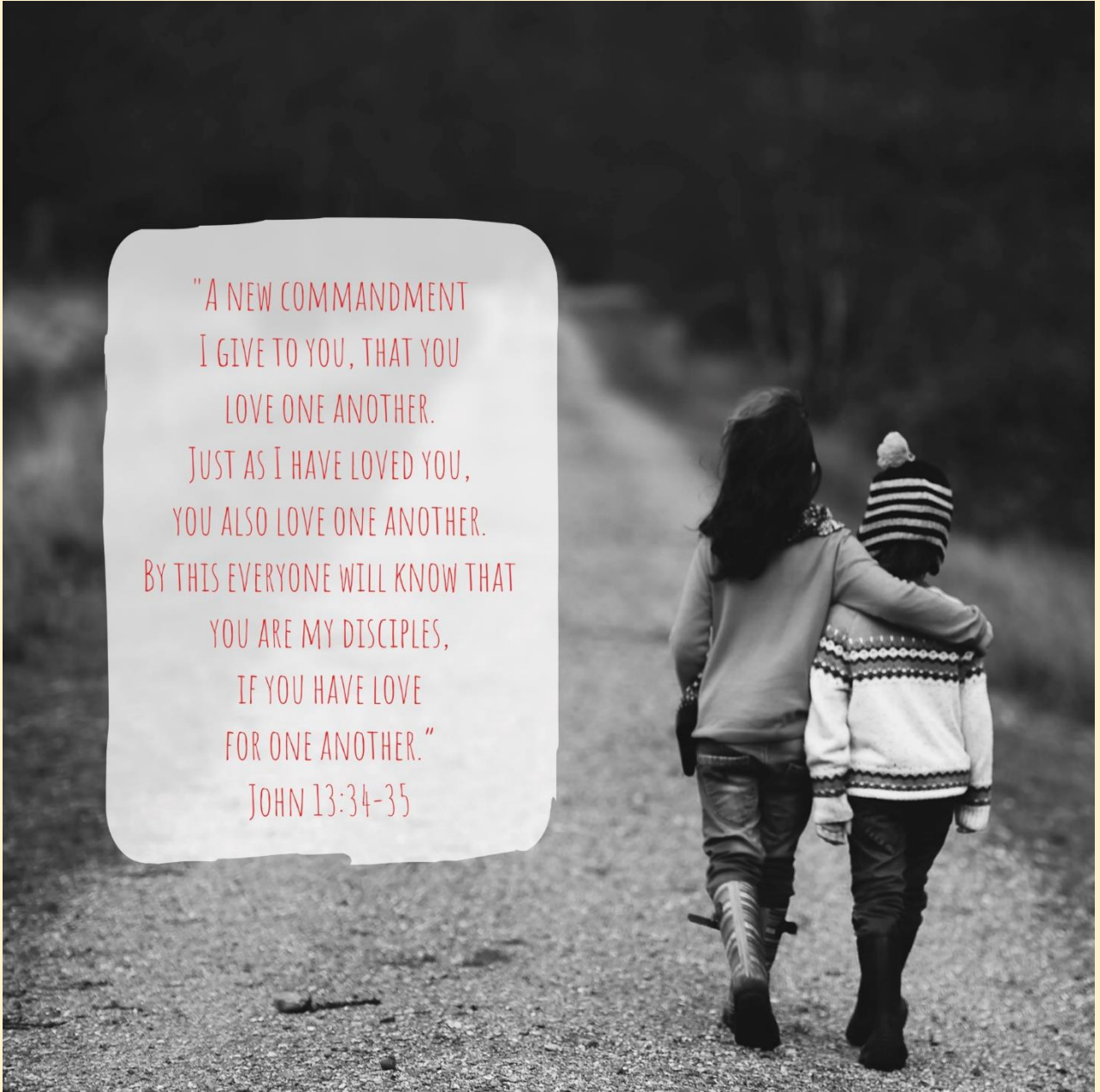


"A NEW COMMANDMENT  
I GIVE TO YOU, THAT YOU  
LOVE ONE ANOTHER.  
JUST AS I HAVE LOVED YOU,  
YOU ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.  
BY THIS EVERYONE WILL KNOW THAT  
YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES,  
IF YOU HAVE LOVE  
FOR ONE ANOTHER."  
JOHN 13:34-35



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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.

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*Warm greetings to the members of the Boonah Catholic community and beyond on the 5th Sunday of Easter.*

## 1. REFLECTION ON THE SUNDAY WORD.

The **first** reflection is by Br. Julian McDonald, a Christian Brother, from Sydney.

