

PARISH NEWSLETTER FOR 2ND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME

Weekend of the 13/14 January 2024

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:3-10 Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 17-20 Gospel: John 1:35-42

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 is paramount.

As part of my long service I walked the Portuguese Camino to Santiago de Compostela. It was a great experience, but I wonder if I would have got more out of it if I was not so preoccupied with avoiding blisters, being bitten by bed bugs, getting sick because I ate something dodgy or the simple fear of not making the distance. Every morning when I got up I knew I had to walk a certain distance so, I would set off determined to get to my destination without any distractions or detours. My walking partner, on the other hand, was content to set off when ready, talk to fellow pilgrims along the way, stop for coffee, admire the scenery and eventually reach the day's destination contented and happy.

While everyone was walking to Santiago, the joke shared between other pilgrims was that "*Fr Peter was running to Santiago!*"

In the evening, we would discuss the events and highlights of the day. "*Did you see this?*" No, I would say. "*What about that stream and the old Roman bridge?*" Nope, must have missed that! The truth is that my walking partner was a lot more conscious of the journey he was on, the people he was sharing the journey with and the unique beauty that surrounded him!

Sure, I was walking to Santiago de Compostela – but was I **really** conscious of walking to Santiago? Like life here in our North Coast Parish Family, we can get so consumed with the tasks we need to complete, the jobs we have to do, the things we think we need to get done that we "*fail to smell the roses*" on the way!

In this weekend's gospel, Jesus saw two disciples following him and he asked the simple question, "*what are you looking for?*" It should be the question that we ask ourselves constantly. Yet, how can we answer a question like that with all our distractions and busyness, our rush to get where we are going?

You see, most times I am not conscious of the question, let alone the answer. My life is full of distractions – the radio plays, I can waste hours on the computer without achieving anything. I get home and the first thing that goes on is the TV – and even if there is nothing on I can still surf the channels aimlessly. What does that say about our lives or the quality of our lives? Are we really living? Or, despite all the gadgets and electronic devices, are we merely existing?

If we are merely existing, we are throwing away the life God has given us and all the God given opportunities will just slip through our fingers. What we need to do is to be conscious of living. We need to *give ourselves over to what we are doing*. I sit at meal times and shovel food into me without appreciating the food, the taste, the different aromas. Often, half an hour after eating I can't remember what I have eaten!

I talk to people, but often I am not present. I am too busy, too distracted, too concerned about what I have to do next, too tired to really listen. I walk away from a conversation without a clue of what has been said or the real needs of the person I was talking to.

"*Come and see*" is Jesus' invitation to each one of us this week to try turning off the distractions and giving yourself over to what you are doing - and in the process appreciating the gifts of life and love that surround you.

Fr Peter Brannelly

Parish Clergy

Fr Peter Brannelly
Fr William Aupito Iuliano
Fr Isaac Falzon
Deacon Michael Khoury



Stella Maris Parish Office

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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, 15 January

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

Tuesday, 16 January

- ◆ **Mass** (9.00am, Stella Maris School Chapel). All Welcome.

Wednesday, 17 January

Feast of St Anthony

- ◆ **Mass** (7am, St Mary's Church)
- ◆ **Mass** (9am, St Catherine of Siena Church).
With the staff of Siena College
- ◆ Scripture Study Group (9.30am, Zoom).
- ◆ St Mary's Community Team meeting.

Thursday, 18 January

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

Friday, 19 January

- ◆ **Mass** (9am, Stella Maris)
- ◆ 2pm Stations of the Cross (Stella Maris)
- ◆ Community Meal for the Homeless, Vulnerable and Disadvantaged (6pm, Stella Maris)

Saturday, 20 January

- ◆ Reconciliation **8.30 to 9.30am** (Stella Maris)
- ◆ 9:30am Baptism of Olive Kerswill and Rivera Echter, (Stella Maris)
- ◆ 9:30am Sophia & Felicity Moeara (Sippy Downs)
- ◆ 10am Morning Tea followed by volunteer in-service and planning at Stella Maris Church.
- ◆ 11am El Shaddai group meets (Sippy Downs)
- ◆ **Vigil Mass** (4.30pm, St Peter's Church)
- ◆ **Vigil Mass** (6.00pm, Stella Maris Church)

Sunday, 21 January

3rd Sunday of Ordinary Time - Year B

- ◆ **Mass** (6.30am, Stella Maris Church)
- ◆ **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) following Mass the Parish presentation to Fr Will
- ◆ **Mass** (5pm, Stella Maris Church)

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

The nativity scene has been put back in its box, the Christmas decorations have been taken down, the green vestments indicate we have returned to Ordinary Time, back to school advertisements remind us that we have left the Christmas season behind us and our focus is well and truly the business of 2024! It is the same for us as a Parish. The scramble to tie down dates for different events and ceremonies provides plenty of stress for everyone at this time of the year!

