

Peace and mercy for all

July 7 2013

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

Liturgy Resources, Small Group Reflection and Youth Activities



Welcome

Peace and Mercy for all!

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council (NATSICC), and in particular our dedicated Liturgy team, have worked very hard on the 2013 Liturgy Resources. We have also worked closely with Dr. Paul Taylor, Executive Secretary of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy to ensure that the suggestions are Liturgically appropriate.

An underlying theme of the resources is the call to make contact with your local Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Ministry. They have the knowledge and experience in local traditions and customs and the context in which they can be used on the day.

NATSICC hopes that you will make use of the additional resources included for 2013 - the Small Group Reflections and Youth Activities. They are aimed at extending the focus of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday throughout the year. Finally, we have compiled a short survey to help us continue to improve the resources and serve our people. We would very much appreciate any feedback you would like to provide us.

Thelma Parker
NATSICC Chairperson

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY 2013

INTRODUCTION

Peace and Mercy for all

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) represents Indigenous Catholics in Australia. The culture, circumstances and the variety of ways that our people celebrate the Word of the Lord form a ‘patchwork’ of beauty and diversity, NATSICC wants to highlight and promote these gifts as they that add colour and ‘texture’ to the Church - serving to open her doors further to people of all backgrounds.

The theme of the resource this year is “Peace and Mercy for all” and they include a range of Ceremonies, rituals and prayers that may be utilised where approved and appropriate. NATSICC advises that you consult your parish Priest or pastoral council when preparing your Mass. When using traditional ceremonies, it is imperative that local Indigenous community is consulted. A list of State and Territory Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Ministries (AICMs) can be found at www.natsicc.org.au in the ‘Your NATSICC’ section. The simple effort of making contact with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic congregation is an act of respect, reconciliation and will build bridges of communication.

The 2013 resources are our most extensive, particularly with the inclusion of the Small Group Activity sessions. These activities assist and encourage small groups of Catholics to sit and reflect on scripture in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics. The resources give Parish and School groups the opportunity to meet several times throughout the year as well as invite Indigenous Catholics to participate in the discussions.

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Young people are the future of the Catholic Church. The Youth activities are an effective way of engaging young people in a way that is enjoyable. Extra copies of the puzzles and activities are also available at the NATSICC website.

NATSICC hopes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday is celebrated in all Parishes and Catholic Schools across the country. We welcome any photos, stories or articles of how the day was celebrated in your area.

Deep down, we Aborigines are religious people. We did not have many material goods, but we are rich with spiritual goods. It is this strong religious side that made us. It gave us our identity, our dignity, our self-assurance. My People existed here in Australia thousands of years before Abraham, In all that time, God was with my people. He worked through their culture. He was saving us despite human weakness. He was preparing us for the day we would see the features of Aborigines in the image of His Son.

Deacon Boniface Perdjert, Wadeye (Port Keats,NT)

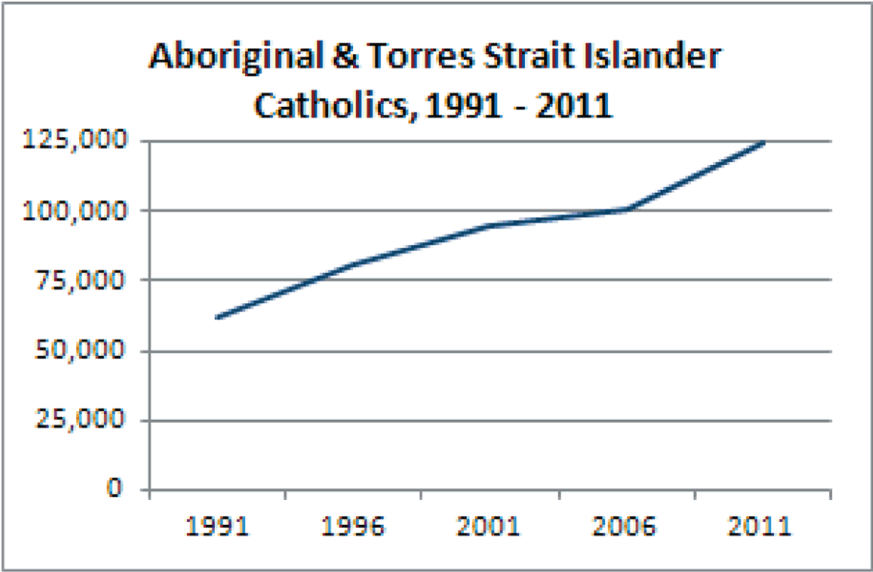
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STATISTICS

