



Glass bowl (detail), Colin Heaney, 2002

*May your life-giving Spirit
lend fire to our words
and strength to our witness.*

Opening Prayer on Pentecost Sunday
Mass during the day

OPENING PRAYERS: COLLECTS IN CONTEMPORARY LANGUAGE
(Canterbury Press, 2001)

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

1. REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY WORD.



The **first** reflection for this Sunday is from the *Catholic WomenPreach* website and the preacher is Suzanne Nawrocki.

Dr. Suzanne Nawrocki has undergraduate business degrees from St. Mary's College, Notre Dame; a Masters of Scripture and a Masters of Divinity from St. Thomas University (through St. Mary's Seminary), Houston, and a Doctorate in Ministry from Aquinas Institute of Theology, St. Louis, where she has previously been an adjunct professor.

She is an executive member of the Catholic Association of Homiletics, known as C.A.T.H.; the wider ecumenical group, the Academy of Homiletics; and the international guild *Societas homileticus*. Dr. Nawrocki assisted in the Practices Peer Forum to update accreditation standards for the Association of Theological Schools, helped the USCCB train clergy on preaching *Laudato si'*, consulted and lecturer for the University of Notre Dame Martin Preaching initiative, and assists the Diocese of Austin Deacon formation in preaching. She enjoys presenting at the LA Catechetical Congress. Suzanne frequently gives workshop for parishes in sacramental preparation, lector training, and on the scriptures.

Suzanne lives with her husband of 38 years in the Hill Country of Texas. She has four grown children, and one award winning Grand baby. She enjoys golf, tennis, the piano and (surprisingly) yard work.

Part of her homily includes:

The Holy Spirit is the love that connects the Father and the Son. Imagine such a love.

A love that cannot be diluted or diminished.

A love that doesn't play favourites.

A love that is freely given and always accessible.

Augustine, calls the love between the Father and the Son, "*vinculum amoris*", the chain or bond of God's love. We toss the word love around quite frequently. I love brownies. I love Golf. I love Netflix. I love... is used to denote a strong preference. To love, to truly love is to will the good of the other.

Here is the link to her homily:

<https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/05232021>

The [second reflection](#) is from Julian McDonald, a Christian Brother in Australia. It is entitled: 'The language of love can bring a new Pentecost'.



All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Acts 2:1-11

I'm sure that most of us have noticed that, every now and then, when we find ourselves struggling to find the right words in a tight spot, we manage to come up with an answer that satisfies those who have been challenging us. I often recall a moment back in 1989 when I suggested to a group of seasoned, English-speaking Christian Brothers that they venture out as volunteers to engage with needy children and homeless adults in Rome. I was confronted with protesting voices of "How can we possibly do that if we can't speak Italian?" The response I managed to find was: "Kindness, smiles and love speak all languages." Somehow, those few words did the trick and, a week later, about thirty generous volunteers went off to an orphanage and several soup-kitchens to engage with complete strangers who had not a word of English. They returned home full of stories, and fuelled with eagerness and anticipation for their next opportunity.

As I reflect on Luke's account of the first Pentecost in today's first reading from Acts, I wonder if those first disciples were so successful in engaging with the crowds of pilgrims in Jerusalem simply because they spoke the language of love which they had learned from Jesus himself. When I look at our world, and, indeed, at our Churches, gripped by confusion, uncertainty and fear as a result of the COVID pandemic, I am convinced that we are in need of a new Pentecost. Not some kind of miraculous intervention by God, but an outburst of consciousness, inspired by God's Spirit already among us, that we are all one, intimately connected to one another in our human diversity and

respectful of one another irrespective of our race, language and adherence to a particular religion or to none.

We belong to a world in which we allow divisions, dichotomies and oppositions to keep us apart. Out of a need to somehow identify ourselves, we gravitate into polar-opposite camps like conservative or liberal, democrat or republican, radical or fundamentalist, pro or anti asylum seekers and immigrants, pro or anti-euthanasia. Such polarities divide, and result in mutuality, open-mindedness, respect for and civility to others becoming casualties. And while, in the religious context, we have made some advances towards ecumenism, some Christian churches still reflect tribalism and bigotry, and those who hold different beliefs are turned into targets for demonisation. And, on the social level, we see how would-be immigrants and asylum-seekers are variously labelled as terrorist threats and queue jumpers looking to sponge on social security benefits. Even our own indigenous peoples are accused of being lazy and responsible for the injustices heaped upon them. Phenomena such as these fuel suspicion, doubt and fear that create confusion on the social scene. And on the religious level our churches sometimes look more like Babel than Pentecost.

