



The Catholic Church in the regional city of Mackay, especially the parish of St Patrick, celebrated its 150th anniversary, 1866-2016. At that time, I was serving as the pastor of four parishes south of the river. This is the image chosen for the Jubilee 150 Prayer. The artist is Benedictine Br. Frank Kacmarcik, Obl. S.B (1920-2004). It is from a wonderful book co-authored with Dominican priest, Paul Philibert (1936-2016), *Seeing and Believing: Images of Christian Faith* (1995).

Sunday greetings to the members of the Boonah Catholic community and beyond on this Trinity Sunday

1. **LITURGY BRISBANE**, from our own archdiocese, provides the Sunday Readings for home reflection. Click on the link below for today's texts.

The first link contains the Sunday readings with associated commentaries and prayers. It is suggested that families gather to read the Scriptures aloud together:

<https://litedliturgybrisbane.weebly.com/sunday-readings-at-home.html/>

The second resource is designed for families with young children. An extract from the Sunday gospel is provided, along with several reflection questions, a family activity and a worksheet for children:

<https://litedliturgybrisbane.weebly.com/family-prayer-week-by-week.html/>



2. **REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY WORD.** We again share several reflections on the Sunday scriptures our church chooses for Trinity Sunday.

We are able to hear the Word being reflected upon from female and male faith perspectives . . .

Today's Sunday preaching is offered by Sharon Chipman, a retired lay ecclesial minister who has served in parish and campus ministry for over forty years. Sharon has had a rich life – read her biography on the link. The link offers a video of the reflection, the text and some background of the preacher:

<https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/06072020>



Julian McDonald, a Christian Brother of the Australian province who ministers in Rome, offers us this reflection. It is entitled: *Celebrating the mystery of Divine love let loose*.

<https://www.catholicreligious.org.au/gospel-reflections/2020/6/4/trinity-sunday-celebrating-the-mystery-of-divine-love-let-loose>

