SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
26 JULY 2026 YEAR A /2

The Language of Heaven

Have you ever seen on TV those huge rubbish tips that exist on the edge of great cities in South America, Asia and Africa? The shanty town dwellers and the poor constantly pick over the tips to salvage what they can.

A pall of smoke hovers over such tips which are often generations old, so there is not a time when fire is not doing its destructive work.

In Our Lord's time, there was such a tip in a small ravine only a short distance from the Temple Mount of Jerusalem. It had been smouldering and burning in this way for centuries. It was a particularly terrible place called the Valley of Gehenna.

That is an image which Jesus used when speaking about Hell. Jesus taught that we can by our choices and actions end up in a state of endless suffering like being trapped in ever smouldering rubbish tips. That would be Hell.

We must remember it is an image or metaphor – but especially powerful. It has a real hold on our imagination: the stuff of paintings and sermons: 'souls burning in hell', (but of course the soul is not material – so cannot 'burn' in any literal sense).

Let us try another image.

Have any of you travelled to a foreign country and been unable to communicate – can't speak the language – don't understand the customs and culture of the people? It is not only frustrating but you feel less human. In the midst of other people you feel a terrible loneliness, a-lone-ness. There is lots of weeping and gnashing of teeth in frustration.

Now, what if you were born with a good ear for languages, knew you had the opportunity to go to that other place, but had deliberately never learnt the language of that other place, had deliberately done things which made you a person who could not reach out the hand of friendship to the people of that place?

You would only have yourself to blame if you were suddenly transported and marooned there. It would be a living hell.

That is what happens at death. Your soul is suddenly transported to a different dimension of existence, and it can be either heavenly or hellish depending on the choices and actions of a lifetime.

So, our lifetime project is to 'learn the language of heaven' otherwise we will end up mute, speechless, at the crucial moment.

Of course, God is merciful. At death, God can take the stutters and the stammers and the half-sentences and coach us and tutor us out of our self-centredness and bring us to the ability to wholeheartedly converse with God and others.

This is what Catholics call 'Purgatory', the *purging* of self-ish-ness.

But, there is the very real danger that, at death, we may have rendered ourselves totally incommunicado, unable to benefit from the saving grace of purgatory.

So, we must try, now, to learn the language of Heaven.

How can we learn the language of Heaven?

First, by following the story of Jesus. After all, Jesus is the Word of God, the perfect conversation between humanity and God. We can try to translate his story into our own lives.

Secondly, we can observe those who seem to love unreservedly, ranging from Mother Teresa to a person you may know quite well.

Thirdly, when the opportunity comes, move out of self-centredness, especially as Pope Francis used to say, by touching the wounds of Christ in others.

So let us move from incommunicado to communion by learning and practising the language of Heaven. There is only one lifetime to do it.

Homily by Fr Michael Tate

PHILERMOS HOUSE- THE BIG RED SHED

NOW IS THE TIME TO REGISTER TO VOLUNTEER

ORDER OF MALTA AUSTRALIA

Opening Soon

Do you have 1 to 4 hours, 1 to 2 days per week, Monday-Friday?

Our aim is to create a calm, dignified and supportive space, where people feel seen, valued and cared for.

Roles include:

Foodservice, Cooking, Cleaning, Laundry and Clothing.

Please scan QR code to volunteer.

Readings Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time - 2 August 2026

Is 55:1-3; Ps 144:8-9, 15-18; Rom 8:35, 37-39; Mt 14:13-21

THE SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM Confirmation • Reconciliation • First Holy Communion 2026-2027
We ask our parish community to keep these candidates and their families in prayer as they begin this important step in their faith journey.

Rite of Enrolment - Mary Immaculate Church: Saturday 25 July at 4.30pm **or** Sunday 26 July at 9.30am

Lord God, bless these children who have enrolled for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Keep them close to you as they prepare to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. May they grow in faith, hope and love, and become faithful witnesses of Christ. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen..

PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM – Southport Catholic Parish

If you would like to join the Planned Giving Program, please contact the Parish Office on 5510 2222 Wednesday –Friday, 9.00am to midday.
Email:acounts.southport@bne.catholic.net.au
By making a commitment to planned giving, you directly support and enable the ongoing maintenance and growth of our parish mission. Thank you Fr Gerard

FLOCKNOTE
NEW PARISH REGISTRATION
Stay connected

LUMINOUS LANTERN PARADE -Please Join Us
Friday, 31 July from 5.30pm South Bank Parklands

Each year, as dusk settles over South Bank, thousands of lanterns begin to glow along the river. Every year the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission walks in the Multicultural Australia Luminous Parade.

SUPPORT THE BIG RED SHED -TRIVIA NIGHT

- **Saturday 29th August 2026**
- **From 6:00pm**
- **Southport Bowls Club**
- **$20 per person**
- **Teams of up to 8 people**

Please transfer your payment to the **BNI Beach-side** bank account:**BSB:** 034-154 **Account #:** 291037
Please include your name as the payment reference.
RSVP:Georgia BNI at georgia@iinvestadvisory.com

DONATIONS TO PHILERMOS HOUSE, DAVENPORT STREET SOUTHPORT through the Order of Malta can be made several ways:

ORDER OF MALTA AUSTRALIA

- **Online** through our secure payment facility
  Direct Deposit to BSB: 083 453 Acct: 44888 1897

Please use 'Southport' as the description and email info@orderofmalta.org.au details to obtain a tax-deductible receipt

- **Phone** by calling 02 9331 8477 - please note the office is closed weekends.
- **Post** with cheques payable to '*Order of Malta*' and sent to Philermos House, Order of Malta, PO Box 79, Caringbah NSW 1495

Saints We Celebrate This Week

29 July: **Sts Martha, Mary and Lazarus**

30 July: **St Peter Chrysologus,** Bishop, doctor

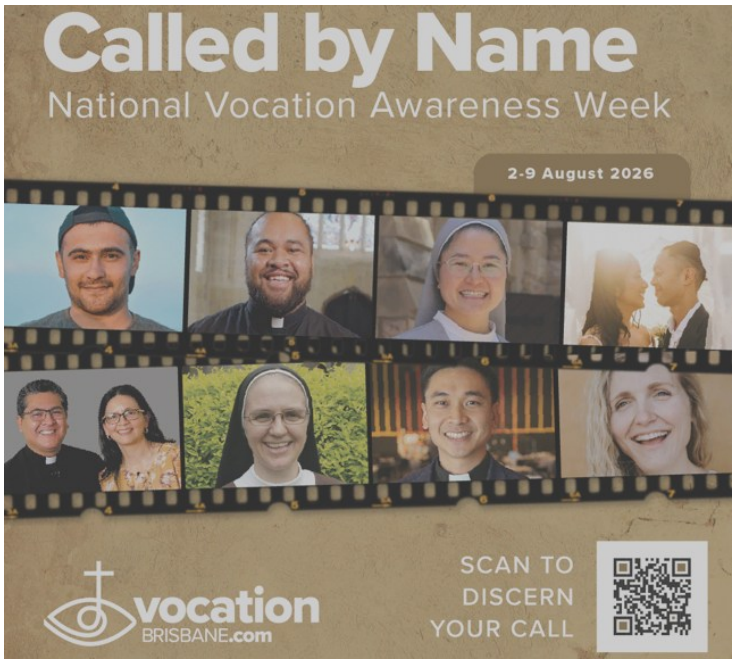
31 July" **St Ignatius of Loyola,** Priest

1 August : **St Alphonsus Liguori,** Bishop, doctor

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Guardian Angels Church, Southport
Each Thursday noon to Friday
ending with mass at 12.30pm
24 hour adoration
Mary Immaculate Church, Ashmore
Thursday 7.45am- 8.30am
Please help us by committing to a time either on Thursday or Friday. SMS our Timetable master on 0402812832 or email adorationgc@gmail.com

National Vocation Awareness Week
2-9 August 2026



FAITHFUL DEPARTED
Eric Duncan
Vernon Murdoch
ANNIVERSARIES

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE BOOK OF THE SICK
Each Church has both these books on display.
If you would like to include a name in either of the books, please seek approval from the Parish Office
T: 5510 2222.

