



Alma Nungarrayi Granites | Yanjirlpirri Jukurpa - Seven Sisters Dreaming
Jap 008638 | acrylic on linen | 122 x 122 cm

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

1. REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY WORD.



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

Megan is the Director of Faith Exploration at La Lumiere School, an independent, Catholic boarding and day prep school in La Porte, Indiana. She teaches a variety of theology courses – *Biblical Literacy*, *Stories of Grace*, and *Exploring Faith with C.S. Lewis* – and also coordinates school retreats and liturgies. She and her husband Kevin live on campus and serve as Dorm Parents for the residential students of Becket Dorm.

Prior to working at La Lumiere, Megan served in a variety of ministry roles while earning her Master of Divinity at the University of Notre Dame. From leading Bible studies with the inmates of St. Joseph County Jail to teaching homiletics to students at Holy Cross College to facilitating Lectionary-based faith sharing for the women of Welsh Family Hall, Megan's love for the Word and passion for preaching remain at the heart of her ministerial pursuits.

Originally from California, Megan graduated summa cum laude from UCLA with a Bachelor of Arts in English and a minor in Spanish. After her undergraduate studies, she served with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps at Cristo Rey High School Sacramento from 2015-2016.

Megan will be returning to the University of Notre Dame in the Fall of 2021 to begin her Doctorate in Systematic Theology. She hopes to study the theology of preaching through the lens of ecclesiology, pneumatology, and sacramental theology.

Her homily concludes:

Unlike the disciples in that scene from Acts, we are not waiting for the promise of the spirit! It was well and good for the disciples to wait, but what are we waiting for? We have been baptized with the Holy Spirit, we have received power, and we have become witnesses!

I very intentionally used the present perfect tense just then – “we have been baptized” – because this tense is used to describe actions that began in the past and CONTINUE INTO THE PRESENT.

Baptism is not a one-and-done event! As you may have noticed, we get wet every single Sunday during this Easter season! This awesome sprinkling rite reminds us of the power of the Holy Spirit and of our baptismal promises: not only what Jesus promises us but also what we promise Jesus.

The holy water in our parish fonts was one of the first things to disappear when the pandemic first began. But even when the fonts were running dry and even when our churches were closed, our

baptism was never taken away from us. Nothing – not even a global pandemic – can take away our baptism. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ Jesus.

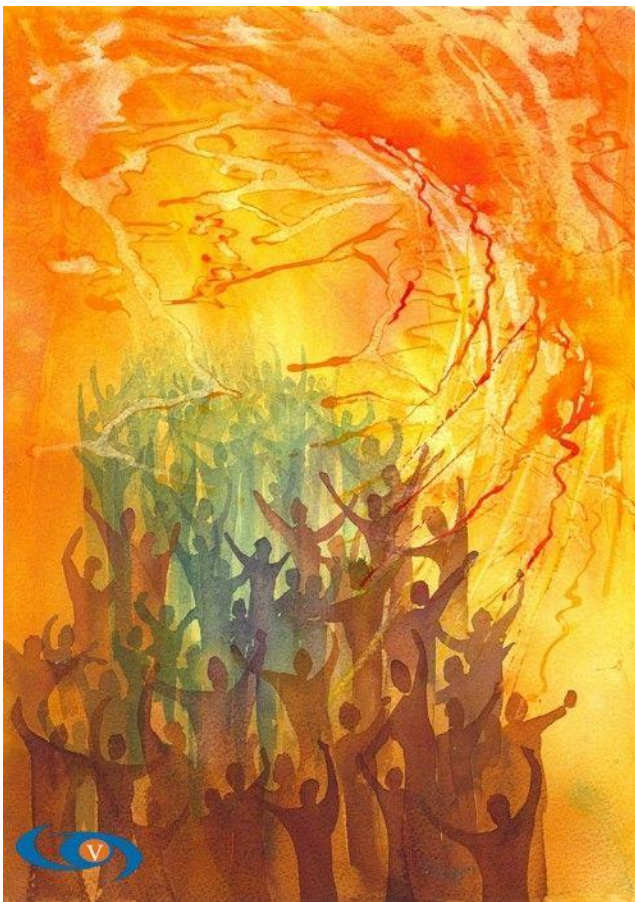
In baptism, we have died with Christ and we have risen with Christ. The reading from Acts says that Jesus “presented himself alive...by many proofs” (Acts 1:3). What proofs will we offer the world to show that Christ is still alive in us?

