



Miraculous Draught of Fishes

John Reilly

(1928-2010)

I feel that a visual artist should not talk too much about his work because a good painting should speak in purely visual terms through form, colour and tone and should not need to be interpreted or explained.

My paintings are not concerned with the surface appearance of people or things but try to express something of the fundamental spiritual reality behind this surface appearance.

I try to express in visible form the oneness and unity of this invisible power binding all things into one whole.

I do not illustrate Bible stories literally, as I am not interested in the places or people but try to express what I feel is the deeper significance of each story for every individual throughout all time.

- John Reilly

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 3rd Sunday of Easter.

1. REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY WORD.

The **first** reflection is by Br. Julian McDonald from Sydney.

The last few verses of chapter 20 of John's Gospel read as though the writer was bringing his work to an end. In fact, the Jerusalem Bible puts these verses under the heading of Conclusion: "There were many other signs that Jesus worked, and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name" (John 20, 30-31). Chapter 21 is headed Appendix. Scripture scholars tell us that this chapter was added at a later date, for the purpose of correcting the views of some of the members of the early Christian community who had doubts about the physical resurrection of Jesus. They believed that what the disciples saw, when they supposedly encountered the risen Jesus, were hallucinations or figments of their imagination. Chapter 21 presents the risen Jesus lighting a fire and cooking, serving and eating freshly-caught fish.



Today's gospel-reading puts the focus on Simon Peter, the disciple who, only a few days before, had three times denied having any connection with Jesus. His weakness was underlined by the fact that those who had recognised him as belonging to supporters of Jesus, were hardly threatening. They were a servant-girl and two curious onlookers. They had little or no connection with the people in authority who

would be satisfied with nothing but the death of Jesus. We are told that, when Peter realised the gravity of his denials, he went off and wept bitterly. If the risen Jesus had not turned up and intervened, we might not have heard of Peter again.



It is worth noting the context in which the writer of this appended chapter sets the story of Peter's forgiveness and restoration. Of significance is the fact that Jesus invites the disciples to breakfast around a charcoal fire, the same kind of fire around which Peter was warming himself when he denied Jesus. And echoing the scene of the Last Supper, Jesus broke bread and fish and handed it around to the disciples as they came ashore. It is in this setting that Jesus turns to Peter and asks three times: "Peter, do you love me?" But there was nothing vindictive about the questioning. Jesus was certainly not trying to even the score by rubbing Peter's nose into his recent failures. In inviting Peter to tend the lambs and feed the sheep who belonged to the community around him, Jesus was restoring him to his role of leadership and affirming his confidence in Peter.

In that action by Jesus, there is a message for all of us: Despite the fact that we have all been inspired by Jesus at some time or other, and despite the fact that we have all committed ourselves to walk in his footsteps, we still fail, we still deny him in one way or another. As often as not, we choose to give up on ourselves, telling ourselves that being connected to Jesus was good while it lasted. But it might be better if we got back to doing what we used to do before we ever got caught up with him. That's what

Peter did. When Jesus was executed and buried, he did what many people do when they lose someone dear to them. He tried to pick up the pieces by getting involved in an activity with which he was familiar. Moreover, he said to the other disciples: "I'm going fishing." And they responded to the cue he gave them. But their efforts were decidedly unsuccessful. They caught nothing. Peter failed not only as a disciple but discovered quickly that he had forgotten how to catch fish.

This story, of course, calls to mind Luke's account (Luke 5, 1-11) of how, after a fruitless night of hard work, Jesus turned up unexpectedly and urged Peter and his companions to put down their nets in a most unlikely spot. The large haul led Peter to say to Jesus: "Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man". And the response from Jesus was one of reassurance: "From now onwards, you will be catching people." And now, that same man who had so recently demonstrated his sinfulness in his denial of Jesus, is lifted out of his shame and failure and encouraged to get on with the job of reaching out to those in need.

And the message for us? When we dare to acknowledge our sinfulness and confront the reality of our fragility and failure, we open ourselves up to discovering that the love God has for us is far deeper than any denial of ours, and the invitation from God to reach out to others is far stronger and more persistent than any failure on our part to accept that invitation.