The two readings from the Book of Revelation offered to us for reflection, last Sunday and this coming one, are an invitation to ponder the fullness of life awaiting us when we die.

However, very few of us seem to look forward eagerly to that life which is promised to us. I suspect that's because we have come to love the joys and satisfactions with which God has blessed us in the creation that surrounds us and in the love we experience in the relationships we have grown into with family and friends.

In our better moments, despite interpersonal breakdowns and disappointments, we appreciate that all the good we experience in relationship with one another and with the created world around us is evidence of the immense love God has for us.

parents whose love for one another, however inadequate, was a reflection of God's love for us working in and through them. We are aware that it was our mother who probably taught us more about love than anyone else. There were no instructions. Our mothers taught us all about love by being love in action for us. Their love was contagious. In time, we somehow came to realise that God, too, loves us. If we want evidence of that we need only to list the names of the ten or so people whom we regard as having been the most significant influences on our lives.

Moreover, we've all been around long enough to know that, at some time or another, we all fall in love with somebody, and that we cannot predict who that somebody will be. We know, too, that, if we haven't been loved, we would by now be dead and buried.

Deep down, we know that we are made for love.  
We believe that we were loved into life by

So, from one perspective, it is a little surprising to hear Jesus saying: "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you, so you should love one another." After all, loving is not something about which we feel we need directives. Or maybe it is, especially when we encounter people who have little appeal to us.

What then lies behind this directive to us from Jesus: "As I have loved you, so you must/should love one another!"? And why does he describe it as a new commandment?

In order to answer these questions, I suggest a brief theological/scriptural excursion into the meaning of the Lenten period we completed just a few weeks ago.

Lent was instituted as a period of preparation for baptism, and concentrated on helping people to understand the covenant relationship God initiated with humankind and sealed in baptism. In making that covenant or agreement with humanity, God reached out to us saying I have loved you into life and created you in my image. I love you and you are mine. God sealed that covenant in the person of Jesus, who lived in our flesh and blood and died on the Cross out of love for us. God's covenant with us has the shape of an ongoing relationship with us that was formally initiated at our baptism. It has been made with us for the sake of our getting to know who God really is, for bringing us closer to God.

Worthy of note is the fact that one of the readings for the First Sunday of Lent (Cycle B) is the story of the covenant God made with Noah, a covenant which was sealed with the rainbow. Many ancient cultures fashioned flood stories and myths as a way of trying to deal with the fears they created in themselves because of the violence to which they resorted as a way of dealing with human conflict and disagreement.



*Noah and the Rainbow, Marc Chagall, 1966*

The ancient Mesopotamians, Incas, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks and many others fashioned stories of their gods using the destructive violence of floods to wipe out humans' violence to one other and provide opportunity for a fresh start. Human beings had come to recognise that the violence to which they resorted would eventually be an instrument for wiping themselves out. The violence they repeatedly adopted was like a contagion.

The story in Genesis of Noah, the ark and the flood has mythic qualities similar to flood stories in other cultures. The Genesis flood story tells of a God who used a flood as a projection of the age-old human answer to violence: resorting to more and greater violence to wipe out existing violence. The rainbow that appears at the end of the flood story in Genesis is a symbol of the peace that God holds out to humanity. The God who put the rainbow promise of peace in the sky is the God we meet in the person of Jesus Christ. Any god who uses the violence of a flood to wipe out people is a false god, a god created by human cultures to wipe out violence with violence. True, Jesus, in his death on the Cross was a victim of human violence, but God's response in raising Jesus from the grave demonstrated the impotence of human violence in comparison with God's life-giving power of love and forgiveness.





When we renewed our baptismal vows at the Easter-Vigil, we identified ourselves with Jesus Christ in death but also in the belief that we, too, will be raised to unending life, the kind of which we cannot even imagine. But let's not overlook the fact that God's creative energy is still at work in us and our world. We continue to be formed and shaped and remade as individuals and as a species through God's faithful and loving relationship with us over time and space. In his teaching, Jesus revealed to us a God who is faithful, loving and totally opposed to violence. Moreover, he told us that we are our best selves when we love as he does, with the kind of love he learned from God.

As we try to live as sisters and brothers to one another in the Christian community we call Church and in the world that is beyond Church, we encounter people with whom we disagree, people to whom we are certainly not attracted.

But that's what God's covenant with humanity is all about. God, and the Jesus who revealed God to us, reach out to people who are not likeable, to people who, like us, are fragile, weak and sinful. It is only because God embraces imperfect

human beings that any of us has a chance to be included in God's covenant.