The next time you dip your hand into a font of holy water, remember that Jesus has appointed you – not just your bishop or your pastor – but YOU to proclaim the Gospel to every creature. And think about that four-letter word: WILL. The Holy Spirit will be with you, but what WILL you do with that power?

Here is the link to her homily:

<https://www.catholicwomenpreach.org/preaching/05162021>

The second reflection is from Julian McDonald, a Christian Brother in Australia. It is entitled: 'Go out to all the world and tell the Good News'.



You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses...to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:1-11

Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce God's good news to one and all.

Mark 16:15-20

help (from the Holy Spirit and prayerful reflection) and what was involved in being commissioned (sharing with others what has been learned).

The way in which Mark opened his Gospel (“Here **begins** the Gospel, the good news, of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”) resonates with the way in which Luke introduces the Acts of the Apostles (often called the second volume of Luke’s Gospel): “In my first account (volume), Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up to heaven, having first instructed the

apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1, 1-2). Luke proceeds to record a conversation that took place between Jesus and his apostles immediately before he disappeared permanently from their sight: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down on you; then you are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1, 8). To put it bluntly, Jesus was telling the apostles to roll up their sleeves and prepare to go out and share what he had taught them. Moreover, we hear the very same message in today's gospel-reading from Mark: "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation" (Mark 16, 15). The implication of the start of both Acts and Mark's Gospel is that what Jesus said and taught was but the beginning of his good news to the world and that it was to be continued by all his followers, with the help of the Holy Spirit, until there was nobody left to hear that good news. The indicator that Luke gives to include all of us in the proclamation of Jesus' good news is the fact that he addresses the second volume of his Gospel to Theophilus, a Greek name which literally means friend or lover of God. Surely that is a generic name for all of us who all claim to be friends and lovers of God.

The question which Luke attributes to all the apostles in their final exchange with Jesus, was probably put by one of them, on behalf of his companions. The very fact that they could ask Jesus: "Lord, are you going to restore the rule to Israel now?", is a clear indication that those eleven apostles were a class of slow learners. They had not understood what Jesus had tried to teach them. Clearly, too, his telling them that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came down on them just didn't register with them. Indeed, they probably could not even imagine who the Holy Spirit might be. But their question to Jesus would suggest that they were still expecting a political bonanza or a visit from the tooth fairy. Yet, Jesus still took the risk of trusting that God's Spirit would breathe sense into them. So, he commissioned them to work at bringing his good news to the world, at continuing to contribute to his Gospel, but making sure to rely on the Holy Spirit.

I have no doubt that Luke and the other Gospel writers wanted to stress just how slow the apostles were in coming to understand who Jesus was and what he had tried to teach them. They also knew that the apostles did not know who the Holy Spirit was and how God's Spirit works in the world. But are you and I any different from those first apostles? Have we yet grasped who the Risen Christ is and what our role is in living and sharing his message? And what role do we give to God's Spirit in our day-to-day lives? How often, in the space of a week, do I reflect on the action of God's Spirit in my life, in the world around me, and in the people I encounter? Or do I do that only when I make time to sit down to write a reflection like this? I can admit, too, that there have been times in my life when I have hoped that God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit would come with a spectacular solution to my challenges. I have even hoped that God would intervene and solve my problems for me. But isn't it true that God has given us the resources we need to meet the problems and challenges that come our way, and that Jesus has assured us that the Holy Spirit is within and around us to guide us in the decisions we make? And yet, all too often, we delude ourselves into thinking that it



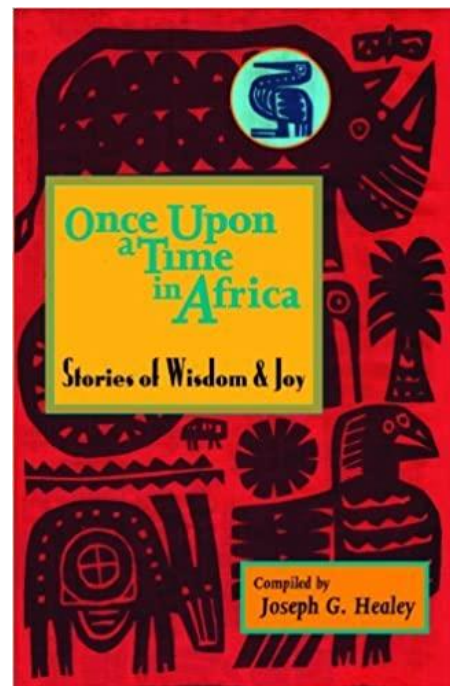
all depends on us. We also have to remember that the blessings we have are for our community and our world, not just for ourselves.

