



by Shaun Gladwell

Collection, HOTA Gallery,
Gold Coast.

*In the waters of the Jordan
you revealed a new baptism
through signs and wonders:
a voice came down from heaven
to waken our faith in your Word dwelling among us;
your Spirit descended as a dove
to make it known that Christ, your servant,
was anointed with the oil of gladness
and was sent to preach the good news to the poor.*

PREFACE OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

We, the people of Boonah Catholic parish,
acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our parish is located
and where we conduct our mission and ministry.

We pay our respects to ancestors and elders, past and present.

As a local community of faith within the Church of Brisbane,
we are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'
unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas
and their rich contribution to society.

Warm greetings to the members of the Boonah Catholic community and beyond on the feast of The Baptism of the Lord. This is the last day of the Season of Christmas.

1. REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY WORD.

The **reflection** for this Sunday is offered by Julian McDonald, a Christian Brother who lives in Sydney.

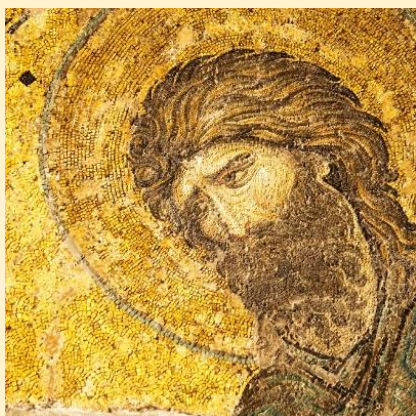
**After Jesus was baptised, heaven opened,
and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove.**

And a voice came from heaven:

"You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.

Luke 3, 15-16, 21-22

To grasp the full significance of today's gospel-reading, it is important for us, once again, to look at context. The first two chapters of Luke (the infancy narratives) serve as a prologue. Then Luke launches into the body of his Gospel, describing the mission of Jesus and its impact.



He begins by introducing John the Baptist and his ability to draw crowds, despite his "fire and brimstone" sermons. He then turns his attention to what

the Baptist effectively called the "main event" - the arrival on the scene of the one for whose coming he claimed to be preparing. With a touch of irony, Luke observes that God chose for a messenger none of the "big shots" of the day - Tiberius Caesar (Emperor of Rome), Pilate (Governor of Judea), Herod (Tetrarch of Galilee), Philip (Tetrarch of Iturea & Trachonitis), Annas & Caiphas (Jewish High Priests) - but the eccentric John the Baptist: "The word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the wilderness" (Luke 3, 2). Luke then proceeds to describe how John challenged his audiences to shake themselves out of their complacency, to repent of their sins and to come forward and be baptized. In contrast, Jesus appeared without

fanfare and humbly joined those lining up to be baptized by John, who baulked at the prospect of baptizing the one for whose arrival he had been preparing - the Messiah, the Christ of God. John described himself as the signpost directing people to Jesus, whom the Evangelists eventually identified as “the light of the world”, the very centre of human history.

The focus of today’s gospel-reading is the self-effacing, humble baptism of Jesus, an action that he chose as his way of identifying deeply with the very people whose lives he would set out to transform by revealing to them God’s love for them. Having been baptized, Jesus sat quietly in prayer. As he prayed, there came what can only be described as a moment of epiphany, a revelation for him personally: *Heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you’* (Luke 1, 21-22).

The point of this is that Jesus, as fully human as we are, had to discern through personal prayer, his own vocation in life. Like us, he had moments of insight and revelation, when the way forward became clearer to him. Luke describes one of those moments graphically. It was a moment when, conscious of God’s Spirit guiding him, Jesus committed himself to his mission to his own people. Because we know the conclusion to which all the Gospel writers came, namely that Jesus was truly divine and truly human, I suspect that we more readily accept his divinity, and gloss quickly over his humanity. One of the great Vatican II documents is The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et spes*). In it we read a statement of how Jesus lived his humanity as we do: *He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human will, and with a human heart he loved.* Implied in this is the fact that he had to discern his vocation in life and make decisions about how to live it out. He

knew his choices had to express the love in his heart, and he learned that he had the Hebrew Scriptures and God’s love to guide him.

