



We all Stand on Sacred Ground:

Learn, Respect & Celebrate

5 July 2015 — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council
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Multimedia Resource

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Parish or organisation



www.natsicc.org.au/resources/aboriginal_and_islander_sunday_2015

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, from Western Australia.

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Several pages of 'Clip Art' have been included with your package for use in Mass books and promotional materials. The artist should be acknowledge if a piece is used.
Front Cover Courtesy of Murri Ministry

Acknowledgements

Dr. Paul Taylor - *Executive Secretary, Bishops Commission for Liturgy*

Sr. Carmel Pilcher RSJ

Bishop Saunders, Bishop Sproxtton,

Archbishop Prowse and Bishop

Oudemans, Tricia Mowbray, Secretary -

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Craig Arthur, NATSICC,

National Administrator

References and Suggestions:

Aboriginal Our Father

Reconciliation Prayer

Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group

13 March 1997 Brisbane, QLD

NATSICC acknowledge the prayers and songs as listed above and grateful for their use

Welcome from the NATSICC liturgy team: Welcome to the 2015 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday Liturgy & Prayer Package.

The NATSICC Liturgy Team brings to you ideas and concepts that both reflect and display our Spiritual beliefs : both contemporary and traditional values and spiritual beliefs are embedded in this document. Our creator has woven his gift of SHARING throughout our culture – it is our strongest link to him and it is central to our culture.

The Prayers of the Faithful; Hymns; Psalms; Readings and the Holy Gospel focus on our Creator's directive "to go out and share our Faith, Our Beliefs and Values, and our Lives " with the isolated, the marginalised, the persecuted, the unbelievers, and the poor people who live in our most Sacred Land.

Our Land is the most sacred to us, the First Australians, and is visible proof that our Creator exists. This land was here before man ever walked this Earth and so was our Creator. When We walk this Land - Our Spirit grows strong and our Faith becomes reality.

We pray this package will encourage you to walk with us on this very special Sunday and share in the Spirit of this land.

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We all Stand on Sacred Ground: Learn, Respect and Celebrate

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2015

For 2015, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council decided to adopt the National NAIDOC Theme for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday Resources – We all Stand on Sacred Ground.

There is a great parallel with the Gospel of the day where Jesus is not recognised in his own land and a definite resonance of recent talk of closing remote Aboriginal Communities in Western Australia.

Our land, known as Australia, is sacred. It is Sacred in our beliefs, culture and spirituality. It is also sacred to our Faith. We too find ourselves in Jesus' shoes – not accepted in our own land and many of the prayers and hymns in the resources

are representative of this. The Children's Activities use the symbolism of shoes and footprints to initiate discussion and learning around the concept of belonging and social justice.

Our council hopes that the resources are useful in the planning of your own celebrations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday and we remind you that there are many local Ministries that do a wonderful job in your Community that would be more than happy to assist you.

**We all Stand on
Sacred Ground:**

Learn, Respect & Celebrate



‘The Heart of Jesus beats within us all’ cover artwork

Karntilmun Angela Ninnal of Yek Nangu clan and Yilimu Bernadine Kungul of Rak Dirringara clan worked on the logo with the theme: The Heart of Jesus beats within us all. Kandji Michael Parmbuk of Rak Wambu clan was then asked to undertake the work.

The image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is central in the presentation and picks up an image in the spirituality that has been particularly prominent in the history of the Catholic Church at Wadeye and for that matter throughout the NT.

You might note though the lines surrounding the heart which indicate that, along with the theme, the heart beats and is a living heart; a blazing fire also rests upon the top of the heart. It is a strong image using the fire, the blood from a wounded heart, the crown, all symbols that have been strong symbols for the Catholic Community here.

The heart is surrounded by a band indicating the Aboriginal clans and family groups that have gathered together from the many different directions to know the love of God found in the heart of Jesus.

Blue is very much the colour that people in these parts associate with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and who is closely associated with the Sacred Heart under the title of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the name of the Wadeye Parish. Mary under this title is prominent in the prayer and devotions of the people of Wadeye. Our Lady of the Sacred Heart is also the patroness of the Diocese of Darwin.

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

An Acknowledgement of Country is a ceremony that pays respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners of the area on which the Parish stands and surrounds, or where a speech, event or presentation is taking place.

