



When Martha Leaves the Kitchen to Do the Hoovering!
artist: Eileen Kennedy, USA

*Eternal God,
you draw near to us in Christ
and make yourself our guest.
Amid the cares of our daily lives,
make us attentive to your voice
and alert to your presence,
that we may treasure your word above all else.*

(16th Sunday Ordinary Time, Year C, Alternative Opening Prayer)

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 this 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

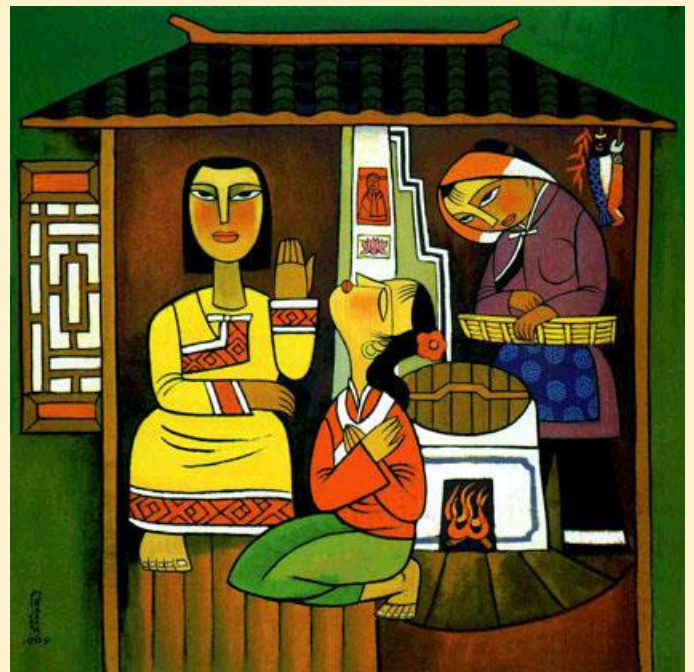
1. REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY WORD.

A **scripture reflection** is from Br. Julian McDonald, a Christian brother who is in Sydney.

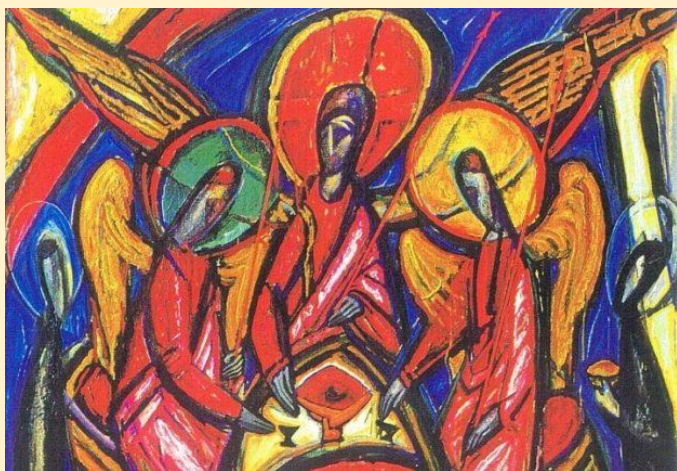
Once again, context is vital to a clear understanding of today's gospel-reading. Last week's story from Jesus of the Good Samaritan was triggered by questions put to Jesus by a lawyer. His first question was: "Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?" As we heard, Jesus immediately turned the lawyer's question back to him: "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" The lawyer's answer could not have been better, for he quoted perfectly the Great Commandment recorded in Deuteronomy (6: 5) and echoed in Leviticus (19: 18), pointing out that loving one's neighbour as oneself was a logical consequence of loving God with all of one's heart, soul, strength and mind. The lawyer's follow-up question: "And who is my neighbour?" prompted Jesus to tell the story of the Good Samaritan.

Luke follows that immediately with an account of what happened when Jesus, still making his way to Jerusalem, visited the house of Martha and found himself being asked to deal with

some domestic tension between her and her sister. Instead of taking sides, Jesus took the opportunity to give a lesson on how to give one's attention to loving God. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Today's first reading from Genesis introduces what becomes the central theme of today's gospel-reading.