One person who heard and responded to that invitation from the risen Jesus was William Sloane Coffin (1924 - 2006), a Presbyterian minister who, in the turbulent late 1960s when student unrest on university campuses was at its height, became chaplain to Yale University. An outspoken civil rights and anti-war campaigner, this man put social activism at the centre of his ministry as a pastor. That earned him bitter

criticism from many of the politicians of his day. He was not deterred. In a homily on today's gospel-reading, which he once delivered at the Riverside Church in New York, he commented: "Christ is risen to convert us, not from this life to some other life, but from something less than life to the possibility of full life. What makes Easter so exciting is the cosmic quality of it. For Easter has less to do with one person's escape from the grave than with the victory of seemingly powerless love over loveless power. Easter represents a demand as well as a promise, a demand not that we sympathise with the crucified Christ, but that we pledge our loyalty to the risen one. That means an end to all loyalties to all people and to all institutions that

crucify. For example, I don't see how we can proclaim allegiance to the Risen Lord and remain indifferent to our government's, and the world's, intention not to abolish nuclear weapons. Or how can we think that the Risen Lord would applaud an economic system that reverses the priorities of Mary's *Magnificat*. - filling the rich with good things and sending the poor away empty?"

"Do you love me, Peter, Christine, Brian, Emily, Jason, Sandra...?" "Lord, you know I love you!" "Then stop wallowing in the memory of your failures, and get on with feeding my lambs and tending my sheep!"



God of life,
in your risen Son
you reveal your abiding presence among us
and summon those reborn in baptism
to lives of worship and service.

Fill this assembly with reverence
as we come before you in prayer.
Grant us courage and zeal
in bearing witness before the world
to your Son, Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead,
who lives and reigns with you now and always
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever

(3rd Sunday of Easter, Alternative Opening Prayer)



A [second reflection](#) is from the *Catholic Women Preach* website. The preacher is Kelly Meraw who is Director of Liturgy, Music, and Pastoral Care for St. John - St. Paul Collaborative (a thriving Catholic Collaborative of two parishes in Wellesley, Massachusetts). Kelly earned her Masters Degree from McGill University, where during her undergraduate studies she was received into the Catholic Church through the RCIA program at St. Patrick's Basilica in Montreal. Kelly brings her deep love of scripture, liturgy, music, and devotion to Church teaching and tradition to her ministry. She leads bible studies, organizes faith sharing circles and social justice initiatives, leads communion, wake and committal services, offers adult faith enrichment programming and shepherds bereavement ministries in her parishes.

In our readings today we are asked to consider what it means to be a lover of Jesus. We've taken up our crosses, followed Him, summoned our courage and have been willing to watch as He bore the weight of our own inadequacy. We as followers of Jesus' passion have waited with the singular mark of patience, with hope, for His resurrection. We have witnessed His face and in it, we've seen the promise of new life. And today we are being asked to ponder what it means to wholeheartedly love Him.

Our Gospel today culminates in that evocative breakfast on the beach. This is the very last of the resurrection appearances. We know nothing is wasted in scripture. Every detail is precious and important. Every story teaches. John tells us that he could have shared so many stories, but he chose this one because it's important. It could be argued that no other Gospel is as replete with meaning for living in anticipation of Christ's return as this one.

The disciples' worlds have been turned upside down in their three year walk with Jesus. After the devastation of His crucifixion and the inconceivability of His resurrection, the disciples are seemingly without a mission. It isn't surprising that they return to the familiar rhythm and pattern of their previous lives. Peter leads them back to the beginning. Peter leads them to fish... (albeit unsuccessfully at first...echoing St. Luke's Gospel in Chapter Five).

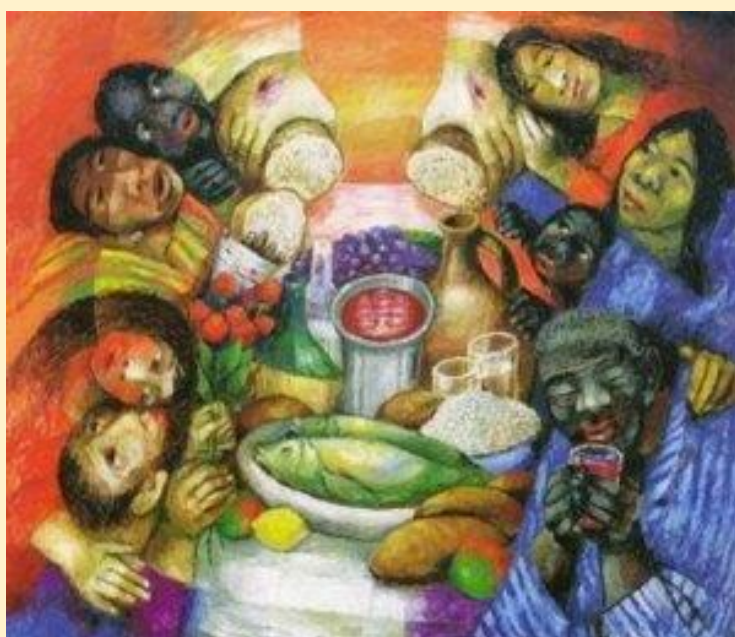
John, always seeing with the eyes of love, is able to spot Jesus first. Jesus is stable on the shoreline, as the disciples respond to the unpredictability of the Sea of Galilee. He no longer calls them 'brothers' but now 'children'. Peter, always passionate and demonstrative, dives in (into water he once walked on by the power of fixing his eyes on The Lord!) He arrives at the shore to a charcoal fire (meant to evoke for us the fire around which Peter, for the first of three times, denies Jesus). What a painful reminder that fire must have been of Peter's disloyalty.