An 'Acknowledgement of Country' is a way that **all people** can **show awareness and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture** and heritage and the ongoing relationship the traditional owners have with their land. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can perform 'Acknowledgement of Country'. It is a demonstration of respect dedicated to the traditional custodians of the land (or sea) where the event, meeting, school function or conference takes place. It can be formal or informal.

A 'Welcome to Country' is a small ceremony where **traditional owners**, usually Elders, welcome people to their land.

This is a significant recognition and is made through a **formal process**, although it's up to the Elder how they decide to carry out the ceremony. It also depends on the location of the event and the practice of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community which can vary greatly according to region.

During a 'Welcome to Country' the Elders welcome those in attendance, guests, staff and students to their Country. It might be just a simple speech or a performance of

some sort, like a song, traditional dance, a didgeridoo piece or any combination of these.

'Welcome to Country' **should always occur in the opening of the event** in question, preferable as the first item. Note that a 'Welcome to Country' is **often considered a right and not a privilege**.

Protocols for welcoming visitors to country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture for thousands of years (www.creativespirits.info).

The use of Acknowledgements or Welcome to Country have become more common place since the creation of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), which places an Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country as an important step in the process of practical Reconciliation in this country. The Council is aware that some Parishes already do it, some do it on special occasions and some do not do it at all.

A recent survey of Parishes in Australia indicated a strong desire to pay respect and acknowledge those that walked upon and cared for the land for thousands of years and still continue to do so.

NATSICC would like to recommend that Parishes consider the following forms of Acknowledgement:

- Acknowledge the Traditional Owners

of the land on which the Parish stands in a physical form (signage, plaque) on Parish grounds

- Provide an Acknowledgement to the Traditional Owners in Mass booklets, websites and other media produced by the Parish
- An Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country regularly on the Liturgical Calendar or on significant days.

NATSICC is happy to assist you to implement any of the above recommendations. Additionally, your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Ministries work very hard in the community and provide a great resource to Parishes.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

On Parish grounds, buildings, newsletters and websites

The _____ Catholic Parish acknowledge the _____ people, the Traditional Owners who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

On published documents (traditional and electronic)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are respectfully advised that this publication/production may contain the words, voices, names, images and/or descriptions of people who have passed away.

Acknowledgement of Country where the language group is not known:

I would like to show my respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, of Elders past and present, on which this event takes place.

Acknowledgement of Country using a specific nation:

I would like to acknowledge the _____ people who are the Traditional Owners of this land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders past and present of the _____ and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present.

Parish Survey 2015

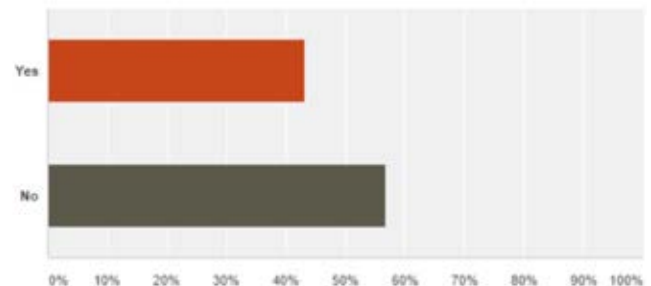
Over the past year, NATSICC has used an online survey to ask Parishes if and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Catholic are involved on a local level.

It is important to gather information like this as it identifies areas where improvements can be made as well as shining light upon the good things that are happening around Australia.

Interestingly, of the 100 Parishes surveyed 30% had Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present in their Parish. Extrapolated to a national level, it equates to 432 Parishes with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present.

Do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in your Parish assist in the Celebration of the Mass?

Answered: 44 Skipped: 56



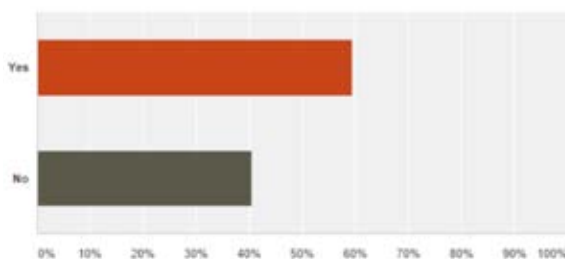
Do you have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people active in the life of your Parish?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 3



Do you have symbols in your Parish that recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture?