In addition, we have the books of the New Testament to guide us, and the assurance that God loves us, too. Given that most of us were baptized in infancy, there were almost certainly no epiphanies or moments of revelation of which we or our sponsors were conscious at the time. However, today’s gospel-reading is an invitation to us to reflect upon the significance of our incorporation into the Christian community. While a Baptism certificate is a record of our enrolment in that community, the only authentic measure of our commitment to what we profess is the extent to which we translate the Gospels into practical action.

When Jesus sat in prayer following his Baptism by John, inspired by God’s Spirit, he came to the sudden realisation that he had just been claimed as God’s beloved Son. In our Baptism, we, too, were claimed as God’s beloved daughters and sons to carry on the mission of Jesus to a world

in need.
Fidelity to the mission entrusted to him by God led Jesus to the Cross. Fidelity to the word of God that came to him in the wilderness led



John the Baptist to confront Herod who, in a moment of moral weakness, had John executed. While commitment to our baptismal promises may not lead to bloodshed, we can be sure that it will lead us to some sticky moments. Calling for justice, protesting for the release of asylum seekers, working to assure that refugees are treated with dignity will meet with opposition. That kind of action is demanded by the Gospel.

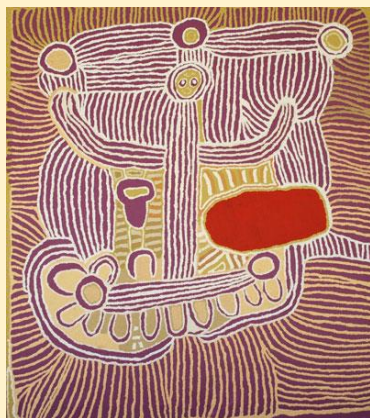
2. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*

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
Linda Syddick Napaltjarri (b. 1937)

Saturday

5.00pm

Boonah church

Sunday

7.30am

1st and 3rd Sunday: Harrisville church

2nd and 4th Sunday: Peak Crossing church

9.30am

Boonah church

Our **WEEKDAY EUCHARIST** schedule for this week, the 10th – 15th January 2022:

Tuesday 11th January *No Mass on Tuesday*

Wednesday 12th January 10.00am, **Funeral Mass for Fr. Ellis Clifford**, former pastor of Boonah parish, Cathedral of St. Stephen, Brisbane.

6.00pm, **Peak Crossing church: Memorial Mass for Fr. Ellis Clifford** followed by dinner at *The Peak Pub*

Thursday 13th January 8.00am **Boonah** church

Friday 14th January *No Mass on Friday*



We pray with and for those who are sick in our parish and beyond: all across the globe infected with COVID-19; Chris Healy, Paul White, Arthur Devin, Liliana Toohill, Libby Shields, Marko Babic, Max Gardiner, Trish Merlehan, Bernadette Pinchin, Simon Greatrex, Cate Mitten, Bernice Brault, Paula Ebrington, Fletcher Casey, Jill Archer, Louisa, David Mitchell, Vince Bellett, and

sick members of parish families and those beyond our parish boundaries.

▪ Fr. Ellis Clifford was the former pastor of our parish. Ellis died on Thursday last week, 6th January 2022 at St. Vincent's Hospital, Kangaroo Point.

Archbishop Coleridge has invited all in the Church of Brisbane to celebrate a Funeral Mass for Ellis at the Cathedral of St. Stephen, Brisbane, on **Wednesday 12th January at 10.00am.**

The liturgy will be live-streamed via the following link: archbne.org/bzw

The Rite of Christian Burial, the final stage of the liturgy, will be celebrated at Nudgee Cemetery.



Photo from 18th April 2015. Parish Centenary of St. Joseph's church, Gayndah. This was Ellis' family church. (Ellis is third from the left holding a walking stick)

- **DEATH NOTICE:**

BERNICE ELIZABETH LIPPIATT

Died: 3rd January 2022

Funeral: 7th January 2022

in God's care

sister of Noela Gilbert

- **FIFTH SUNDAY OF JANUARY.** January 2022 has a fifth Sunday of the month! In our parish we celebrate a Saturday night Mass at Harrisville church starting 6pm and one Sunday Mass at 9.30am in Boonah. There is hospitality after Mass in Harrisville on Saturday night. At this stage, we are planning for this to go ahead.