There is an African parable about two villages separated by a river. In each village, there lived a woodworker who knew how to make chairs. Both knew the secret of making strong, durable and beautiful chairs. But the chair-maker in the first village was afraid to teach others because he thought they would not make the chairs correctly — and worse, if they did, they could cut into his business. So, he jealously guarded his work. He became suspicious of anyone with wood, worried that they may have discovered his secret. He would ridicule them and warn them not to try and make a chair themselves. So, he made all the chairs in the village, but no one wanted to go near him. The young men of the village interested in woodworking left the village rather than ask him to teach them. The chair-maker eventually died alone — and his secret with him.

But the chair-maker in the second village did not keep his knowledge to himself. He helped anyone who asked what wood to use, how to plane and cut the pieces, how to mix the glue to assemble the pieces. Over the years, many of the young men of the village served as his apprentices. Sometimes one of them would discover a way to improve the chair. The master chair-maker would encourage the apprentice to show what he discovered to others. As a result, the chairs in the village kept getting better and better. People from other villages would come and buy their excellent chairs — and soon the tables and benches he and his apprentices began to make.

When people praised the master chair-maker's work, he would laugh and say, "I did not build these chairs alone. These young men have improved my chairs. I am getting old, but these young men will continue building better and better chairs. I have given my skills and knowledge to them and they have given their love and friendship to me. Together we have done far more than if I had worked alone." (*Adapted from Once Upon a Time in Africa: Stories of Wisdom and Joy*, compiled by Joseph G. Healey. I am indebted to the writer, Jay Cormier for this story.)

We have all been instructed in how to live and witness to the Gospel. We also know that some who see our efforts to do that will ignore or ridicule us. Are we still up to it?



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 Ascension is Elizabeth Young RSM.

Elizabeth was brought up on a farm in the south of South Australia. Her father was a lay preacher in the Uniting Church, and their ministers were both men and women.

She attended St Mary MacKillop's very first school in Penola, and was received into the Catholic Church along with family members.

Elizabeth valued the sacramental worldview that she encountered and was inspired by all the religious leaders in her community.

From a young age, she felt called to a vocation in religious and liturgical leadership, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. However, her life took a turn through a few years of questioning her faith and completing a degree in Circus Arts.

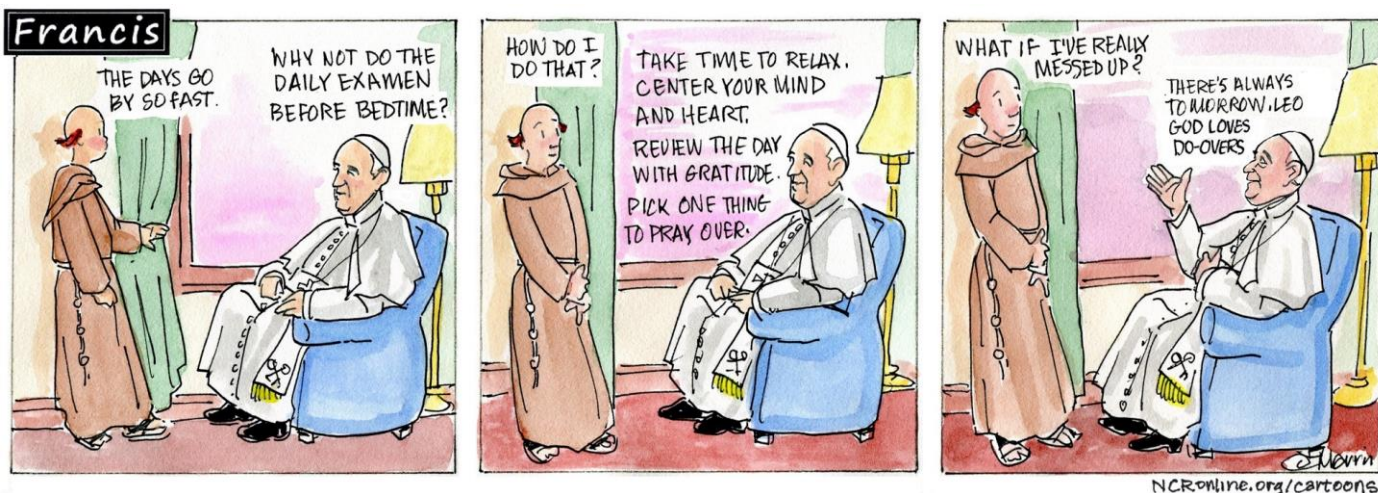
From there she discerned God's call to become a Sister of Mercy, professing her first vows in Adelaide in 2010. She has since studied a Bachelor of Theology, Graduate Diploma of Teaching and Learning, and Master of Theology (Coursework).