Answered: 47 Skipped: 53



Servers Ministers Readers
Eucharistic Liturgy Parish

Things that influence the figure might be whether or not Parishioners identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to the Parish priest and the number of Aboriginal and Islander Ministries that may not have responded to the questionnaire.

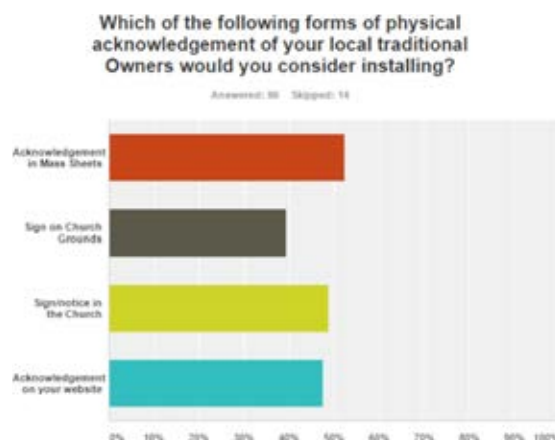
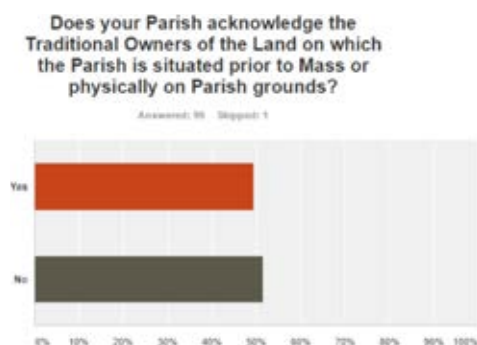
Of the 30% with Aboriginal and Islander Parishioners, over 40% stated that those people were active in Parish life and serving the community. This is a terrific example of the community spirit and values of Aboriginal and Islander Catholics and the willingness to become involved and serve the Catholic Community.

49% of respondents had some form of acknowledgment of the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Parish is situated.

Of those that don't 86% would consider doing so in a variety of ways.

The Survey shows that much progress has been made informing and supporting Catholic Parishes to include, acknowledge and involve Aboriginal and Islander people in the community. It also shows that we have some way to go to ensure that 100% of Parishes acknowledge Traditional Owners and build the capacity of their Aboriginal and Islander members to fill roles as Deacons, Catechists, altar Servers and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion.

Below is a summary of some of the Parish Survey questions as well as a text analysis of the most commonly repeated words in the survey responses to the question.



Liturgy & Music Resources

HYMNS AND ACCLAMATIONS

Taken from As One Voice (AOV) volume 1, and Gather Australia (GA).

Entrance Hymn:

- Celebrate, AOV 44, Brown, Monica
- Sing a New Song, AOV 80, GA 414 Schutte, Dan
- Blest be the Lord, AOV 179, GA 458 Schutte, Dan
- Gather Your People, AOV 71, GA 530 Hurd, Bob

Entrance Processional May be accompanied by a Didgeridoo

Offertory Hymn:

- Open My Eyes Lord, AOV 166
- Lord, to Whom Shall We Go? AOV 6, Herry, Michael

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 altar 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)

Communion Hymn

- Communion Song, AOV 187, Grant, Peter
- Come as You Are, AOV 31, GA 212 Browne, Deirdre
- Let there be Peace on Earth, AOV 190, Miller, Sy & Jackson, Jill

Final Hymn:

- Companions on the Journey, AOV 188, Landry, Carey
- City of God, AOV 57, GA 498 Schutte, Dan

Recessional - May be accompanied by the Didgeridoo or clap sticks. Aboriginal Elders join if applicable.

HOMILY NOTES

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn

NATSICC SUNDAY

We All Stand on Sacred Ground: Learn, Respect and Celebrate
Fourteenth Sunday In Ordinary Time, Year B

Readings:

Ezekiel 2:2-5

Second letter of St Paul
to the Corinthians 12:7-10

Mark 6:1-6

In Chapter 6 of Mark's Gospel we hear of Jesus going to His home place with his Disciples and he begins to teach in the synagogue. The listeners are astonished at what they hear. It seems to be so full of wisdom. They can't understand this. They have known Jesus and His family. They feel that the words coming from Him are too prophetic from a mere carpenter's son. They say to each other "This is the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joseph and Jude and Simon. His sisters, too aren't they not with us there?" They would not accept him.

