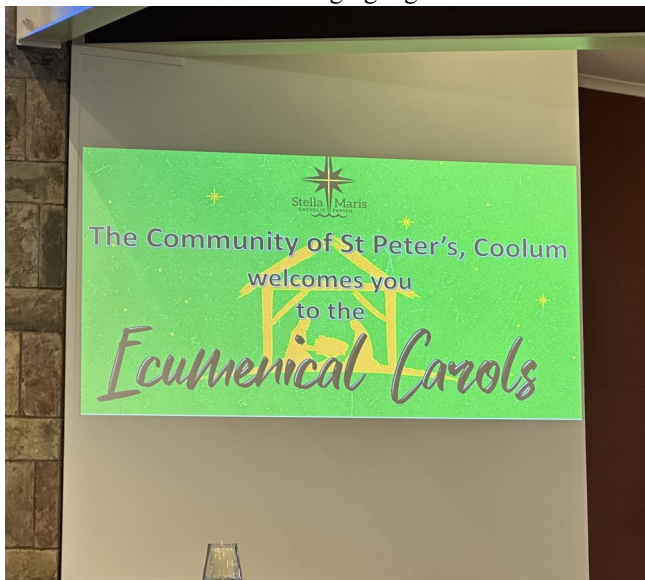
As we draw closer to Christmas we want to make sure that everyone prepares as well as possible for this sacred time in our Liturgical Year. To that end, Reconciliation will be on offer to those in the St Mary's community on 20 December after the 7am Mass. We especially encourage those who find it difficult to travel to attend these Confessions. See you there!

BRING A CHAIR AND A MAT—CHRISTMAS AT SIPPY

Families are reminded to bring their mats, camping chairs and hats for Mass outside at Sippy Downs on Sunday 24th at 5pm. There will be plenty of people around so make sure you get there early to find a space and enjoy a few Carols beforehand.

ECUMENICAL CAROLS

On Thursday Night, St Peter's Coolum had their Ecumenical Carols. Christian communities from around the Coolum area gathered for a night of singing and reflecting on the Christmas message. Fr Will gave a short reflection on the Christmas moment of Jesus' birth. We thank all those involved in bringing together a successful evening.



THE YEAR THAT WAS 2023

We've had a big year in the Parish with many new things happening. We want to take the time to look back on 2023 and all the good work that happened in the Parish. As we look forward to the future, let's cherish what we've experienced so far as learnings and foundations for a holier life here on the coast as a Parish.

- Arrival of Deacon Isaac
- Australia Day BBQ
- Ministry Recruitment Drive
- Lenten Mini Mission—Bishop Tim
- Italian Classes
- Technology for the Third Age
- Craft Group
- Exodus 90
- Men Alive
- Hospitality once a month
- Young Adults
- Parish Welcome Night
- Multicultural Mass
- St Patrick's Day Sing-a-long
- Ignatian Spiritual Retreat
- 24 Hour Adoration
- Fr Isaac's Priestly Ordination
- Christmas in July
- Catholic Formation Scripture Course
- Office Renovations
- Consecration to Jesus through Mary
- Junior Ministers
- What's the Rosary with Fr Jeremy Santoso
- Day Trip to the Cathedral
- Fr James Alison Tour
- John Canavan Divine Mercy
- Br Michael Herry Workshop
- Relic of St John Bosco
- Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition
- Sounds of Celebration Fundraiser
- Sisterhood Retreat
- Sisters of Mary Morning Star
- Parish Nativity Play
- Ecumenical Carols

Outside of these events we had our Sacramental Life within the Parish. As of the end of 7pm Mass on the 17th of December we will have celebrated **743** Masses in the Parish, which is more than double the days of the year. From the **1st Jan– 31st Dec** we will have celebrated **776** Masses within the Parish. In that time, as of the 16th of Dec we will have baptised **201** people. From the **1st Jan—31st Dec** we will have baptised **206** people within the Parish. We had **95** children receive Confirmation this year and **99** children receive First Holy Communion. We've said farewell to about **65** people over the year and celebrated their funerals. Only God knows how many anointings and hours of Confessions we've had over the year. We've also seen an increase of attendance across our Mass centres over the year.

