



# Praise to you, Lord of Heaven and Earth

6 July 2014    Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council  
Secretariat: 80 Payneham Road Stepney SA 5069 Tel: (08) 8363 2963 Fax: (08) 8363 3159 Email: [craig@natsicc.org.au](mailto:craig@natsicc.org.au)

# Multimedia Resource

Download Clip Art, Videos,  
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Parish or organisation



[www.natsicc.org.au/resources/aboriginal\\_and\\_islander\\_sunday\\_2014](http://www.natsicc.org.au/resources/aboriginal_and_islander_sunday_2014)

## 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.

## NATSICC Councilors 2012-2015:

### Chairperson, Queensland

Thelma Parker

### Deputy Chair, South Australia

John Lochowiak

### Youth Councilors

Mitch Firth

Sabrina Stevens (Proxy)

### Treasurer, Tasmania

Jamie-Lee Armstrong

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Dolly McGaughey

### New South Wales

Ann Weldon

### Western Australia

Shirley Quaresimin

### Northern Territory

Cathie Wilson

## Victoria

Margrett Gilson

## ACT

Sally FitzGerald

## Clip-art

Melissa Brickell VIC (Clip Art)

Kimberly Clip Art WA (Clip Art)

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

Front Cover Courtesy of Murri Ministry

## Acknowledgements

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man - *Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*

Sr. Elizabeth Delaney, SGS

Thelma Parker, NATSICC, Chairperson and NATSICC Councilors

Jamie-Lee Armstrong,

Dolly McGaughey, Shirley Quaresmin -

*NATSICC Liturgy Team*

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



*Introduction:*

# Praise to you, Lord of Heaven and Earth

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

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 "Praise to you, Lord of Heaven and Earth" and they include a range of Ceremonies, rituals and prayers that may be utilised in your liturgy. 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) are can be found at [www.natsicc.org.au](http://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 2014 resources are comprehensive and suitable for use in congregations with and without Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members. The Reflections included bring together 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.

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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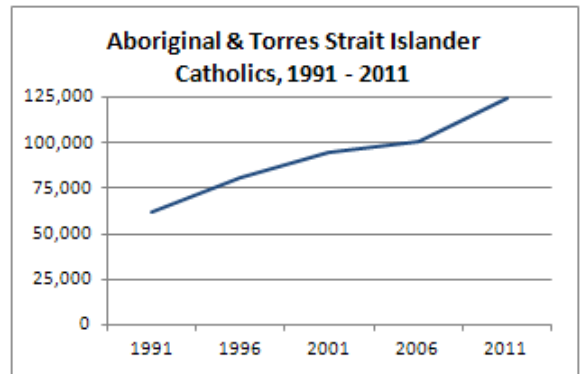
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# Statistics

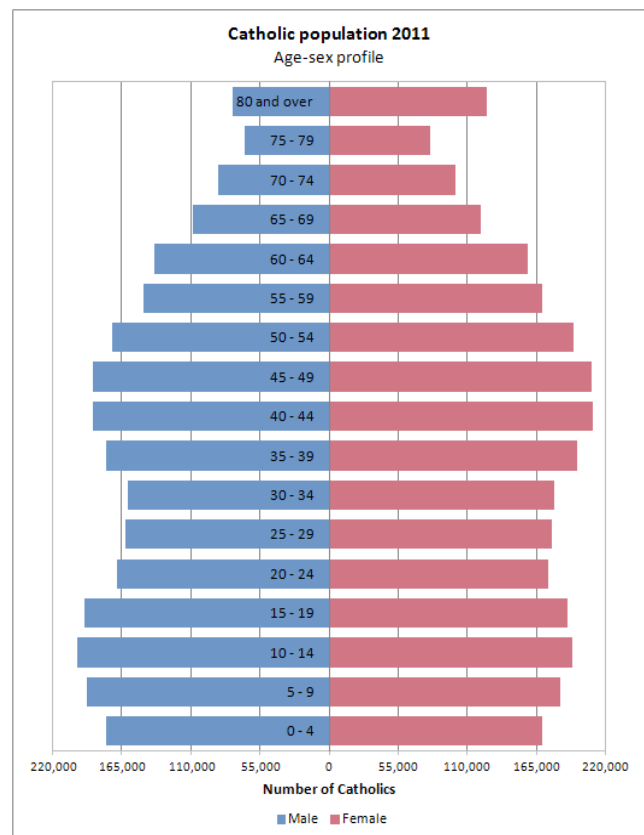
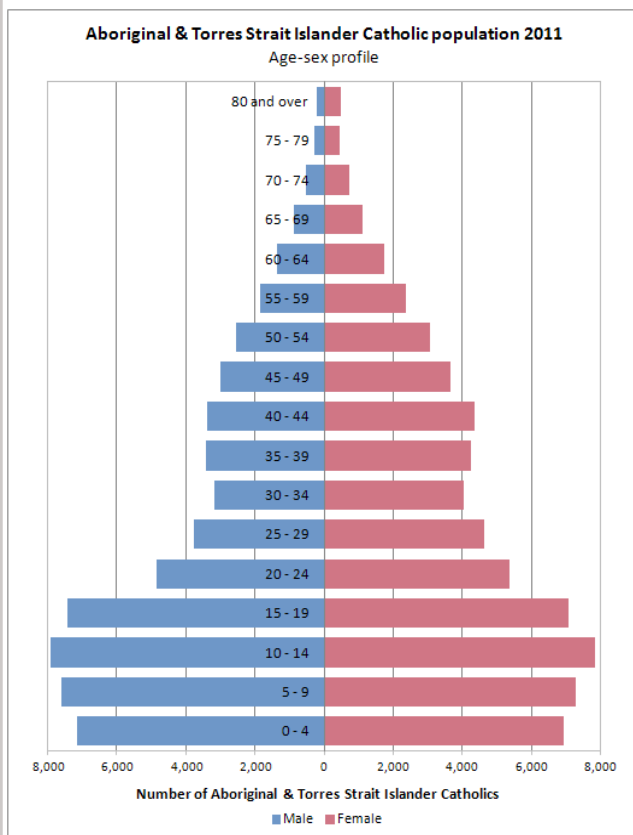
Courtesy ACBC Pastoral Research Office E News Bulletin, September 2012