The onlookers know of Jesus and His extended family. They can't accept that a man from such a simple and humble background would speak such words of wisdom and challenge them in such a prophetic way.

Following from this, one of the sadder comments in the Gospel is the following: after Jesus realises He is being despised by His own country people, the Gospel states "He could work no miracle there, though he cured a few sick by laying hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith."

People still find it so hard that God can speak His wisdom through very humble instruments. This can happen even with the First Australians, the Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander peoples. The whole of Australia has heard much wisdom from them over the years. But are their opinions taken seriously?

So often initiatives are taken on behalf of Aboriginal people without much Aboriginal involvement in the initiative. Are the wider Australian people also indifferent to the wisdom that may come from our First Australians?

Even in the first reading from the Prophet Ezekiel we find something similar. The Prophet Ezekiel was not well known. He was a Prophet for a group of exiles in Babylon. He enjoyed no particular status. Yet God used him powerfully. It says a lot about the Prophet Ezekiel that he was able to obey the Spirit of God coming into him to be able to stand up to people hostile to God's message.

But God persists. The Scripture says "The Lord says this. Whether they listen or not, this set of rebels shall know there is a Prophet among them!"

So many of us have learnt a lot about living in Australia and about our humanity through the wisdom of our First Australians. We need seriously to think that God might be using many of them in a prophetic way like he used Ezekiel.

But the first step of course is to listen. Listening is linked with obedience. To be obedient to God is to listen to the Lord carefully.

Who knows? As Saint John Paul II said when he visited Alice Springs in 1986, that Australia can never be the Australia God wants it to be until the Aboriginal people have taken their place amongst us. This is still yet to happen. We only have to look at the still deplorable statistics on

so many social barometers that our first Australians endure. Let us listen to them carefully as to know the true reasons for their disengagement from the whole of Australia.

Perhaps in the Second Reading from Saint Paul we can gain even further wisdom. He too, suffered a great deal of criticism and anger from people as he spoke the Word of God to them. Saint Paul knew that he was doing God's will. Therefore this gave him enormous encouragement. He says that God's grace is all that he needs. In this beautiful passage he summarised this fact by saying "May grace be enough for you: my power is at best in weakness."

We must never give up but we always must stand ready to do the will of God. Incredibly, God will use our weaknesses to be His strength. This is the boast of St Paul "I shall be very happy to make my weaknesses my special boast so that the power of Christ may stay over me, and that is why I am quite confident with my weaknesses, with insults, hardships, persecutions and the agonies I go through for Christ's sake. For it is when I am weak I am strong."

On this NATSICC Sunday throughout Australia, let us see in the weaknesses that surround us in Australia the strength of God to draw us forward onto a new chapter of happiness and hope in the years to come. Let us do this alongside all Aboriginal and Torres Islander Peoples.

This is our prayer. This is our hope.

Scripture readings

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel 2:2-5

The people are rebellious; they shall know there will be a prophet in their midst.

The spirit came into me and made me stand up, and I heard the Lord speaking to me. He said, "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites, to rebels who have turned against me. Till now they and their ancestors have been in revolt against me. The sons are defiant and obstinate; I am sending you to them, to say, 'The Lord says this.' Whether they listen or not, this set of rebels shall know there is a prophet among them.'

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 122. R. v.2

Response: Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy.

1. To you have I lifted up my eyes,
you who dwell in the heavens:
my eyes, like the eyes of slaves
on the hand of their lords. **Response.**

2. Like the eyes of a servant
on the hand of his mistress,
so our eyes are on the Lord our God
till he show us his mercy. **Response.**

3. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.
We are filled with contempt.
Indeed all too full is our soul
with the scorn of the rich,
with the proud man's disdain. **Response.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 12:7-10

I will glory in my infirmities so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

In the view of the extraordinary nature of these revelations, to stop me from getting too proud I was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to beat me and stop me from getting too proud! About this thing, I have pleaded with the Lord three times for it to leave me, but he has said, 'My grace is enough for you: my power is at its best in weakness. So I shall be very happy to make my weaknesses my special boast so that the power of Christ may stay over me, and that is why I am quite content with my weaknesses, and with insults, hardships, persecutions, and the agonies I go through for Christ's sake. For it is when I am weak that I am strong.