It is very appropriate, therefore, at the start of the year for our generous volunteers to recommit and to extend an invitation to fellow members of our Parish Family to consider being part of the different ministries of our large and diverse Parish Family. We all have been given different gifts and talents, not to hide them under a bucket but to share them and in doing so build up our community.

Attached to this week's newsletter is our annual Volunteer Form for 2024 – *have a read of it and see where God is leading you!* Take a few moments to complete it and either place it on the collection plate or return it to the Parish Office. **Next Saturday morning, January 20th, at 10am all existing and new readers, musicians, Communion Ministers and Communion Ministers to the Sick volunteers are invited to morning tea at the Stella Maris Function Room and then we will break into ministry groups to welcome and support new volunteers and to remind ourselves what is best practice in our ministry.** On behalf of the entire Parish Family, a big thank you to all our generous ministry members – *you truly are the mortar that binds our community together.*

While talking about dates, you might be terrified to be informed that Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, is only 30 days away (Wednesday, February 14th). Once again, we have many opportunities to make this important season meaningful including our annual Lenten Mini Mission, Lenten groups and the different liturgical exercises that accompany this season.

Also, we invite parents and families who are interested in their children receiving Confirmation and First Holy Communion to visit our Parish website and mark the dates for the events on the Calendar. Simply follow the links to either Confirmation or First Holy Communion on the Parish website where the dates for 2024 are displayed. We look forward to celebrating these dates with you in the coming year

ARRIVEDERCI

As you all know, the Archbishop has appointed Fr William to the rapidly transforming parishes of West End and South Brisbane. There will be no shortage of challenges for the new Parish Priest! Over the past couple of weeks, each community has had the opportunity to bid farewell to Fr Will. His final Mass and Parish Farewell will be at the 9am Sunday Mass at Stella Maris next Sunday, January 21st. There will be a sausage sizzle after Mass and a presentation to Fr Will on behalf of the entire parish. *All are welcome.*

Celebrating and Remembering

We welcome into God's Family, the Church,
Zane Hourigan, Jordan Roberts and Spencer Richardson-Stoddart
who will be baptised this weekend in our parish.

We pray for all those who have died, especially *Anne Storey* and *Geraldine Kinnane* Anne's funeral will be on Wed 17th and the funeral rites for Geraldine will be celebrated at Stella Maris on Monday, January 22nd. May Anne and Geraldine's soul and the souls of all our departed through the rich mercy of God, **Rest in Peace.**

Doing Good – *So how do we do better?*

Why not give a little of your time and energy in the service of the Gospel and your fellow parishioners?

Your parish family is looking for volunteers for the ministries described below. Volunteers are not just the mortar that holds our parish together but it is a practical and rewarding way of living out our faith. Already, we are blessed as a community of so many generous people who, quietly behind the scenes, do so much to enrich and sustain our parish. This weekend, you are invited to consider adding your gifts and energy to the life of our parish by being a part of one or more of the following ministries. No previous experience is necessary. You will always be part of a team and all the resources are provided and, where necessary, training will be provided. Ultimately, being a volunteer is a great way to serve God and the people of God. So don't be shy, we need you!

Baptism Support Group – The Sacrament of Baptism is the first step in a lifelong journey of commitment and discipleship. During the Rite of Baptism, the Priest or Deacon declares that this Church shares in the joy of your new born child, elates at the fact that the numbers of God's children have increased, and offers the parents and Godparents the support of this faith community.

Volunteers in the Baptism Support Group will be a friendly and welcoming face at the Baptism and at the monthly baptismal preparation meeting. ***Your commitment is once a month to welcome young families at the preparation meeting and go on a roster to welcome families to the baptismal celebration.***

Communion Minister – Communion Ministers or *Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion* assist with the distribution of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ at the Eucharist. It is an important ministry of our community and we depend upon the generosity of parishioners to be part of this team. ***Your commitment is to go on a roster to serve at a mass of your convenience.***

Communion Ministers to the Sick — In this Ministry you will be an extension of the worshipping community bringing Holy Communion to our sisters and brothers who are sick and house bound and can't join us for Sunday Mass. This is an extremely important ministry that requires reverence for the Eucharist and concern for your fellow parishioner. ***Your responsibility is to go on a roster to take communion directly from Mass to parishioners.***

Music Ministry – *“There is nothing in the world so much like prayer as music is.” William P. Merrill*

You are already part of the Music ministry by your participation during Mass. However, our music ministry requires many other gifts and talents to continue making this ministry fruitful. Each week across our diverse parish we are blessed with so many fellow parishioners who share their time and musical gifts. But it is unfair to just rely on the few! If you play a musical instrument, or can sing and would like to be part of a choir, then your Parish Family needs you! We will offer regular workshops and the Liturgy Committee has organised the first one for this Saturday, January 20th, starting with 10am morning tea in the function room, then 10.30am workshop in Stella Maris Church.