## 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.



**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
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,301</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9,450</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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
<b>Total primary</b>	<b>9,819</b>	<b>9,556</b>	<b>19,375</b>	<b>100</b>

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
<b>Total secondary</b>	<b>6,625</b>	<b>6,598</b>	<b>13,223</b>	<b>100</b>

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

Tel: (03) 9953 3457

Email: [office@pro.catholic.org.au](mailto:office@pro.catholic.org.au)

Web: [www.pro.catholic.org.au](http://www.pro.catholic.org.au)

# Liturgy resources

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

## 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 "Praise to you, Lord of Heaven and Earth".

## Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country by an Aboriginal Elder

'Welcome to Country' is an important ceremony by Aboriginal people and inviting them to perform it helps non-Indigenous people recognise Aboriginal culture and history.

### Or, ALTERNATE

Acknowledgement of Country by Celebrant in the Introductory Rite.

An 'Acknowledgement of Country' can be done by everyone, Indigenous or non-Indigenous, to pay respect to the fact that one is on Aboriginal land.

Sample Acknowledgement of Country where the language group is not known [1]:

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.

Sample Acknowledgement of Country using a specific nation [1]:

I would like to acknowledge the Eora people who are the traditional custodians of this land. I would also like to pay respect to the elders past and present of the Eora nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal people present.

## Hymns & Acclamations

### Entrance Processional

May be accompanied by a Didgeridoo

**Entrance Hymn:** All The Earth, AOV 184

**Mass setting:** Local choice

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia per local choice

### Aboriginal Our Father: If appropriate.

Contact your local Catholic Aboriginal Community.

**Communion Hymn:** One Bread One Body (AOV 129), Communion Song (AOV1 87)

**Recessional Hymn:** How Great Thou Art

(AOV 94) or The Great Southland (below)

Verse 1:

This is our nation, this is our land,  
This is our future, this is our hope.  
A land of reaping, a land of harvest,  
This is our land, this is our home.

Chorus:

This is the Great Southland of the Holy Spirit,  
A land of red dust plains and summer rains,  
To this sun-burnt land we will see a flood,  
And to this Great Southland His Spirit comes.

Verse 2:

This is our nation, this is our land,  
This land of plenty, this land of hope.  
The richest harvest is in her peoples,  
We see revival, His Spirit comes. [to chorus]

Verse 3:

This is our nation, this is our land,  
This lucky country, of dreams gone dry,  
And to these people we see a harvest,  
And to this land, revival comes. [to chorus]

## Recessional

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

## Liturgy of the Word

**First Reading:** Zechariah 9: 9-10

The Lord says this: "Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion! Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem! See now, your king comes to you; he is victorious, he is triumphant, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem; the bow of war will be banished. He will proclaim peace for the nations. His empire shall stretch from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth."

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13-14

**R. (cf. 1) I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. or: R. Alleluia.**

I will give you glory, O God my King,  
I will bless your name for ever.

I will bless you day after day  
and praise your name for ever.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. or: R. Alleluia.**

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,  
slow to anger, abounding in love.  
How good is the Lord to all,  
compassionate to all his creatures.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. or: R. Alleluia.**

All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord,  
and your friends shall repeat their blessing.  
They shall speak of the glory of your reign  
and declare your might, O God.

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. or: R. Alleluia.**

The Lord is faithful in all his words  
And loving in all his deeds.

The Lord supports all who fall  
And raises all who are bowed down

**R. I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. or: R. Alleluia.**

# Download a Video slideshow celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the Church at [www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au)

## **Second Reading:** Romans 8: 9, 11-13

Your interests are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him, and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you. So then, my brothers and sisters, there is no necessity for us to obey our unspiritual selves or to live unspiritual lives. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body you will live.

This is the word of the Lord

## **Gospel Acclamation:**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed are you, Father, lord of Heaven and Earth; You have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.

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:** Matthew 11: 25-30

Jesus exclaimed, "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light."

This is the Gospel of the Lord

## **Prayers of the Faithful**

Please select the intentions for your community from the following:

**Celebrant:** Today, we ask the Lord to be with us and hear our prayers on this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday, a day where we are called to celebrate the gifts that Indigenous people bring to the Catholic Church in Australia. It is today and the month of July where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples celebrate survival and the strength of culture and spirit.