The word of the Lord.

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark 6:1-6

A prophet is despised only in his own country.

Jesus went to his home town and his disciples accompanied him. With the coming of the Sabbath he began teaching in the synagogue and most of them were astonished when they

heard him. They said. 'Where did the man get all this? What is this wisdom that have been granted him, and these miracles that are worked through him? This is the carpenter, surely the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joset and Jude and Simon? His sisters, too, are they not here with us?' And they would not accept him. And Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is only despised in his own country among his own relations and in his own house'; and he could work no miracle there, though he cured a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

The Gospel of the Lord.

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

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

Father of all, you gave us the Dreaming. You have spoken to us through our beliefs. You then made your 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.

Prayers of the Faithful

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

INTRODUCTION

Celebrant: Sisters and Brothers, let us pray for the needs of our world, especially the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

[Select intentions from the following:]

INTENTIONS

Reader/Cantor: For our Church, Pope Francis, all Bishops, Priests, Deacons and Religious, that they may continue to inspire us by their witness and commitment.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, that they will work collaboratively and foster the unity and welfare of the people they serve.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all politicians and policy makers, that their decisions may be guided by the spirit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and all the elements of this land to work for the development of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all who dwell in this ancient land that we will show a renewed attitude of understanding and respect towards all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in order to foster God's peace and justice among all peoples.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all elders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, that they may be sustained and renewed in their vision, wisdom and strength in order to nurture the young in their communities.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all our youth, that God will empower them with the gifts of his Spirit so that they will serve their present and future generations with enthusiasm and integrity.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all who were stolen or lost, that they may find their families, an increased sense of their identity and a secure sense of belonging.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all in our communities who suffer in mind, body and spirit, that they may be assisted by the love and charity of Christians and all people of good will.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader/Cantor: For all who have died, that they may rest in the peace of Christ and rise in glory on the last day.

Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

CONCLUSION:

Celebrant: Gracious and loving God, we ask you to hear our prayers and to listen in kindness to the requests of those who call on you. We ask this prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Rituals

The following ceremonies are an important means of enriching the Liturgy and involving 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'.

NATSICC strongly advise that you work closely with your Parish Priest and Liturgical team to ensure the suggestions conform with the Liturgical norms of the Roman Missal.

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.

It is customary in some areas, when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 and Torres Strait Islander 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 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 good in 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.

Faith Story

NATSICC Counsellor Shirley Quaresimin (nee AhChee)

I would like to think that my faith journey began the day I was born into a loving family and extended family. I learnt from an early age that family was the most important part of culture, sharing, caring and giving.

My journey begins with my mother Marjory Watson, who was born at Noonkanbah in the Kimberley in 1914 on the Fitzroy River of the Nyikina tribe. My mother was taken away and sent to Beagle Bay mission on the Peninsula 80kms from Broome where Sisters of Saint John of God and the German Pallottine Fathers and Brothers who ran the mission.

Mum did not talk much of what happened but said she loved the Sisters and Fathers to bits. She went about her learning and loved religion. Mum was baptised there. She missed her family deeply though during that time.

On her return to Derby she worked as a housekeeper before marrying my Dad which lasted 53 years before Dad died. Mum always had in the corner of the room statues of Jesus, Mary, Joseph and the Saints. This was where prayers and the Rosary were said. Our place became a place where Bishop Raible, Sisters and Priests would come as there was no church or presbytery in Derby in the early years. They were always welcomed in our home. I remember Bishop Raible would play our old Pianoia.

In 1954 the first Catholic school opened in Derby. I was 8 years old and one of 20 students that attended the school. The school was situated at the back of the old corrugated iron church. Sister Ignatius was

our first teacher and besides doing school work we would spend time cleaning and polishing the brass. For me it was a time where I could be with God to talk to and feel his love and that I was special. I wish that all kids could have that opportunity to experience of belonging.