The account of the hospitality which Abraham and Sarah extended to the three strangers who unexpectedly turned up at their dwelling, highlights an unwritten rule rigorously observed in the Middle East, then and even now, that passers-by, be they friends or strangers, must be afforded the utmost in welcome and hospitality. That includes that those who are suddenly put into the role of being hosts are expected to give priority to the needs and wants of their newly-arrived guests. Today's Genesis reading reveals that Abraham and Sarah had unwittingly welcomed and extended hospitality to three of God's angels, whose gratitude was expressed by a promise that Sarah would be blessed with a child. (The fifteenth century Russian iconographer, Andrei Rublev wrote/created an icon of the three visitors, presenting them as a metaphor of the Triune God, whom he saw as the embodiment of spiritual unity, peace, harmony, mutual love and humility.)



The urgency evident in Jesus at the start of his journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9, 51-62, 13th Sunday in Ordinary) persists in today's gospel-reading and into those we will hear in the weeks ahead. It is as though Jesus is mentally calculating all he still has to teach his disciples and how little time remains for him to do it. We hear today how Martha wanted Jesus to side with her in her complaint against Mary for not doing her expected share of kitchen duties. But Jesus has other things on his mind and, because he is a

guest, his hosts have a responsibility to attend to his needs and wants as first priority.

Let's then look closely at what is unfolding. Martha is intent on providing the guest with a substantial meal, but realises that she needs Mary's help. Mary has come to appreciate Jesus' status and the significance of his teaching. Moreover, Jesus is intent on grasping every opportunity to teach and to proclaim his message and Mary is more than happy to provide a listening ear, and accepts Jesus' offer to her to sit at his feet. That Jesus allowed her to sit at his feet was a breach of accepted practice. Only disciples were permitted to sit at the feet of a teacher, rabbi or recognised prophet, and women were not recognised as disciples. That was a role allowed to men only. It seems that Martha agreed with accepted practice and wanted her sister with her in the kitchen where custom and practice decreed that she should be. On top of that she violated social etiquette by pressuring a guest to intervene in a domestic disagreement.

Even though she had already embarrassed herself by speaking out as she did, Jesus did not add to her embarrassment by criticising her. He merely said that Mary had made a better decision by putting first the needs of their guest, which were to take the opportunity to share the message of God's love with any and all who were prepared to stop and listen to him. Jesus was not prepared to support the view that a woman's place was in the kitchen. Moreover, he chose to ignore the prevailing view that there was no place for women to be disciples.

The twin parts of the Great Commandment proclaimed by Moses were for all to be mindful of loving God with one's total being and loving one's neighbour as oneself. We saw last week an illustration from Jesus, with his story of the Good Samaritan, of what was involved in loving one's neighbour. Today's gospel-reading makes

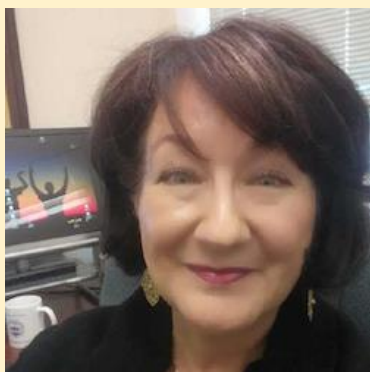
it clear that love of God involves giving time to be present to God, to invite God into our lives. Whenever we risk inviting God to be a guest in our lives, it is vital that we give time to listening to God, to hear what God's priorities are, what God is asking of us. That means giving time to set aside distractions and preoccupations, to allow ample time to listen to a God who speaks to us in the depths of our being. It calls for being sensitive to a need we all have to make the kind of time we were once asked to set aside as Sabbath rest.

This story of Martha and Mary, then, is not a celebration of doing nothing or of simply sitting still. It is an invitation to make time for quietening ourselves, for being open to listen to God and to savour and be grateful for the many ways in which God has blessed us; to make what we might call "sabbath space" even on our busiest days.