**Reader:** Let us pray to the Lord

**All:** Lord hear our Prayer

**Reader:** We pray for the church, Pope Francis, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, 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 a compassionate response to the needs of others in ways that reveal your love and mercy, especially to those that are suffering.

Let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord hear our Prayer

**Reader:** We pray for our Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community leaders who stand for us. May their minds and hearts be guided by their connections to community and their family. Keep them safe from the burden of responsibility, that they too may live in peace and harmony.

Let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord hear our Prayer

**Reader:** We pray for our sick and dying, the homeless and imprisoned, the refugees in detention, the weary and lost, that their Faith stays 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:** For leaders of all 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 peoples. 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 Mother Mary walk with them and touch their lives as they make their contribution to God and Church.

Let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord hear our Prayer

**Reader:** We pray that our faith stays strong and continues to bear witness to the Church that God wants it to be in Australia.

Let us pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord hear our Prayer

**Reader:** We reach out to our Brothers and Sisters who have turned away from their Faith, we pray that the Holy Spirit guide them on the right path back to church and the sacraments.

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 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 ... )



# Homily Notes

## National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

by Bishop Joseph Oudeman

In today's Gospel we are told by Matthew that Jesus, at a time when his message was falling on deaf ears and indeed caused conflict and opposition, still found it in His Heart to bless and praise the Lord of Heaven and Earth! Why you may ask? He thanks his Father "for revealing to mere children" the mysteries of God and God's plan for humanity.

Those same mysteries, He said, were hidden from, i.e. not seen or understood by, the learned and the clever. It continues to be so, for eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to respond. Like only mere children can and do.

Jesus then invites us all, who are weary and feel burdened by the trials of life and history, to come to Him and to learn from Him, who is gentle and humble of heart. The lesson we need to learn is to be gentle and humble of heart. It is a lesson for the heart. To be clever and learned only fails to see, what the heart sees. And Jesus promises all the weary and overburdened "and you will find rest for your souls." Oh. Our souls! Where we are in touch with our deepest needs and desires. Where all of humanity, in their restlessness, dream and in their dreaming believe in and hope for all things true and noble.

We are very much aware on this "National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" Sunday of the many past and present efforts to bring about indigenous recognition of and respect for their rightful place in our society and indeed in Australia's Constitution.

We also acknowledge that there are many political issues which still need to be dealt with. Recognition and reconciliation is far from complete. Injustice and racism are still realities for many of our indigenous brothers and sisters. Too few have adequate housing, adequate healthcare, adequate education, and far too few have adequate employment.

We hope and pray that our government and the many agencies involved will continue on the path of reconciliation with a sense of justice and compassion.

But more is needed: Reconciliation needs to be underpinned by a change of heart, by a conversion from "our unspiritual selves to our spiritual selves". We need to be open to the Spirit of God who has made His home in all of us, in all of our cultural diversity. Every day. In every encounter. In every relationship. First of all we need to admit and embrace everyone as family, as brother and sister, created in the image

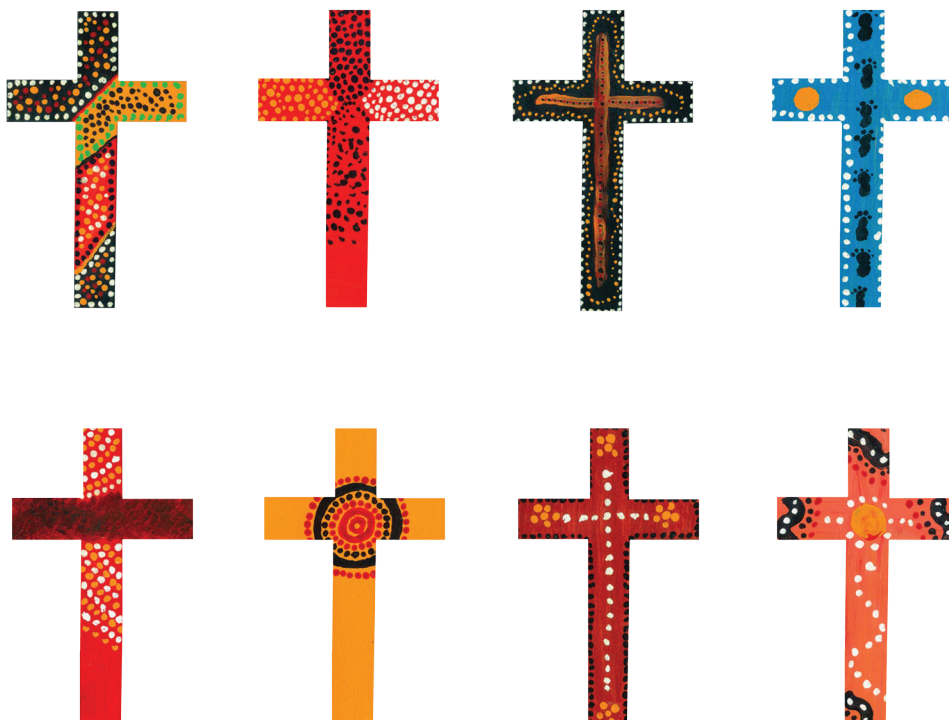


and likeness of the “Lord of Heaven and Earth”. We belong. That is the spiritual truth of our lives. If we are not prepared to admit this, with all its practical implications, we are stuck in our unspiritual selves. And remain a hindrance to make this world a better place for all. We don’t enter the place/space where the Lord of Creation, of Heaven and Earth reigns. The place named by Jesus as “The Kingdom of God.” The place where everyone finds rest for his soul. With great humility and gentleness, we have learned to say: you are my brother and my sister! You God are the God of all. We share in your likeness!