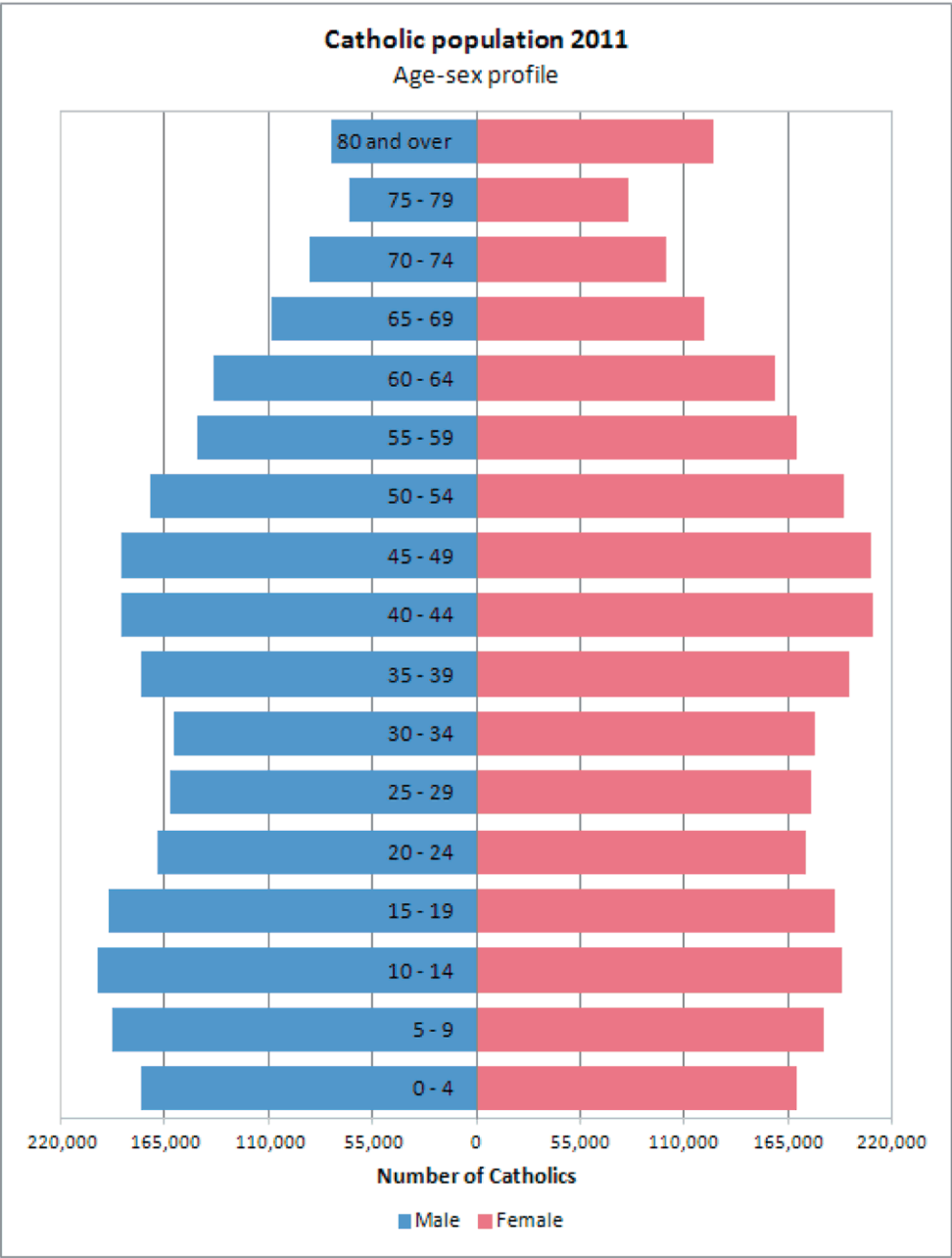
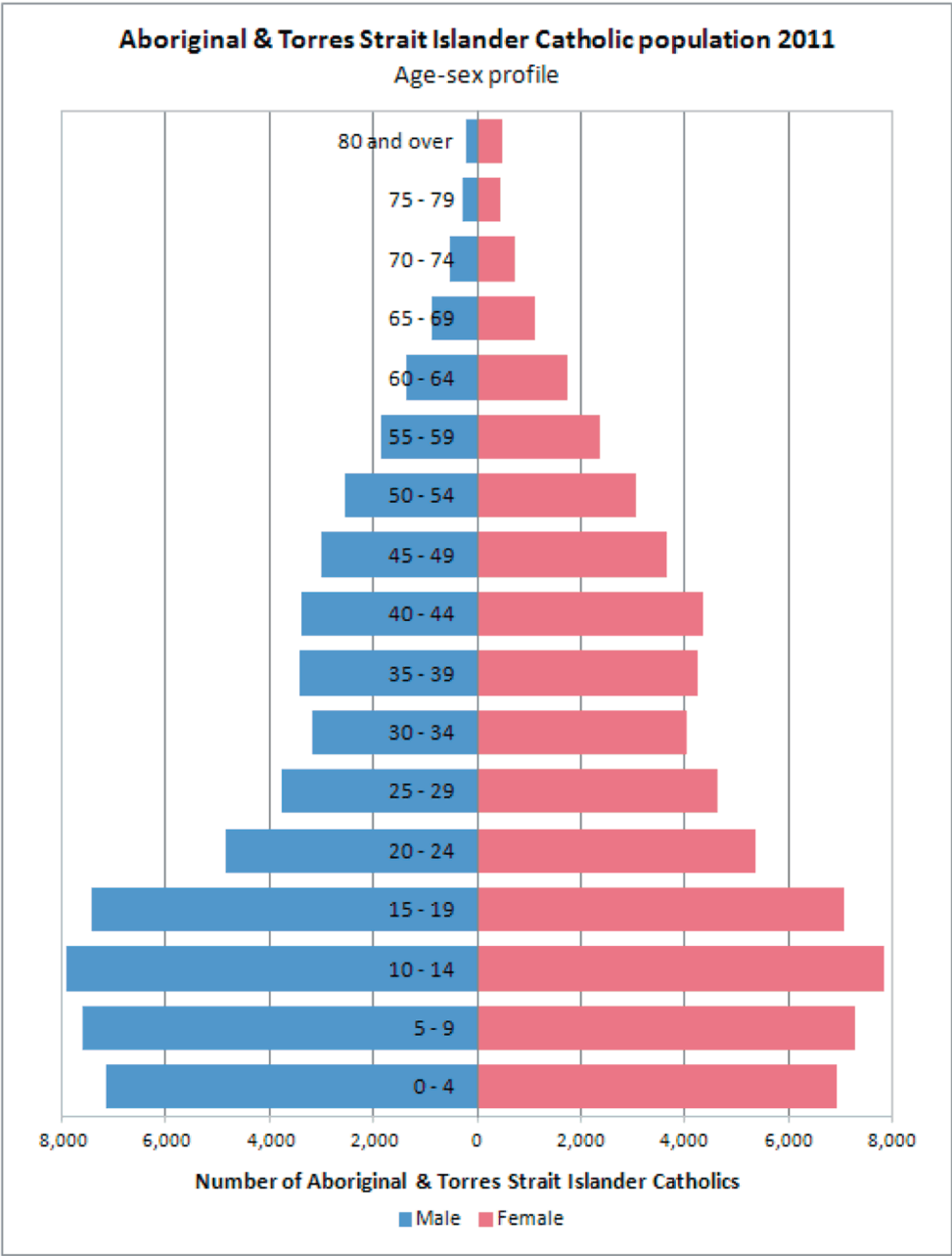
Courtesy ACBC Pastoral Research Office E News Bulletin September 2012

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholics

- ★ According to the 2011 Australian Census, there were 124,618 Catholics of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander origin, or 2.3 per cent of all Catholics.
- ★ Between 1991 and 2011, the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholic population increased from 62,000 to 125,000, or 102 per cent. The overall Catholic population increased by 18 per cent in the same period.
- ★ In 2011, the median age of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholics was 21.5 years. By comparison, the median age of all Catholics was 37.6 years.
- ★ Fourteen per cent of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholics were aged 50 and over, compared to 32 per cent of Catholics overall.
- ★ The graphs below compare the 2011 age-sex profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics with that of the entire Catholic population.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 1991-2011.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2011. Data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Table 1. Catholics speaking Australian Indigenous Languages by Age, 2006 & 2011

Age group	2006		2011	
	N	%	N	%
0 - 4	815	9.8	846	9.0
5 - 11	1,370	16.5	1,559	16.5
12 - 19	1,377	16.6	1,733	18.3
20 - 29	1,468	17.7	1,568	16.6
30 - 39	1,253	15.1	1,388	14.7
40 - 49	883	10.6	1,076	11.4
50 - 64	734	8.8	951	10.1
65 and over	401	4.8	329	3.5
Total	8,301	100.0	9,450	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2006 - 2011. Data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

DID YOU KNOW?

A question on Indigenous origin has been asked in all Censuses. However, prior to the 1971 Census, Indigenous peoples were counted in order to exclude them from population estimates for each state/territory.

(ABS, 2011 Census Dictionary, Cat. 2901.0)

Table 2. Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholics: Type of school being attended by sex, 2011

Type of school being attended	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of
				Indigenous Catholic primary students
Infants/Primary - Catholic	3,151	3,140	6,291	32.5
Infants/Primary - Government	6,358	6,143	12,501	64.5
Infants/Primary - Other Non Government	310	273	583	3.0
Total primary	9,819	9,556	19,375	100

Type of school being attended	Male	Female	Total	Percentage of
				Indigenous Catholic secondary students
Secondary - Catholic	2,037	2,100	4,137	31.3
Secondary - Government	4,156	4,030	8,186	61.9
Secondary - Other Non Government	432	468	900	6.8
Total secondary	6,625	6,598	13,223	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2011. Data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

For more information

ACBC Pastoral Research Office
Australian Catholic University
Locked Bag 4115
Fitzroy VIC 3065
P: (03) 9953 3457
E: office@pro.catholic.org.au
W: www.pro.catholic.org.au

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY 2013

LITURGY RESOURCES

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Welcome

Today is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday. It is also the beginning of a week of celebrations throughout the nation where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people celebrate their spirituality, identity, culture and survival.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics bring beautiful gifts to the Church in Australia, and it is on this day that we celebrate those gifts. The Theme NATSICC has chosen is “Peace and Mercy for All”.

A Welcome to Country by an Aboriginal Elder

ALTERNATE Acknowledgement of Country by MC or Celebrant in the Introductory Rite prior to Mass.

Hymns & Acclamations

Entrance Processional

May be accompanied by a Didgeridoo

Entrance Hymn: Blest be the Lord AOV 179 or GA 458

Mass setting: Local choice

Gospel Acclamation: “Alleluia” as per local choice

Aboriginal Our Father: If appropriate. Contact your local Catholic Aboriginal Community.

