



*Start by doing what's necessary;  
then do what's possible;  
and suddenly you are doing the impossible.*

Francis of Assisi + 1226

*Sunday greetings to the members of the Boonah Catholic community and beyond on the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time.*

*The 4<sup>th</sup> October is also the day where all people of goodwill remember the witness, life, and death of St. Francis of Assisi.*

## 1. REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY WORD.

We share two reflections on the Sunday scriptures our church selects for this Sunday.



The [first Sunday preaching](#) is offered by Sister Ramona Miller OSF who began her pre-Vatican II ministry as an elementary school teacher.

Currently, she is the elected leader/president of the Sisters of Saint Francis in Rochester, Minnesota.

She widened her horizon with numerous experiences in pastoral ministry in parishes as Director of Adult Faith Formation, and Pastoral Associate and at retreat centres.

She served as Director of Spiritual Formation at the Franciscan School of Theology in Berkeley, California (2002-2006) and on her congregation's leadership team (2006-2012).

For over twenty-five years, she was a staff member of the Franciscan Pilgrimage Programs leading pilgrimages to Assisi, Italy. The interactions with pilgrims from around the world further expanded her awareness of cultures and spiritualities. Sister Ramona served as the president of the National Franciscan Federation (2009 – 2012) and she continues to offer presentations on contemporary aspects of Franciscan spirituality including virtual pilgrimages to Assisi. Ramona is the author of *In the Footsteps of Saint Clare*, and co-author of *Praying with Clare of Assisi*.

This is toward the end of the homily:

*As we desire to develop a vineyard that pleases God and deepens our inner peace we come to realize that there can be no fences around the perfect vineyard. We are being called to be in relationship with all of creation and all peoples and creatures. Lest we get frightened by the expectation to be so magnanimous, keep in mind that God planted the law of love in our hearts.*

<https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/10042020>



The **second Sunday preaching** is offered by Australian Christian Brother, Julian McDonald.

In reading today's gospel (and the gospel readings taken from Matthew over the next few weeks) it's important to remember that they are reflections on the events of the last week of Jesus' life, during which his conflict with the Jewish leaders reached boiling point.

In today's parable of the vineyard owner and the rebellious tenants to whom he had leased it, Jesus identifies himself as yet another prophet who has been rejected by Israel. He goes even further, indicating that he is the son of the vineyard owner (God) who will be done to death by tenants whose uncontrolled desire for greed, power and status delude them into thinking that his death will deliver to them all they want.

The risk in reading the parable only in this way is that we can use it to point the finger of blame at people in leadership, and forget that there is a message in the parable for us, too. As an indirect way into exploring this parable, I share a Sufi story with which, almost forty-four years ago, the Dutch-born theologian and writer, Henri Nouwen began a public lecture entitled *Compassion: The Core of Spiritual Leadership*:

*Once upon a time, there was a man who strayed from his own country into the world known as the Land of Fools. He soon saw a number of people flying in terror from a field where they had been trying to reap wheat. "There is a monster in that field," they told him. He looked and saw that it was a watermelon.*

*He offered to kill the "monster" for them. When he had cut the melon from its stalk, he took a slice and began to eat it. The people became even more terrified of him than they had been of the melon. They drove him away with pitchforks crying, "He will kill us next, unless we get rid of him."*

*It so happened that at another time another man also strayed into the Land of Fools, and the same thing started to happen to him. But, instead of offering to help them with the "monster," he agreed with them that it must be dangerous and by tiptoeing way from it with them he gained their confidence. He spent a long time with them in their houses until he could teach them, little by little, the basic facts which would enable them not only to lose their fear of melons, but even to cultivate them themselves. (If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him, Palo Alto: Science & Behavior Books, Inc., 1972, p.8)*

Nouwen went on to say: "This beautiful story tells us better than any essay the crucial difference between someone without compassion and someone with compassion.