While Luke in his Gospel consistently made the point that women were prominent as disciples of Jesus, the gospel-readings of last week and this week powerfully illustrate what is meant by love of neighbour and what is involved in love of God - the two essential responsibilities for

disciples. The Samaritan had learned what is meant by love of neighbour and proceeded to put it into action. Mary had come to know and love Jesus. To be a disciple means that one loves both. But there is something shocking, even scandalous, about a Samaritan reaching out in compassion to a Jew lying helpless in a ditch and a woman sitting at the feet of Jesus, in a place where male disciples only are allowed to sit. We have already spent time on the Good Samaritan. This week, Luke opens the way for women to sit at the feet of Jesus to learn and delight, not at the expense of Martha, but rather for her benefit and for the benefit of any community or church in need of liberation from narrow, one-track, closed-system thinking.

And let's not forget that hospitality is first and foremost an attitude of mind and heart. Luke gives hospitality special attention in today's gospel-reading. At least a decade before Luke compiled his Gospel, Paul, in his letter to the Romans had urged his audience: "Make hospitality your special care!" (Romans 12: 13). There is a cost to us when we invite God into our lives. We might be asked for something we're reluctant to give.



A **second reflection** is by Susan McGurgan who has served in pastoral formation and lay formation for thirty years and is currently in Cincinnati. She is active in the *Catholic Association of Teachers of Homiletics*.

Click [here](#) to watch and listen to her homily.

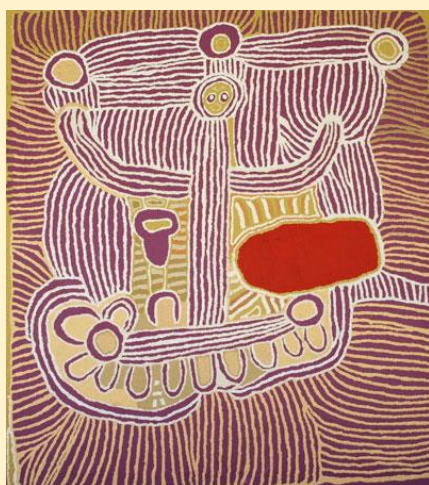
2. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*

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

(5th Sunday of the month: 6pm Sat night
Harrisville church & 9.30am Sun morning Boonah
church.

We have a 5th Sunday on 31st July!

Our **WEEKDAY EUCHARIST** schedule for this week, the 16th week in Ordinary Time:

Monday	18 th July	10.00am Boonah church, Funeral Mass for Keith Hilton. <i>All welcome.</i>
Wednesday	19 th July	6.00pm Peak Crossing church followed by meal at <i>The Peak Pub</i>
Thursday	20 th July	9.15am Boonah church
Friday	21 st July	9.15am Boonah church

FUNERALS IN THE PARISH AND DEATHS OUTSIDE THE PARISH.

We remember **Keith Hilton** (formerly Mt. Alford) who died recently. Our sympathy and condolences to Patricia Hilton and their two children, Jo and Robert. Keith and Patricia were long time parishioners present at Sunday Mass until early 2020. They were married in the former All Saints' church, Boonah, on 14th May 1955. Fr. Morgan Howe was the presiding priest at their Nuptial Mass. Keith and Patricia have been members of the parish for a very long time. Keith's Funeral Mass will be celebrated this Monday at the new Boonah church (1961).

On Monday of last week, 11th July, we received word of **Raymond Gale's** death on the same day. Ray with his wife Helen joined our parish in 2004 and left very recently to be closer to family. Let's remember Ray and pray for Helen and their families.

We also received word of **Nicholas Brault's** death during the week. We extend our sympathy especially to Graeme and Jane Gilloway and their extended families. Nicholas' name was added to our list people who were sick so many have been praying for him in recent times. May he now rest in peace.

Let us also remember those who are dying because of war and conflict as well as those who are dying because of COVID.



We pray with and for those who are sick in our parish and beyond: all across the globe infected with COVID-19; all those who are unwell because of the war raging in Ukraine and other places; all those who are starving; Chris Healy, Paul White, Arthur Devin, Liliana Toohill, Libby Shields, Marko Babic, Max Gardiner, Trish Merlehan, Bernadette Pinchin, Cate Mitten, Bernice Brault, Paula Ebrington, Fletcher Casey, Jill Archer, Louisa, Lynne

Nunan, Bea Bedard (USA), Carol Libke, Angela Kearney, Tony Pisani, Lorraine Bakon, Luca (a grandson), Jane Platz, Maureen Wilson and sick members of parish families and those beyond our parish boundaries.