Communion Hymn: One Bread One Body (AOV 129 or GA 193), Communion Song (AOV 187)

Recessional Hymn: City of God AOV 57 or GA 498

Recessional

May be accompanied by the Didgeridoo. Aboriginal Elders join if applicable.

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Is 66:10-14

Rejoice, Jerusalem,
be glad for her, all you who love her!
Rejoice, rejoice for her,
all you who mourned her!

That you may be suckled, filled,
from her consoling breast,
that you may savour with delight
her glorious breasts.

For thus says the Lord:
Now towards her I send flowing
peace, like a river,
and like a stream in spate
the glory of the nations.

At her breast will her nurslings be carried
and fondled in her lap.
Like a son comforted by his mother
will I comfort you.
And by Jerusalem, you will be comforted.

At the sight your heart will rejoice,
and your bones flourish like the grass.
To his servants the Lord will reveal his hand.

This is the word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 65:1-7, 16.20. R. v. 1

R Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

1 Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of his name .
O render him glorious praise.
Say to God: ‘How tremendous your deeds! R

2 ‘Before you all the earth shall bow;
shall sing to you, sing to your name!’
Come and see the works of God,
tremendous his deeds among men. R

3 He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the river dry-shod.
Let our joy then be in him;
he rules for ever by his might. R

4 Come and hear, all who fear God.
I will tell what he did for my soul.
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer
nor withhold his love from me. R

Second Reading: Gal 6:14-18

The only thing I can boast about is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. It does not matter if a person is circumcised or not; what matters is for him to become an altogether new creature. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, who form the Israel of God. I want no more trouble from anybody after this; the marks on my body are those of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my brothers. Amen.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!
May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and the fullness of his message live ,within you.
Alleluia!

Gospel Procession

In the spirit of our ancestors the Message Stick can be carried forward (and upright) with the Gospel Book. It should be held upright during the Gospel reading. There are other symbols and actions that can be used according to local sacred tradition and need to be discussed according to local practice.

GOSPEL: Lk 10:1-12,17-20

The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. to house. He said to them, ‘The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road.

Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, “Peace to this house!” And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and’ drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, “The kingdom of God is very near to you.” But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say, “We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you: Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God’ is very near.” I tell you, that on that day it will not go as hard with Sodom as with that town.’

The seventy-two came back rejoicing. ‘Lord: they said ‘even the devils submit to us when we use your name.’ He said to them, ‘I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Yes, I have given you power to tread underfoot serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Prayers of the Faithful

Please select the intentions for your community from the following:

Celebrant: On this day of celebration as we acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia, we turn to God in prayer and seek the help of the Holy Spirit as we commit ourselves to praying and journeying together in a spirit of Reconciliation.

Reader: We pray for the Church, Pope Francis, the Bishops, Priests, Deacons religious and laity: that they joyfully follow in your footsteps with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray for all leaders of political parties: that their decisions be guided by compassion and acceptance of all peoples, and that they be open to the Holy Spirit in their minds and heart to make the right choices for all. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities: that the Holy Spirit strengthen the love of Jesus in our lives, as they struggle for truth, equality, justice and healing. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray for our Brothers and Sisters who struggle for Justice and Reconciliation: that they will be blessed by God’s love. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray for our Brothers and Sisters who have turned away from their Faith, that the Holy Spirit guide them on the right path back to the Church and the sacraments. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray for our young people: that the Holy Spirit, and the Blessed Virgin Mary will walk with them and touch their lives as they make their contribution to God, the Church and society. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray for the sick and dying, the homeless and imprisoned, the refugees in detention, the weary and lost: that their Faith stay strong, and that the Blessed Mother Mary’s love of all fill their hearts. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Reader: We pray that our Faith stays strong and continues to what God’s wants it to be in Australia. Let us pray to the Lord:

All: Lord, hear our prayer

Celebrant: We pray, Almighty God, as your people and seek the power of your Holy Spirit. We bring our needs before you in trust and confidence. We ask these prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presentation of the Offerings

In some areas the coolamon is used to carry the bread to the altar. In the absence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in the celebration, a coolamon can be placed in front of the Sanctuary as a symbol of the non-presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters at the table.
(Alternative/additional Aboriginal gifts: a boomerang, woomera, Aboriginal painting, clap sticks ...)

Additional Prayer Suggestions

Holy Father, God of Love

Holy Father, God of Love, You are the Creator of this land and of all good things.
Our hope is in you because you gave your son Jesus to reconcile the world to you.
We pray for your strength and grace to forgive, accept and love one another, as you love us and forgive and accept us in the sacrifice of your son. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen

(Prepared by Wontulp Bi – Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group)

God of the Holy Dreaming

God of holy Dreaming
Great Creator Spirit
From the dawn of creation you have given your children
The good things of Mother Earth
You spoke and the gum tree grew
In the vast deserts and dense forests, in the cities,
At the water’s edge, creation sings your praise.

Your presence endures as the rock at the heart of our land.
When Jesus hung on the tree
You heard the cries of all Your people
And became one with Your wounded ones
The convicts, the hunted and the dispossessed.

The sunrise of Your Son
Coloured the earth anew
And bathed it in glorious hope.
In Jesus we have been reconciled to You,
To each other and to Your whole creation.

Lead us on Great Spirit
As we gather at this special place
Located on land where ancestors of long ago
Gathered for work, play and praise.
Enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt of the past
Into the full day which has dawned in Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Prayer for Special People

Father, Our Creator
You created all things seen and unseen
Listen to my silent prayers as I stand here before you
As my weary eyes look back over distant horizons,
Back to those days where my people walked.
The footprints of my Grandfathers are imprinted on the earth,
And the images become real to me.

I see my Grandfathers standing tall and strong,
Warriors of long ago.
I hear them singing.
I see them dancing,
And my Spirit moves within me.

They told of the emus fighting,
And the kangaroos picking up the scent of our hunters.
The images fade away as I feel the hurt of my people.
I can hear the cries of my Grandmothers as they cry for their children.
Grandfather, you can see me as I stand here and feel this hurt.

Father Creator, is this the purpose of my being here.
Or is it your plan to reshape my people
To be once again the proud race it once was?

Let me walk with you and my Grandfathers
Towards the dawning of a proud and new nation.
I thank you for my Sacred Being.

Reconciliation Prayer

Holy Father, God of Love
You are the Creator of this land and all good things
We acknowledge the pain and shame of our history
And the suffering of our peoples.
And we ask your forgiveness.
We thank you for the survival of Indigenous cultures
Our hope is in you because you gave your son Jesus
To reconcile the world to you.
We pray for your strength and grace to forgive,
Accept and love one another,
As you love us and forgive and accept us
In the sacrifice of your Son.
Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history
So that we may build a better future for our nation.
Teach us to respect all cultures.
Teach us to care for our land and waters.
Help us to share justly the resources of this land.
Help us to bring about spiritual and social change
To improve the quality of life for all groups in our communities,
Especially the disadvantaged.
Help our young people to find true dignity and self esteem by your Spirit
May your power and love be the foundations
on which we build our families, our communities and our Nation.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group 13 March 1997 Brisbane, Qld.

Prayer of the Aboriginal People (where an Indigenous reader is available)

Father of all, you gave us the Dreaming. You have spoken to us through our beliefs. You then made you love clear to us in the person of Jesus. We thank you for your care. You own us, you are our hope. Make us grow strong as we face the problems of change. We ask you to help the people of Australia to listen to us and respect our culture. Make the knowledge of you grow strong in all people, so that you can be at home in us and we can make a home for everyone in our land. Amen.