Despite all this, we live in a world in which violence proliferates. While God's creative energy is still at work in our world, we and our world are seemingly unable to let go of wanting to get even with those who hurt us, unable to stop fighting violence with more violence. We can't stop wanting God's creative transformation to work at our pace rather than at God's pace.

Jesus called his commandment to love new simply because loving one another, even enemies, was not a priority for the people of his era, and has not been for our world over the last two thousand years. The way of non-violence, of compassion, reconciliation, forgiveness and love is new, simply because we have been unable to embrace it.

At a time when world leaders have at their disposal technology and weaponry sufficiently powerful to obliterate us all, the need to imitate the love of Christ is more urgent than ever. Accepting Jesus' new commandment will come at a price, and will certainly be countercultural.





A **second reflection** is from the *Catholic Women Preach* website. The preacher is Mariann McCorkle who is Co-Director of the Ignatian Legacy Fellows Program, Loyola University Chicago. She founded the program in 2018 with John Fontana, Co-Director, to promote a community of learning in a pilgrimage over one year in one's retirement. Mariann lives in Maryland, where she enjoys tennis, gardening, writing, and travel.

When was the first time you felt loved? What is your earliest memory of being in the presence of love?

I felt loved by my mother early on as a child; she delighted in me, and I can close my eyes today and hear her laughter, feel her presence. . . I know that her love of God enkindled in me a desire for a deeper faith, a hunger for being known and loved by God.

My daughter, Olivia, when she was 3 years old, sat with me on the porch swing as a summer thunderstorm moved through the neighbourhood. She turned to me and said, "Does God feel the thunder?" I was humbled by her question, saying, "yes, Olivia, I think God feels everything, because he sent his son, Jesus to be human, to be one like us."

By the time this Sunday arrives, Olivia will have given birth to our first grandchild and as we just celebrated Mother's Day, I invite you to reflect on your faith journey. Who accompanied you and made an impact on your spiritual life. Join me in giving thanks for that accompaniment.

How then do we embody that love for ourselves and others?

I think it is by studying Jesus. By listening to his message. By quieting ourselves before Him.

And today, Jesus says, "Love one another as I have loved you."

[CLICK HERE](#) for video of homily . . .

**We behold your glory, O God,  
in the love shown by your Son,  
lifted up on the cross  
and exalted on high.**

**Increase our love for one another,  
that both in name and in truth  
we may be disciples of the risen Lord Jesus  
and so reflect by our lives  
the glory that is yours.**

**Grant this through Jesus Christ, the firstborn from the dead . . .**

*(5th Sunday of Easter, Alternative Opening Prayer)*

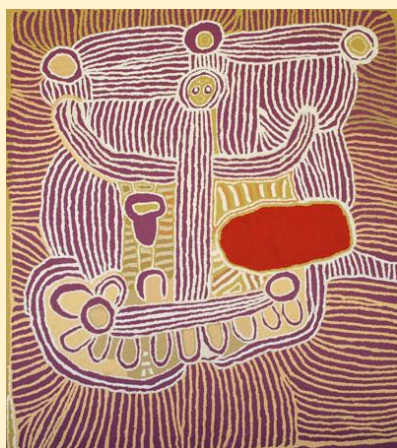
## 2. Boonah Parish happenings . . .

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

**1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Harrisville church**

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Peak Crossing church**

9.30am

**Boonah church**

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

**We have a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in May!**

Our **WEEKDAY LITURGY** schedule for this week, the 5th Week of Easter:

**Monday**

16<sup>th</sup> May

10.30 am **Funeral: George Coffin**

*Centenary chapel and cemetery*

*There are no other liturgies this week until Sunday Mass on Saturday evening 21<sup>st</sup> May.*





**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, Lynne Nunan, and sick members of parish families and those

beyond our parish boundaries.

- **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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).

- **OUR PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER.** Leigh Muller has kindly agreed to continue as our local Safeguarding Officer. *Thanks so much Leigh.*



*We had a lot of rain this week. This is taken at the end of Church St. on Friday*



At the end of March, there was a gathering of priests from the local South Country Deanery in Ipswich.

Three pastors in the deanery were away. We who gathered had lunch afterwards.