In the psalm that follows the first reading from Acts, we are invited to pray: "Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth" (Psalm 104). This is not a prayer to God for some kind of miraculous intervention. Rather, it is a prayer that we will be open and generous in making ourselves available to God's Spirit who is already alive and active in us and in our world. Today's reading from Acts describes how God's Spirit entered the community of those first disciples and fired them to take the risk of proclaiming to pilgrims, who had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish harvest festival, that Jesus really was the clearest expression of God's love and hope for the world. The disciples were so excited about the good news they had to share that their emotions overflowed. Little wonder, then, that some who heard them were convinced that they had drunk too much. That was hardly a criticism from hard-working farmers and labourers who were able to recognise the disciples as fellow workers who were entitled to over-indulge on a festival day designed to celebrate the success of all Jewish farmers, tradesmen and labourers.

But Luke has a more serious purpose, evidenced by the details he provides. He emphasises that God's Spirit came upon all the gathered disciples - at least 120 of them ("There must have been a hundred and twenty gathered together" Acts 1:15; and some were definitely women.) Moreover, Luke goes to great efforts to list the countries and districts from which the pilgrims had come; some even from as far away as Rome. He further adds that Peter explained to those who had assembled to listen that what had occurred was a fulfilment of something the prophet Joel had foretold: "I will pour out my spirit on all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; even upon the servants and the handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my spirit" (Joel 3:1-2). We are told that some listened to Peter and took his words so seriously that they were convinced there and then that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. - and some 3000 of them were baptised. Others remained unconvinced and concluded that those they had heard were just drunk. While what Luke describes in Acts chapter 2, probably collapses several events into one, the Pentecost event provided the impetus that took the first disciples out to the wider world with the message of God's loved lived and proclaimed by Jesus.

Worthy of note is that Peter, when he spoke to the gathered crowd, did not try to convert them or ram some new message into their heads. He told them that what they were witnessing was the arrival of God's spirit foretold by the prophet Joel. That same Spirit is still alive in our world, but so often we are inclined to stifle the voice of the Spirit. We refuse to hear the prophetic voice of women and young people ("your sons and daughters shall prophesy"), dismissing them as trouble-makers or disgruntled and disaffected misfits. But today's readings are challenging us on our openness to hear the prompting and goading of God's Spirit coming to us in surprising ways and from people we are often inclined to dismiss. Yet, we are being invited to keep alive in our world the message of God's love and hope entrusted to the disciples on that first Pentecost.

If there is one good thing that has come out of the COVID pandemic, it is that there are signs that people across the globe are beginning to grasp that we are all in this together, that we are all connected in our responsibility to protect one another, to see everyone around us as sisters and brothers. Surely that is a sign that we are beginning to appreciate we can walk together, helping one another to cope with truth that sometimes seems unpalatable, working with one another to accept and respect difference and diversity, thereby edging towards the possibility of sharing with one another the world's resources and living in peace.

If the gospel-reading, which relates how Jesus penetrated walls and locked doors to appear to the disciples, tells us anything, it is that there are no barriers to the message of God's peace, love and hope. The challenge for us contemporary disciples is to create a climate that will allow a new Pentecost to find a way into our hearts and our world. The first step might be to start practicing the language of love.

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



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

The preacher for Pentecost Sunday is Di Rayson.

Dr Di Rayson is a public theologian whose specialties are ecotheology and Bonhoeffer. She lectures at various institutions including University of Newcastle and Uniting Theological College, Charles Sturt University, and previously at BBI - The Australian Institute for Theological Education. She is an Adjunct Research Fellow of the Public and Contextual Theology (PACT) Research Centre and is an elected board member of the International Bonhoeffer Society. Di helps edit two academic journals, *The Bonhoeffer Legacy - An International Journal*, and

Perspectiva Teológica in Brazil. She is a research consultant for the National Church Life Survey (NCLS Research) and a member of Anglican EcoCare.