Prepared by Aboriginal people.For Pope John Paul II’s visit to Alice Springs 1986

Aboriginal Lord’s Prayer (where approved and an Indigenous reader is available)

You are our Father, You live in Heaven
We talk to You, Father, You are good.
We believe Your Word, Father, we Your children.
Give us bread today.
We have done wrong, we are sorry.
Help us Father, not to sin again.
Others have done wrong, to us
And we are sorry for them, Father today.
Stop us from doing wrong, Father.
Save us all from the evil one.
You are our Father, You live in Heaven.
We talk to You, Father, You are good.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY 2013

TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES

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The following ceremonies enrich the community and should involve local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics. Working together with Indigenous members of your community is an opportunity to share, listen and discuss faith and culture and is a form of ‘Practical Reconciliation’.

A Rite of Water Blessing

Lord, make us feel your invitation to ‘come to the water’. At the very beginning you blessed the water, your great gift to us, and now we ask that your blessing be renewed in this water here today.

We ask that through this water blessing we will all be renewed with your love, and protection, and your power to love one another as true Christians. Lord, this truly is a sign of the new life in Christ, which in Baptism we have all received. We ask this prayer through Christ our lord. Amen.

It is customary in some areas, when Aboriginal people gather for important ceremonies to use water. Water containers can be a large shell or coolamon and a small branch from an appropriate native tree can be used to sprinkle the water.

Please collaborate with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group to ensure this rite of water blessing is appropriate.

Water to Aboriginal people is always a sign of God’s peace and fulfillment in everything that is good; the promise of food, of harmony with ourselves, and the bush around us.

A Rite of Smoking

This is traditionally celebrated by Aboriginal people. Since the beginning of time our ancestors used to smoke away evil spirits and receive the good spirit. We acknowledge Aboriginal Elders to lead the Smoking Ceremony. Today we share with you one of the oldest living ceremonies, to remove our sins and ask for forgiveness. We invite you now to share our smoking ceremony like our ancestors have done for thousands of years.

Fire is important to Aboriginal people and is the heart of Indigenous culture. It is the sign of the Holy Spirit that gives warmth, purifies, and brings many gifts

Involving your local Aboriginal or Islander Catholic Ministry (AICM)

Visit www.natsicc.org.au and go to ‘Your NATSICC’ and click on your State or Territory to find your local AICM. These ministries work very hard to serve local Indigenous Catholics and do much to support the community. You may be able to work together in preparing the Liturgy, sourcing speakers or presenters or learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in your area.

Whilst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday is on the first Sunday of July each year, we ask that you keep your Indigenous brothers and sisters in your heart and mind all year.

*** These Ceremonies can be used prior to or following Mass or, where appropriate, during other gatherings to Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday**



Kimberley Clip Art

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday is an important day on the Catholic Calendar. NATSICC encourages Schools and Parishes to take this a step further and calls for discussion and reflection throughout the year.

Small groups of people sitting and talking together dates back to the earliest practice of both Indigenous and Christian

communities and are an excellent way of gathering in the name of God in a setting conducive to building deeper relationships with one another;

“ In such a human context it will be easier to gather to hear the word of God, to reflect on the range of human problems in the light of this word and gradually to make responsible decisions inspired by the all-embracing love of Christ” (Pope John Paul II The Church in America, January 22, 1999).

NATSICC has produced the following small group resources as a guide for Catholics to lead them into reflection around the theme of ‘Peace and Mercy for all’. Each session plan includes Scripture relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday along with a piece that conveys an Indigenous point of view.

Finally, a short reflection provides a starting point for discussion and contemplation.



SMALL GROUP REFLECTIONS FOR PARISHES AND SCHOOLS

Session 1

Scripture - Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, ‘The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, “Peace to this house!” And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house.

Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, “The kingdom of God is very near to you.” But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you

welcome, go out into its streets and say, “We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God is very near.” I tell you, on that day it will not go as hard with Sodom as with that town.’

The seventy-two came back rejoicing. ‘Lord,’ they said, ‘even the devils submit to us when we use your name.’ He said to them, ‘I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Yes, I have given you power to tread underfoot serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven.’

The Church and Aborigines by Deacon Boniface Perdjert

When I read the Gospels, I read them as an Aboriginal. There are many things in the Gospel that make me happy to be an Aboriginal because I think we have a good start ...

Christ did not get worried about material things... He was born in the countryside in a cave, like many of us have been born. He walked about like us and with

nowhere to lay his head. He died with nothing on a cross. So many of our people die with nothing.

He liked the bush as we do. He loved nature ... He loved the big things like the hills and open spaces. He loved the little things like the mustard seed and the grain of wheat and the corn, drops of cold water and the little sparrows. We have similar things like seeds and berries and yams, small water holes, and we like the quietness of the hills and the bush. Like him we have a deep sense of God in nature.

We like the way he uses the things of nature to teach, and

the important part nature plays in the Sacraments ...

We can appreciate also the community nature of the Church, because we are very conscious of being part of a group bound by religious ties. We are strong on ceremony, through dance and song and painted bodies. Our ceremony closely involves groups and group participation ...

So the ceremony of the Mass, the ceremony of the Sacraments and the ceremony of the liturgy should find a ready response in us, provided it is made meaningful, based on a theology that is tuned to the Aboriginal mind.

Reflection

The disciple is called on to travel light. Jesus himself “had nowhere to lay his head” and he only had the clothes he wore. So many of us are weighed down by the things we own. In our search for prosperity and material security we have lost the more precious gift of freedom. Deacon Boniface Perdjert gives us an insight into the simplicity of life of Indigenous people before colonisation.

How can we learn from Jesus to pursue the spiritual richness of life rather than material goods?

SMALL GROUP REFLECTIONS FOR PARISHES AND SCHOOLS

Session 2

Scripture - Isaiah 66:10-14

Rejoice, Jerusalem,
be glad for her, all you who love her!
Rejoice, rejoice for her,
all you who mourned her!

That you may be suckled, filled,
from her consoling breast,
that you may savour with delight
her glorious breasts.

For thus says the Lord:
Now towards her I send flowing
peace, like a river,
and like a stream in spate
the glory of the nations.

At her breast will her nurslings be carried
and fondled in her lap.
Like a son comforted by his mother
will I comfort you.

And by Jerusalem you will be comforted.
At the sight your heart will rejoice,
and your bones flourish like the grass.
To his servants the Lord will reveal his hand.

WE WALKED ON SACRED GROUND by Judy Kenny - Brisbane Archdiocesan Pastoral Council Secretariat.

The longest occupation of any race in the world ...
The longest isolation of any people from all the rest...
By far the greatest number of Australians who have ever lived
have been members of the Aboriginal race ...
Wandering ... developing spirituality, not materially
Ceremonies, lore, kinship, sharing, settling, 47,000 years
Shattered ... in 1788
The land is our mother, our life force
The mother which nurtures, helps us to grow,
Has protective feelings towards us
How many people would take a knife and cut their mother?
This is what you have done with your mining and your roads
Oppressed, shortened life expectancy,
This adult generation educated only to grade 3

Shuffled around, separated from our parents, rejected in the work place
We are a long way from where the institutional Church is today
But our God doesn't sit up there
He is ... a part of us
Lord from which side of the river am I asking my questions?
I am compelled in all honesty to say "I am racist",
I am part of the original sin
Teach me how the oppressed can be grace to my sinfulness, questions
to my answers.