That's where the scripture classes began and the understanding about being a Catholic meant. Beside my parents the Sisters of St. John of God and the Pallottine Fathers played a part in developing my faith journey. The Sisters prepared us for life, to have the ability to be part of church and for young Aboriginal girls a message/creed for living.

Moving to Perth and wanting my children to have the same experience of my faith journey, I turned up to the local church to find I was the only Aboriginal person there. But my trust in God and the love He had for us kept us going. I was commissioned as a Catechist for the Archdiocese of Perth and Special Minister of the Eucharist. I taught scripture to after-school children at my then church parish for ten years. When you let the love and trust of God into your life everything falls into place.

The passion for Catholic Aboriginal Education and equality led me to join the Catholic Education Office and they gave me the opportunity to keep pursuing and learning and building on my faith journey. At this time I joined the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in the 1980s which I became Chairperson and part of NATSICC. Being part of NATSICC led me to meet so many



Aboriginal people also passionate about their faith. I was there when the elders wrote the Aboriginal prayer. It is still very emotional for me to have experienced such devotion by our elders.

At St. Joseph's House of Spirituality in Baulkham Hills I had the chance to spend time with the Josephite Sisters. It taught me so much more about faith and spirituality, the love of the Bible. Living with 90 nuns, 2 priests and a Brother was strange for me. My highlight was doing a street retreat which took place in Sydney meeting Mum Shirley Smith. I worked alongside her visiting the juvenile centres. We went one Sunday to the park to pray when I met the only Aboriginal man. He asked me where I came from and I offered him a sandwich. He replied; "he had eaten at the Salvos and would take me for a feed". I thanked him and said no thanks. Did I meet God that day? I like to think I did because after that I did not see another Aboriginal person.

I went to Ireland and Rome for the Beautification of Edmund Rice. My faith journey took me to another level to see Pope John Paul and thousands of Catholics.

I was lucky and grateful to have had my Grandmother Emily in my life as she taught me how to understand my Aboriginal spirituality and Catholic faith. She was also a Catholic but did not lose her own Spirituality.

I have respect for my humble beginnings from the early teaching from a loving family. It taught me to be respectful to your elders, honesty, love, courtesy and to be grateful for

what you have.

On the day you are born God sets a path and it's up to us what path we want our journey to take. I believe what I have achieved through my life has been my faith in God and those early teachings. I hope that I have been a role model for all the children and people I have met along the way.

I have taken a full circle after a long time away from NATSICC and now I am back on NATSICC, God has a plan, it's not over yet. I am so proud to be working with such dedicated people who ensure Catholic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a voice in the Church. Remember what Pope John Paul II said in Alice Springs; until the ABORIGINAL people of Australia have made their contribution to the church, it will not be the church God wants it to be.

I thank my five children and husband for letting me pursue my faith journey through life and having them by my side.

"Halt at the Crossroads

..... Ask Yourselves which is the way.....

..... Take the Risk

..... Walk the way

..... And You will find Rest"

Jeremiah 6:16

Children's Liturgy

Create a Prayer Space (like the one below):

- A cloth in brown or red to symbolise the earth/Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material in brown or earthy colours.
- Old shoes/footprints/decorated thongs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols
- Bible
- Candle
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols provided by your local Aboriginal Catholic Ministry or group (Didgeridoo, Coolamon, clapsticks)
- Use Lectionary for Masses with Children (1992) and published notes for Leaders



Prayers

Creator God, we come together today. We thank you for the peoples who treasured and cared for the land we stand on. We pray for them and we pray for us.

Holy Ground

The land we stand on is holy ground. It's holy ground because we stand with each other. It's holy ground because we are made in the image of God. It's holy ground because God loves each of us and God invites us to see each other as the likeness of God.

Together

We pray that we can stand together.
We pray that we can walk together.
Help us to share our gifts with each other
Help us to listen to each other
Give us courage to walk with each other.

