

Do not be unbelieving but believe . . .



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 2nd Week of Easter.

1. REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY WORD.

The **reflection** for this Sunday is offered by Kathleen Rushton, Sister of Mercy, Scripture Scholar and Author.

*Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take . . .
but by the moments that take our breath away.*

These words attributed to Maya Angelou, the American poet, singer and civil rights activist, relate the experience of awe and wonder as being intimately connected with our breath and with fullness of life.

We can think of breathing as purely functional, of breath and breathing as movements: in and out, internal and external, inspiration and expiration. The process of breathing essential to all life on Earth features uniquely in the second part of John's resurrection story. There breathing is associated with the work of creation and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Breathed the Spirit on Them

Jesus "breathed on them [the fearful disciples locked in the room] and said to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (Jn 20:22). Jesus gives the Spirit

to the disciples after he "hands over the Spirit" to the women and the beloved disciple at the foot of the cross (Jn 19:30). Several times before these givings, in the farewell discourse, Jesus commissions the community through the power of the Holy Spirit to finish the works of God (Jn 14-17). By breathing the Spirit in, the disciples grow as a community for mission.

Jesus had promised to bring a recreating Spirit. The disciples are to be born of this wild, uncontrollable Spirit (Jn 3:3-8). The Greek for Spirit can mean wind, breath or spirit. Each is unpredictable – the wind that blows where it will is not seen or able to be grasped but is essential for life and has great power.

The word "breathed" is unique in the New Testament and is found only twice elsewhere in Scripture to describe God creating. In Genesis we read that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" and in doing this created the

Earthling (*adam*) from the Earth (*ha'adam*) (2:7). The Book of Wisdom speaks of God "who breathed a living spirit into them" (15:11). In John, too, Jesus's breathing is connected with God's creating.

Before considering what Jesus is creating, we need to look at where he speaks the creating words. Jesus is not at the tomb nor with the first disciples but is instead with disciples in a house where "it was evening on that day, the first day of the week" (Jn 20:19). This evokes the day on which, from the earliest times to today, disciples gathered as a community.

Mission Community of Peace

The basis of God's mission in John is shalom, Jesus's peace. Whereas in Matthew Jesus gives the disciples his power and authority to baptise in the name of the Trinity (Mt 28:18-20), it is different in John. Jesus breathed on the disciples creating them into a new community. Through the Holy Spirit this community will carry on the work of Jesus, the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" by "forgiving sin and holding fast in communion those who are thus reconciled to God" (Jn 20:23).

Consciousness of our breath and breathing can take us deeply into Jesus, the incarnation of God in the world God so loved. In the Book of Wisdom we find: "When I was born, I began to breathe the common air and fell upon the kindred earth" (Wis 7:3). All life in Earth – the community of life – shares the atmosphere.

For Us Today

The process of breathing evolved about 3.77 billion years ago. Eventually plants which breathe through the pores in their leaves evolved over 470 million years ago. Living creatures which move air into and out of their lungs evolved about 395 million years ago. Then,

breathing the common air in Earth our common home, modern humans emerged only about 100,000 years ago.

We latecomers are intimately connected with Earth. From earliest times Christian teachers have taught that God speaks to us through two books: the little book of scripture and the big book of creation. Pope Francis introduced the phrase "integral ecology" in *Laudato Si'*. The air of our common home is interconnected through atoms or subatomic particles between plants and living creatures and among species in ecological systems and networks. When the Australian bushfires raged, the air we breathed changed colour. The deforestation of the Amazon reminds us that each breath is fed to us by Earth – it is a natural resource but not an infinite resource. The airborne spread of Covid-19 reminds us that we all share the same air – we are not enclosed in our own hermetically sealed bubbles of personal space. Climate scientist James Renwick sees that some of the changes being forced on us because of Covid-19 give us insight into a cleaner world. Appeals to fly less and live lighter have been around for some time. Now people are being forced to change. In China there has been a dramatic drop in air pollution because of fewer cars and factories not running. In some places air pollution is down a quarter to a third and the sky is clearer.