We named God long before Christianity came.
We dream ... our dream is God himself
Our symbols are symbols shared
We go from water-hole to water-hole seeking life
We paint ourselves with the colour of liturgy
We light our camp fires, circle their purifying smoke
Celebrate corroborees, sacrifice food
The way of Aboriginal people is not far from the way Jesus taught.
Talk is like the wind ... talk goes away
It is the heart that remains
As I tell the story of the past in the evening
I know that my God is an Aboriginal
My God speaks my language
Creation told me there was a God ...
When I went fishing in the river I saw my God there ...
When I meet with my people the Spirit is among us
I walk strong and proud and tall as an Aborigine
Lord, help us to gather fragments of all our people together,
to build slowly, actively but patiently, a new humanity.
All our roots feed into the tree whose deepest root
is that of the Aboriginal people
set deeply in the soil of this our land.
Free us from the burden of history and bring us home.

Reflection

Isaiah uses the image of motherhood to characterize the relationship that will exist between Jerusalem and her inhabitants as well as the loving care that this relationship will provide. Like a nurturing mother, Jerusalem will give of herself, feeding her inhabitants from the fullness of her body.
How might this prophetic vision and the hope it offers influence the appreciation we have for our land, Australia? How can we who live here today learn from the wisdom and culture of the first inhabitants of the land on which we live and which sustains us?

Additional Materials

The following resources will assist you to conduct your own sessions of reflection.

Themes

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Congregations - How to become closer to God and bring Jesus into our day to day lives.

For non-Indigenous congregations - The gifts that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics bring to the Church and ways to better open hearts and minds to these gifts.

The Land is Alive by Brian McCoy SJ

Aboriginal people have lived on this land for about a hundred thousand years. They lived close to the land and saw it alive, full of the living presence of great ancestors. When the British came in 1788 they could not negotiate with the people for land. They could not see the spiritual life of the people. Instead they invaded and took control. As the years unfolded, Aboriginal people found themselves prisoners and refugees in their own land. It was not until 1992 that the High Court recognised the original ‘sin’ of the founding of this country, which held that the land was ‘terra nullius’ or empty. The High Court said that not only had Aboriginal people truly lived on this land but in cases their native title continues.

Reconciliation is needed in this land. We cannot change what happened 200 years ago but we can seek to heal the hurt of time and history. In such a reconciliation all Australians can be enriched.

We can begin to see and feel that ‘the land is alive!’

Ecclesia in Oceania (1998), No. 28 – Indigenous Peoples

Written in 1998 by Pope John Paul II, the apostolic exhortation Ecclesia in Oceania is still relevant, particularly in light of the introduction of the Stronger Futures Legislation and the Northern Territory Emergency Response (Intervention)

Unjust economic policies are especially damaging to indigenous peoples, young nations and their traditional cultures; and it is the Church’s task to help indigenous cultures preserve their identity and maintain their traditions. The Synod strongly encouraged the Holy See to continue its advocacy of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

A special case is that of the Australian Aborigines whose culture struggles to survive. For many thousands of years they have sought to live in harmony with the often harsh environment of their ‘big country’; but now their identity and culture are gravely threatened. In more recent times, however, their joint efforts to ensure survival and gain justice have begun to bear fruit. There was a saying from Australian bush life heard in the Synod Hall: “If you stay closely united, you are like a tree standing in the middle of a bush-fire sweeping through the timber: the leaves are scorched, the tough

bark is scarred and burned, but inside the tree the sap still flows, and under the ground the roots are still strong. Like that tree you have survived the flames, and you have still the power to be born. The time for rebirth is now.”

The Church will support the cause of all indigenous peoples who seek a just and equitable recognition of their identity and their rights; and the Synod Fathers expressed support for the aspirations of indigenous people for a just solution to the complex question of the alienation of their lands.

Whenever the truth has been suppressed by governments and their agencies or even by Christian communities, the wrongs done to the indigenous peoples need to be honestly acknowledged. The Synod supported the establishment of “Truth Commissions”, where these can help resolve historical injustices and bring about reconciliation within the wider community or the nation. The past cannot be undone, but honest recognition of past injustices can lead to measures and attitudes which will help to rectify the damaging effects for both the indigenous community and the wider society. 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 apologised unreservedly for the part played in these by members of the Church, especially where children were forcibly separated from their families. Governments are encouraged to pursue with still greater energy programmes to improve the conditions and the standard of living of indigenous groups in the vital areas of health, education, employment and housing.

Papal teaching and encouragement

‘Do you think that your gifts are worth so little that you should no longer bother to maintain them? Share them with each other and teach them to your children. Your songs, your stories, your paintings, your dances, your languages must never be lost.’ (Pope John Paul II)

‘We know that you have a lifestyle proper to your own ethnic genius or culture – a culture which the Church respects and which she does not, in any way, ask you to renounce Society itself is enriched by the presence of different cultural and ethnic elements.’
(Pope Paul VI)

‘For us, you and the values you represent are precious. We deeply respect your dignity and reiterate our deep affection for you.’
(Pope John Paul II)

‘You are a part of Australia and Australia is a part of you. And the Church herself in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others.’ (Pope John Paul II)

METHODS OF REFLECTION

“Encounter God through the spirit of prayer and the scripture by reflecting and praying the Word of God daily. The purpose is to bring you to prayer and to a deeper union with the Lord on the level of the heart.”

Catholic Spirituality Centre

In today’s world, there seems to be little respite from noise, technology and the constant ‘buzz’ of life. Time seems to be in short supply and the joy of sitting still, either alone or in a small group, can soon be forgotten. The art of reflection is like everything else, it needs to be practiced and it needs to be fulfilling.

The two methods outlined below (Lumko and Lectio Divina) are just two ways that bring people together to reflect on the Word of God.

Lumko method

The Lumko Method is a communal way of reflecting on the Bible and encountering God and one another.

Steps 1-4 help us to “persevere” with God, to “listen”, to participate in the biblical action, “to surrender ourselves to God”.

Step 5 brings us together as brothers and sisters because we risk sharing our experience with God with one another. This is not the most important step, but it gives great joy to all those who want to build and experience a deeply human community in God.

In step 6 we confront our life with the Word of God. It is often the case that in this atmosphere of prayer, individuals discuss problems which they wish to resolve as a group.

In step 7 all are invited to share in spontaneous prayer.

FIRST STEP: We invite the Lord

Once the group settles down, the facilitator asks someone to volunteer “to invite the Lord”. The belief in the living presence of the Risen Christ in our midst is the presupposition and basis of our meditation.

We want to meet the Word who became flesh and dwells among us. We remember Jesus’ promise: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I shall be there with them.” (Mt 18,20).

SECOND STEP: We read the text

The facilitator announces the chosen text. First the book, then the chapter. He/she waits until everyone has found the chapter and only then does he announce the verse.

When everyone has found the passage, the facilitator invites someone to volunteer to read the text. A moment of silence follows.

THIRD STEP: We dwell on the text

The facilitator continues: “We dwell on the text. Which words strike you in a special way?”

In doing so, almost the entire text is listened to again. The participants spontaneously read aloud the word or words that have impressed them.

Whole verses are not read, only short phrases or individual words. The participants are encouraged to repeat those words silently to themselves three or four times. It is extremely important that a moment of silence be kept after each person has spoken, allowing the message to “soak in”. As a result of this step, “simple” words often take on new meaning.

FOURTH STEP: We are quiet

After spending time on the individual word, the entire passage is read again slowly. Then the facilitator announces a time of silence, giving the exact length of time, for example, three minutes.