God of all people

Let us pray
God of all people, your Son, Jesus was rejected and forced to leave his own land.
We ask you to give us strength to walk with all our brothers and sisters, willingness to work together to be reconciled and courage to listen with an open heart and mind so that our sacred land of Australia, will be a place where everyone is welcomed, respected and celebrated.
We make this prayer in Jesus' name.
Amen

Gospel Commentary

In the Gospel, Jesus is not accepted in His own land. People he grew up with rejected Him. We all know what it's like to be rejected. In the past, some people would say to people to walk a mile in my shoes. Imagine walking in the shoes of your parents, or your grandparents or your cousins or your next door neighbour. Our shoes, if they could talk, would tell lots of stories of where we have been, the people we met, how fast we travelled, what the road or footpath or the ground we travelled on was like.

Questions for Students

Today we think about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. What type of journey have they walked? How have they walked on this land? An Indigenous person could tell a story of one of their journeys or explain how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people showed their journeys through their art.

Do we know what it's like to walk in someone else's shoes?

What sort of footprint do we leave behind? Is it one of respect, love, kindness or is it deep and destructive, heavy with hate?

Activities

We All Stand on Sacred Ground Activity

The land is very important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They have strong spiritual and cultural links to the land and have walked upon and cared for it for thousands of years.

Create your own prayer space:

1. Decorate footprints or old shoes for the prayer space

2. Trace your own footprints and write in the space:

We All Stand on Sacred Ground



Story Sharing

Paint, draw or write a story about what you think is holy ground/ or a symbol of your own footprint/how do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people walk in love? What symbols do they use?

Make a word cloud –

Write a prayer about being accepted and accepting of all people. Pick out the most important and used words by the class or group and arrange them on a page to form a word cloud.



EXAMPLE

Faith Stones

Each stone is unique and they are an excellent medium to show that although they are different, they are all important and precious in God's eyes. It would be terrific if an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person could be invited to lead the group in painting.

Students should be encouraged to use thought and imagination in depicting their faith through painting the rock.

Whilst the stones are drying, encourage students to talk about what they painted and how there are similarities and differences in each painting.

Once finished, they could be arranged in your prayer space or classroom.

Materials:

- Stones (palm sized) - smooth and clean, any shape, 1 per student. River pebbles are ideal.
- Acrylic paints
- Brushes, newspapers, shirts, smocks or aprons
- Felt and glue
- Newspaper or material to protect tables and floor

Before class:

- Wash stones and ensure that they are dry.
- Setup painting stations

Faith Connection

St. Peter wrote about Jesus in the Bible as the "living stone" who was rejected by the people in power but approved and precious in God's eyes. We, too, are "living stones" (1 Peter 2:4-5). We are God's building stones of the Church, with Jesus as the cornerstone. God wants to build Church with you and me. Let the stones with our names on them remind us of all the saints who have lived before us. We, too, should strive to become good and loving persons.



Learning about Saints

Students might learn about Saints that are linked in some way with sharing, kindness and inclusion.

The Saints below are linked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. St. Kateri is a Native American Saint and Sr. Mary MacKillop is the first Australian Saint.

St. Kateri Tekakwitha

St. Kateri Takakwitha is the patron saint of the environment. She is the first Native American saint. She was born in 1656 to the daughter of a Mohawk warrior and a Catholic Algonquin. Father Jacques de Lambertville, a Jesuit missionary baptized her. She was devoted to prayer and penitential practices. She also cared for the sick and aged. At the age of four her mother and brother died of smallpox. Kateri's face was scarred by the disease and she became almost blind. St. Kateri died during Holy Week. Within 15 minutes of death her face was healed of its scars. She appeared to many people after her death, always carrying a cross. We celebrate St. Kateri's feast day on July 14.



Saint Mary MacKillop

Saint Mary MacKillop is one of the most remarkable and inspiring women that Australia has produced. She dedicated her life to the Sisters of St Joseph, the first religious order to be founded by an Australian, and in doing so, Saint Mary MacKillop provided an outstanding example that we as a society can follow.

Despite a vow of poverty and a dependence on Divine Providence, Saint Mary managed to make education available to the poor and the marginalised people of rural Australia.

Even when faced with challenging times, Saint Mary refused to attack those who wrongly accused her and undermined her work. She continued in the way that she believed God was calling her, and was always ready to forgive those who wronged her.

Saint Mary showed compassion for anyone in need, regardless of race, colour or faith, and a reverence for the dignity of others, especially those most neglected in society.