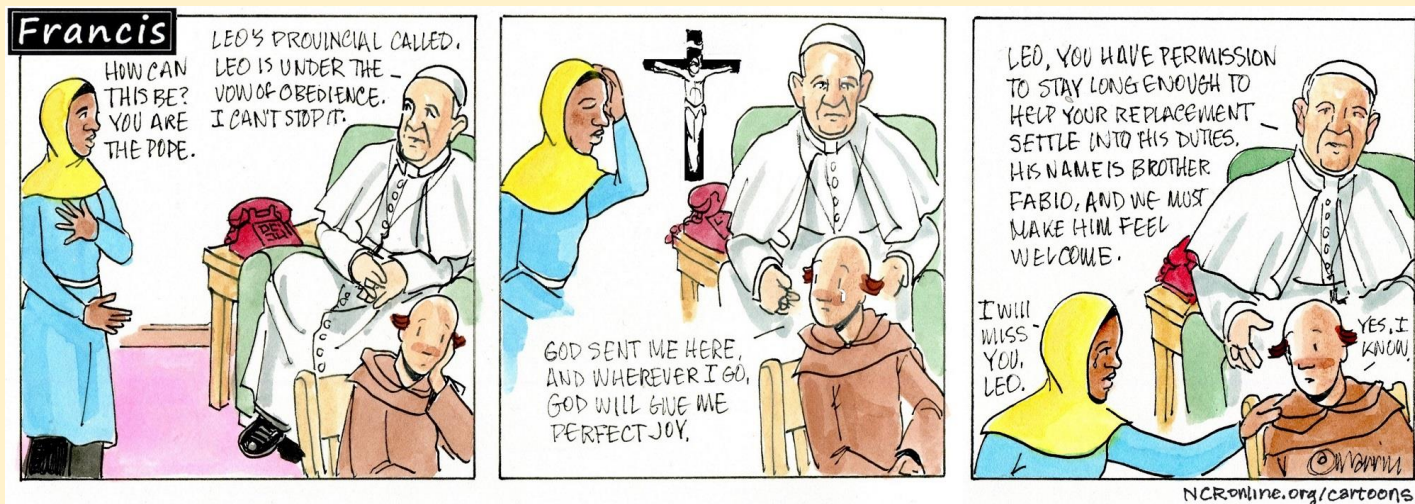
*Left side:* Michael Tran (Pastoral year seminarian 2022, Ipswich); Fr. Stephen (pastor - Ipswich); Fr. Johny CMI (Ipswich - newly appointed associate pastor).

*Right side:* El Louie (deacon - Springfield); John Fitz-Herbert (pastor - Boonah); Fr. Mauro (pastor - Springfield)



*The rain had stopped on Saturday morning – running water by side of Cunningham Highway.*





10<sup>th</sup> May 2022



12<sup>th</sup> May 2022

3. **Fr. Ron Rolheiser OMI wrote this reflection on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022:**  
**'SPIRITUALITY - A PLACE WHERE ALL BELIEVERS CAN COME TOGETHER'**

Where can all of us believers come together beyond the divisions created by history, dogma, denomination, and religion? Where is there a place all people of sincere heart can find common ground and worship together?

That place is found in the *ecumenical* and *inter-religious* pursuit of *spirituality*, and our theology schools and seminaries need to create this place within their academic vision and structures.

What is spirituality as an academic discipline within our theology schools and seminaries? It has actually been around a long time, though under different names. In Roman Catholic circles, formerly it was handled piecemeal as *moral theology*, *liturgy*, *ascetical theology*, and as *mystical and devotional literature*. In Protestant and Evangelical circles (where, until recently, mystical and devotional literature were distrusted) there were courses on discipleship, worship, and Christian ethics.

So what is spirituality as an area of study? At the risk of a vast over-simplification, let me propose an analogy as a way of understanding how spirituality relates to theology and dogma. Spirituality is related to theology and dogma akin to how an actual game of sports is related to the rule book of that sport.

For example, for the game of baseball there is a rulebook, one initially codified and then periodically amended through the many years the game has been played. To play the game today one has to stay within those rules. There is no game outside those rules. However, while these rules critically dictate the lines within which the game has to be played, *they are not the game itself*. They merely dictate how it is to be played and ensure that it is played in a fair manner.

In essence, that is the critical role of theology and dogma. They are the rule book for how we need to discern faith and religious practice as we live out our discipleship, if we are legitimately to call ourselves Christian. But, while they make the rules, spirituality is the actual game; it's how in actual practice we live out our faith and discipleship.

Thus, spirituality takes in morality and ethics, worship, ascetical theology, mystical theology, devotional theology, and everything else we do in living out our discipleship. Theology makes the rules, while spirituality tries to instil the motivation, the fire, the hope, and the practical guidance for the game itself, lived discipleship.

I offer this little apologia for spirituality as an academic discipline in view of affirming that spirituality is that place where believers can come together in a common heart beyond the long-standing divisions created by history, dogma, ecclesiology, and different notions of faith. Spirituality is a place where we can meet in a communion of faith that takes us (at least in that place and moment) beyond our different histories, our different denominations, our different religions, and our different notions of faith.