This reflection started with the joy of Jesus, as He thanked His Father for revealing His truth and love, His plan, to mere children, to all those who acknowledge that they belong to the family of God.

Our first reading and responsorial psalm describe for us the joy and praise that is in God and in His creatures. A joy that comes from God’s unconditional love for his creatures, who respond: “I will give you glory O God my King, I will bless your name forever, I will bless you day after day, and praise your name forever.”

Let us celebrate all that has been achieved with gratitude. Let us indeed anticipate the completion of our journey of reconciliation and unity, and praise the Lord of Heaven and Earth. There should be much more praise and thanksgiving in our lives, for the many blessings. The more are hearts are filled with gratitude, the more we will be in tune with our spiritual selves and act accordingly with a spirit of deep respect and generosity of attitude. In our different cultural ways!





## 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)

### NATSICC Prayer

Lord, we are companions on a journey  
Only you Dear Lord  
Know the identity and depth of me  
You know my hurts and pains  
Those frustrations I feel in this land  
So please I ask you  
Take my hand and comfort me  
Reconcile and guide me in justice and in faith  
For we're on our way to Alice (Springs)  
Where you expressed your love for me  
Lord, set me free  
And let me be the servant I want to be  
Lord, I thank you  
For hearing and understanding me  
For Lord,  
You are always on my mind  
And on my lips  
And in my heart  
And there's simply no other way that  
it could be. Amen.

### 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  
or 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 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.

### **Aboriginal Lord's Prayer**

**(where 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 are 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.

Diocese of Broome, used with permission.





# My Story

Aboriginal Deacon Ralph Madigan tells of how his traditional culture and Catholic faith has guided him on his spiritual journey.

My Catholic background comes from my grandmother on my father's side, Annie Green, who had a very strong Catholic faith. Gran always prayed the rosary and she had story books about Jesus, and the stories in those books were passed on to us. She had seven children, five sons and two daughters and she made sure they were all baptised in the Catholic Church. From there, our parents made sure that all her grandchildren were baptised into the faith. The Catholic faith has been in our family for over one hundred years and our families are still baptising their children today.

Living on an Aboriginal Reserve at an early age was a primitive but a happy lifestyle with other Aboriginal families from different religious backgrounds. We would listen to their religious stories and sometimes they would be critical of our faith, but that did not deter us. I guess it only made us stronger in our faith.

My brothers and sisters and I were educated by the Sisters of Mercy at the local parish school in Mareeba and we also spent some time in the State School system. The Sisters of Mercy made sure we attended school regularly and they helped us over the years with food and clothing.

My mother, Elsie Madigan, was a big influence in my attendance at Mass in St Thomas's, Mareeba. In his early years, my father, Jack Madigan, was also a regular Mass goer. When I went to Mass I always sat in the back row and felt very comfortable there. One Sunday, one of the parishioners asked my mother and me to take up the gifts, which we did. Then I was asked if I would like to be a reader at Mass, and I accepted. From there I became a communion minister and then I began playing the organ. Sometime later I was invited on to the R.C.I.A. team in the parish.

**We need to look at the future and what it holds for us. Each one of us has been given gifts from God and we are meant to use those gifts by sharing them with others.**

These were things that I had never imagined that I would be able to do. Sometimes our background holds us back so that we don't go forward. We need to look at the future and what it holds for us. Each one of us has been given gifts from God and we are meant to use those gifts by sharing them with others.

Even though I was active in my parish, for many years I had a longing for something more. I wanted to be a deacon. So, after some encouragement and much study I was eventually ordained by Bishop James Foley on 7 June 2009 in St Thomas of Villanova Church in my home town of Mareeba. It was a day for me and my family and the parishioners to remember – a wonderful ceremony with a bishop, fourteen priests and a deacon and over 500 parishioners to help celebrate this special occasion.

Since my ordination I have been working full time for the Church and have presided at many baptisms, weddings and funerals. I regularly serve as the deacon during the celebration of Mass and frequently give the homily. But my main role is working, in partnership with Fr Rob Greenup, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in the Diocese of Cairns – calling ourselves 'Indigenous Connections'. This has taken me all over the diocese but most of our work is done in the small Aboriginal community of Coen, my home town of Mareeba and in Cairns. In these places we celebrate Mass on a regular basis. We have also re-established the AICC in Mareeba and Cairns,

worked with two Catholic Secondary Colleges and have become involved with Wontulp-Bi-Buya, an ecumenical theological college in Cairns.

In all this my Catholic faith is supported by what I know of my traditional Muluridgi belief and culture. For example, my parents and grandparents told us many traditional stories which conveyed a strong belief in the spiritual world. A world that was very real to them and part of their everyday life. And these stories have become part of my life as well. For our ancestors the spiritual world and the material world were not separate but were closely woven together. They saw the spiritual world ever present around them in the hills and the trees, the wind and the sky, and the behaviour of animals and birds. Much like the way in which Jesus could see his Father's kingdom breaking into this world in ordinary, everyday things such as a farmer planting seed (Mk 4:1-9) or a woman baking bread (Lk 13:20-21).