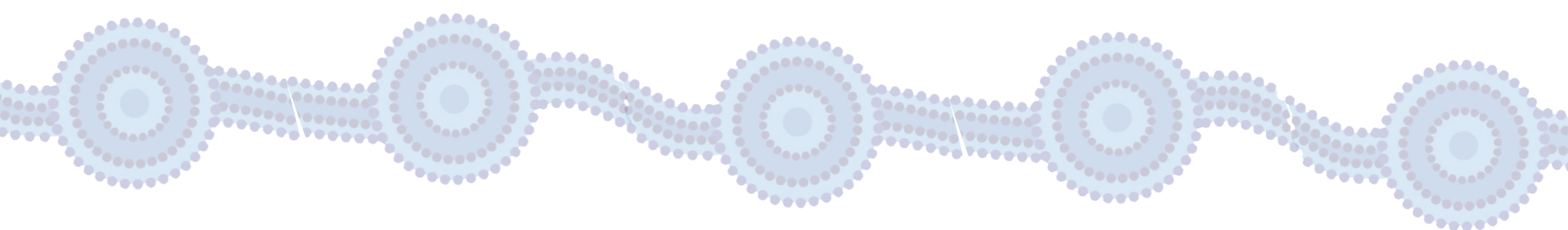
We advise the people to spend this time in silence before God. “We are open to God.” “We allow ourselves to be loved by him.” “We let God look at us.”

A helpful practice during this silence is to repeat a specific word. Meditation: Simply to be open to God, to wait for him, to be with him, “in fact he is not far from any of us” (Acts 17,27).

FIFTH STEP: We share what we have heard in our hearts

After the time of quiet, the facilitator announces the next step: “We share with each other what we have heard in our hearts.”

We do this to share with one another our faith experience and to help each other to grow in the faith. The entire Sacred Scripture is nothing less than a God experience which the People of Israel and Jesus “share” with us.



It is somewhat strange that we can talk to friends about almost every aspect of our life yet when it comes to sharing with others our experience with God, we become shy. In this Bible meditation method, however, anyone can learn “to risk” this sharing in a very natural and unpressured way.

SIXTH STEP: We search together

The facilitator announces: “We search together.”

Now the time has come for the participants to examine their lives in the light of the Gospel. At this stage, a basic community might discuss everyday problems as:

Someone needs help in the neighbourhood ...

Children need instruction in the faith ...

How can we settle a discord that has arisen ...

None of these problems need to have a direct connection to the Bible passage which had been read and shared. However, they emerge and can be resolved because of the mutual confidence that now exists in an atmosphere of the presence of God. Things look different when God is allowed to be present.

SEVENTH STEP: We pray together

The facilitator now invites everyone to pray.

The words of Scripture, the various experiences of God’s Word, the daily problems - these all become fuel for prayer. Some find this form of sharing in prayer the easiest way to communicate with others.

The participants are encouraged to incorporate in their personal prayer whatever has been of special importance to them during the meditation.

Only at the end is a formal prayer known to everyone recited

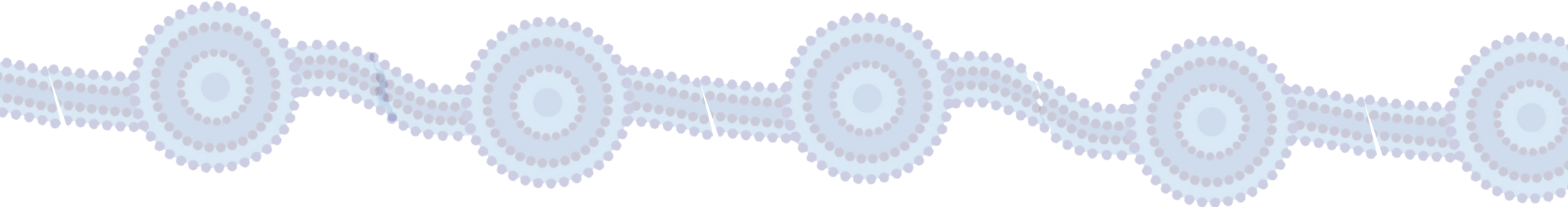
(Adapted from: <http://madure.blogspot.com.au/2008/03/seven-steps-of-bible-study-lumko-method.html>)

Lectio Divina (Divine Reading)

Lectio Divina a very helpful way of praying with the Bible and in a group setting is effective in providing a regular pattern to build openness and trust in a community.

Lectio Divina Process: (flexibly adapt the following steps, as needed, for individuals and groups)

1. Reading (lectio) – hearing God’s Word in the Bible as I/we read it aloud:
 - o What does the biblical text say?
2. Meditation (meditatio) – reflecting on the meaning of the text that I/we have read:
 - o What is God saying to me/us through this text?
3. Prayer (oratio) – speaking with God in praise, thanksgiving, contrition, and petition:
 - o What do I/we say to God in response to this text?
4. Contemplation (contemplatio) – listening to God more quietly in the silence of our hearts:
 - o How does this text make me/us feel in my/our relationship with God?
5. Action (actio) – letting the encounter concretely affect our daily life and work in the world:
 - o How will I/we change what I/we do today in response to hearing this text?



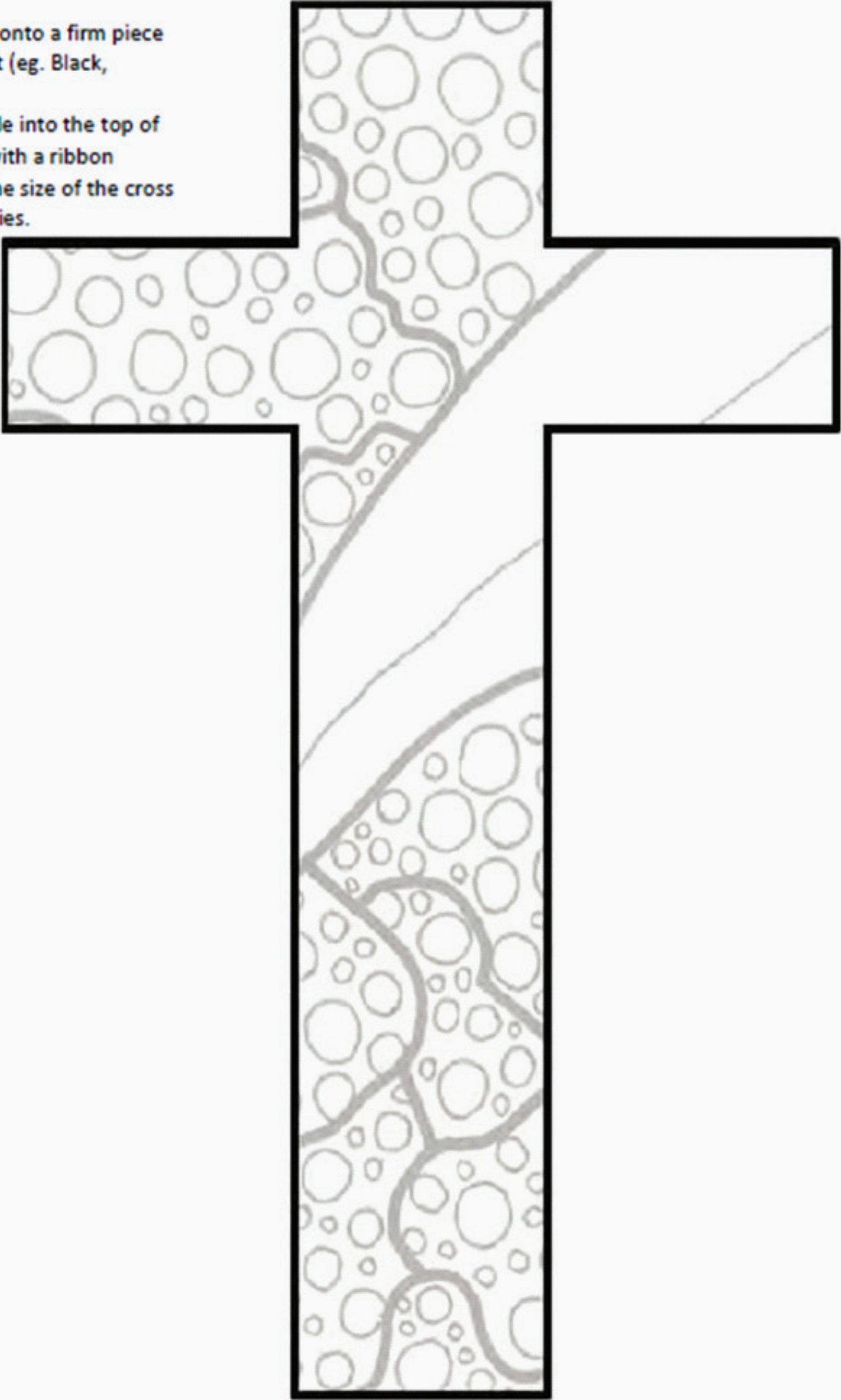
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY 2013