Before theology, Di had an extensive career in public health, community development, and public policy, working as a missionary in Papua New Guinea and then in Australia's Northern Territory. She holds a Master of Public Health through her work in training village birth attendants in the Highlands of PNG.

Her area of research is in the application of the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer to ecotheology and ecoethics, based on a deep relationality with all creation. Her first book, *Bonhoeffer and Climate Change: Theology and Ethics for the Anthropocene*, is about to be released. She has published on other issues such as ecofeminism, war, and rape culture.

Di regularly preaches in her home Anglican parish and is a guest preacher in other denominations. She speaks in a wide variety of settings here and abroad (COVID permitting!). She periodically appears on ABC Radio to discuss moral and ethical issues. Her passion is to bring good theology to the service of the church community and to communicate it widely and well.

Di lives on Biripi country on a small farm with her family of humans, animals and plants.

<https://anchor.fm/awp/episodes/11--Di-Rayson---23-May-2021-e118ks8>

2. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin – 20th May 2021.



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, 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, Bernice Brault (nee Gilloway) and sick members of parish families and those beyond our parish boundaries.



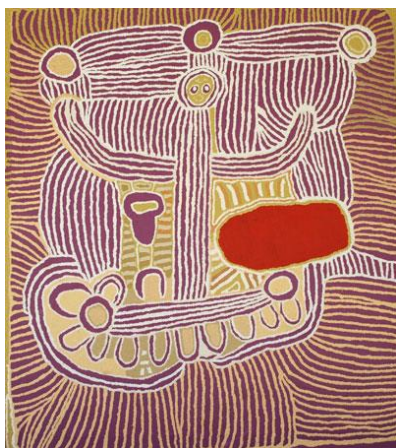
4. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*

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

5.00pm Boonah church

Sunday

7.30am Harrisville church

9.30am Boonah church

12.00pm Peak Crossing church:

baptism of Abigail Martin

Our **WEEKDAY EUCHARIST** schedule for this week, 8th Week of Ordinary Time, is:

Monday	24 th May	8.00am, Boonah church
Tuesday	25 th May	9.15am, Boonah church, parish school students participating in Mass
Wednesday	26 th May	6.00pm, Peak Crossing church followed by dinner at <i>The Peak Pub</i>
Thursday	27 th May	8.00am, Boonah church

▪ **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 appreciates our support.

I was hungry and you fed me
Matthew 25



▪ **THANK YOU** to all who support the weekly Sunday collection. Your gifts enable the parish to meet its expenses and to function like an everyday household. If you would like to give weekly or monthly in a planned way, please see me.

The new envelopes for the new giving year have arrived. So we will be getting them out to regular givers in early June.

A few people have seen me about giving electronically. *Thank you!* Please see me for the simple paperwork if you would like to give this way.

▪ **THANK YOU** to those amongst us who, week by week, *send out* the FlockNote invites, *prepare* the churches for the celebration of Mass, *coordinate* the arrival and departure of the assembly especially on Sundays, *exercise* liturgical ministry in necessary ways (readers, sacristans, servers, organists, PowerPoint preparer and operators), and *clean* the churches after the celebration of the liturgy as we are required to do in this time of COVID-19.



▪ This Sunday we celebrate the baptism of Abigail Martin, daughter of Brendan and Kacie, at the church of Peak Crossing. We pray for her, her parents and her godparents. We have more than four baptisms to be celebrated in the next few months!

▪ On the first Sunday of May we baptised Margaret McEniry, daughter of Nicholas McEniry and Melissa Wickman. Nicholas and Melissa travelled up from Victoria for the celebration. See the lovely picture!



- As we move to the middle of Term II, parish school students in the upper grades will be participating in the celebration of Tuesday Mass over a few weeks. Mass will start at 9.15am which is a good time for the staff and students. Thanks to our usual daily Mass celebrants for fitting into the changed time. The next date is Tuesday 8th June, 9.15am.

- On the first Sunday of June at the 9.30am Mass in Boonah, we welcome the young people of our parish into various ministries for our monthly youth-ministered Mass.