Another big part of our Aboriginal culture that supports my Catholic faith is the importance we place on family. Not just our immediate family but also our extended family and even beyond that to the connectedness there is between all people. For us everybody has a place and everybody fits in somewhere. To this day we are still trying to put together more of our family connections. We believe that as Christians, guided by the same Spirit, we are all brothers and sisters, children of the one God (Rom 8:14).



Also, in our culture and in our family, we were taught by our parents from an early age to share what we had with one another. All our lives we have shared with each other and we are still doing it today. It is an important part of who we are and many Aboriginal people share with each other no matter how little they may have for themselves. I guess that is why a lot of Aboriginal people are not wealthy. But that was the way of Jesus. He said, "Give to anyone who asks, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away" (Mt 5:42).

All the way along the journey of my life I have tried to hold fast to my Catholic faith and to my Aboriginal heritage. For me, there has never been a conflict between the two. My Catholic faith and my Aboriginality walk side by side, like close friends. They work together as one, they strengthen each other and they have made me who I am today. I thank God for both of them.

# Small Group Reflections of Parishes and Schools

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday is an important day on the Liturgical 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 Christian groups and Indigenous 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 relationship of Non Indigenous Australians with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Pope Francis and Anglican Bishop Saibo Mabo provide the source documents for reflection. Both discuss the concepts of Culture, faith, humanity from differing perspectives whilst reinforcing the importance of maintaining and developing our relationship with God through our interactions with others.

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

## Reflection #1:

### Pope Francis

Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter 1 June 2014

We need, for example, to recover a certain sense of deliberateness and calm. This calls for time and the ability to be silent and to listen. We need also to be patient if we want to understand those who are different from us. People only express themselves fully when they are not merely tolerated, but know that they are truly accepted. If we are genuinely attentive in listening to others, we will learn to look at the world with different eyes and come to appreciate the richness of human experience as manifested in different cultures and traditions. We will also learn to appreciate more fully the important values inspired by Christianity, such as the vision of the human person, the nature of marriage and the family, the proper distinction between the religious and political spheres, the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, and many others.

How, then, can communication be at the service of an authentic culture of encounter? What does it mean for us, as disciples of the Lord, to encounter others in the light of the Gospel? In spite of our own limitations and sinfulness, how do we draw truly close to one another? These questions are summed up in what a scribe – a communicator – once asked Jesus: “And who is my neighbour?” (Lk 10:29). This question can help us to see communication in terms of “neighbourliness”. We might paraphrase the question in this way: How can we be “neighbourly” in our use of the communications media and in the new environment created by digital technology? I find an answer in the parable of the Good Samaritan, which is also a parable about communication. Those who communicate, in effect, become neighbours. The Good

Samaritan not only draws nearer to the man he finds half dead on the side of the road; he takes responsibility for him. Jesus shifts our understanding: it is not just about seeing the other as someone like myself, but of the ability to make myself like the other. Communication is really about realizing that we are all human beings, children of God. I like seeing this power of communication as “neighbourliness”. Whenever communication is primarily aimed at promoting consumption or manipulating others, we are dealing with a form of violent aggression like that suffered by the man in the parable, who was beaten by robbers and left abandoned on the road. The Levite and the priest do not regard him as a neighbour, but as a stranger to be kept at a distance. In those days, it was rules of ritual purity which conditioned their response. Nowadays there is a danger that certain media so condition our responses that we fail to see our real neighbour.

## Reflection #2:

### Indigenous Reflection

“Indigenous Spirituality and the Church: A Cultural Faith”

Presentation by : Bishop Saibo Mabo

Darlington Centre, University of Sydney,  
8th July 2003

In many ways we are all alike. In other ways we are different. We are different because we come from different backgrounds. Although we are one in Christ, we come from different cultures.

In our discussion today, I want to use the image of culture as a basket. Each culture carries its own traditional basket. In the islands of the Torres Strait, our baskets were used to collect our daily food. These baskets are a very important part of our traditional life for they contain food that nourishes our life.



For all of us, baskets represent not only food for our daily lives, but they also symbolise our culture. For example, the European basket represents European food, material goods and spiritual things. In the same way, the Dilly Bag of Aboriginal culture contains Aboriginal food, material goods and spiritual aspects. In the Torres Strait Islands, the basket is called a Li, in the Western Islands and in the Eastern Islands it is called an Epei.

The History of the Christian story that the gospel of Jesus Christ was brought to Indigenous people in the European basket. That is, the Anglo-Celtic basket. It contained not only the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, but also the Bible that contains different versions and interpretations of European forms of Christianity. This means that before the Gospel was brought to our Indigenous context, it was already contextualised in Europe.

The gospel was brought to Indigenous people at a time in history when Christianity was strongly identified with European culture or civilisation. This meant that to accept the Gospel was to also accept European culture and European forms of Christianity. Our people saw no difference between the Gospel and European culture or between the Gospel and European forms of Christianity.

Thus, the European basket was handed down to Indigenous people. We accepted this basket without question and we have appreciated the spiritual nourishment contained in the basket. In this European basket, we have not only found the Gospel, but also liturgies and forms of worship which were developed in the Anglo-Celtic contexts, through which the faith in Jesus of Nazareth and his Good News is expressed.