New Structure of Faith

Thomas, one of the twelve, "was not with them when Jesus came" (Jn 20:24). He does not doubt but declares firmly, "I will not believe." He refuses to believe. There is a new structure of faith. Thomas is one of the generations who are called to believe, not through their actual experience of the resurrection of Jesus, but through the testimony of others – the community of the Church. We are like Thomas when we refuse to believe and act.

With the myriad threats to our environment and well-being, we are perhaps better placed than ever to understand the significance of life-sustaining breath, to believe, to participate in the mission of God. When Jesus breathes on the disciples his is – literally – the same air we breathe. Jesus breathes out a gift – the Spirit – and as disciples we breathe in. Jesus’s breathing is intentional and life giving. “What kind of world do we want to leave to those who will come after us, to children who are growing up?” Pope Francis asks in his 2020 video message (www.laudatosiweek.org). “Motivated by this question”, he says, “I would like to invite you to participate in Laudato Si' Week . . . It is a global campaign on the occasion of the fifth

anniversary of the encyclical letter *Laudato Si': On the Care of Our Common Home.*”

We who breathe in a culturally Christian, yet pluralistic country, became aware of our Muslim sisters and brothers and reached out to them. A year later we are hearing stories of the friendships created through this tragedy. We can be inspired to join this on-going work of community making through simple everyday acts of friendship and inclusion. So breath, crucial to individual life, is shared. When we inspire we become inspired. Maya Angelou’s words on how to measure life remind us to pause to treasure our moments of awe – the breath-taking moments when we become aware of our participation in God’s creating.



God of life,
 source of all faith,
 through the waters of baptism
 you have raised us up in Jesus
 and given us life that endures.

Day by day refine our faith,
 that we who have not seen the Christ
 may truly confess him as our Lord and God
 and share the blessedness of those who believe.

(2nd Sunday of Easter, Alternative Opening Prayer)



A **second reflection** is from the *Catholic Women Preach* website. The preacher is Sr. Maureen Glavin who has been a member of the Society of the Sacred Heart (RSCJ) for 34 years. Having recently completed a term serving on the Society's United States-Canada Province Provincial Team, she has said 'yes' to an invitation to live, learn and minister in Indonesia beginning in August 2022. Her teaching experience is in math, chemistry and school leadership.

I am fascinated with how the universe works. I always have been. Perhaps like many of you I like to think of myself a real seeker of knowledge and, yes, truth. So, when I hear the story of Thomas, I see *him* as a seeker too - as someone who wants to know. His, and our, seeking, searching and yearning *to really know*, begs the question of how any of us *really knows anything*. When we say 'I believe', why do we believe what we believe?

I, who have never seen the person of Jesus with my physical eyes, believe that he *is* alive and present to us. Is it just because I accept what others say? It is fair to say that there *is* a level of trusting what others tell us - if we deem them 'trust-worthy'. When we were young, most of us probably trusted what our parents and our teachers told us. I did! However, there comes a point when 'cognitive assent to what others say' does not sustain us in mature faith.

When it comes to '*how we know* if something is true' (at least as we study the external world), the process goes something like this:

1. First, we follow an injunction: **to know this, do this**. If we want to know if it is raining outside, we look out the window; if we want to know if a cell has a nucleus; we look through the microscope; if we want to know how many moons around Jupiter, we look through a telescope.
2. Second, by following the injunction, we **have an experience**. When we looked out the window, or through the telescope, or into the microscope we gathered 'the data'.
3. Finally, **confirmation**: We check our experience (i.e. the data) with a community of the adequate. In other words, we check with others who have already looked through the telescope, the microscope or out the window. If they do not see that it is raining too, maybe I am hallucinating. However, if they DO see the rain I can be pretty sure that *the truth is* that it is raining. (you get the idea)

(full disclosure - this pithy little three-step summary of the scientific method is from Ken Wilber)

Back to Thomas! This is *exactly* the process Thomas used:

1. The **injunction** - Jesus said, put your finger in my side
2. The **experience** - he *saw, felt, touched* the wound of Christ . . . and
3. His **experience was confirmed** - the *other Apostles experienced it too*

On this topic of deep knowing or mature belief, I often think of the founder of my congregation, Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat. She wrote regularly about the interior life or interior spirit. Her own contemplative practice provided her with the kind of ongoing experiences which allowed her to know what it tasted like, felt like, to be in union with, communion with, in relationship with, touched by and touching, the living Christ.

