



The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 2019

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday falls on the first Sunday in July and is a significant celebration on our Church's calendar. Whilst providing us with an opportunity to acknowledge our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters, the celebration also signifies that we are united as one in God's love and care.

As a community we must strengthen the observance of the Lord's Day especially in the worship of God at Sunday Mass. This year, on July 7, I encourage you to you utilise the Liturgical resources provided by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday and, renewed by the strength of God's love, I pray the Liturgy will lead you, your Parish, school or organisation to mission.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics number over 130,000 and are a growing demographic in our Church today. We must continue to reach out and provide opportunities where we may be enriched and nourished by their deep spirituality, culture and love for Jesus Christ by open the doors to our hearts and our homes.

In the Gospel of the day Jesus says "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Just as Jesus did, we must meet people where they are and walk alongside our First Nation's peoples on their journey to reconciliation and justice.

The Resource kit that has been compiled by NATSICC includes not only Liturgical suggestions but also activities and educational materials to assist schools to celebrate and educate young people on the unique and beautiful customs and traditions of Australia's First Peoples. I ask that you not only make use of the kit, but also engage with your local traditional custodians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Ministries.

The NATSICC website (www.natsicc.org.au) has information on how to contact your local groups as well as resources and articles on faith, culture and spirituality.

As Catholics we can set an example for the rest of Australia to follow by coming together as equals and friends in our Schools, Parishes and Organisations in the name of Jesus Christ and in the spirit on mutual respect and unity as one people.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Columba Macbeth-Green".

Most Rev. Columba Macbeth-Green OSPPE DD

Chairman

Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples