



Supper at Emmaus (Caravaggio), 1601,
Oil on canvas, Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan



Supper at Emmaus (Caravaggio), 1606,
Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London

(Caravaggio painted the same gospel scene five years apart. Notice the differences)

Easter greetings to the members of the Boonah Catholic community and beyond on the Third Sunday of Easter.

1. REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY WORD.



The **first** reflection for this Sunday is from the *Catholic WomenPreach* website and the preacher is Christy Hicks Aydt.

Christy Christy M. Hicks Aydt is a Campus Minister at Saint Louis University and a spiritual director; also trained in the 19th Annotation, the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises.

Most of her career has been ministering to young people on college campuses. Prior to working at Saint Louis University, Christy worked as an Acquisition Editor at Liguori Publications for two years.

In 2010-2011, she spent a year in India and Nepal. Though her studies have been through the lens of Catholic-Christian faith and thought, she reverences the faith and beauty other faith traditions share. Eastern spirituality and culture has gifted her with a more expansive image of God.

Christy lives in St. Louis, Missouri with her husband and family.

Her homily begins:

“Jerusalem is my home/Guard Me/Walk with Me/Do not leave me here/My place is not here/My kingdom is not here”. These are the words in translation of the south African dance song *Jerusalema* by Master KG, a song which has inspired the world through these pandemic days to dance. ITV, a British Television program declares: “it is the dance craze uniting the world...from monks in Israel, to nuns in Africa, from the beaches of India, to the supermarkets of France...”

The first time I saw a compilation of these dances and the spirit within them, I was filled with joy and amazement at the human spirit in these times. One video quotes Master KG sharing: “I knew I wanted this to be a spiritual song.”

What strikes me is that the whole world is praying with their bodies these beautiful words as they dance. I cannot think of a better image to contemplate the events happening in today's gospel.

Here is the link to her homily:

<https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/04182021>

The [second reflection](#) is from Julian McDonald, a Christian Brother in Australia.

The two disciples told the eleven and their companions what had happened on the road to Emmaus, and how Jesus had been made known to them in the breaking of bread...While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said: "Peace be with you...Look me over from head to toe, touch me and see that a ghost is not flesh and bones like this.

Luke 24: 35-48



At this stage of my life, I find that I don't go to weddings anymore, only to funerals, at which I find myself delivering the eulogy. Anyone preparing a eulogy normally sits with those who know the deceased, gathering stories and memories. Such meetings often end up with various friends and family members launching into: "Do you remember when he went up to the Cardinal and called him 'Your evidence' or when she embarrassed us all by telling the rent collector that mum was not able to speak with him because she was in the bedroom with the electrician?"

On reflection, we can come to appreciate that those who wrote the four Gospels relied heavily on stories about Jesus that had been passed on orally, by those who actually knew him, to the next generation, who in their turn related them to younger people who wanted to know more about Jesus. In time, such stories were changed in the ways in which story-tellers are used to doing. And remember, we are all story-telling people, who spend a good part of each day relating to others what we have selected from our experiences of the day as it has unfolded.

So, I suggest that a worthwhile preparation for reflecting on today's gospel-reading is to read quietly the whole of chapter 24 of Luke's Gospel. That chapter is Luke's version, with minor variations, of last Sunday's gospel-reading from John. It records memories of what occurred on the day Jesus was raised from the tomb. It leaves me with the impression that the prospect of new life heralded by Jesus' resurrection took hold of the disciples slowly, in fits and starts. Very few of us rush to grab the prospect of a new way of doing things, let alone a new approach to living. We take on the possibility of new life with a degree of caution we already know that embracing anything new requires change, and change is very often uncomfortable, even painful. New life, a new way of living and viewing the world, does not slip in quietly through the back door. Any mother will tell us, if we don't already know, that the pain of giving birth to new life is excruciating, as are the struggles to guide a child successfully through infancy, early childhood, adolescence and early adulthood to maturity. Maturing as Christians is just as painful.

Traumatised by the injustice and brutality of Jesus' trial and execution, the disciples were seemingly resigned to accepting the grief that had overtaken them. The women among them, accustomed to attending to practical demands, had prepared spices for anointing Jesus' body, and headed for his tomb in the early morning. The men were slowly getting used to coping with their fear and grief, as victims of prejudice and persecution have done throughout the centuries. But, the expectations of all of them were jolted from the moment the women arrived at the tomb and saw the stone rolled away from the entrance. Moreover, when the women came back with the news given them by the two

gleaming men who had greeted them in Jesus' empty tomb, reminding them that their teacher had done his best to prepare them for the surprise that had just startled them, the Apostles dismissed their message as nonsense, and Peter ran off to verify for himself whether or not they were suffering from hallucinations. The women had returned, buoyed up with hope, but their stunningly good news was greeted with disbelief. This was Luke's way of demonstrating just how difficult it is for the new to break into people's lives, even into the lives of those who had walked with Jesus for three years.

On that very day, on a road leading to Emmaus and then over a meal in an inn, the Risen Jesus had made a second attempt to break into the lives of two other dispirited disciples. That experience had lifted them from grudging resignation, to the joy of recognising their Teacher in someone who had presented as a sympathetic stranger, and had left them, too, buoyed up with a hope that propelled them to come rushing back to the apostles with the incredible news of resurrection. As they shared their excitement of how they had recognised the Risen Jesus in the simple act of breaking bread, and sat listening to how Simon had discovered that the Master had been raised up, Jesus made a third attempt to convince them that his resurrection could be life-changing for them, too. In extending to them the gift of peace and forgiveness, he urged them to set aside their fears and doubts and to come forward to touch him, as proof positive that it was really he standing before them. In so doing, he promised them his Spirit, who, in due course, would empower them to let resurrection, new life loose in the world.



Embedded in these stories is a very clear message that the very first disciples who had been privileged with first-hand encounters with the Risen Jesus, struggled to allow even the possibility of resurrection to break into their living. It was as though they had been inoculated against the new, against change and transformation. Therein lies a message of hope for us. As this very moment in our history, we look around at a world and its people gripped and dispirited by a raging virus. We can see, too, how, over two thousand years since Christ was crucified, violence and hatred still hold

sway in many places, how our Church has failed the very people whom it was meant to protect and, in the process, has all but lost its credibility. We can look at all this and begin to conclude that resurrection is still beyond our reach. BUT, Luke will not let us ignore the fact that it is at the very moment when we tell ourselves that hope is dead and buried and when we do the preparations to complete the burial, that the stirrings of new life are likely to be felt. Like the women at the start of chapter 24 in Luke, we might set out on pilgrimage to the tomb of our long-dead dreams, only to be disturbed by the rumblings of hope and resurrection breaking out from unexpected places. We meet a complete stranger who stops to engage us in the supermarket. We read of a small child who gives his prized sneakers to a new-found friend, because "that's what Jesus would do". Our hearts break open when we hear the very human, yet very divine question: "Do you have anything to eat here?"

Perhaps some of the best places for us to understand ourselves and our role in the world and, indeed, to experience resurrection, are soup kitchen tables, budget cafe and family kitchen tables, where the people with whom we engage will mirror to us new insights and resurrection. When we stop to ponder the resurrection of Jesus, we might well discover that it is God's affirmation that the universe and all of creation matter, that love, integrity and justice matter, that all of us human beings, with our mystery, complexity and in-built contradictions, matter, for we have all been loved into life by God and are in God's image. We are all living proof of the Risen Christ's breaking into our lives and resuscitating us with resurrection. And that process must surely continue.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fritz_Eichenberg#Biography

(image on page 4: José Clemente Orozco, Christ Destroys His Cross, oil mural, 1922-24)



The [third reflection](#) for this Sunday is also an Australian voice.

It is from the new series called *Australian Women Preach* which was launched on *International Women's Day*, 8th March 2021, and runs for thirty weeks leading into the Plenary Council which starts in October 2021.

While our first reflection from the USA is shared in video format and the second is usually a printed piece, this third one is a podcast!

Several folk who receive our bulletin mail-out alerted me to this new initiative from "The Grail in Australia" and "Women and the Australian Church".

The preacher for the Third Sunday of Easter is Tau'alofa (also known as Lofa) Anga'aelangi, an ordained deacon in the Uniting Church in Australia.

I am a first generation Tongan-Australian. My family and I migrated to Australia in the early 1990's.

I am currently serving as a Tertiary Chaplain at Charles Sturt University in Port Macquarie.

I am passionate about advocating and encouraging different faiths and communities to come together in dialogue on differences and social justice issues.

I have a strong interest in studies of the Hebrew Bible and contextual Theology.

As a young contemporary theologian from Oceania, my hope is to see more theological work from those at the grassroots of Pasifika.

I hope to liberate our younger generations to write and relate to their own context.

I love to spend time reading novels, tales from Pasifika and hanging out with family and friends.

Listen to the podcast:

<https://soundcloud.com/andrea-dean/6-april-18-taualofa-angaaelangi>



2. 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, Paul White, Arthur Devin, Liliana Toohill, Libby Shields, Marko Babic, Dermot Peters, Max Gardiner, Bernice Lippiatt, Pat Toohill, Trish Merlehan, Pat Shannon, Bernadette Pinchin, Simon Greatrex, Neil

O'Connor, Cate Mitten and sick members of parish families and those beyond our parish boundaries.

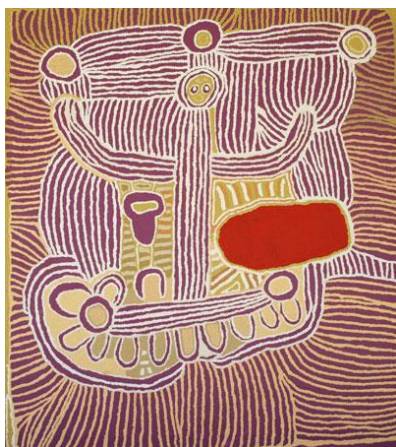
3. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*

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 these 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 Second Vatican Council.

- Fr. John O'Malley SJ, 2006

Our **SUNDAY EUCHARIST** schedule is:



Desert Eucharist by Linda Syddick Napaltjarri (b. 1937)

Saturday
7.00pm (Boonah church)

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

Our **WEEKDAY EUCHARIST** schedule for this week, 3rd week of Easter, is:

Monday	19 th April	8.00am, Boonah church
Tuesday	20 th April	5.30pm, Boonah church
Wednesday	21 st April	6.00pm, Peak Crossing church followed by dinner at The Peak Pub
Thursday	22 nd April	5.30pm, Boonah church

BOONAH ST. VINCENT DE PAUL NEEDS OUR HELP!

There is once again an opportunity to help raise funds to support the work of our local conference within the Boonah and Fassifern district.

What is it? To provide **GATEKEEPERS** and assist with parking duties at the upcoming Boonah Show, Friday 28th May and Saturday 29th May.

What am I asked to do? Donate 2 or 3 hours of your time on Friday or Saturday, 28th and 29th May.

When? Between 5.00am and 8.00pm on either day as a team member.

Who? You, your relatives, your friends and neighbours.

John Greatrex would love to hear from you by SUNDAY 2nd MAY 2021:

07 5463 4100

0407 962 625

j.greatrex@bigpond.com



▪ **EVERY SUNDAY** when we gather for the Sunday eucharist, there are baskets (of some or another) at the entrances of our two churches.

We are invited to bring a gift of non-perishable food or goods for people seeking help from our local St. Vincent de Paul.

There is a great response each Sunday from the assembly at Harrisville. *Thanks!*

There is also an emerging and positive response from the two assemblies who gather at Boonah. *Thanks!*

I know the local conference very much appreciate our support.



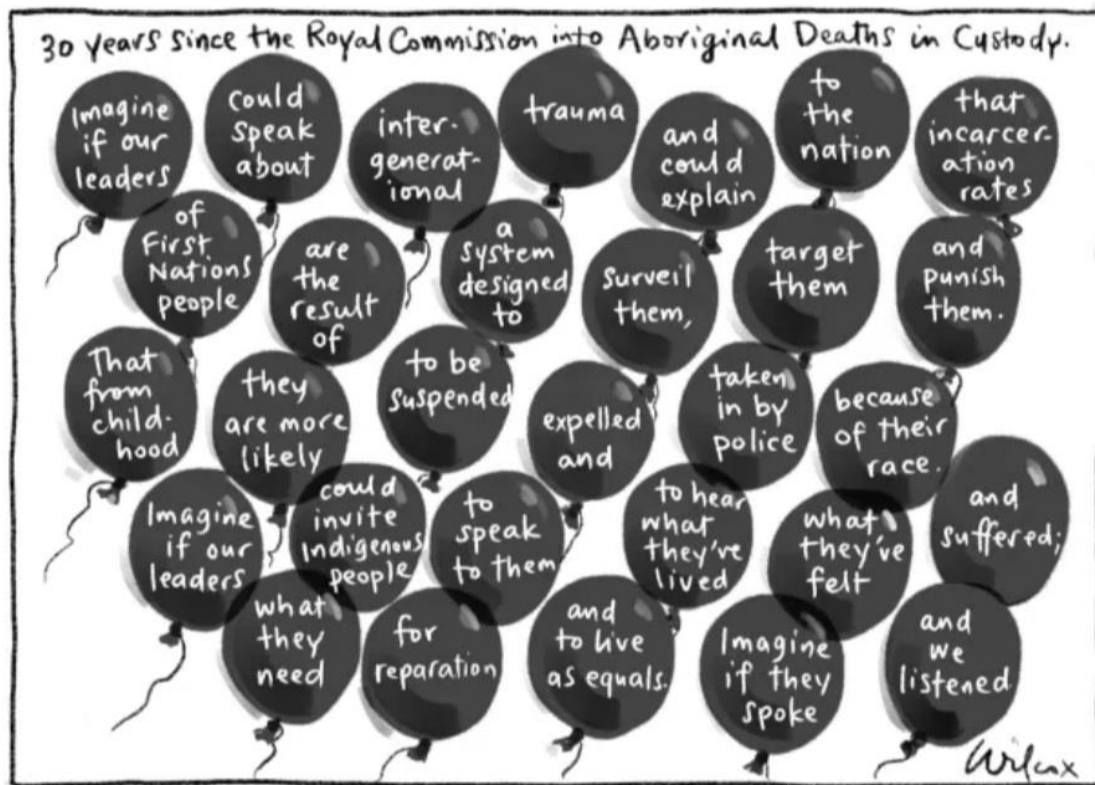
I was hungry and you fed me. Matthew 25:35

- We acknowledge the 30th anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody on 15th April.

During the week I listened to an interview with Pat Dodson who was brought into the Royal Commission's process as one of the commissioners.

You might be interested to hear his reflections thirty years on:

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/deaths-in-custody:-pat-dodson/13302462>



- **THANK YOU** to all who support the weekly collection. Your gifts enable the parish to meet its expenses and to function like an everyday household.

4. On Easter Sunday after celebrating The Three Days of Easter here, I was visiting some friends. They shared this Lenten reflection with me and I thought it not only speaks to us during the annual forty days but beyond. *Thanks!*

And the Lord said: I will give you a new heart, and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts, and giving you hearts of love. I will put my spirit within you, and make you live by my ways, careful to observe my decrees. (Ezekiel 36: 26-27)

This holy season, let us think about our call to:

- Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ dwelling in them
- Fast from emphasis on our differences; feast on our oneness
- Fast from the darkness around us; feast on the light of Christ
- Fast on thoughts of illness; feast on the healing power of God
- Fast on words that pollute; feast on words that purify
- Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude
- Fast from withholding anger; feast on sharing our feelings
- Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism
- Fast from worry; feast on trust
- Fast from guilt; feast on freedom
- Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation
- Fast from stress; feast on self-care
- Fast from hostility; feast on letting go
- Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness
- Fast from selfishness; feast on compassion for others
- Fast from discouragement; feast on seeing the good
- Fast from apathy; feast on enthusiasm
- Fast from suspicion; feast on seeing the good
- Fast from idle gossip; feast on spreading good news
- Fast from being so busy; feast on quiet silence
- Fast from problems that overwhelm us; feast on prayerful trust
- Fast from talking; feast on listening
- Fast from trying to be in control; feast on letting go.

Loving God, let us Fast from anything that leads us away from you and teach us to feast on all that brings us closer to you. Amen.

5. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin – 13th April 2021.



6. On Friday last week, the Jesuit weekly paper from the USA, AMERICA, carried a very interesting homily.

San Francisco is the home to a large Asian population. In response to a rise in anti-Asian hate crimes across the USA, Archbishop Salvatore Joseph Cordileone gave this homily during a prayer service for peace at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption on 10th April.

In our fair city's other official song (not Tony Bennett's "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," but the *other* one), we hear these opening lyrics:

*San Francisco, open your Golden Gate
You'll let no stranger wait outside your door.
San Francisco, here is your wanderin' one
Saying I'll wander no more.*

While the song goes on to narrate the exploits of the native San Franciscan who leaves town to wander about, only to return home and stay for good, we can also interpret it in another way, a way also very much in keeping with our city's history and character.

San Francisco has always been a major destination of immigration. We can think of the large waves of Irish and Italian immigrants who came here early on in our city's history and contributed so much to the building up of our city's infrastructure. The city now teems with immigrants from Mexico, Central America and other parts of Latin America seeking freedom from oppression and a better life.

The one constant of immigration in our city, though, from the very beginning down to the present time, is immigrants coming from China, whether originally to work on building the trans-continental railway, or now to work in the tech industry. For quite some time our city has also been receiving immigrants from many other countries in Asia. Our city has always been known as a place that welcomes the foreigner, a place of harmonization between diverse cultures where all can be who they are and thrive in community. A place where no one has to wander anymore to find a welcoming and stable home.

That racial violence would rear its ugly head here, then – especially against Asians who have been such a vital part of this city's life and culture from the beginning down to the present time – is very disturbing indeed. This alarming rise in racial violence, even here in San Francisco, justifies the words of Pope Francis on this topic from last month.

*The virus of racism never goes away,
but there are ways to inoculate oneself against it.*

In a tweet on March 21 – the day the United Nations observes as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – the Holy Father compared racism to a "virus" that does not go away, but changes and adapts. He said: "Racism is a virus that quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting. Instances of

racism continue to shame us, for they show that our supposed social progress is not as real or definitive as we think.”

We are not as accomplished as we thought when it comes to welcome, inclusion and living in peace among a diverse population. What, then, are we to do?

We are finally getting some very welcome relief from the virus that causes Covid-19. The plan for the rollout of the vaccines is working; people are being inoculated. But inoculation doesn't kill the virus; rather, it prevents one from being harmed if exposed to the virus. And we still have more to learn about these vaccines, and we are learning more all the time: their effectiveness against variants, how long the inoculation will last and whether or not a booster shot will be needed later, whether one who has been inoculated can still spread the virus to others or not.

The virus of racism is a lot like that: it never goes away, but there are ways to inoculate oneself against it, even if one has to remain vigilant always to protect oneself from being infected. But what is our inoculation against racism?

We need look no further than the Acts of the Apostles to get a good start in answering that question. In the first reading for the Third Sunday of Easter, Acts 4:32-35, through its description of the life of the first Christian community, we hear: “The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common.... There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale ...and they were distributed to each according to need.”

*Inoculation against racism can be summed up in one word: virtue.
These virtues: generosity, selflessness, trust and trustworthiness, humility,
courage, conviction, forgiveness and mercy itself.*

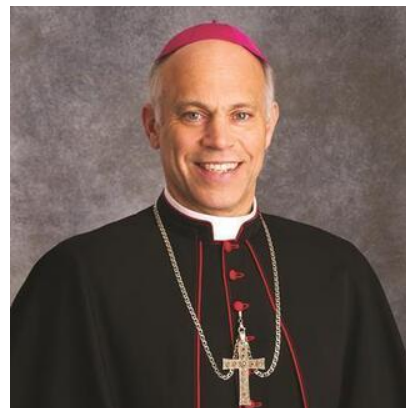
We see here the qualities that make such a peaceful and harmonious common life possible: Each one looked out first and foremost for the good of the other, not what they were going to get out of it. Everyone shared generously, indeed, everything they had in order to contribute to the common good of the community. And the apostles were entrusted with the distribution of these goods, because they were worthy of the trust of the community members – as were the members themselves, in sharing generously of all they had. Everyone put the good of the other first, and that requires a lot of humility.