So, what about us?

The *seeker's path* is the *seeker's path* is the *seeker's path* – interior or exterior:

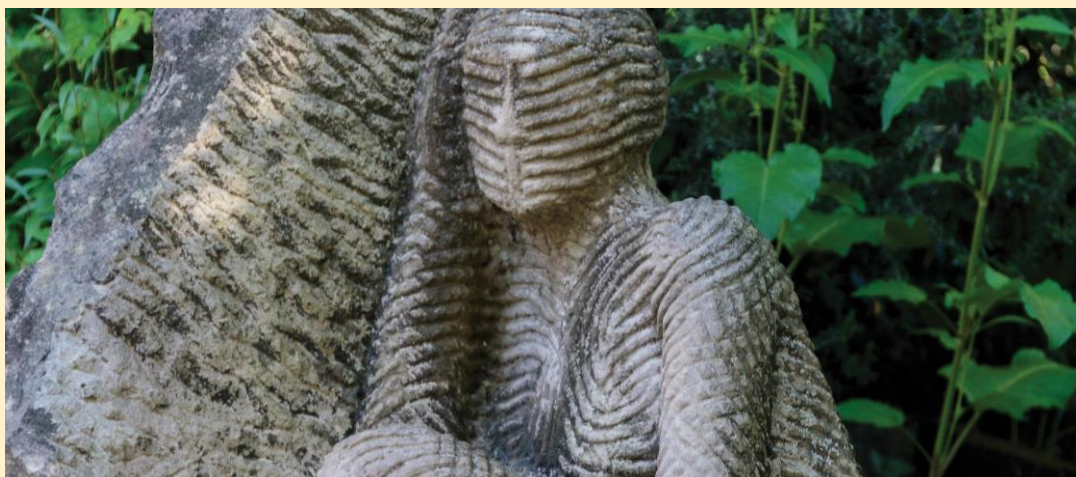
1. **We too have been invited.** We have been invited to be still and be courageously interiorly open so as to allow Love/Christ to touch our own wounds or to be courageously open enough to touch the wounds of those around us (in Christ among us).
2. When we actually have the courage to follow the invitation (really follow the invitation or really allow ourselves to be interiorly open), **we too have an experience.** I am sure you can recall your own powerful experiences - surprisingly tender, loving, connecting. Unfortunately, sometimes we don't believe our own experiences. We rationalize them, we minimize them and we dismiss them.
3. So, we too need to share our experiences with those who have also walked the path: a spiritual mentor/director, a spiritual friend, to see if they are nodding their heads and saying, yes, yes, yes!

If they are, we, who have *NOT seen* with our eyes of our flesh, can confidently *believe!*

I am not saying it is easy to take the first step. The difficult part is being open in the first place. It is easier to put up defences and to protect ourselves. Many of us put up defences much of the time. I often wonder if this is the biggest problem with our world. It can just be too hard to touch the wounds of humanity (of Christ) among us or within us.

However, when we do, when we allow ourselves to taste, to touch the wounds of Christ (within us, among us, around us, **we have life!** And, when we have life, we can (like the apostles in the first reading) **give life!**

Let us then, **BE NOT AFRAID!**



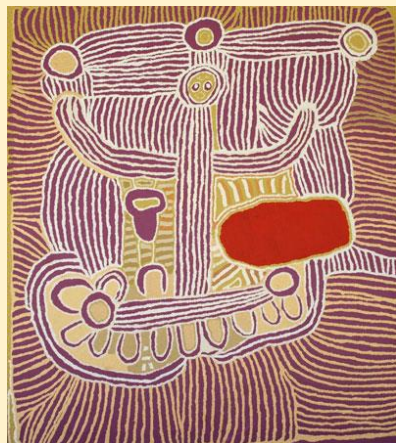
2. *Boonah Parish happenings . . .*

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)