Those of us who usually gather in Boonah on Saturday night might like to join our northern sisters and brothers for the Mass.

The next fifth Sunday of the month will be in May 2022. *Archbishop Coleridge will be with us for a parish visitation that weekend including Friday leading into the weekend.*

- As the Season of Christmas has now ended, *thank you* once again to all who contributed in so many ways to our liturgical celebrations.

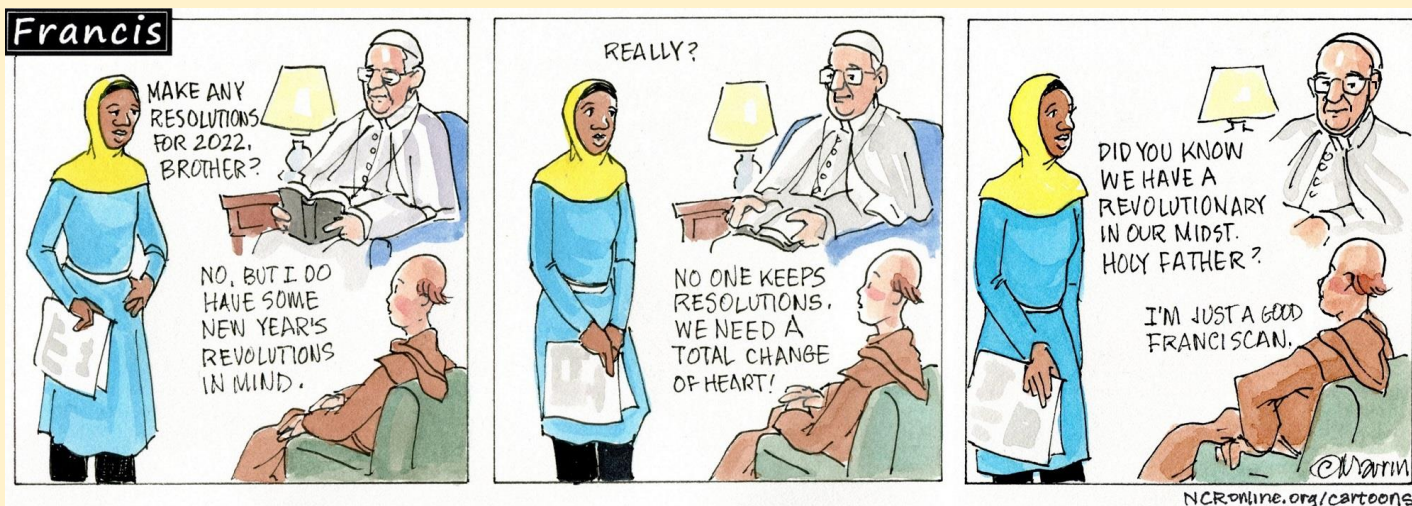
- **EVERY SUNDAY** when we gather for the Sunday eucharist, there are baskets (of some kind or another) at the entrances of our churches.

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

The local conference very much appreciates our weekly support.

- **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.

- **CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION.** The 1st Rite for Reconciliation (formerly known as Confession) may be celebrated anytime. Please phone 5463 1057 to make a suitable time. Alternatively see me before Mass (if there is plenty of time) or after Mass (once the majority of people have left the church).