- Please pray for families and friends who are grieving the loss of their loved ones. We pray for those who have recently died: **Owen Doyle** (Brisbane), **John Jordan** (Hervey Bay) and **Jack Elson** (Maroochydore). *May they rest in peace.*

5. Once again Fr. Ron Rolheiser OMI has shared a reflection for this Sunday called 'Living in the Holy Spirit':

Few expressions so succinctly summarize what is asked of us as Christians as does the expression: "to live in the Spirit." Too often, however, this phrase is used in a way that is too pious, too over-charged with charismatic fervour, or too theologically abstract to have much meaning for ordinary people. It may well summarize Christian life, but it can also be little more than a very vague platitude. What does it mean "to live in the Spirit?"

St. Paul, in attempting to specify this, is anything but piously deluded or theologically abstract. Rather he speaks with a clarity that leaves almost no room for vagueness or false sentiment. He begins by a certain VIA NEGATIVA, telling us that, if in our lives there is "lewd conduct, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, bickering, jealousy, outbursts of rage, selfish rivalries, dissensions, factionalism, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like", then we are not living in the spirit, pure and simple. Conversely, we are living in the spirit when, in our lives, there is "charity, joy, peace, patience, endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness, and chastity." (Galatians, 5)

This is a valuable insight because, if we take Paul's word's seriously, we can never delude ourselves into identifying true life in the Spirit with what it is so often confused with, namely, false piety and over-privatized sentiment (in pious circles) and confrontation out of hurt, paranoia, and narrow loyalties (in both liberal and conservative circles). When the fruits of the Spirit are absent, irrespective of how spiritually confident and self-righteous we might feel or how right our cause might seem, then the Spirit too is absent. We must be clear about this.

The Spirit is present only when charity, joy, peace, patience, endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness, and chastity are deeply in our lives - and permeate the air around us.

The Holy Spirit, as classically defined in theology, is "the love between the God and Christ, the Father and the Son." It is in meditating this concept that we come to some understanding of what it means to live in the Spirit. Let me try to elaborate on this by using an image, that of romantic love in its peak fervour.

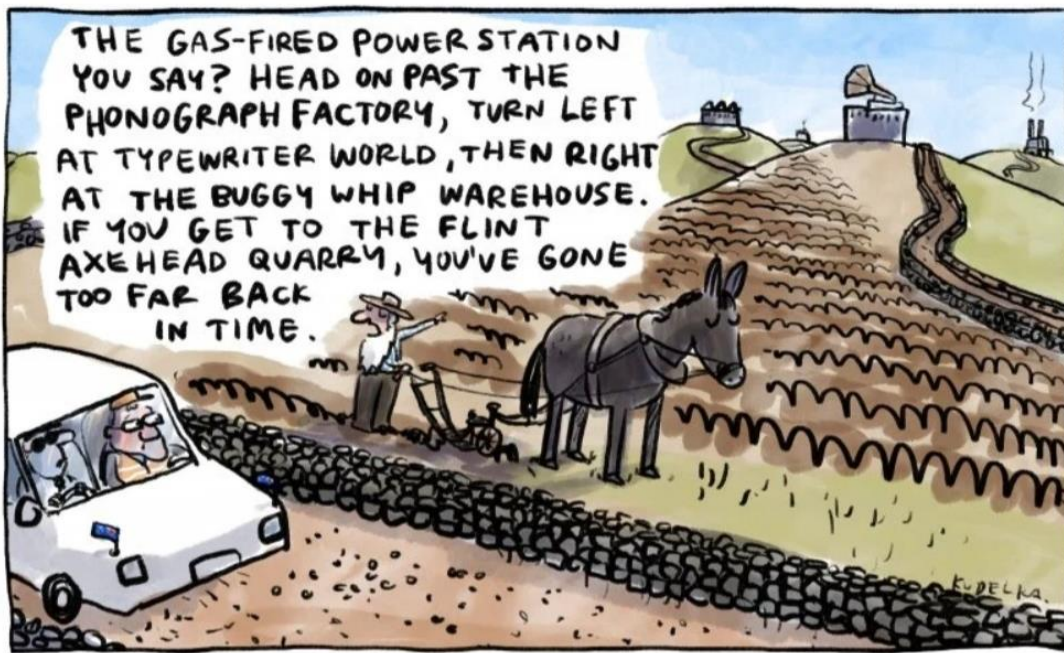
Imagine a man and a woman who are deeply, passionately, and completely in love. What will characterize their relationship? Constant giving and receiving, resulting in an ever deeper relationship and an ever intensifying gratitude – which will leave them both, daily, feeling ever more mellow, joyful, peaceful, mild, patient, chaste, and wanting to reach out and share with others what is so quickening in their own lives. Moreover, their love for each other will create, around them, an ambience, a climate, an atmosphere, of charity, joy, peace, patience, mildness, and chastity. The movement of giving-and-receiving-in-gratitude between them will create a warm hearth where others will spontaneously come to seek warmth in a world which offers too little peace, patience, joy, and the like.