Our **WEEKDAY EUCHARIST** schedule for this week, the 2nd Week of Easter:

Tuesday 26th April 5.30pm **Boonah church**

Wednesday 27th April 6.00pm **Peak Crossing church** followed by dinner at *The Peak Pub*

Thursday 28th April 9.15am **Boonah church**

Friday 29th April 9.15am **Boonah church**



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

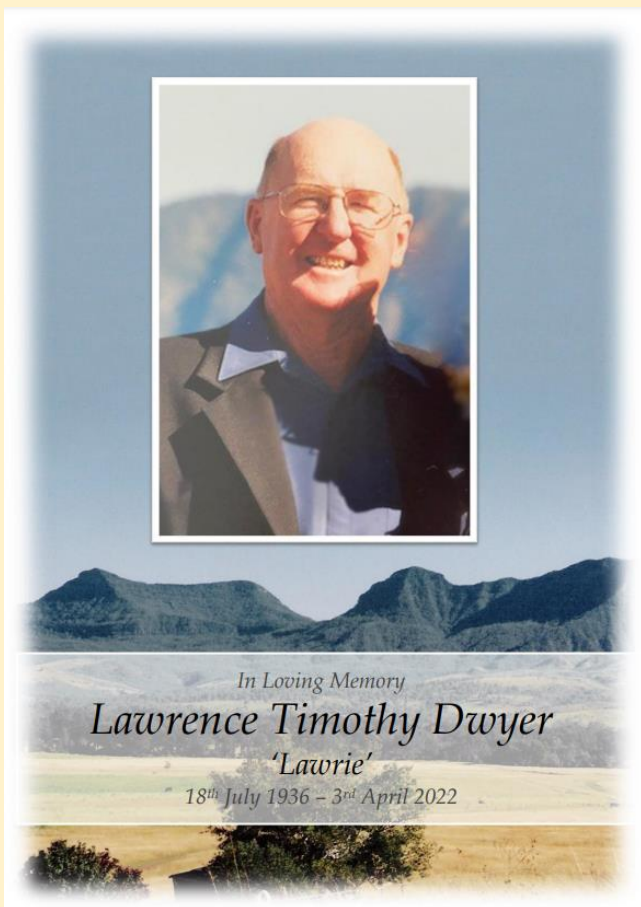
NIKON PHOTO OF THE YEAR 2022

WINNER: Kate Geraghty, *The Sydney Morning Herald*,
"Fighting COVID-19 Delta"

▪ **HOLY THURSDAY EVENING MASS AND GOOD FRIDAY (THE WAY OF THE CROSS)**

Our *thanks* to those who prepared the liturgies for the Easter Triduum and who ministered on the evening of Holy Thursday Mass. Thanks also to those who, at very short notice, organised and led 'The Way of the Cross' at Peak Crossing on Good Friday Morning: *Lesley and Lyle, Fiona and Donna.*

Thanks to those who cleaned the Boonah Church **twice**, once in preparation for a parish funeral and then for Palm Sunday and the Three Days of Easter.



An energetic crew gathered to prepare the church for Lawrie Dwyer's funeral on Thursday 7th April. Lawrie and Helen, along with their own family and extended family, have been part of the parish for a very long time.