We know too well how great our temptation is to laugh at the fools who do not understand and to create hatred by cutting melons from their stalk. We also know that it is our hard but urgent vocation to become fools with the fools, to live in their land helping them with gentle patience to convert their fears into new expectations. That is the Christian vocation to compassion. It is the vocation to have the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ, who 'did not cling to his equality with God, but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave and became as we are' (Philippians 2:6-7).

Compassion is core to a spiritual life, and three questions need our special attention. The first question is: how does compassion manifest itself? The answer is: in solidarity. The second question is: how is compassion disciplined? The answer is: by voluntary displacement. The third question is: how is compassion lived out in the light of the gospel? The answer is: in discipleship. Compassion manifests itself in solidarity, is



disciplined by voluntary displacement and is lived out in discipleship. I hope to discover some clues about how to avoid becoming unwise melon hunters!" (*The Core of Spiritual Leadership*, Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical Leadership and Cultural Research, Occasional Paper No. 2, published March 1977) "Voluntary displacement" is an unusual concept meaning stepping away from our society's expectations on us to shine as individuals and, instead, to accept that we are as ordinary and as broken as everyone around us. Voluntarily adopting that attitude opens the way for us all to be truly compassionate.

In the person of Jesus, God entered fully into human experience, living our life and embracing the challenges, distress and fear that touch us all. In so doing, Jesus taught us how to transform our lives and live in the love God extends to us. Today's parable illustrates that faith in God is not some kind of gift given only to self-appointed people of privilege. Nor is it a weapon of the powerful for imposing on others an arbitrary catalogue of dos and don'ts. Rather, faith is an awareness that God is present to us, accompanying us along every step of life's journey. The only authentic response to that is gratitude.

But how does today's parable translate to our lives in our contemporary circumstances? Every single parable that Jesus told was designed to disturb the comfort of those who were present. In similar measure, they are an invitation for us to join



as participants. We are tenants of a world to which Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Laudato Si*, refers as "our common home". An integral dimension of our vocation as Christians is to be stewards of the earth,

of the vineyard that has been entrusted to our care. Even a cursory glance over recent decades of our history is sufficient to demonstrate that many of us allowed those around us with power and money to exploit the vineyard for which we all have a responsibility to nurture and care. If we are not directly implicated in abusing our "sister Earth" (*Laudato Si*, 2) our silence is a sin of omission. In the concluding chapter of his encyclical, Pope Francis states: "Living our vocation to be

protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (*Laudato Si*, 217).

I conclude with Pope Francis' prayer of compassion for the earth and its people:

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.

Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen

2. Since the changes introduced following the presence of the COVID-19 virus, **LITURGY BRISBANE** provided for free the *Sunday Readings for home reflection* and second resource for families, *Praying with Children*.

From the first Sunday of September, parishes were invited to take out an annual subscription. We have done so, and last this Sunday both are included as attachments to our Sunday e-bulletin.



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

The *second* attachment is designed for families with younger children. An extract from the Sunday gospel is provided, along with several reflection questions, a family activity as well as a worksheet for children.