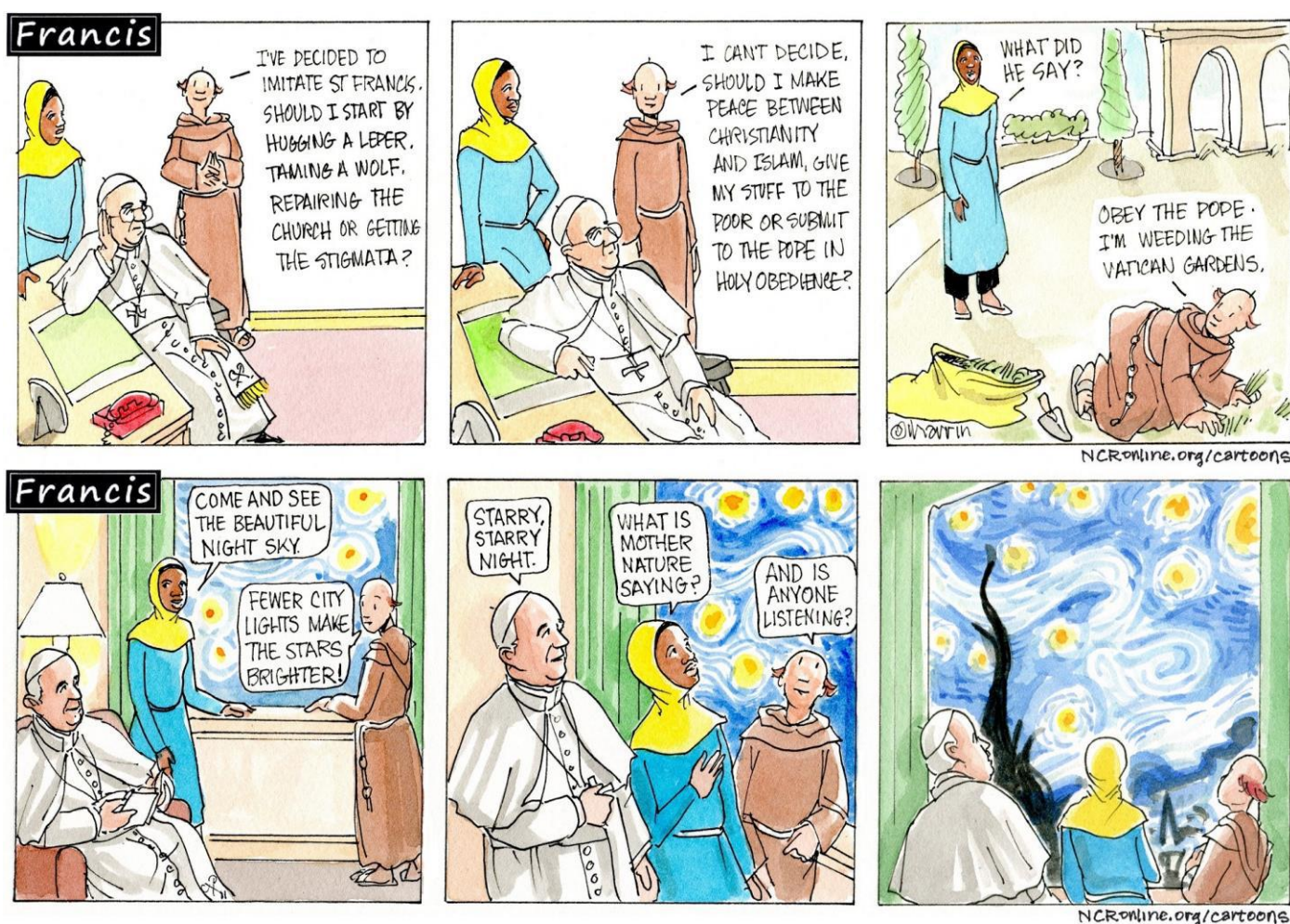


3. We pray with and for those who are sick in our parish and beyond: all across the globe infected with COVID-19; former pastor of Boonah parish Fr.Ellis Clifford, Chris Healy, Bill Castley, Paul White, Thyrlene Devin, Bridget Muller, Liliana Toohill, Libby Shields, Jonathon Hancock, Marko Babic, Dermot Peters, Max Gardiner, Nicole Wimmer, Bernice Lippiatt, Pat Toohill, Trish Merlehan, Kath Pascoe, Suzy Collyer, Pat Shannon, Lyn Elson, and Paul Maschio.

*Sometimes a healing word will listen: hearing the voiceless into speech,
letting the pattern of the story move us to learn what it can teach.
Come, break the silence! Let us tell the Word that makes us free and well.*

SOMETIMES A HEALING WORD IS COMFORT (WORDS: PATRICK MICHAELS 1954 -)
from *Together in Song Australian Hymn Book II* (1999)

4. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin.



2nd and 4th Hune 2020

5. The month of May marked the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si* – Pope Francis' letter to all people of good-will concerning human care for creation *for the common good*. It was ground-breaking and remains so. For five Sundays starting on the Ascension, we are promoting the anniversary of *Laudato Si*.

This week the article is taken from the National Catholic Reporter and the writer is Patricia Gualinga, a leader of the Kickwa indigenous community of Sarayaku, Ecuador:

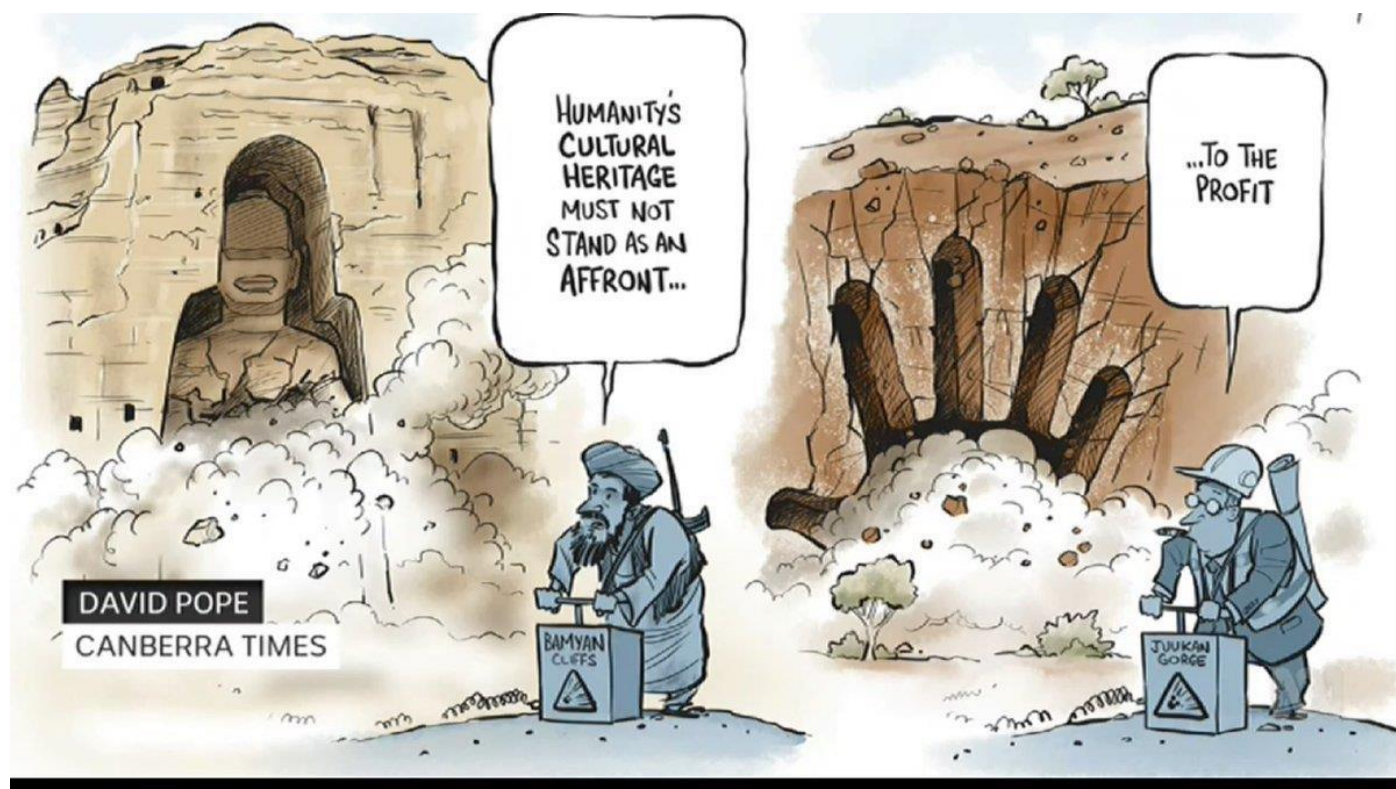
<https://www.ncronline.org/news/earthbeat/laudato-si-validates-centuries-indigenous-knowledge-defend-nature>