4th January 2022

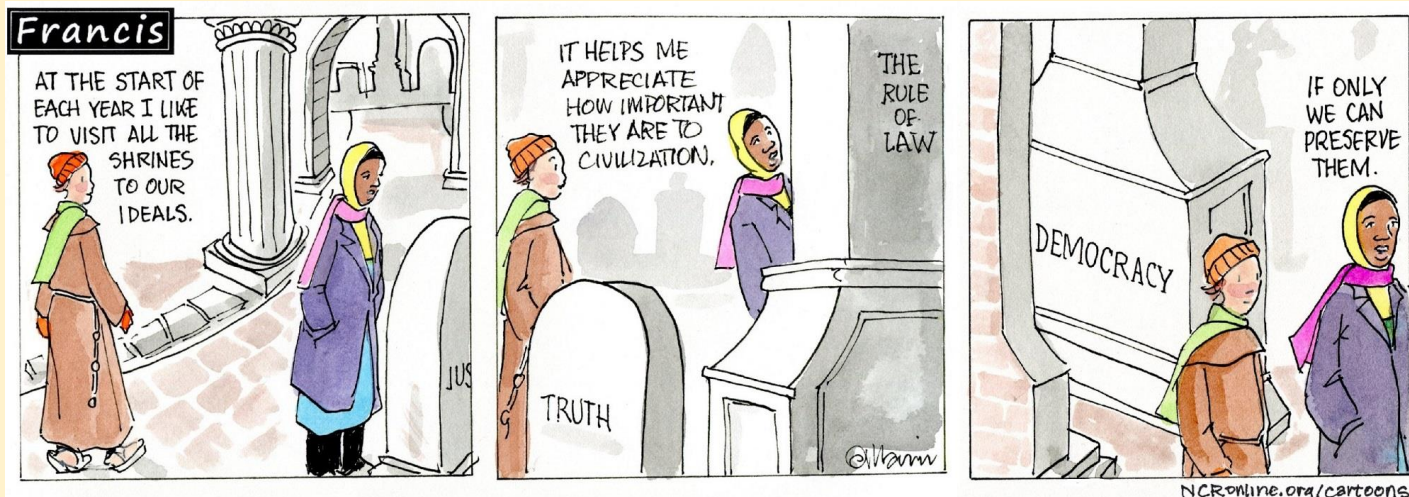
3. Pope Francis preached on the Solemnity of the Epiphany. To access the entire homily [CLICK here](#).

Two sentences caught my eye: *The Magi did not allow their hearts to retreat into the caves of gloom and apathy; they longed to see the light. They were not content to plod through life, but yearned for new and greater horizons.*

Sometimes we live in a spirit of a “parking lot”; we stay parked, without the impulse of desire that carries us forward. We do well to ask: where are we on our journey of faith?



Pope Francis burns incense as he venerates a figurine of the baby Jesus during Mass for the feast of Epiphany in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on 6th Jan. 2022. (CNS photo/Yara Nardi, Reuters)



6th January 2022

Open the heavens,
almighty Father,
and pour out your Spirit
upon your people gathered in prayer.

Renew the power of our baptismal cleansing
and fill us with zeal for good deeds.
Let us hear your voice once again,
that we may recognise in your beloved Son
our hope of inheriting eternal life.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
in the splendour of eternal light,
God for ever and ever

(Year C: Baptism of the Lord, Alternative Opening Prayer)

4. Australia's Catholic bishops, on the recommendation of their key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisers, have endorsed the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference made the decision as it gathered online for its biannual meeting earlier this month.

The bishops' consideration of the matter was informed by the words of St John Paul II, who in a visit to Alice Springs in 1986 said to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: "Your culture, which shows the lasting genius and dignity of your race, must not be allowed to disappear... Your songs, your stories, your paintings, your dances, your languages, must never be lost."

Bishop Columba Macbeth-Green OSPPE, chair of the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, said the Bishops Conference had been awaiting guidance on the Statement from the Heart.

"We are very grateful for the reflections of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council in helping shape our thinking on this important subject," Bishop Macbeth-Green said.

"That Council recently endorsed the Statement from the Heart, and we have listened carefully to their reasons for doing so.

"We also heard from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the Plenary Council at our recent assembly of their desire for the Church in Australia to follow NATSICC's lead."

The Plenary Council's agenda called for the Church to "honour and acknowledge the continuing deep spiritual relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation".