Her ministries have been with youth, immigration detention centres, prisons, parish, school and ecumenical/interfaith relations.

She is currently a pastoral worker in the Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes and a chaplain at Red Bend Catholic College. Elizabeth finds life in exploring the scriptures and the Church's liturgical/sacramental tradition together with those in marginal situations.

<https://soundcloud.com/andrea-dean/10-elizabeth-young-may-16>

2. FRANCIS, THE COMIC STRIP by Pat Marrin – 11th 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.



PRAYER FOR N-COVID19 FRONT LINERS


Lord Jesus Christ,
you traveled through towns and villages "curing every disease and illness."
At your command, the sick was made well. Come to our aid now,
amidst the global spread of the coronavirus,
that we may experience your healing love.

Jesus Christ,
healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.
Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers, and all medical practitioners
who seek to heal and help those affected and
who put themselves at risk in the process.
May You give them Your Divine protection and peace.
Be with the leaders of all nations.
Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern
for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve.
Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions
that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks.
May they receive Your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Wherever we are, surrounded by many people suffering from this
illness or only a few, stay with us Lord, as we endure and mourn,
persist and prepare.
In place of our anxiety, give us Your peace.

Lord Jesus Christ, heal us.

Source: Adapted from: A Corona Virus Prayer



Ten days ago Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane, Ken Howell, sent the following message through and suggested we might like to share in our bulletin:

We are all concerned about the pandemic situation in India. Some parishioners may wish to make a donation towards emergency relief and Caritas is providing an avenue for this.

CARITAS APPEAL

Caritas Australia, in partnership with Caritas India, is providing support to vulnerable communities as the nation is devastated by massive increases in COVID-19 infection rates. The

communities which Caritas works with are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19, with poor access to clean water and Personal Protective Equipment. We are accepting donations through our Asia Emergency Appeal which can be found here: <https://caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/asia-emergency-appeal/>

Please consider giving generously towards this as we support these vulnerable communities now, and assist them as they start to rebuild their lives in the future.

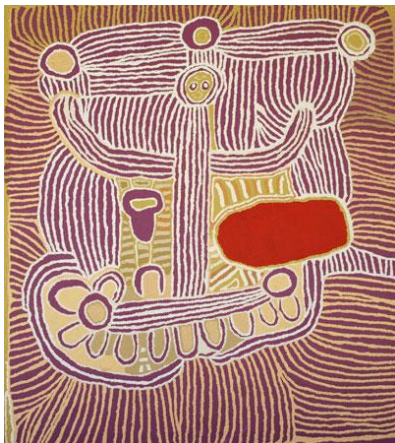
4. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*

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:



Saturday
5.00pm (Boonah church)

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

Desert Eucharist by Linda Syddick Napaltjarri (b. 1937)

Our **WEEKDAY EUCHARIST** schedule for this week:

From this Sunday night to Friday morning next week, I will on retreat with other Brisbane clergy.

Weekday Masses will be celebrated again after Pentecost Sunday.

- **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 soon.

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.