▪ **CONFIRMATION AND EUCHARIST, SUNDAY 24TH JULY AT 9.30AM MASS, BOONAH:**

We will celebrate the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist for a number of candidates at the 9.30am Mass in Boonah on Sunday 24th July.

I thank Bishop Ken Howell for delegating me to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation on this day.



The Archbishop, Bishop Ken and Bishop Tim Norton were not available on this date.

I have written to the four families whose child or children are ready. Focused preparation for Confirmation will be offered to the candidates once the school holidays are over.

We look forward to this celebration as we haven't celebrated these sacraments since late 2019.

We continue to encourage and welcome those who have recently begun their preparation for Eucharist.

▪ **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.



▪ **BOONAH PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER.** Leigh Muller is the Parish Safeguarding Officer. Email: boonah@bne.catholic.net.au

▪ **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).



3. What's the future of the Catholic Church in Australia? A keen reader of Sunday bulletin notified us about an interesting interview broadcast on 6th July 2022 on the ABC Radio National's *Religion and Ethics Report*. It is a special edition of this weekly report:

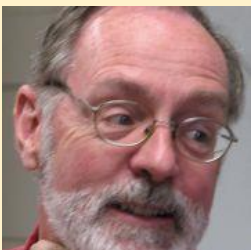
Tensions emerged during this weeks' national Plenary Council as bishops overruled the people's votes. At one point the bishops rejected women-in-leadership motions, including ordination to diaconate.

Women's leadership was only one contentious issue.

The national meeting of the Catholic Church comes at a time of crisis. Numbers are falling, the census is showing us this, and there's an attempt at rebuilding trust, after the child sex abuse scandals in the Church.

Guest presenter Noel Debien and our panellists Bishop Shane MacKinlay, Sr Dr Maeve Heaney, and Toni Janke, join us for a special program recorded at St Mary's Cathedral College in Sydney, Gadigal Country.

Listen (29 mins) on ABC RN [here](#). Two of the people interviewed are members of the Church of Brisbane: Toni Janke and Maeve Heaney.



4. Pat Marrin, the artist who produces *Francis, The Comic Strip* is having some holidays and will post new comics when he returns. Thanks to all who have asked when it is returning.



Pope Francis looks on as Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, speaks at the start of a symposium on priesthood at the Vatican 17th Feb. (CNS/Paul Haring)

5. Pope Francis continues to reframe practices of the See of Peter. On 13th July, he appointed three women to the Vatican department that recommends new bishops.

Read the article [here](#).

6. Let's continue to pray for peace in Ukraine. Every morning readers of *The Guardian's* website see: "At a glance: What we know on day *x* of the invasion." Today it was day 143.

The following prayer will be offered here for some weeks: *Prayer from the Uniting Church in Australia*, UCA President, Rev Sharon Hollis.

**God of peace, God of mercy,
We pray for the people of Ukraine.**

We lament the violence that has come to their country.

We ask for comfort for those who mourn, hope for those who despair and compassion for all who suffer.

We plead for an end to violence and aggression in their land.

We pray for the people of Russia.

We give thanks for those who protest for peace and pray for ongoing courage.

We ask for a change of heart in those who commit acts of aggression and war against their fellow citizens and neighbours.

We pray for Russians who will suffer because of sanctions and war.

We pray for leaders around the world.

We pray that world leaders might work for an end to war and for establishing of peace.

We seek wisdom for those who are making life and death decisions about how to respond to violence and threats of violence.

We ask for courage for those who campaign for peace.

We pray for aid workers and journalists.

We give thanks for the willingness of aid workers to work in situations of war and unrest in order to meet the needs of others.

We ask for safety, wisdom and compassion for all working to alleviate suffering and heal the wounded.

We pray for journalist and media organisations reporting the situation in Ukraine and Russia, may they report truthfully and compassionately.

We pray for peace.

We lament violence around the world.

We plead for the ceasing of violence and the establishment of peace.

We pray that you might give us a desire for peace and a willingness to work and hope and pray for peace each day.

Amen.

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OF BRISBANE

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[Click here to visit the Stopline website](#)

John

pastor,

Boonah Catholic community