Compare this to the apostles before they were visited by the risen Christ. What controlled their attitude and behaviour? Fear and doubt. The Gospel passage we heard proclaimed in our prayer service, John 20:19-31, is the one from which St. Thomas comes to be dubbed “the doubting Thomas.” But it is clear from the various Gospel accounts of the post-resurrection appearances of our Lord that all of the disciples doubted at first. It was that encounter with the living, risen Christ that transformed them into messengers of...what? Notice the mission that our Lord sends them on: “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them.” It is a mission of forgiveness, a mission of mercy. Fear and doubt are transformed

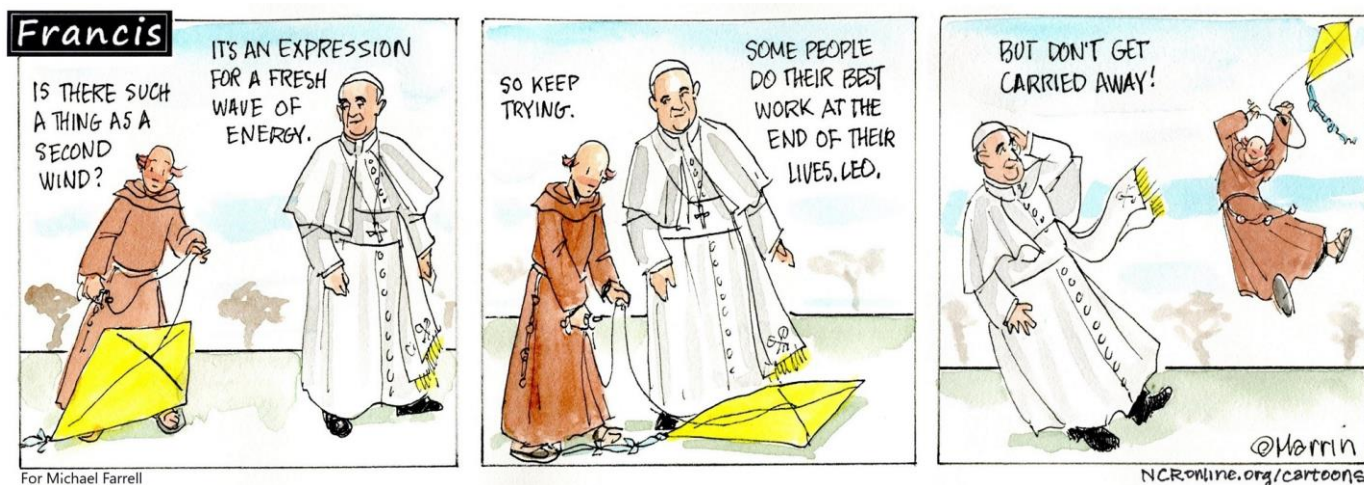
into courage and conviction, to spread God's mercy throughout the world. Fear and doubt result in violence; courage and conviction on behalf of mercy result in the qualities necessary for a diverse community to live in unity and peace.

To put it briefly, then, the inoculation against racism can be summed up in one word: virtue. These virtues are very clearly delineated in the readings from the Word of God that are prescribed for this Sunday that the Catholic Church names "Divine Mercy Sunday": generosity, selflessness, trust and trustworthiness, humility, courage, conviction, forgiveness and, of course, mercy itself.

Let us, here in San Francisco, lead the way by example. Let us make our Golden Gate an authentic symbol of a city that will let no stranger wait outside its door, and where the wandering one will say, "I'll wander no more."



7. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin – 15th April 2021.



8. The biblical scholar Ched Myers gave this homily two years ago. It is a reflection on Luke's post-resurrection appearances. He specifically explores their reckoning with the traumatic somatic:

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/jesus-risen-mutilated-body>

Continue to live this Easter days in hope and compassion!

John

pastor

Boonah Catholic community.