



❖ **What is the Apology?**

Ten years ago today Prime Minister Kevin Rudd gave an official Apology to the Stolen Generations of Indigenous Australians in the Commonwealth Parliament.

❖ **Who are the Stolen Generation?**

Between 1910-1970, many Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families as a result of various government policies. The generations of children removed under these policies became known as the Stolen Generations. The policies of child removal left a legacy of trauma and loss that continues to affect Indigenous communities, families and individuals.

Below is the text of the Apology:

That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations - this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.

A future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again.

A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.

A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.

A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.

A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

Video of the speech- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKWfiFp24rA>

Information about the Stolen Generation -

<https://www.australianstogether.org.au/discover/australian-history/stolen-generations>

<http://www.yokai.com.au/>- Western Australian Stolen Generation Network



❖ **What does it mean for our Catholic community?**

On the 10-year Anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generation, the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth renews its apology to the Aboriginal community for the role the Church played in the removal of Children. In the words of JP II speaking after the Ecclesia In Ocean Synod in 2011, we say “

“The Church expresses deep regret and asks forgiveness where her children have been or still are party to these wrongs. Aware of the shameful injustices done to indigenous peoples in Oceania, the Synod Fathers apologized unreservedly for the part played in these by members of the Church, especially where children were forcibly separated from their families.”⁽¹⁰³⁾

The relationship between the Church and Aboriginal people is a complex one. We can recall the great work of many Christian missionaries whom supported, loved and cared for Aboriginal people from the beginning of settlement, such as Bishop Rosendo Salvado OSB. However, we also acknowledge when we did not always live up to the vision of Jesus Christ and participated in a system that oppressed Aboriginal people and many Aboriginal people experience deep pain because of this.

As a Catholic community we continue to work with the survivors of the stolen generation and their families towards, truth, justice and healing. This occurs through the various ministries and services of the Catholic community, both locally and nationally, who work alongside these families on a daily basis. These include Day Dawn Advocacy Centre, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, larger organisations like St Vincent de Paul Society and Caritas Australia as well as our schools and hospitals.



❖ **Suggested Prayers for use on weekend of the 10th and 11th of February**

Universal Prayer- <http://www.johnxxiii.edu.au/upload/pages/resources-240513/prayers-for-the-stolen-generation.pdf>

Reconciliation Liturgy & Prayers-

[https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.natsicc.org.au%2Fassets%2Fnatsicc_liturgy_reconciliation-\(1\).doc](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.natsicc.org.au%2Fassets%2Fnatsicc_liturgy_reconciliation-(1).doc)

For more information and ideas on how to acknowledge the ten-year anniversary of the Apology and work towards healing the past hurts please contact the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry on 93287529 or visit

www.acm.perthcatholic.org.au



www.caritas.org.au 1800 024 413



EVANGELINE'S STORY – A JUST FUTURE STARTS WITH CULTURE

Caritas Australia is helping youth in First Australian communities to strengthen their culture and create opportunities for their communities.

Evangeline is employed as a Senior Artswoker by the Caritas Australia supported Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, based in Beswick (Wugularr), 100 kilometres east of Katherine in the Northern Territory.



*Evangeline – Senior Artswoker for Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation.
Photo: Richard Wainwright*

Today she is strengthening Aboriginal culture, while making a living for herself – and creating opportunities for her community.

Featured in Project Compassion 2016, Evangeline went from seeking employment to being a Senior Artswoker and an inspirational leader for youth.

Her work at the non-profit Aboriginal organisation, Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, has supported the organisation's growth from a multi-media project to a multi-level contemporary arts and culture centre. An example of excellence in Indigenous tourism, it's now a major employer for young people in the remote Northern Territory community.

Evangeline's community of around 450 people faces a range of challenges, stemming from the violent experience of colonisation, including few employment opportunities, crowded housing, a lack of access to services, alcohol and health problems and financial hardship.

Limited political influence continues to disempower Australia's First Peoples. Lack of opportunity draws young people away from their country and culture into towns and cities where they are most vulnerable.

This year, 2018, Evangeline is busy guiding tourists, coordinating cultural activities and helping community members to practise and market their arts, such as weaving and jewellery-making. "Now we have a new gallery up. And we have our new kitchens, we look after these and we now maintain this to make sure it's running okay and in good condition. We're also trying to open up another tour for tourists to go around the waterfall, we're just planning that now," says Evangeline.

Evangeline believes that Caritas Australia's support for Djilpin Arts, through Project Compassion, is vital for all of Wugularr's young people. Although their families do their best to pass on knowledge, Elders are dying and she is keen to spearhead the preservation of culture and lore for future generations.

"It's good for them to learn and to keep their culture strong," says Evangeline.

Support Project Compassion 2018 and help provide employment and training opportunities for First Australians like Evangeline. A just future starts with you.