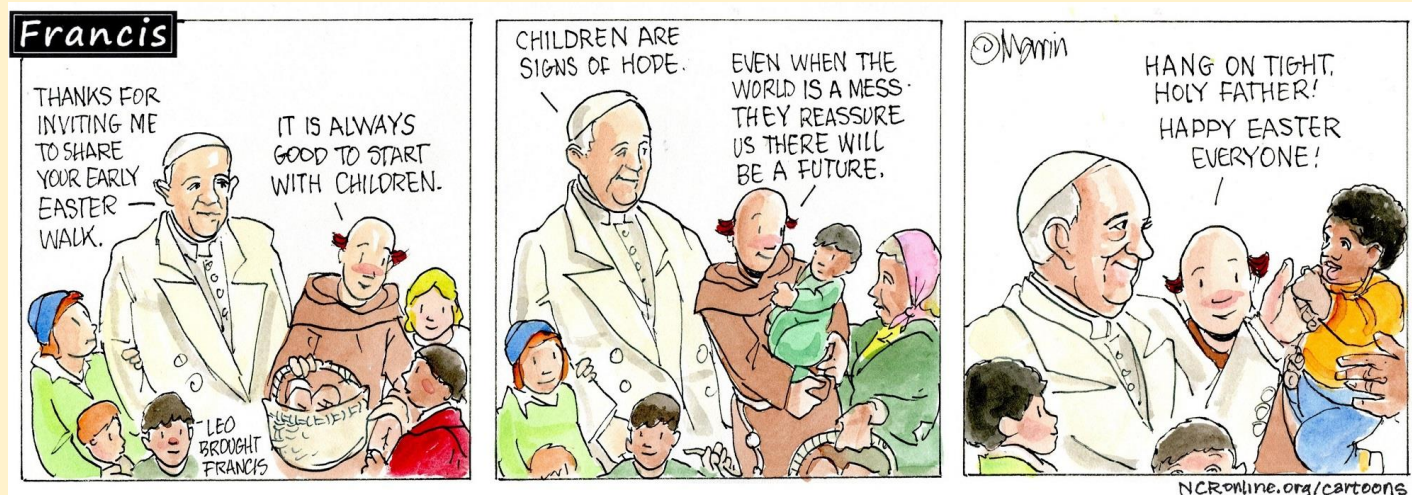
Lawrie and Helen celebrated their marriage with a Nuptial Mass in the new one-year-old church of All Saints on 29th December 1962. Fr. Morgan Howe officiated.

It was wonderful to welcome so many to Lawrie's funeral Mass. *May Lawrie rest in peace.*

Then on Saturday morning before Palm Sunday, another energetic crew prepared the church for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and the Three Days of Easter. *Thank you to this team!*

We started the Three Days of Easter with Holy Thursday Evening Mass. During that night I was very unwell and sadly I returned a positive result from a RAT taken on Good Friday. I alerted parishioners

that I was unable to preside as I entered home isolation for seven days. Thanks for the many messages of care and concern. It was quite overwhelming to receive phone calls, emails and messages with offers of assistance. As I write this Sunday bulletin I am eagerly looking forward to leaving home isolation on Friday afternoon.



14th April 2022

- **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 (electronic giving), 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).

- **PASTORAL VISIT WITH ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE.** A reminder that our local shepherd, Archbishop Mark Coleridge, will be here for a Pastoral Visit from Friday 27th May – Sunday 29th May.

In Handover Notes I was given, it appears the Archbishop was with us for a previous Pastoral Visit on 21st-23rd August 2015 where he celebrated a Rite of Installation of Fr. Peter Gablonski as the Pastor of this parish. Does this mean it has been almost seven years since the last Pastoral Visit? Let me know!

And Yes! The 2022 Pastoral Visit is on the same weekend as the annual Boonah Show!

- **EASTER SUNDAY HOMILY: ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE.** You might like to view our Archbishop's short homily prepared for Easter Sunday: short, to the point and encouraging:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pr6fGWy894s>



19th April 2022

3. The following is a text from Pope Francis' weekly Wednesday audience 20th April: *Honouring the elderly.*

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today, with the help of the Word of God that we have heard, we open a passage through the fragility of old age, marked in a special way by the experiences of confusion and despondency, of loss and abandonment, of disillusionment and doubt. Of course, the experiences of our frailty in the face of life's dramatic - sometimes tragic - situations can occur at any stage of life. However, in old age they can produce less of an impression and induce in others a kind of habituation, even annoyance.

How many times have we heard or thought: 'Old people are a nuisance' - 'But, these old people are always a nuisance': don't deny it, that's the way it is... We've said it, we've thought it... The more serious wounds of childhood and youth rightly provoke a sense of injustice and rebellion, a strength to react and fight. On the other hand, the wounds, even serious ones, of old age are inevitably accompanied by the feeling that, in any case, life is not contradicting itself, because it

has already been lived. And so the elderly are somewhat removed from our experience: we want to keep them at a distance.

In the common human experience, love - as is said - descends: it does not return to the life behind with the same force that it pours out on the life that is still before us. The gratuitousness of love also appears in this: parents have always known this, the old soon learn it. Nevertheless, revelation opens a way for reciprocating love in a different way: that of honouring those who have gone before us, the way of honouring the people who came before us, of honouring the elderly.

This special love that paves the way in the form of honour - that is, tenderness and respect at the same time - intended for the elderly is sealed by God's commandment. "Honour thy father and mother" is a solemn commitment, the first of the "second tablet" of the Ten Commandments. It is not just about one's own father and mother. It is about their generation and the generations before, whose leave-taking can also be slow and prolonged, creating a time and space of long-lasting coexistence with the other ages of life. In other words, it is about the old age of life, old age...



Honour is a good word to frame this aspect of returning love that concerns old age. That is, we have received the love of parents, of grandparents, and now we return this love to them, to the elderly, to our grandparents. Today we have rediscovered the term 'dignity', to indicate the value of respecting and caring for the age [life] of everyone. Dignity, here, is essentially equivalent to honour: honouring father and mother, honouring the elderly, and recognizing the dignity they possess.

Let us think carefully about this beautiful expression of love which is honour. Even care for the sick, the support of those who are not self-sufficient, the guarantee of sustenance, can be lacking

honour. Honour is lacking when an excess of confidence, instead of being expressed as delicacy and affection, tenderness and respect, is transformed into roughness and abuse. This occurs when weakness is reproached, and even punished, as if it were a fault, and when bewilderment and confusion become an opening for derision and aggression.

It can happen even in the home, in nursing homes, as well as in offices or in the open spaces of the city. Encouraging in young people, even indirectly, an attitude of condescension - and even contempt - for the elderly, for their weaknesses and their precariousness, produces horrible things. It opens the way to unimaginable excesses. The young people who set fire to a "bum"'s blanket - we've seen this, haven't we? - because they see him as a human reject, and we often think that the old are the refuse, or we put them in the trash; these young people who have set fire to a bum's blanket are the tip of the iceberg, that is, of the contempt for a life that, far from the attractions and impulses of youth, already seems to be a life to be cast aside. 'Refuse' is the word, isn't it? To despise the elderly and cast them from life, to put them aside, to put them down.

This contempt, which dishonours the elderly, actually dishonours all of us. If I dishonour the elderly, I dishonour myself. The passage from the Book of Sirach, which we heard at the beginning, is rightly harsh on this dishonour, which cries out for vengeance in the sight of God. There is a passage in the story of Noah that is very expressive in this regard - I don't know if you have it in mind. The elderly Noah, the hero of the flood and still a hard worker, lies unconscious after having had a few too many drinks. He's already old, but he's had too much to drink. His sons, in order not to wake him up and embarrass him, gently cover him, looking aside, with great respect. This text is very beautiful and says everything about the honour due to an old man. To cover the weakness of the elderly, so they don't feel ashamed. A text that helps us a lot.

In spite of all the material provisions that richer and more organized societies make available for old age - of which we can certainly be proud - the struggle for the restoration of that special form of love which is honour still seems fragile and immature. We must do all we can to support and encourage it, offering better social and cultural support to those who are sensitive to this decisive form of the 'civilisation of love'.

And on this point, allow me to offer some advice to parents: please, bring your children, young children, closer to the elderly, always bring them closer. And when the elderly person is ill, a bit out of their mind, always approach them: let them know that this is our flesh, that this is what has made it possible for us to be here. Please don't push the elderly away. And if there is no other option than to send them to a nursing home, please visit them and bring the children to see them: they are the honour of our civilization, the old people who opened the doors. And many times, the children forget this.