This Week in Our Parish

- **Philermos House – The Big Red Shed** is opening soon and is currently seeking volunteers for food service, cooking, cleaning, laundry, and clothing support roles. Register Now - Thank you.
- **Morning Tea** Mary Immaculate Church after 9.30am Mass.
- **24-Hour Adoration** continues at Guardian Angels Church from Thursday noon until Friday Mass at 12.30pm.
- **RCIA Program** invitations are open for adults interested in becoming Catholic or learning more about the faith.
  Contact Lawrence Fenech 0458 378 315
- **Parish Walking Group** meets every Saturday at 6.30am at St Joseph the Worker Church, Labrador. Contact Janeece 0408 763 772
- **Luminious Lantern Parade** - Friday 31 July from 5.30pm South Bank Parklands
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- **Funerals:**
  Monday 27 July at St Joseph the Worker Labrador - Eric Francis Duncan at 11.00am
  Friday 31 July at Mary Immaculate Ashmore Vernon Robert Murdoch at 11.00am
- **Parish Registration** continues, with 1077 parishioners already registered.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

STOPLINE receives reports of suspected abuse, misconduct, or serious policy breaches involving Archdiocesan clergy, employees, or volunteers (reports may be anonymous). We uphold zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and adults-at-risk. Our parish follows the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Framework, with strong recruitment, screening, and ongoing practices to ensure a safe ministry environment . Our Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR) is **Catherine -** lsr.southport@bne.catholic.net.au
Please note that our LSR will be on leave for six weeks until 24 August. For any assistance during this time, please contact the Archdiocese.

07 5510 2222 / 1300 304 550
aob@stopline.com.au
www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com

St Joseph the Worker Church
44 Imperial Parade, Labrador

Sunday Mass
8.00am

Weekday Masses
Monday & Wednesday 7.00am
1st Wednesday 7.00pm
1st Saturday 9.00am

Rosary
Monday & Wednesday 6.00am
1st Wednesday 6.00pm
1st Saturday 8.30am

Novena
Wednesday 6.00pm

Guardian Angels Church
99 Scarborough Street, Southport

Saturday & Sunday Masses
Reconciliation Saturday 4.30pm

Saturday (Vigil) 5.30pm
Sunday 7.00am & 9.00am

Filipino Mass
1st Sunday 12.00pm

Prayer & Adoration
Thursday 12.00 noon (24 hours)

Rosary & Mass
Friday 12.00pm

Mary Immaculate Church
31 Edmund Rice Drive, Ashmore

Saturday & Sunday Masses
Saturday (Vigil) 4.30pm
Sunday 9.30am & 5.30pm

Korean Mass
Sunday 3.00pm
한인미사 일요일 오후 3시

Weekday Masses
Tuesday & Thursday 9.00am

Adoration & Rosary
Tuesday & Thursday 7.45am

Gold Coast University Hospital

Rosary & Mass
Friday 10.00am

PARISH CONTACTS

Ph 07 5510 2222
Webpage: https://scp.org.au

Safeguarding Representative
lsr.southport@bne.catholic.net.au

Parish Office Ashmore
Monday to Friday 9.00am-12.00pm
31 Edmund Rice Drive, Ashmore, 4214

Parish Reception/Secretary
parish.southport@bne.catholic.net.au

Sacramental Programme
sacramental.southport@bne.catholic.net.au

Finance Officer
accounts.southport@bne.catholic.net.au

Associate Pastor
Fr John Hong Xuan Nguyen (Hospital Chaplaincy)

Parish Priest
Fr Gerard McMorrow PP