At Jesus' request they haul in the spoils of their unbroken nets: one hundred and fifty-three large fish. St. Jerome suggests to us the meaning of the number is the total number of species of fish which existed at the time in the Sea: representing the power of Christ to call every nation to Love of Him. Augustine of Hippo posits that the symbolic number of the fish represents 'perfect divine grace'- that by some mathematical equation I'll never understand encompasses the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, combined with The Ten Commandments. Regardless of interpretation: Completeness and Fulfilment

in Christ is clearly enveloped in that unbroken net. And once again our hearts recall the feeding of the five thousand on that beach. The leitmotif of Christ's provision and sufficiency which is always pervasive in John's Gospel.

I met with a mother once, faced with the unimaginable task of preparing her husband and two children for a life without her. She'd been given the terminal diagnosis many years ago, and her time was running out. She knew it. She'd already defied unbelievable odds by the power of her own faith and grit. This mother sat with me and was primarily preoccupied, not remotely by her own fear (which I imagine must have been significant), but rather by communicating to her people the things that were most important to her. What was her legacy? What perspective could only she provide? What words remained unspoken? How could she open those broken hearts and place a lifetime of love there?

When Jesus breaks bread with his disciples again that morning, I can see that mother's eyes. 'Remember what I told you?' - 'Break the bread! Feed one another! This is your mission. Keep moving forward, don't return to your lives as they were. Don't forget.... Do it in memory of me.' A final deposit of all that is most important.



And then the camera zooms in. Jesus is deliberate in finding this moment with Peter. This, His last, and most important glorified appearance will be used to exemplify something for Peter. Peter is the rock on

which the Church is built. The one with a unique share in the authority of Christ. The one to whom Jesus entrusts His entire flock. The one in whom is the delegation of pastoral authority. Peter is to feed and tend. There could be no more important lesson to no more important figure.

In his threefold affirmation of love for Jesus, Peter is guided to the most integral mark of an intimate lover of Christ: limitless love and mercy. Peter must be reminded of his need for Christ's mercy in order to ultimately be the conduit of it. Teaching Peter that 'to love is to forgive' is our Lord's last blueprint entrusted to a Church who is asked to spill divine mercy over a world in desperate need of it. A Church who is asked to confront their own finite love and follow the movement of the Holy Spirit into a radical, unbounded love. An agape love. A love like Christ showed Peter, and a love like Christ has shown us.

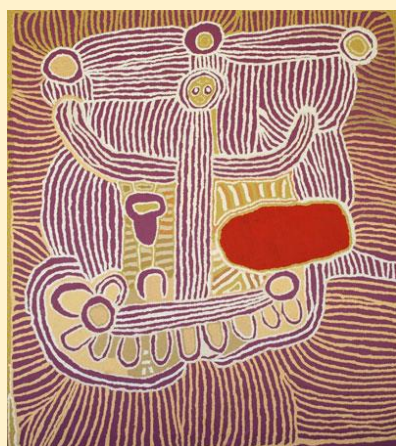
2. Boonah Parish happenings . . .

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 3rd Week of Easter:

Wednesday 4th May

6.00pm **Peak Crossing church** followed by dinner at *The Peak Pub*

Thursday 5th May

9.15am **Boonah church**

Friday 6th May

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.

▪ **KEITH SHEAHAN RIP**



We celebrated the funeral of Keith Sheahan on Friday of last week in the Boonah Church.

Keith was born into a large Boonah family on 6th August 1942.

He died in Toowoomba on Holy Thursday this year.

We extend our sympathy to his son Nathan and his family (in Banyo), to his sisters Kath Sweeney (married to Jim) and to Hazel and to the extended family who gathered from near and far.

May Keith rest in peace.



26th 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).

▪ **2022 PASTORAL VISIT WITH ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE POSTPONED TILL 2023.**

Last Sunday I wrote that our local shepherd, Archbishop Mark Coleridge, was scheduled to be here for a Pastoral Visit from Friday 27th May – Sunday 29th May.