I'll tell you something personal: I used to love visiting nursing homes in Buenos Aires. I went often. I went often, I visited each one... And I remember once I asked a lady: 'And how many children do you have?' - 'I have four, all married, with grandchildren ...,' and she started talking to me about the family. 'And do they come [to visit]?' - 'Yes, [she said,] 'they always come!' When I left the room, the nurse, who had heard, said to me: 'Father, she told a lie to cover up for her

children. Nobody has come for six months!’ This is discarding the old, it is thinking that the old are refuse.

Please: it is a grave sin. This is the first great commandment, and the only one that says the reward: ‘Honour your father and your mother, and you will have long life on earth.’ This commandment to honour the elderly gives us a blessing, which is expressed in this way: ‘You will have long life.’ Please cherish the elderly. And [even] if their mind goes, cherish the old. Because they are the presence of history, the presence of my family, and thanks to them I am here, we can all say: thanks to you, grandfather and grandmother, I am alive.

Please don’t leave them alone. And this, looking after the elderly, is not a question of cosmetics and plastic surgery, no. Rather, it is a question of honour, which must transform how we educate the young about life and its stages. Love for the human person that is common to us, including honouring a life lived, is not a matter for the old. Rather it is an ambition that will bring radiance to the youth who inherit its best qualities. May the wisdom of God’s Spirit grant us to open the horizon of this true cultural revolution with the necessary energy.

Thank you.

4. The Australian Catholic Bishops have released their *Election Statement 2022* for the Federal Election in a few weeks. It can be accessed [here](#).

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge said no one political party fully embodies Catholic social teaching. The bishops are, however, offering an election statement to encourage Catholics and people of good will to reflect on the good they can do for their community by using their vote for the good of all.

Archbishop Coleridge said “we all long for what Pope Francis calls ‘a better kind of politics, one truly at the service of the common good’”. “This ‘better’ politics pursues the common good of all Australians by recognising the dignity of every individual and the solidarity we all share as a national community,” Archbishop Coleridge said. “Since the last federal election we have seen the impact and the challenges of a global pandemic, floods, summers of bushfires, wild weather events and a world on edge because of military conflict.



5. Franciscan priest, Dan Horan, has written a short reflection emerging from Lent: *Lessons learned from a Lent without Twitter or Facebook.*



Part of his reflection includes: . . . *The first week of Lent was the most awkward in this regard. Everything would be as normal until, in my pre-thinking mode of habit, I would attempt to open the Twitter or Facebook app and hit a roadblock: I was intentionally logged out of them.*

So I would be standing or sitting there, confused and uncomfortable, wondering to myself how many hundreds if not thousands of times a week I would go through a similar unconscious practice, but instead of being jarred to alertness because I was logged off my accounts, I would simply scroll, read, explore with no real sense of intention or deliberation.

As that initial physical and mental awkwardness began to subside, I started to become more attuned to how I was feeling. While I, of course, had good and bad days like everyone else, I did begin to sense that something was discernibly different about me. I was less preoccupied with what was going on outside my lived experience in a healthy way.

To read his short article: [CLICK HERE](#)



6. Local radio announcer, Diana Hockey, hosts a weekly show on RIM FM.

She contacted the parish and invited us to listen to a **special ANZAC DAY edition**

from 3pm - 5pm on ANZAC DAY.

It can be accessed on rimfm.org or on FM radio 100.1. *Thanks Diana.*



PRAYER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE IN UKRAINE

God of peace and justice,
who change the hardened heart
and break the power of violence,
we entrust the people of Ukraine to you.

Protect them in this time of peril;
let them know not death but life,
not slavery but freedom.

You are Father of all;
we are brothers and sisters.

Give us the strength
to live that truth in love,
choosing peace not war.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Australian Catholic
Bishops Conference

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
Email: AOB@stopline.com.au
Online Report: www.bncatholic.stoplinereport.com

If you think it's wrong report it.

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