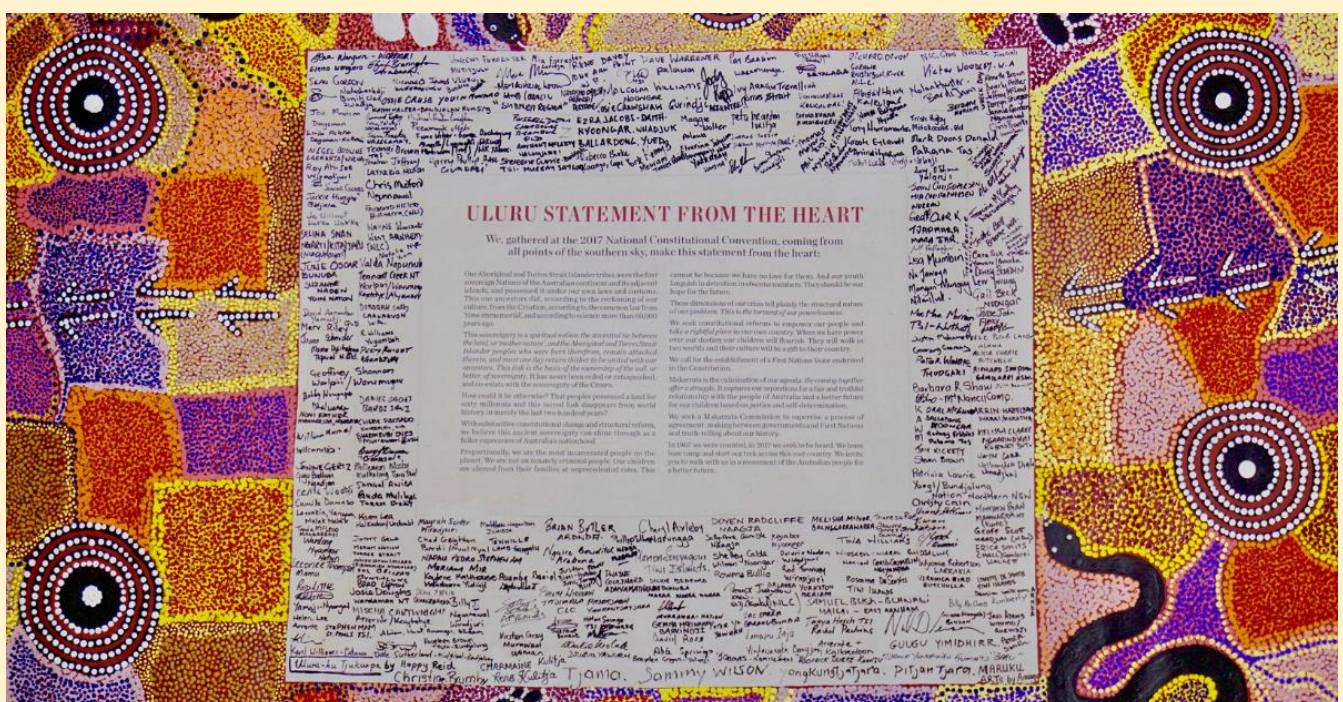
Among the key recommendations of the Uluru Statement are the establishment of a First Nations "Voice" to the Australian Parliament and a commission to supervise a process of "truth-telling" between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Bishop Macbeth-Green said the bishops acknowledged there remain diverse views within Indigenous communities on the Uluru Statement, but the principles of reconciliation and walking together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders fit well in the Catholic understanding.

"Sadly, we within the Church have not always lived up to our Gospel calling in our engagement with our Indigenous brother and sisters," he said.

"The endorsement of the Uluru Statement is another step in our journey of addressing those shortcomings, but it will be an ongoing journey with First Peoples.

"Part of that will see us listening to the stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, rather than a tendency to talk about them. That is the model we seek to emulate with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council, and that has brought us to this point."



Source: https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/bishops-endorse-uluru-statement-from-the-heart/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=bishops-endorse-uluru-statement-from-the-heart



The poster features a white central area with a hand-drawn blue border, set against a background of colorful abstract brushstrokes in yellow, green, and blue. At the top left is the Brisbane Catholic Education logo with the tagline 'learning • challenging • nourishing'. At the top center is the Archdiocese of Brisbane crest. At the top right is the Centacare logo. The word 'STOPline' is prominently displayed in large red letters. Below it, a paragraph explains that STOPline receives information about abuse, harm, and serious misconduct by Archdiocesan workers. A red line separates this from the text 'Information can be provided anonymously.' in red. Below this, contact information is listed: Phone: 1300 304 550, Email: AOB@stopline.com.au, and Online Report: www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com. A circular logo with the word 'STOPLINE' is centered below the contact info. At the bottom, the text 'If you think it's wrong report it.' is written in red.

STOPline

STOPline receives information about abuse, harm and other serious misconduct by Archdiocesan workers (including priests, religious, employees and volunteers).

Information can be provided anonymously.

Phone: 1300 304 550
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If you think it's wrong report it.

John

pastor
Boonah Catholic community