YOUTH ACTIVITIES - PRIMARY

Instructions:

- 1. Carefully colour in your cross
- 2. Carefully cut the cross out
- 3. Mount the cross using glue onto a firm piece of coloured card as a mount (eg. Black, Burgundy)
- 4. Laminate, punch a small hole into the top of the mounted card and tie with a ribbon

NB: You can enlarge and reduce the size of the cross for different types of activities.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES - PRIMARY



Create your own Jigsaw

Instructions:

1. Carefully colour in your jigsaw
2. Glue it onto a firm card (perhaps a Manila Folder)
3. Carefully cut out each piece

A large rectangular area containing a jigsaw puzzle template. The template consists of several interlocking pieces. The background of the puzzle is filled with a pattern of small, overlapping circles of varying sizes, creating a textured, bubble-like effect. The pieces are outlined with thick black lines, and some pieces have internal lines suggesting they are part of a larger design. The overall shape of the puzzle is roughly rectangular with some irregular edges.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES - PRIMARY



Find a Word

N	T	Y	X	S	P	I	U	X	C	O	M	P	A	S	S	I	O	N	W
M	H	U	P	I	T	O	R	R	E	S	S	T	R	A	I	T	P	Z	X
K	O	I	M	S	S	V	O	U	N	I	E	V	W	H	E	J	R	R	D
P	L	P	S	T	F	I	R	E	Y	J	Q	S	U	N	D	A	Y	U	W
L	Y	K	L	E	L	H	W	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	E	U	T	O
P		I	J	R	C	Q	N	X	N	V	C	X	E	M	T	A	C	J	T
B	F	S	K	S	W	P	V	G	A	G	N	X	S	B	H	M	Q	Q	V
T	A	A	B	O	R	I	G	I	N	A	L		P	E	O	P	L	E	S
H	T	P	E	A	C	E	J	Q	U	E	S	S	E	R	M	T	U	K	V
N	H	J	O	Y	C	R	E	A	T	O	R	C	C	M	V	N	O	E	C
O	E	X	R	D	S	L	Y	E	Z	M	A	B	T	A	U	O	O	E	C
I	R	M	R	K	O	J	Y	K	R	E	S	C	A	M	X	I	T	W	I
T	E	P	E	B	G	A	X	J	P	C	K	O	F	Q	H	T	X		S
C	U	Z	M	R	R	V	Y	Z	I	A	A	O	C	O	R	A	S	C	T
E	M	Y	Y	P	C	B	D	R	D	C	L	L	P	P	W	C	U	O	A
T	S	T	F	C	R	Y	P	E	O	B	A	A	U	V	I	I	S	D	N
O	S	H	E	A	L	I	N	G	G	P	N	M	I	O	O	D	E	I	H
R	W	P	H	Y	E	Z	K	D	B	O	D	O	U	E	D	E	J	A	K
P	A	S	P	I	R	I	T	X	P	D	O	N	E	H	Q	D	Y	N	D
Y	R	S	G	F	H	O	B	C	O	M	M	I	T	M	E	N	T	X	W

LAND

PEACE

DEDICATION

SPIRIT

JOY

JESUS

SUNDAY

TORRESSTRAIT

HOLY FATHER

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

COMPASSION

RESPECT

MERCY

COMMITMENT

CREATOR

PEACE

HEALING

COOLAMON

NAIDOC WEEK

PRAY

SYMBOL

PROTECTION

FIRE

GOD

SISTERS

NATSICC

CELEBRATE

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY 2013

YOUTH ACTIVITIES - SECONDARY

.....

1. Create a Vision Board



What is a Vision Board?

A Vision Board is a collection of words, pictures and articles that serve to remind you of a hope, dream or aim. In this activity, your vision board will depict:

- The wonder of God’s creation
- Australia’s first people
- People celebrating God
- People caring for one another

in the world, your State/Territory or neighbourhood.

Steps to create a Vision Board:

1. Go through magazines, newspapers and cut out images or stories that depict the theme. The internet is another source you could utilise. Simply print any items that are relevant.
2. Lay your favourite items on the board. The layout is entirely up to you. Each corner could be a different theme or colour; it could be totally random. Let your imagination run free.
3. Glue everything onto the board. Add writing if you want. You can paint on it, or write words with markers.
4. Leave space in the middle of the vision board for a fantastic photo or drawing of yourself, your school or Parish. This serves to remind us that we all have a role to play in celebrating the Word of God and caring for everyone in our community.
5. Hang your vision board in your Parish or Classroom.
6. Send in a photo of your Vision Board to office@natsicc.org.au so that we can display all of your good work!

YOUTH ACTIVITIES - SECONDARY

2. Create an Acknowledging Country display



Photograph: Blacklines Publications 2010

Look around your local community and create your own acknowledging country display. The display in the photo uses found objects including a paperbark coolamon (made with bark from a Paperbark and tied with grass string), a branch, rocks and water. It also includes two hardwood digging sticks and a hard wood coolamon. This acknowledging country display is a perfect centre-piece for your mass, youth group or classroom.

3. Learn about the Traditional Owners of the land on which your School is located.

Step 1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders walked and cared for the land for many thousands of years. Utilise your local Indigenous organisations and groups to find the local Traditional Owners and prepare a presentation on their:

- Language Group
- Dreaming Stories
- Lifestyle pre and post colonisation
- Neighbouring groups
- Examine the ways Aboriginal people of the local/selected community expressed their connection to Country at time of colonisation.

* It is important to understand the cultural practices and considerations of each Language group when learning about them. In some groups it may not be culturally appropriate to share certain dreaming stories or talk about certain people. This is why it is important to work with your local group when completing this task.

Step 2. Pick an area of Australia in a different State and find the same information as you have on your local group