I know this is true because I have seen and am seeing it first-hand. *Oblate School of Theology*, where I teach, has an *Institute of Contemporary Spirituality* in which I see Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Evangelicals of every persuasion studying together, searching together, and praying together in a way that denominational differences simply don't enter into. Everyone, irrespective of denomination, is searching for the same things: What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus today? How does one genuinely pray? How do we sustain faith in a secular world that so easily swallows us whole? How can we pass our faith on to our own children? How can we be both prophet and healer in our bitterly divided world? What is a faith-based response to injustice? How does someone age and die well? What insights and grace can we draw from the deep wells of Christian mysticism and hagiography to help guide our lives?

Everyone has the same questions, and everyone is searching at the same places.

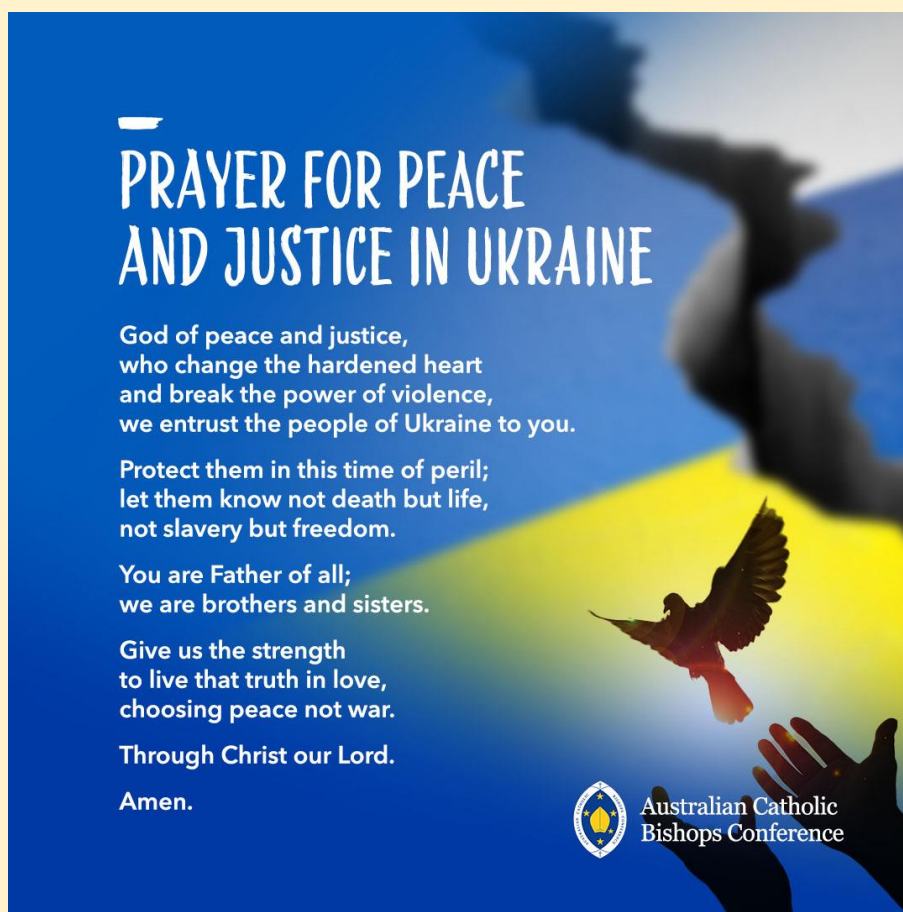
Denominationalism recedes when spirituality takes over.



Moreover, this doesn't just pertain to being together beyond the differences of denominations among Christians; the same holds true vis-a-vis our separation from other world religions. The questions we are grappling with as Christians are the same questions that Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Taoist, and other believers are grappling with, and they are looking to us for help even as we are looking to them for help. In spirituality, Christians learn from Sufi Islamic mystics, even as Islamic believers delve into Mariology and Christian mysticism. Buddhist, Hindu, and Taoist believers pick up the *Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius*, even as Christians learn from various Buddhist and Hindu methods of meditation.

Jesus assured us that in God's house there are many rooms. Spirituality is one of those rooms. Spirituality is the room where all who are caught-up in a common need, common search, and common hope, can bracket for a time their denominational and religious differences and search together.

Don't get me wrong, this doesn't take away with our differences; but it gives us a place where we can be in a community of life and faith with each other, beyond those differences.





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**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.**

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**Phone:** 1300 304 550  
**Email:** AOB@stopline.com.au  
**Online Report:** [www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com](http://www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com)



**If you think it's wrong ..... report it.**

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

*John,*  
pastor,  
Boonah Catholic community