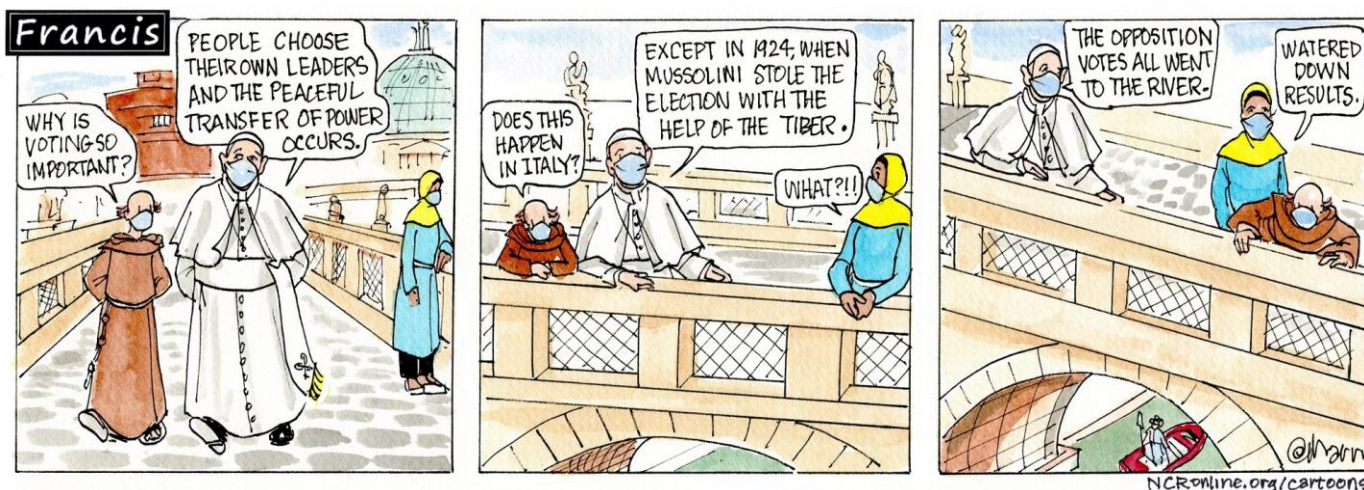
3. For those of us unable to gather for Sunday eucharist today, you may wish to prayerfully watch live-recordings of communities celebrating eucharist especially in our Cathedral of St. Stephen, Brisbane. This link takes you to the live-streaming page:

<https://brisbanecatholic.org.au/multimedia/on-demand-web-casts/>

Live-streamed daily eucharist continues at Lavender Bay, Sydney . . . prayerful and uplifting. Start time is 0730 Mon-Fri:

<https://www.northsydney Catholics.com/spirituality/liturgy/mass-on-demand>

#### 4. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin.



1st October 2020

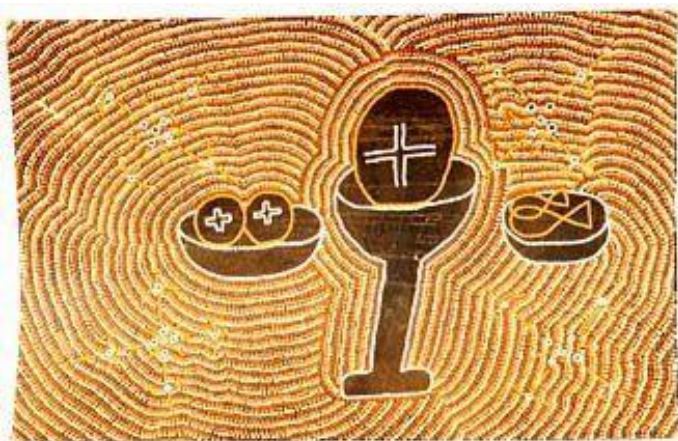
5. We pray with and for those who are sick in our parish and beyond: all across the globe infected with COVID-19; former pastor of Boonah parish Fr. Ellis Clifford, Chris Healy, Bill Castley, Paul White, Thyrlene Devin, Bridget Muller, Liliana Toohill, Libby Shields, Jonathon Hancock, Marko Babic, Dermot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



6. Keith York died on 17<sup>th</sup> September and his funeral was celebrated at St. Mary's, Ipswich on the afternoon of 24<sup>th</sup> September. Keith was known to people in the district and beyond. May he rest in peace.

Let's also remember those whose anniversaries have occurred recently: Robert Doyle, Delma Winks and William Barnes.