The 2022 Pastoral Visit was occurring on the same weekend as the annual Boonah Show on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th. When the dates were set for the Pastoral Visit in 2021 I wasn't aware of the Show dates.

Over the weekend and throughout the week I had several conversations with parishioners and our school about this reality.

It became clear that more than a few active parishioners have big commitments to the annual Show. Our school children are involved at the Show on Friday which is the day the Archbishop would typically visit the children on his Pastoral Visit. Add to this the possibility of several Confirmations and First Communions in the parish and it was all getting a bit busy.

So at the end of last week I contacted the Archbishop about these realities. I am grateful that he thought it best to postpone his Pastoral Visit until 2023. His office advised us that his schedule probably won't permit a later Visit in 2022.

This also gives us some more time to consider the content and direction of the Pastoral Visit.

Thanks to Archbishop Mark.

▪ I was very glad to have attended and participated in the [Dawn Service on ANZAC Day 2022 at Peak Crossing](#).

The gathering was at the recently dedicated *Peak Crossing War Memorial*.

Some of our parishioners were involved in various aspects of the ceremony and other parishioners were part of the large crowd.

For me it was a meaningful and moving celebration. The balance was spot-on with the various parts: hymns, music, Address, prayer, Calling the Names of the Fallen, sharing a letter from a time of war, and wreath laying. A breakfast followed which was prepared by the local Harrisville Lions.

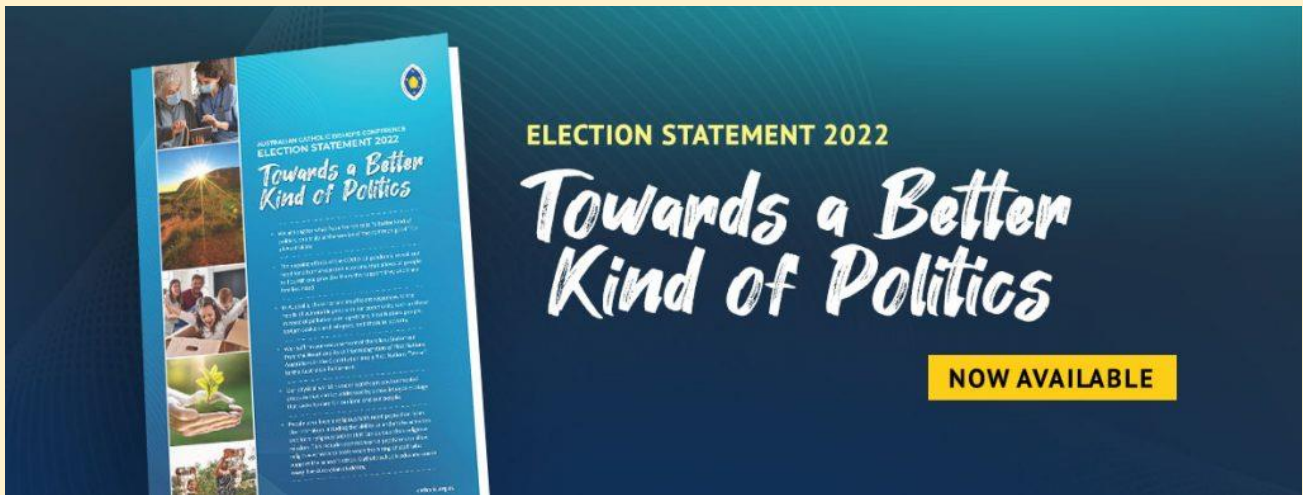


Photo: From the dedication in 2018.

3. 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.



4. Austen Ivereigh is a regular contributor to *Commonweal* and a Fellow in Contemporary Church History at the Jesuit-run Campion Hall at the University of Oxford. His most recent book, with Pope Francis, is *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future* (Simon & Schuster).

Austen has written a very accessible piece called “Rome on Mission” and he addresses Pope Francis’ reform of the Curia (the public service of the Catholic Church).

It is insightful and is a record of a very significant action of Pope Francis which resets the focus of the Curia. Much of the foundations for this reform can also be applied to the renewal of parishes at the local level.

To access it: [CLICK HERE](#)

5. Fr. Thomas Reese SJ penned a short piece in the *National Catholic Reporter*: “While focusing on Ukraine, don't forget the rest of the world” (28th April).

To access it: [CLICK HERE](#)

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

ARCHDIOCESE
OF BRISBANE

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.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com



If you think it's wrong report it.

[Click here to visit the Stopline website](http://www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com)