As time has passed and we have grown in our Christian faith, we have begun a process whereby we are taking the seeds of Christianity out of the Anglo-Celtic basket and we are now planting them in the Indigenous cultural soil and living our Christian lives in the Indigenous context. We are weaving a new basket – an Indigenous basket, to carry the Gospel to our own people. We are mindful of the need to develop our own Liturgy and Worship through which to express our faith in Jesus of Nazareth.

For our Islander and Aboriginal Church to be strong, we have to learn how to let God speak through our culture. But first we must understand our own culture. This will help us understand the deepest truths about the Bible as we interpret and relate to our Indigenous contexts. In this way, we are taking the good things, the uniqueness of our own culture, and our vision of God and placing them in the new Indigenous basket.

How is it that we can do this ? How is it that God allows us to do this ? For us, God's message is the same. But it is presented in different ways because of our different backgrounds.

Imagine you are on one of the islands of the Torres Strait. There are coconut trees everywhere. Some trees have green coconuts, some yellow coconuts and others, brown coconuts. These coconuts may have different colours but coconut meat and milk all tastes the same. Likewise God's message has been presented in different ways through the Old Testament, through the Prophets, Apostles and Teachers, in a variety of ways and contexts. But it is the same God and the same Kingdom that is proclaimed throughout the generations and in different cultures.

Jesus is God's Good News for all cultures. The Gospel tells us that God became human beings like us. John 1 : 14 says "The Word (Logos) became flesh and tabernacled among us and we beheld his glory." The Logos, the mysterious creative Word and the Power of God, pitched his tent or tabernacle and "camped" among us. He took on human form, common to all of us, whether we are black or white, yellow or red. Jesus showed us God's glory. This is the mysterious, powerful and awesome presence of God, which was experienced by God's people in Old Testament times. This God is the Creator God.

The Creator God was also present in our Indigenous contexts. Indigenous peoples experienced his mysterious and awesome presence in different ways in their sacred places, ceremonies and stories.

On my traditional homeland of Mer Island (Murray Island) in the Torres Strait, this mysterious power and presence was experienced through the ancestor "god" of

Malo. Creative powers were expressed through this "god". Malo is a symbol of the mysterious power and presence of the Creator God revealed in the Bible. He was also present in pre-Christian, Indigenous cultures.

Another story which is important to us as Indigenous people is the story of the two water holes on Mer Island. One of these water holes was on top of a hill and the other was down in the valley. Our traditional spirituality is also centred on this story. It is our traditional story that is parallel with the Christian teachings about the way in which we can drink from the pureness of God and bathe in the clear waters of his spirit.

The water hole in the valley was very large and was made in sandstone – a sandy stones water hole. It was dirty and filthy because there were many dry leaves and dead frogs floating in the water. People swam there and washed their clothes in the water hole and drank from its waters. They loved to go there, but the dirty water gave the girls sores in their mouths and eyes. The girls became weak and sick and there was death in their community. This was probably the reason why they did not follow the old woman, Deo, to the top of the hill.

You see, Deo knew about another water hole – one at the top of the hill. This water hole was in solid sandstone. The rock kept it clean. Deo protected the water hole by cleaning out the leaves and other dead things that floated in it. The water hole was small but it was clear as crystal and the water tasted beautiful. It was pure. The water from this water hole kept the old woman free from sickness and disease. She lived like a young woman.

In our world today we have two water holes. The water hole at the bottom of the hill is modern life and entertainment. Some people are so greedy for money, new cars, new houses and boats. But what is the result of using this water hole ? What are the results that give negative growth to people today ? The results are : countries fighting each other, wars, relationships and people cut down, growing weak, hating each other. There is no time to live in the presence of the almighty God Yaweh because people are drinking from the sandy stones water hole – the dirty water hole – the filthy waters of life.

### *Indigenous Reflection (cont...)*

The other water hole that comes from the solid rock is God. The people who drink from this water hole are the ones who are faithful. They have committed their life and have become humble and obedient to do God's will. Also, they are people who always listen and obey and show others how to leave the filthy waters of life. They are the people who are healthy and strong and alive in the church of God.

The water that they drink comes from the water hole at the top of the hill. It is clean and pure and has a beautiful taste. This water is the Holy Spirit that washes the sins of the world and it strengthens peoples' lives so that their faith can stand strong and fight against the world of flesh and the devil. The living stream only flows from the church of God where it dwells. Jesus is the crystal water that flows from the top of the hill where we drink and quench our thirst. Only Jesus washes away our sins.

The wonders and mysteries that are expressed in our stories and in our traditions are those same mysteries and stories that are expressed in Anglo-Celtic Christianity. The mystery of God has been made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. Our spirituality refers to this mystery in the story of Malo. Malo is our traditional creator yet we know that the Creator of all – the Creator Spirit, the God of Creation, is revealed in Christ to be the Reconciling Spirit and the God of Redemption and Liberation. This is the God that was brought to us in the Anglo-Celtic basket. And now we need to take this Gospel and put it in our Indigenous basket and allow the Gospel seed to grow in our soils.

Djinyini Gondarra, the Arnhem Land theologian says "We Aboriginal leaders are called to plant Christ in this Aboriginal Australian "fertile soil" rather than transplant Western forms of Christianity. We must promote Christ as a living and acceptable part of our ceremony and culture. Our confidence is that Christ has won the victory over all principalities and powers and that victory will certainly become manifest if He is given the chance to do battle (Let My People Go, 1986, 21)."