Spanish readers may prefer the article in the original language:

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/earthbeat/laudato-si-ratifica-siglos-de-sabidur-ind-gena-en-defensa-de-la-naturaleza>

6. **46,000 YEAR OLD AUSTRALIAN ROCK SHELTERS BLASTED AWAY FOREVER BY ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN MINING COMPANY, RIO TINTO GROUP.** Last Sunday we carried an article about the blowing-up of caves in the Juukan Gorge.

It was good to see sustained conversation in the community across the nation last week. I found this cartoon from David Pope at the Canberra Times prophetic:



7. A reminder that **THE CATHOLIC LEADER** digital edition is currently delivered free to your inbox every Thursday morning while we have these restrictions. Sign up on <https://bit.ly/2ShdcSZ>. A free subscription is available while Masses are suspended across the Archdiocese of Brisbane due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The editor and his team hopes this offer gives us all a sense of connection, inspiration and renewal in the faith, at a time when living the faith has changed.

8. The PARISH GIVING APP is working. I trialled it myself, it works, and some folk have given via this app. Be sure to choose BOONAH PARISH! If you are having problems with the app, call the Archdiocese for some help! <https://parishgiving.brisbanecatholic.org.au/slides/> Thanks to parishioners who visited the parish property this week with their envelopes and who have now 'caught up'! It is greatly appreciated.

9. On Tuesday, our Parish Pastoral Council will be meeting to learn about the requirements of both State and Church if we are to have private gatherings of up to twenty people for eucharist. This is the number at the moment for inside gatherings. It is fifty people for outside gatherings. We will be looking at various plans and nutting out the implications for each. Again I stress, we are experiencing the worst pandemic for over a hundred years. I admit to being a little surprised ... even gob-smacked - when well-meaning folk suggest it is easy to gather knowing the steps and processes other parishes have in place to gather. The other thing is that more than a few parishes are relying on their *paid office staff* and *paid parish workers* to make things happen.

10. The events we are witnessing online and on screens in the USA is distressing. Attention is also being drawn to our own backyard in this country about Aboriginal people who gave died in custody. Page one of THE SATURDAY PAPER is stark:

There cannot be 432 victims and no perpetrators . . .

The journalist is Daumbal/South Sea Islander journalist Amy McQuire.

I am reminded of the poem by Pablo Neruda: *I'm explaining a few things.*

*"and ever since then fire,
gunpowder ever since,
and ever since then blood
Bandits with airplanes and with Moors,
bandits with finger-rings and duchesses,
bandits with black friars making blessings,
... kept coming from the sky to kill children,
and through the streets the blood of the children
ran simply, like children's blood.*

*You will ask why his poetry
doesn't speak to us of dreams, of the leaves,
of the great volcanoes of his native land?*

*Come and see the blood in the streets,
come and see
the blood in the streets,
come and see the blood
in the streets!"*

11. Each Sunday, I try to include one or two pieces that invite deeper reflection on our faith with a view to encouraging us to practice our faith through the experience of Easter. The following images are from *Seeing and Believing*. They are my best effort to share Paul Philibert's brief reflection on the Trinity. These words accompany the striking image that graces page of this Sunday bulletin. Sadly this book is now out of print!