It's difficult to measure and put a value on the success of a Parish, but these numbers show us that we have increased our activity and attendance. This is just one way we acknowledge the work of the Lord in our local area and pray that these good works continue. These figures are also a reflection of the hard work that goes into the background, which of course, is not something the clergy do, but these figures are built upon the generosity, passion and enthusiasm of our Parishioners—**you!** So, **Thank You!**

All in all, it's been a wonderful year filled with ups and downs but we thank God for **all of it**. Thank you, our amazing parishioners, for journeying with us through it all, it's been a wonderful time. As we prepare for the end of the year, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and safe holidays.

Deacon Michael, Fr Geoff, Fr William and Fr Isaac

WE NEED YOU!

With families and holiday makers descending on our community we need as much help as we can get to ensure our Christmas Masses run smoothly and are celebrated with solemnity and joy. If you are involved in any Mass ministries and will be joining us for any Christmas Masses, please record your names on the roster forms at the entrance to the church which will help us ensure all the ministry roles are filled.

FREE CALENDAR

Don't forget to take home a free Parish Calendar to see some of the photos from the past year and keep up to date with the events of the Parish. There's not many left, so get in quick!

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, 18 December

- ♦ Adoration (4.30pm, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (5.30pm, Stella Maris Church)

Tuesday, 19 December

- ♦ **Mass** (9.00am, Stella Maris School Chapel)
- ♦ Second Rite of Reconciliation (5pm, Stella Maris)

Wednesday, 20 December

- ♦ **Mass** (7am, followed by Reconciliation after Mass)
- ♦ **Mass** (9am, St Catherine of Siena Church)
- ♦ Scripture Study Group (9.30am, Zoom)
- ♦ Advent Program group (6.30pm, Sippy Downs)

Thursday, 21 December

- ♦ **Mass** (8.30am, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ St Vincent de Paul Society Meeting (Coolum)
- ♦ 2pm Rosary & Divine Mercy (Stella Maris)

Friday, 22 December

- ♦ **Mass** (9am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ Community Meal for the Homeless, Vulnerable and Disadvantaged (6pm, Stella Maris)

Saturday, 23 December

- ♦ **Mass** (4am, Miso de Gallo, Stella Maris)
- ♦ **NO CONFESSIONS** (Stella Maris)
- ♦ Baptism of Sienna Saunders, Reuben Saunders, Alexander Godsall, Sofia Teggin, Charlotte Berkley (10am, Stella Maris)
- ♦ **Vigil Mass** (4.30pm, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Vigil Mass** (6.00pm, Stella Maris Church)

Sunday, 24 December

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- ♦ **Mass** (6.30am, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (7.30am, St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (8am, St Catherine of Siena Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (9am Stella Maris) with Children's Church

- ♦ **Mass** (9.30am, St Mary's Church)

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

- ♦ **Mass** (4pm, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (5pm St Peter's Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (5pm, St Catherine of Siena Church, starts with Carols at 4.30pm)
- ♦ **Mass** (6pm, Stella Maris Church)
- ♦ **Mass** (7.30pm, Syro Malabar, St Catherine of Siena)
- ♦ **Mass** (12am Stella Maris Church)

Celebrating and Remembering

We welcome into God's Family, the Church, *Teghan Esclamado, Gabriele Giannatempo* and *Lucia Camillieri* who will be baptised this weekend in our Parish.

We prayerfully remember all those who have died. May the souls of all our departed priests, religious, parishioners and family members, through the rich mercy of God,

Rest in Peace.

SISTERS OF MARY MORNING STAR

The Parish was blessed to have the Sisters join us from Mitchelton. We spent time listening to a talk on Advent and Humility and poverty. Thank you to all the people that worked behind the scenes to bring this day together.



PARISH NATIVITY PLAY

Last Wednesday night, a group of young children, with our Junior Ministers, put together a small Nativity Play. The play focused on the reason for the season—Jesus. With costumes and interactive songs, they told the story of Christ using their cuteness as the greatest weapon in their arsenal. Thanks to Bernie Baillie for all the work she put into the play.