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

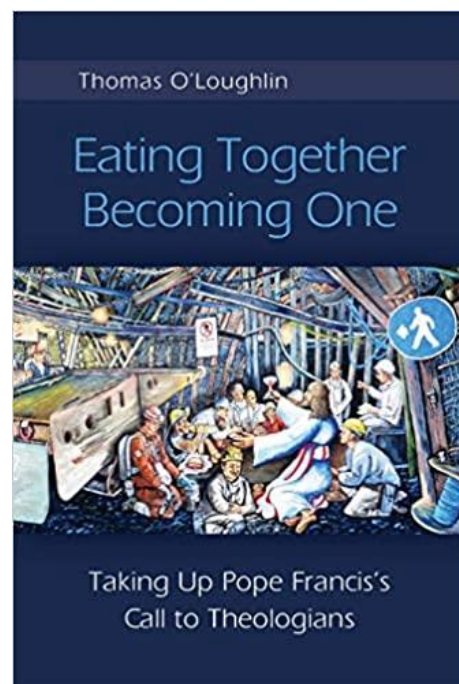


6. When the parish pastoral council met a few weeks ago, our formation included a short article entitled “Mystagogy: Reflecting on the Easter Experience”. It was written a long time ago – 1983! As we received some good feedback on its content, it is included as an attachment this week for reflection.

7. Fr. Tom O’Loughlin is Professor of Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham in England. He is the author of numerous works, including *The Eucharist* (T&T Clark, 2015), *Saint Patrick* (SPCK Publishing, 2014), and *Making the Most of the Lectionary* (Morehouse Publishing, 2012). He is also the author of the book discussed in this interview, *Eating Together, Becoming One* (Liturgical Press Academic, 2019). This interview was first published on July 19, 2020.

It is a timely interview as we begin the final week of Easter which is also the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

<https://www.facebook.com/RealAqueductProject/videos/tom-oloughlin-eating-together-becoming-one/800754504083847/>



8. As these days are an invitation to think about and pray for Christian unity, a short reflection from Paul Couturier, one of the great contributors to the project of unity in the twentieth century, is apt. It was printed first in 1944 and then revised and republished in 1952-53. Abbe Couturier regarded the whole document as his *ecumenical testament*.

Prayer is the greatest of cosmic forces

After these necessary explanations, let us return to the main subject of these pages: Prayer. Is it the fundamental force whose property is to remake Christian Unity? Or are other forces needed, equally strong, to forge the healing link? Prayer is the fundamental force. It is fundamental because it is the greatest of cosmic forces; it fertilizes and makes fruitful even the highest of other powers: those of the heart and intellect. These powers are separate gifts, given directly to man by God. But it is only as a result of prayer, whether his own or other people's,

that man's powers become fruitful for God. It is man's prayer in Christ, or Christ's prayer in man (which is the same thing), which upholds creation in its due order, gives it harmony, makes it pleasing to God, and makes creation sing, through man, the perpetual praise of thanksgiving to the Creator. Prayer transmutes the world of rocks, plants, and animals, into an ordered song: 'O bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord.' What would the violin and the bow be without the artist who makes them sing? Prayer makes us fellow workers, by grace, with God himself, God, in us, waits for his children to hear 'creation groaning and travailing' and when they hear it, they direct it to his glory by the canticle of their prayer.

Since God has made us members of Christ, he has given us, his children a power which is dreadful and terrible, but of indescribable sweetness - the power to ask and to obtain from him anything which can be brought within the orbit of the 'Our Father', the prototype of prayer his Son left us. The Gospel overflows with clear affirmations of the power of prayer and the conditions in which it is valid - faith, humility and perseverance. Everything which can be asked of the Father in Christ's name is vouchsafed by prayer, that is why all prayer implies surrender, for it is often very difficult to declare that Christ would identify himself with our petition or our thanksgiving, or even our so-called oblation, adoration and contribution.

Finally, by creating in the soul a condition of the will, prayer causes us to introduce into the universe a metaphysical force with strength proportionate to the strength calmness and stability of that will. There is nothing in modern science to refute this principle; and much can be inferred from it.

The whole document may be found here:

[http://paulcouturier.faiithweb.com/pctest01.htm#No%20one%20has%20the%20right%20to%20pray%20that%20another%20Christian%20Church%20be%20overthrown'](http://paulcouturier.faiithweb.com/pctest01.htm#No%20one%20has%20the%20right%20to%20pray%20that%20another%20Christian%20Church%20be%20overthrown)

Next Sunday . . . Pentecost Sunday!

John

pastor

Boonah Catholic community.