TRINITY

Jesus showed us who and what and how God is. Some who heard him speak accused him of blasphemy. His idea of God was new, challenging, even frightening to them. John's Gospel reports certain listeners responding to Jesus in these words: "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, though only a human being, are making yourself God" (John 10:33). For a Christian, God is defined in terms of the human life of Jesus, just as the full humanity of a believer can be defined only in terms of the Christian's relation to the God whom Jesus revealed.

What Jesus revealed about God not only brings God closer to us, but also introduces our own human experiences into the dynamic relation that the divine persons of the Godhead share among themselves. The doctrine of the Trinity is not abstract information about a distant God, but a river of life that constantly flows out and enfolds our own lives.

The Bible's account of the triune god develops gradually. The holy name YHWH—Giver of being, Creator of a people, Liberator of the elect—suggests transcendence, distance, and glory. While Old Testament theology is marked with certain expressions of God's love and compassion, it has created in Christians a false sense of God's inaccessibility.

The New Testament announces the one through whom a word of God will come in the opening lines of Mark's Gospel (the first writ-

ten of the four Gospels): "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the son of God" (Mark 1:1; cf. Rom 5:10; Gal 4:4). Having taken his disciples on a tour of preaching and healing, Jesus asked what people said of him. Then he asked, "What do you say?" Simon Peter responded: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matt 16:13). The disciples recognized Jesus as the one chosen by God to be Messiah, that is, the one anointed to perform God's own works in the midst of the people.

A clearer sense that Jesus is one with God comes from those episodes in the Gospels that represent the post-Easter understanding of the early Christian community. The New Testament stories of the annunciation, the infancy narratives, and the marvels surrounding the birth and childhood of Jesus explain Jesus as God's own child. Likewise, the baptism and transfiguration stories make it clear that, in the mind of the early Church, this Jesus of Nazareth is not only sent from God, but is also divine. It is the *kenosis* theme that becomes decisive in the preaching of the Church, reflected in the letters of Paul. (*Kenosis* means self-emptying.)

Paul instructs the early believers to have the same attitude that Jesus had, "who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness" (Phil 2:6-7). This text summarizes the early Church's beliefs about the pre-existence of Jesus; Jesus as Christ has a relation with God that transcends time and space.

When we come to the mystery of the third person of the Godhead, we find that the disciples gradually grasp that the Spirit of God is not just the power of Jesus' resurrection reflected in the post-Easter Church, but a distinct manifestation of the deity within our world. Paul, speaking to the early Christians, tells them: "When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom 8:15-17). God acting personally within our personal lives is the Spirit of the Father and Son.

The Gospels too illumine the mystery of the Spirit of God. Jesus followed the leading of the Spirit who descended on him at his baptism in the Jordan (Matt 1:10; Luke 3:22) and guided him to the wilderness as he prepared himself for his public ministry (Matt 4:1; Luke 4:1). In his pastoral prayer in John's Gospel, Jesus describes the Spirit in this manner: "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf" (John 15:26). Here the relation of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is summarized in the Gospel's own words.

This mystery is important for the Christian life. The Spirit of God (the Breath of God) is given to us to empower us to act on God's behalf. Jesus witnesses to life in the Spirit through his prayer, preaching, miracles, and obedience unto death. Jesus is "raised in the Spirit" to become a new creation open to all who believe. Jesus Christ becomes the "first born within a large family" (Rom 8:29) as through the Spirit Christians enter the relation of mutual love of the divine Trinity.

The breathing that marks our quieting down in meditative prayer is a symbol of the life of the Holy Spirit within us. God's breathing the Holy Spirit into us is constantly taking place. But when we enter a silence marked by the rhythm of slow, intentional breathing, we awaken ourselves to the reality of the Spirit, asking God's Spirit to instruct and guide us. The Spirit leads us through this quiet to the unfolding of God's word (heard in the Scriptures, shared in common prayer, studied in the gospel). The Spirit leads us from disharmony and chaos into an awareness of God's forgiveness and love. By the vehicle of this prayer within our hearts, we also breathe out our own spirit, offering our lives and ourselves to God.