Such a relationship can be a modest indicator for what happens in the Trinity, of how the Father and the Son generate the Spirit, and what results from this generation.

- ◆ The Father constantly creates and gives life.
- ◆ The Son receives life from the Father and gives it back in gratitude.
- ◆ This then (as is true in all relationships wherein gift is received lovingly) makes it possible for the Father to give even more to the Son.
 - ◆ As this flow of life, this giving and receiving, goes on, gratitude intensifies and an energy, a spirit, the Holy Spirit, is created.
 - ◆ This Spirit, since it is generated by gratitude, naturally is a Spirit of charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, mildness, faith, and chastity. It is then too a spirit that is naturally incompatible with idolatry, adultery, violence, gossip, factionalism, jealousy, rage, and infidelity.

When we meditate on how the Holy Spirit is generated, we are under less illusion as to what it means to live in the Spirit. To believe that we are living in the Spirit when our lives are not permeated by, and radiating, gratitude is to be dangerously deluded. We must be clear about this, lest, as poet William Stafford puts it: "Following the wrong God home, we may both miss our star."



By Jon Kudelka

6. *Australian Catholic Bishops Back Call for Indigenous Voice*
by the Office for Social Justice 19th May 2021



*Created by delegates at NATSICC Assembly
Artwork created by delegates at the 2009 NATSICC Assembly – Brisbane
and depicts Faith and Culture coming together.*

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference have backed the call for a National Voice for the First People of Australia. In a submission to the Indigenous Voice Co-Design Process, they say that:

“The models proposed for the National Voice should include the involvement of the widest variety of First People organisations, including religious faith-based groups like NATSICC. Faith and spirituality are an essential part of the lives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and so should not be excluded from the National Voice structure.

“The structure should reach as many First People as possible and provide a very clear and open pathway for people to contribute their views to local, regional and national consultation processes.”

Co-signed by Bishop Columba MacBeth-Green OSPPE, Chair, Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Bishop Vincent Long OFM (Conv), Chair, Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service, the submission supports the views of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC).

In their submission, NATSICC say:

“We call for the Uluru Statement to become the foundational document that its authors intended, and we call for a commitment from the Australian Government to listen to our Voice and in turn ensure that Australia becomes the country that we all want her to be.”

NATSICC sum up the main points of their submission in the following way:

- . The outcomes of any design or process must be a tangible improvement to the lives of Australia’s First Peoples.
- . The Parliament needs to make a commitment that the Voice to Parliament be heard.
- . The Voice must be empowered by legislation to protect their independence and ability to speak truthfully and strongly on issues.
- . We believe that people in Australia have good hearts and that we need to appeal to the National sense of giving everyone a fair go to ensure that the Referendum is passed.
- . Existing organisations should be utilised to inform the Voice.
- . The membership of the Voice should be considered against a selection criteria that is focused on life experience, cultural knowledge and a commitment to social justice in this country rather than purely academic achievements.

The Bishops concur that:

“As well as ensuring input from Indigenous people, the National Voice must be able to demonstrate that the message is received and given respectful consideration in decision making bodies like Australia’s Parliament. This may require a formal place in the standing orders of both houses of the Parliament where input from the National Voice can be tabled and debated.

Ultimately the Indigenous Voice should be able to show how it has helped Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with very practical measures in their lives, including the preservation of their unique cultural heritage, their economic wellbeing and their physical safety.”

7. This week we received the latest issue of Social Justice Trends from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Office for Social Justice.

To access it, click on the link.

<https://agora.catholic.org.au/webmail/576423/735646375/0782ad73cd991aad1a3e8ea867a5cb71d72cdc22353ce3a497aae364cc667021>



I had a great retreat with another fourteen Brisbane clergy last week at our own Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre in Ormiston. This Centre is a fantastic resource in our local church! The leader was Ian Cribb SJ from Sydney.

Next Sunday . . . Trinity Sunday!

John

pastor
Boonah Catholic community.