## 7. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*



SUNDAY EUCHARIST schedule is:

**Saturday**  
**5.00pm (Boonah church)**

**Sunday**  
**7.30am (Harrisville church)**  
**9.30am (Boonah church)**

Our WEEKDAY EUCHARIST schedule for this new week, the 27<sup>th</sup> Week of Ordinary Time, is:

<b>Tuesday</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> October	8.00am, <b>Boonah</b> church
<b>Wednesday</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October	6.00pm, <b>Peak Crossing</b> church
<b>Thursday</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> October	5.30pm, <b>Boonah</b> church
<b>Friday</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> October	8.00am, <b>Boonah</b> church

♦ Over the last week our State continued to improve with all the health plans in place and we saw further restrictions being eased from 1<sup>st</sup> October.

We are to remain vigilant and continue to abide by the Industry Safe Plan which the Church of Brisbane complies with.



**I must ask all parishioners to sanitize their hands as they leave the church once eucharist has concluded. Some people are still waltzing out after eucharist and not sanitizing their hands. This must stop, please, for the sake of everyone.**

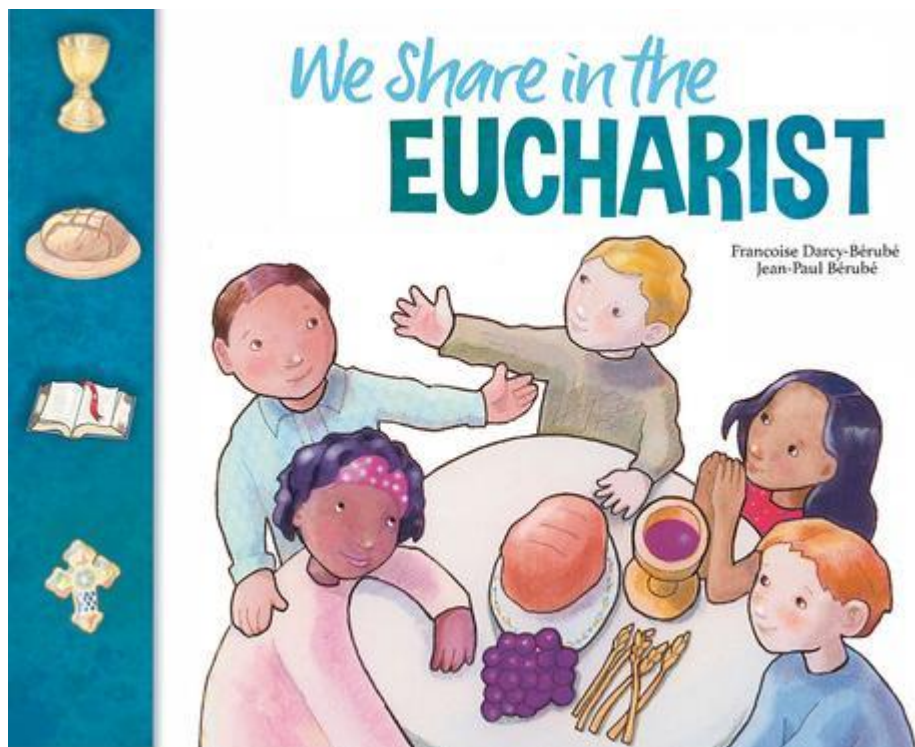
I thank our COVID Crews in Boonah, Harrisville and now Peak Crossing who clean the churches after our Sunday eucharist. We remain grateful to you. Thanks also to a few good people who come to offer and clean after weekday eucharist. We only need two people each time and your offer is noted with thanks.

♦ It is pleasing to be receiving enquiries for the baptism of newly born babies. The process is simply to phone the parish and make an appointment to meet together to do the paperwork and the baptismal preparation.

- ♦ All parishes across the local Church of Brisbane have been involved in the process of requesting preferred dates for the celebration of Confirmation in 2021. We have asked for the bishop to join us for the celebration at one or two Sunday Masses in August next year. More news when we find out what has been arranged.

This means that we are aiming to prepare candidates for Confirmation and First Communion after Easter holidays next year. We will take the first Term of the new school year as time to enrol candidates and work out the processes.

It is my hope that we will be able to get copies of a marvellous resource from Canada: *We Share in the Eucharist*, published in September 2019.