We, the Indigenous people of Australia have only recently begun to explore our own Indigenous cultural patterns and spirituality in relating the Gospel to our own contexts. In this process of contextualising the Gospel, what can Anglo-Celtic Christians do ?

May I suggest that you allow and support us to explore our Indigenous spirituality, our sacred symbols, cultural stories, cultural designs and ceremonies ? This is our inner world. A world in which we discover the mystery of our Creator – God, who Christ revealed.

May I also suggest that you allow and support us to develop Indigenous liturgies, our own forms of worship and forms of Christianity. This is our outer world, through which we express our faith in the creation, of God and salvation. Stand with us on our journey of exodus. We may stand but we will not fall, God holds us in the palm of his hand and he will guide us on our journey. We ask for your encouragement.

On this spiritual journey there is room for Anglo-Celtic Christians and Indigenous Christians, for mutual support and interaction. In the past, we have all made mistakes. Your basket and my basket have not always contained food that has been good for us. Through faith, we learn what parts of our culture are unhelpful for us. In God's grace, we can fill our baskets with new food. Each of us has heard the message that we carry in these baskets – our cultural baskets – it is time for us to combine the good food from these baskets and to feed each other from them. As we have learned and been freed from the Anglo-Celtic basket, we invite you to learn and be fed from the Indigenous Christian basket. We invite you to sample from the Indigenous culture and Christian "Epei".

So, brothers and sisters, our Indigenous baskets contain all good things from our culture and background that will help us to tell God's message clearly to the people of today. Our basket, called the Dilly Bag in Aboriginal culture, the Li in the Western Islands and the Epei in the Eastern Islands are full of traditions that the Holy Spirit can use to call people to faith and action.

As we keep the links with our traditions, soil and lands, let us pray that as we move to a new beginning, God's Holy Spirit will fill our baskets with the good faith, liberty, action and unity.

### **Reflection Activity:**

Bishop Saibo Mabo uses the imagery of a basket to represent culture. He describes the different things that different people use to fill their baskets.

**What is in your basket?**

**What is missing?**

Pope Francis asks how can communication be at the service of an authentic culture of encounter.

**Who in your community do you see as your neighbour?**

**What can you do to enhance the concept of neighborhood in your community, school or parish?**

**How can you better communicate and include people of other cultures?**

# Additional Material for Reflection

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

## **Dadirri** by Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann

"Dadirri is inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness. Dadirri recognises the deep spring that is inside us. We call on it and it calls to us. This is the gift that Australia is thirsting for. It is something like what you call 'contemplation'.

When I experience dadirri, I am made whole again. I can sit on the riverbank or walk through the trees; even if someone close to me has passed away, I can find my peace in this silent awareness. There is no need of words. A big part of dadirri is listening."

"In our Aboriginal way, we learnt to listen from our earliest days. We could not live good and useful lives unless we listened. This was the normal way for us to learn - not by asking questions. We learnt by watching and listening, waiting and then acting."

"My people are not threatened by silence. They are completely at home in it. They have lived for thousands of years with Nature's quietness. My people today, recognise and experience in this quietness, the great Life-Giving Spirit, the Father of us all."

## **Landmarks: A Spiritual Search in a Southern Land** by Fr. Eugene Stockton

It is no accident that the three great monotheistic religions - Islam, Judaism and Christianity - all come out of the desert. As we seek our own spiritual way in Australia, a mostly desert continent, we need to take stock of the spiritual heritage we carried with us from whatever homeland across the sea. Our oldest traditions resonate with the austere landscape of our new home. Our younger traditions grew up amid the lush green and temperate climate of Europe. Our religious culture had moved successively from the desert to the Temple, and again into the market place (the Roman Basilica) and thence into the Cathedral. Christendom expressed itself exuberantly in architecture, art, music, and culture set snug within four walls of the church. Proudly owning our heritage, we yet gently let it go, as we now find Our way in a broad dry land more akin to that which cradled our religion. God is beckoning us back to the stark simplicity of our beginnings, as we face the truth of Australia.

## **Address to the NATSICC National Assembly 2012** by Fr Frank Brennan

Just before going to Rome, I had the chance to check out the wonderful new galleries at the National Gallery in Canberra. They are spacious, making great use of natural light. In one gallery, there are two paintings by the late Hector Jandany from Warmun in the Kimberley. One painting is entitled "The Ascension", and the other is entitled "Holy Spirit in this Land". Hector's description of "The Ascension" appears in the gallery catalogue:

The two spirits on the right make the fire; the two spirits on the left get the meal of fish ready; Jesus' friends (are) at the bottom of the picture, Jesus said: 'We all have supper; This is my last day I have supper with you, I got to go away, I gulonga way "Ngapuny Ngarrangkarrinjil".'

His friends did not know that the fire would make a big smoke.

It make a big smoke and come up behind the hill and took Jesus up to Heaven.

That smoke bin come and lift him up and take him away to Heaven.