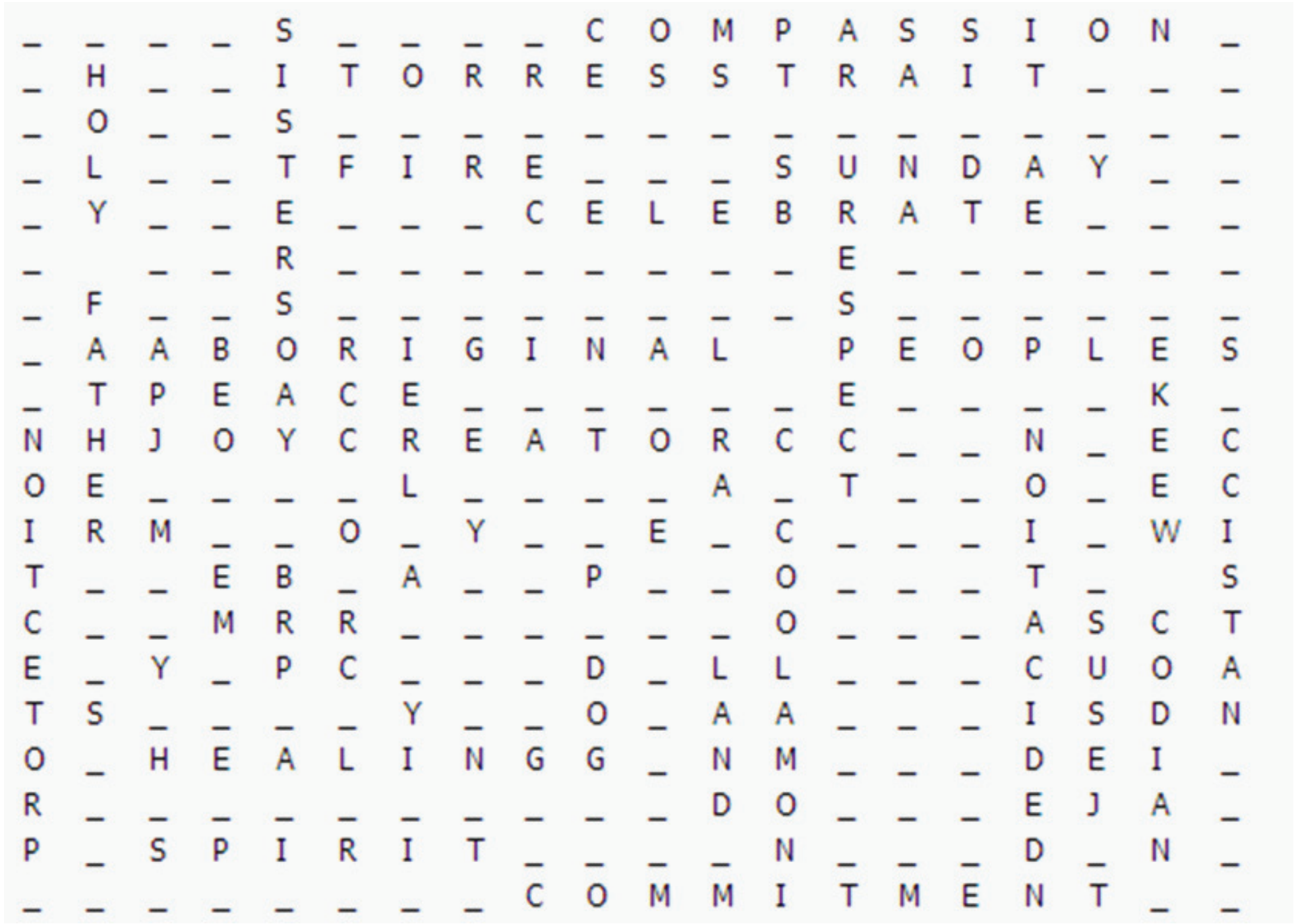
Step 3. Compare the similarities and differences between the two groups.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students comprehend and appreciate the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities across Australia
2. Students gain an understanding of the impact of colonisation on the lifestyle and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
3. Open Dialogue with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups
4. Understand cultural systems and protocols.



Find a word answer key



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REFERENCES AND SUGGESTIONS

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Aboriginal Our Father
Reconciliation Prayer Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group - 13 March 1997 Brisbane, Qld.

ARTWORK

Melissa Brickell - Victoria (Clip Art)
Kimberly Clip Art - Western Australia (Clip Art)

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Fr Stephen Hackett
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Jamie Lee Armstrong, Dolly McGaughey, Shirley Quaresmin - NATSICC Liturgy Team
Craig Arthur, NATSICC, National Administrator

NATSICC VISION STATEMENT

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council promotes and celebrates the cultural identity of our peoples across the nation.
By Living and expressing in all its endeavours the spirituality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic peoples.
Through this expression and recognition of our cultural identity we will find our rightful place within the Catholic Church in Australia.

NATSICC LOGO

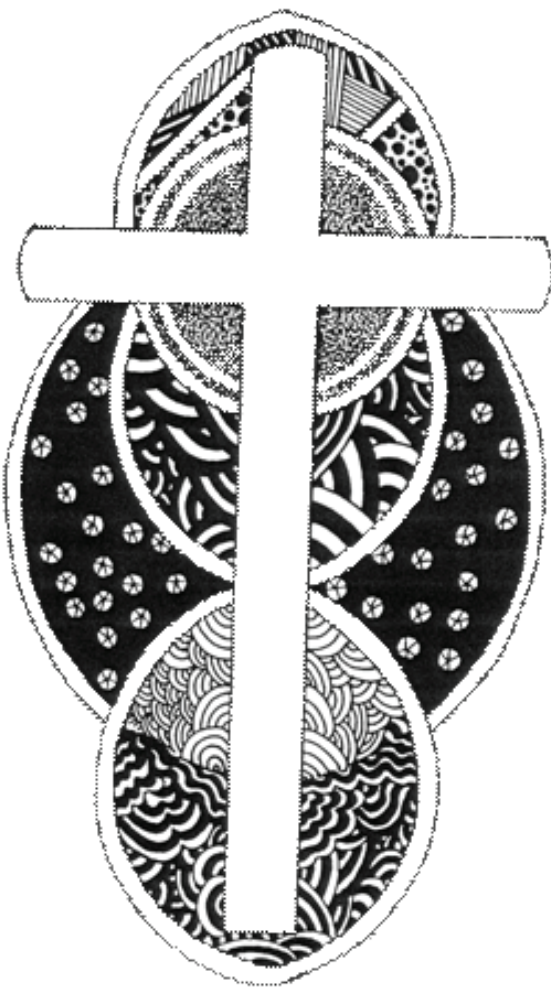
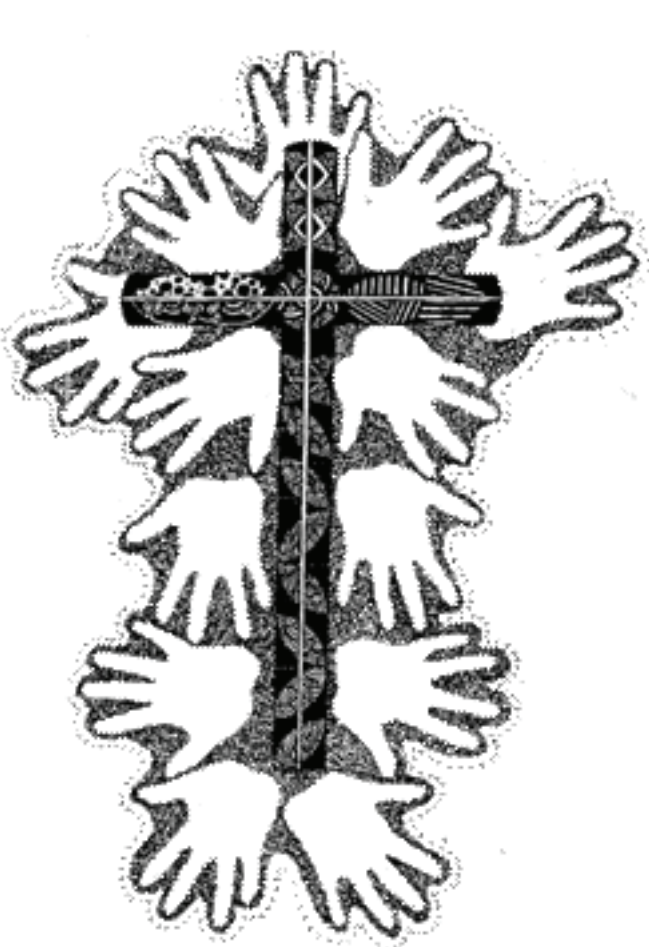
The NATSICC Logo depicts a willy willy, the wind force in the centre a symbol of God's Spirit. The round concentric circles at the top symbolise God and Life, the base depicts men and women receiving the Holy Spirit. The logo was designed by Mrs Olive Boddington, Western Australia.

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