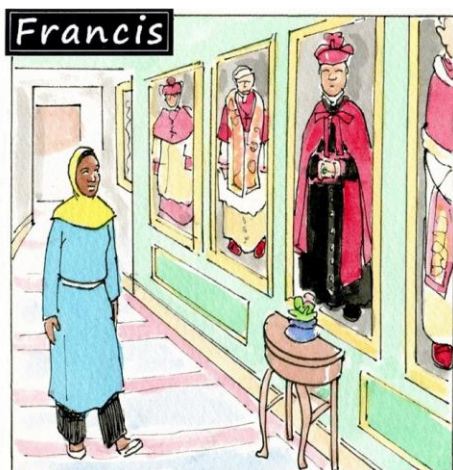
This newly revised resource prepares children for the sacrament.

When I served in Mackay, the teams who prepared children and families found it a marvellous resource.

The authors are Francoise Darcy-Berube and John-Paul Berube, well known pioneering Catechists for children who have collaborated and published numerous books together

They also have a resource for Reconciliation.

#### 8. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin.



NCRonline.org/cartoons

29th September 2020



9. THE CATHOLIC LEADER digital edition is available free at the moment and can be sent to your inbox every Thursday morning while the pandemic is still with us. Sign up on <https://bit.ly/2ShdcSZ>. 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.

10. We will keep this in our bulletin for a while: “What good Catholics should look like and how they should behave”. It is good news!

*I will summarize in a simple litany some of the elements in the change in style of the Church indicated by the council’s vocabulary:*

*from commands to invitations,  
 from laws to ideals,  
 from threats to persuasion,  
 from coercion to conscience,  
 from monologue to conversation,  
 from ruling to serving,  
 from withdrawn to integrated,  
 from vertical and top-down to horizontal,  
 from exclusion to inclusion,  
 from hostility to friendship,  
 from static to changing,  
 from passive acceptance to active engagement,  
 from prescriptive to principled,  
 from defined to open-ended,  
 from behaviour-modification to conversion of heart,  
 from the dictates of law to the dictates of conscience,  
 from external conformity to the joyful pursuit of holiness.*

*When those elements are taken in the aggregate, they indicate a model of spirituality. This, they say, is what good Catholics should look like and this is how they should behave. That means the elements indicate what the Church should look like and how it should behave. This is a significant model-shift. This is a teaching of the council.*

- Fr. John O’Malley SJ, 2006





11. The 4<sup>th</sup> October is remembered and celebrated as the Memorial of St. Francis of Assisi. You might like to read this piece from NCR: *Why is Francis of Assisi the patron saint of ecology?* <https://www.ncronline.org/news/earthbeat/why-francis-assisi-patron-saint-ecology>



12. Dan Schutte is a Catholic composer and was a member of the St. Louis Jesuits group for a long time. He has been composing music for almost fifty years.

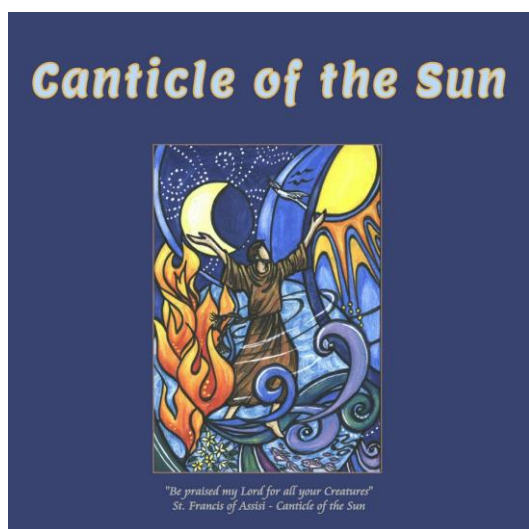
Dan is offering 'home retreats' at several times in October. Two dates stand out: 6-11 October & 13-18 October. There are eighteen music and reflection videos and there is a retreat workbook/journal too.