Hector was encouraged to paint in his home community by the Josephite sisters who had established a spirituality centre nearby. They also ran the community school and assisted at the old people's home. The sisters were not trained anthropologists or art advisers. Like Mary MacKillop they came amongst the poor in a remote area, shared what they had, educating the children and encouraging the adults. None of the sisters would claim any of the credit for the art of Hector and his school of Turkey Creek painters. But for the sisters' presence at Warmun all those years, I doubt that Hector's paintings would now be hanging in the National Gallery. His Holy Spirit painting is now replicated in a huge and majestic mosaic at the Australian Centre of Christianity and Culture. But for the selfless dedication of the sisters all these years throughout Australia, I doubt that there would have been 8,000 Australians in St Peter's Square two years ago attesting the holiness of Mary MacKillop. Such celebrations confirm that indigenous identity is still strong and resilient though ever adapting for individuals and communities who have endured much by way of dispossession, dislocation and disempowerment.



# Methods of Reflection

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

“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:

- What does the biblical text say?

2. Meditation (meditatio) – reflecting on the meaning of the text that I/we have read:

- What is God saying to me/us through this text?

3. Prayer (oratio) – speaking with God in praise, thanksgiving, contrition, and petition:

- 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:

- 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:

- How will I/we change what I/we do today in response to hearing this text?

# Youth Activities - Primary

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

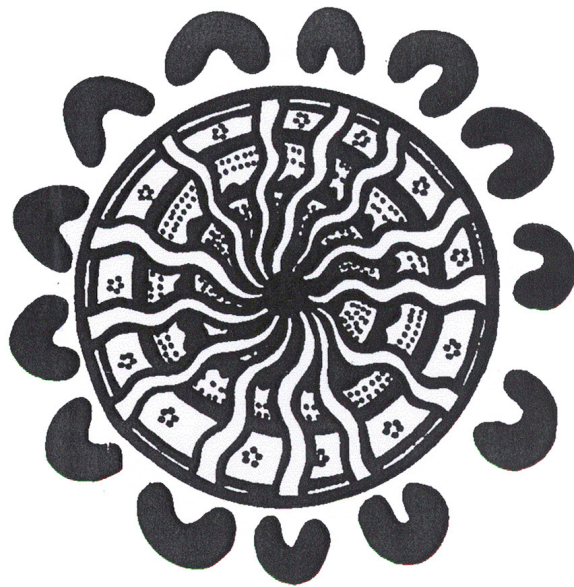
## Balloon Activity

- Copy each balloon twice (blow up to A3 if possible)
- Carefully cut out the balloons (along dotted edge)
- Stick or staple the balloons together close to the dotted line so that you have a front and back to decorate. If you leave the top (or bottom depending on orientation) they can be 'stuffed' to look like they are blown up.
- Ask students to colour in and decorate the balloons
- There is room for students to write a message on the balloons. Perhaps they could describe how they will celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday in their community.
- Use the completed balloons as part of your classroom display.





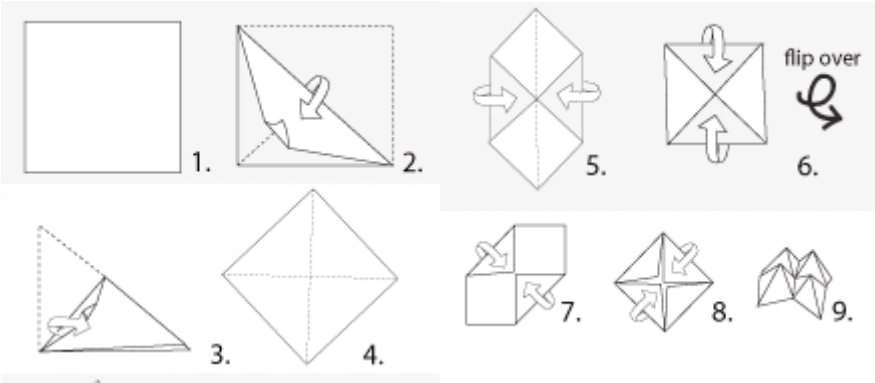
CELEBRATE



ABORIGINAL AND  
TORRES STRAIT  
ISLANDER  
SUNDAY

Chatter box activity

GREEN	1	Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Ministries are in every State and Territory. Do you know about yours?	2	YELLOW
	8	There are over 120,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in Australia	3	
RED	7	There are 548 370 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia	4	BLUE
	6	Message Sticks were used to communicate messages between language groups	5	



How to play:

1. Ask a friend to choose a colour, and then move the activity with your fingers so it snaps open first one way and then the other (imagine a mouth talking!).
2. As you do this spell out the colour they have chosen, for example if they choose red spell out R-E-D.
3. Red has three letters so stop after three moves and ask your friend to choose again. This time more choices are revealed.
4. Ask your friend to choose a number
5. Lift up the flap to reveal the fact or question/activity

# Find a word

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

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ABORIGINAL	SCHOOL
AUSTRALIA	SPIRIT
CATHOLIC	SUNDAY
CROSS	TORRESSTRAIT
DREAMING	
EARTH	
HEAVEN	
INDIGENOUS	
JESUS	
LORD	
MARY	
MOSES	
NATSICC	
PARISH	
POPEFRANCIS	

# Youth Activities - Secondary

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2014

## 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 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](mailto:office@natsicc.org.au) so that we can display all of your good work!





## 2. Create an Acknowledging Country display



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.

# CLIPART

To be used with correct acknowledgement