Children's Church – Children's Church is when the children leave the congregation to celebrate and reflect on the Sunday Gospel, and reading in an age appropriate way. The children are led through prayers, songs and readings that are adapted to their level of understanding.

Attending Mass together is a part of being a Catholic Family, while Children's Liturgy of the Word allows children to enter the celebration more fully by catering to their needs. ***You always work as a team and all the resources are provided. Your commitment to fulfil this ministry, which runs only during school terms, is to join a team and go on a roster.***

Liturgy of the Word – This ministry is to proclaim the Word in partnership with the Priest, leading up to and enhancing the message in the homily. This may include proclaiming the first reading, Psalm, second reading, and prayers of the faithful.

This is a ministry that is open to everyone and there are no surprises because we will give you a **Break Open the Word** so that you can practise beforehand! ***Your commitment is to go onto your community's roster.***

Grief Support Group - One of the most powerful ministries of our Parish Family is our Grief Support Group. It is true that every one of us will one day have to sit in the front pew and mourn the loss of a loved one. It is a journey that we all know is unavoidable. When that does happen, here in our Parish community, we want to assure that no one feels that they have to go through this journey alone.

When a death occurs, life for those who live on changes forever. Our Parish recognises this change, and offers hope and comfort to those who grieve the loss of a loved one. As Jesus comforted Mary and Martha, this parish community can reach out to comfort those who mourn. The Grief Support Group organises the regular morning tea, makes contact with the family to see if any assistance is needed, coordinates the annual All Souls' Memorial Mass, and a member of the group attends the Funeral Service. ***Your commitment is to be part of the activities of the group.***

Sacristans— Many people behind the scenes are needed to ensure our Eucharistic celebrations run smoothly. Sacristans are responsible for setting and cleaning up liturgical items for Mass. ***Your Responsibility is to work with the Mass coordinator and the Priest to ensure the smooth celebration of our weekly Masses.***

Hospitality Throughout the bible, hospitality is such an essential part of the story of the people of God. We want our Parish Family to be known for its friendly hospitality.

On the first weekend of each month, all our communities offer hospitality after Mass. It is a chance for parishioners and new members of our community to gather and share a cuppa and some refreshments. For each community, the form of hospitality is different but the goal remains the same. *Your commitment for this ministry is to go on a roster and, on rotation, assist with the setting up and serving of refreshments and making everyone welcome.*

Funeral Hospitality. After a funeral in our churches, often people gather to remember, give thanks and support each other. This gathering is such an important time. Our Funeral Hospitality Group is several teams who volunteer to set up and serve at the post-funeral gathering. All the food is provided, and this ministry is really about being a friendly face, serving the tea, coffee and refreshments, and helping where necessary.

By volunteering to be part of this ministry you join one of the teams and, on rotation, assist whenever there is a post-funeral gathering.

Church Cleaning Groups. If cleanliness is next to godliness, then we want all four of our churches to be a reflection of heaven! Each week teams of fellow parishioners take it in turns to clean our sacred spaces. The truth of the matter is that we can't afford commercial cleaners so this is a practical ministry that benefits the whole community. *Your commitment is to go onto a roster and, in turn, help with the cleaning of your local church.*

Welcoming Group – *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"*. Australia is such a highly mobile society and here on the Sunshine Coast there are always new faces sitting in our pews. Our welcoming group is a vital ministry that does what its title says - *welcomes!*

Not only does this group deliberately create a sense of welcome and inclusion by greeting and handing out newsletters, several times a year they represent the parish at our welcome nights where we welcome new members of the parish and introduce ourselves in an informal way. A friendly face and a desire to make newcomers feel included is all you need for this ministry. *The major commitment of this ministry is to represent the parish at the welcome night.*

So how do we do better?

Please take a moment and complete the Ministry invitation list below – *what have you got to lose?* There are many, many ministries quietly taking place within our Parish Family day in and day out that makes us who we are. By accepting the invitation to join any of these ministries, you will help your Catholic Community to be open to the Holy Spirit as we, together, continue on the journey of faith. Thank you for your generosity.

Tick the ministries you would like more information about and complete the contact information and we will get back to you. Please return this form to the Parish Office, give it to your Mass coordinator/sacristan, or simply place it on the collection plate.

Baptism Support Group

Children's Church

Communion Minister at Mass

Communion Minister to sick

Music Ministry

Liturgy of the Word

Hospitality

Funeral Hospitality

Church Cleaning Groups

Welcoming Group

Sacristan

Name: _____

Community:

Stella Maris Church

St Catherine of Siena Church

St Peter's Church

St Mary's Church

Contact Details:

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Thank you for taking the plunge and entering more deeply into the life of your Catholic Community.