Such prayer begins in the Spirit, awakens the saving power of the Son's word in our lives, and invites us to pour out our lives before the Father in adoration. We receive the breath of God and allow ourselves to be drawn toward God. This prayer develops our consciousness of being loved in Christ and of sharing life with all who are reborn as children of God. The spirit allows us to entrust ourselves back to the Father, accepting God's love and providence in our lives. By this mys-

tery of contemplative prayer, we enter into the energy of mutual giving and receiving that is at the heart of God's hidden life.

Years ago, I made a retreat at Madonna House in Canada and met its foundress, Catherine de Hueck Doherty. Coming to the end of a pleasant conversation over lunch, she said: "So, you teach theology? And you came here to pray? You are always reading and writing, and when you're not doing that you're thinking, aren't you? Well now, go into the chapel, sit down, shut up! And let the icons pray for you!" This was an invitation to let an image like the drawing of the Trinity shown here orchestrate the hunger and the love of my heart.

This image invites us to recognize the powerful energy of the Spirit's movement in our lives. As our breathing becomes a metaphor for the inspiring presence of the Holy Spirit, we open our minds, our hearts, and our spirits to the indwelling of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our prayer has as its goal neither to persuade God to respond to us nor to impress God with our righteousness, but to surrender to God, who has already redeemed us and loved us. Theologians for centuries and the Greek Church today call the Father's sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit a *perichoresis* (a Greek word meaning "dancing around"). This wonderful image suggests not only God's joy in togetherness, but a joyful sharing of divine life with us. This Trinitarian dance invites us to experience life as a relation of friendship with our God who never ceases to renew us in being, forgive us our weakness, and uplift and direct us on our path. The joy of this unceasing movement of hospitality and creation is the dance.

*Source of all being, Light from whom all shapes proceed;
reveal your holy presence and make us holy
by touching us again with your life.
May our spirits recognize your Spirit,
may our words speak of your Word,
May our hearts rest even now in the peace
that is your eternal communion of love.*

96

12. On 5th June 1992, six deacons were ordained for service at the Qld. seminary chapel. I was one of them. Two of my colleagues and I were reflecting upon our 28 years in ministry. We all agreed none of us could have predicted where the call has taken us. I remain grateful for all that has been and look forward to all that will emerge.

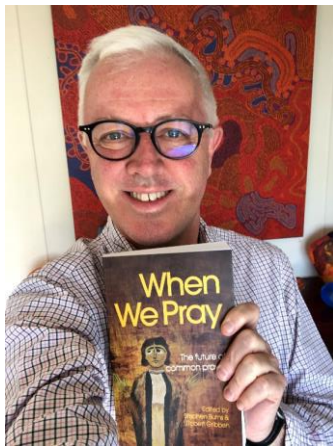
13. Over the years I have enjoyed singing the hymn *Everyday God* by Bernadette Farrell. Bernadette is the composer of *Christ be our light*. This hymn is in the 'call-response' mode . . . many liturgical assemblies sing it across the globe. The assembly sing: *Everyday God . . . O Jesus . .*

. O Spirit . . . Come be with us. Unabashed praise of God. Here's a clip:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1oNP4vaW_c

14. I had two pleasant surprises this week and there are photos to prove it! I received a free copy of the new book *When We Pray: the future of common prayer*, edited by Stephen Burns and Robert Gribben (Melbourne: Coventry Press, 2020). Thanks Coventry Press! I was invited to contribute a chapter which has become 'Ritual Apologies and Reconciliation in Australia'. I thank the faith communities of St. Pat's parish, Mackay, Maroochydore Catholic parish, and the Boonah Catholic parish for affording me time to write and research. Also to the Brisbane chapter of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and several colleagues and parishioners who afforded me necessary critical comment and feedback.

The parents of the baby I am holding sent me this pic. The 'baby' turned 18 this week.



15. Finally, the new Archbishop of Washington, D.C., is Wilton Gregory. He is a fine bishop and African-American. Archbishop Gregory issued a statement this week around events in Washington and beyond. He began this way:

I find it baffling and reprehensible that any Catholic facility would allow itself to be so egregiously misused and manipulated in a fashion that violates our religious principles, which call us to defend the rights of all people even those with whom we might disagree. Saint Pope John Paul II was an ardent defender of the rights and dignity of human beings. His legacy bears vivid witness to that truth. He certainly would not condone the use of tear gas and other deterrents to silence, scatter or intimidate them for a photo opportunity in front of a place of worship and peace.

I knew of this leader as a fine liturgist and it seems he has similarly become a fine successor to Peter and the apostles. His statement was released 2 June 2020 and this is the official text:

<https://adw.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/06/060220-ADW-Press-Release.pdf>

Peace to you and yours this week.

John

pastor,

Boonah Catholic community