I had a look at his invitation video and though some of us may be interested: <https://youtu.be/XjdT6b91bZQ>. The registration fee is reasonable too!

For details: <https://www.danschuttemusic.com/wordpressstore/individual-retreat-details/>



13. A second music offering – this time a *live* recording - comes from Australian composer Peter Kearney. *Canticle of the Sun* taps into remembering Francis of Assisi.



Here are notes from the link:

*Canticle of the Sun* is a nine-minute audio excerpt from a live performance of 'Good Morning Good People', Peter Kearney's 'big work', a musical-narrative on the life of St. Francis of Assisi.

The sequence of song and narration happens near the end. Francis is despondent about troubles in his order of Friars Minor.

He is sick and is going blind. At his request, he is brought to the convent of *San Damiano* where Clare and the other sisters live. He stays in a hut of branches in the convent garden.

<https://peterkearney.bandcamp.com/track/52-canticle-of-the-sun>

Thanks Peter!

14. *Australian Catholics* carried this film review which some of us might like to see:

**DAVID ATTENBOROUGH: A LIFE ON OUR PLANET, US, 2020. Directed by Alastair Fothergill, Jonathan Hughes, Keith Scholey. 83 minutes. Rated G.**

David Attenborough is acknowledged the world over as a key consciousness-raiser about life on our planet, on the significance of biodiversity, on the threats to nature in the 21st-century.

He describes this documentary, encompassing his whole life and mission, as his witness statement. He is now 94. And so the film could rightly be called his last will and testament – his bequeathing to his vast audiences an enthusiasm for mission, to contribute to and work for a better life on our planet.

The David Attenborough we see during this film is not just the venerable octogenarian from recent television programs, now in his 90s. Many sequences from his past have been incorporated here, the enthusiastic explorer setting out in the 1950s, the intrepid visitor to every part of the planet, the powerful yet inviting presence on our television screens.

However, it does offer something of a shock as the film opens when we see the explorer wandering through the remnants of Chernobyl. Here was destruction, poor management, human error and the abandoning of the city. Here was a touch of earth apocalypse at the end of the 20th century. But it turns out that this is a shrewd opening because this is where David Attenborough all but chooses to end his story – back at Chernobyl, not walking through ruined buildings, but showing the extraordinary natural growth that has occurred since the 1980s, the range of trees and foliage, animals returning to the site, nature regenerating.

Throughout the film there is a chart, indicating world populations from the 1930s to the present, the percentage of carbon in the air, the continually diminishing statistic about wilderness remaining in the world. There are sombre sequences of rainforest clearing, especially in Borneo, and the substitution of palm oil. But David Attenborough, despite the losses he has experienced over 60 or more years, is still a man of hope. And, in that vein, he invites us to relive with him some of his exciting experiences, his charmed experiences, showing as beautiful visuals on land, on sea, in the sea, in the air, the wonders of biodiversity on and in our planet.



David Attenborough is a man of moral stature, a celebrity that the world has welcomed over many years, a man who has invited a world audience to share his passion – and, in this witness statement, in this will and testimony, he invites us to continue to share and promote his passion into the future.

*Peter Malone MSC is an associate of Jesuit Media*

Special Limited Screenings from 28 September – [www.attenborough.film](http://www.attenborough.film)

15. The annual *Catholic Mission* appeal is scheduled in our parish for the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> October. The universal Church celebrates *World Mission Sunday* on the same Sunday!

I am pleased that we will welcome Catholic Mission ambassador, Chrissie Turner, who will join our three Sunday celebrations. Chrissie has worked in Cambodia. I know we will make her and her husband very welcome.



16. Thanks to those who are supporting our local SVDP food pantry. There is a great response from the community who gather at Harrisville church every week. On behalf of the local conference, THANK YOU.

All donations are welcome. Dry shelf contributions only please. Food donations can be placed in baskets at our two churches.



Enjoy the new week ahead.

John,  
pastor, Boonah Catholic community