

NATSICC News



The Newsletter of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council - December 2014

NATSICC Youth Leadership Gathering

Indigenous Catholic Youth from every State and Territory converged on the Adelaide, the City of Churches, for the 2014 NATSICC Youth Leadership Gathering.

Each youth had been nominated by their Ministry, Parish or Organisation as a leader in their community. These young people are looked up to and guide other young people in Culture and Faith.

They came to Adelaide to listen and share their experiences of the Catholic Church in their everyday lives and the ways in which they combine their culture and faith. Bishop Christopher Saunders made the journey from Broome to share the week.

In addition to Bishop Saunders who guided the group through scripture,, Ian Tambo (Leadership), Sr Carmel Pilcher (Liturgy and the Mass), Bee Cruise (Leadership), Mitch Firth (Leadership) and Marlon Riley (Culture) provided inspiring talks to the group.

In Adelaide at the same time was the Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Convention at St Aloysius College. The NATSICC group ingrained itself on the event by participating in the Opening and closing Masses as well as facilitating a 'booked out' workshop on Aboriginal Culture and Catholic Faith.

Our youth were very visible in their black 'hoodies' and could be seen talking to groups and leaders at every meal break. For many of the convention delegates, it was the first time they were able to discuss the issues of faith with an Indigenous person.

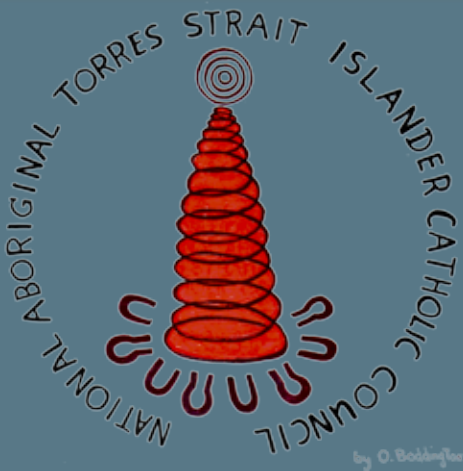
The Gathering was a successful event and we have learnt many things that we can do to improve the outcomes for young people in the Church, particularly the importance of providing engaging faith formation to our young people.

View the Gathering video here: www.youtube.com/user/TheNATSICC/videos



**SAVE THE
DATE**

JULY
2 - 6
2015



THE HEART OF JESUS BEATS WITHIN US ALL

New Signs, New Symbols for Spiritual Healing

You are invited to come together and discuss faith, culture, spirituality in Australia's Top End.

Mark your diaries and join us as Darwin provides the perfect backdrop to discuss Catholic Faith and Indigenous Spirituality.

Kormilda College

Kormilda College is located in the Northern Territory of Australia, on the outskirts of Darwin and in the suburb of Berrimah. It is half way between the cities of Darwin and Palmerston.

**Lot 6057 Berrimah Road, Berrimah,
Northern Territory 0828**

2015 NATSICC
National
Assembly
2- 6 JULY

Information can be found at:
www.natsicc.org.au/events/2015_assembly



*Wishing you a
safe and Merry
Christmas, close
to your family and
Jesus.*

NATSICC Council and Staff



Message from the Chair

As we reach the end of another year, we look back at our achievements and the happy times, but we also think about those that we have lost. It is at this time of the year that we grow closer to Jesus through the highs and lows that our Spirit endures.

For NATSICC, the year is not over yet. We are deep into the planning of our National Assembly in Darwin as well as unpack the things we learned from the successful NATSICC Youth Gathering.

On behalf of all NATSICC Councillors, please have a safe and happy Christmas, and we look forward to seeing you all in Darwin!

Thelma Parker



A moment to reflect

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

The depths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spirituality are encompassed by Paul's challenge to be guided by the spiritual, not the unspiritual. The late Pope John Paul II said to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at Alice Springs in 1986.

"But for thousands of years you have lived in this land and fashioned a culture that endures to this day. And during all this time, the spirit of God has been with you. Your 'Dreaming', which influences your lives so strongly that, no matter what happens, you remain for ever people of your culture, is your own way of touching the mystery of God's Spirit in you and in creation. You must keep your striving for God and hold on to it in your lives.

For thousands of years this culture of yours was free to grow without interference by people from other places. You lived your lives in spiritual closeness to the land, with its animals, birds, fishes, water-holes, rivers, hills and mountains. Through your closeness to the land you touched the sacredness of man's relationship with God, for the land was the proof of a power in life greater than yourselves. You did not spoil the land, use it up, exhaust it, and then walk away from it. You realized that your land was related to the source of life.

The silence of the bush taught you a quietness of soul that put you in touch with another world, the world of God's Spirit. Your careful attention to the details of kinship spoke of your reverence for birth, life and human generation. You knew that children need to be loved, to be full of joy. They need a time to grow in laughter and to play, secure in the knowledge that they belong to their people".

(The Pope in Australia – collected Homilies and Talks" – St Paul's Publications, Homebush NSW)

Part of our 'journey of healing' is to respect the depth and mystery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Spirituality and to recognise the enriching of the Christian message that results from the appreciation of both traditions.

Come to Jesus and place ourselves in his presence. Listen to His Word which speaks of humility, not conflict or racism.

Live a life which is pure and humble of heart. Finally, we focus on this Year of the Eucharist, as our the

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters often speak of the difficulty of sharing the Eucharist, partly because of their inability to inculturate their spirituality and sometimes because of their lack of ease in our ordinary Sunday congregations.

Racism is very much alive in Australia and for Catholic people, sharing Eucharist together will always be a fulfillment of Jesus' dream "by this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples". (John 13:35)



Taken from "Come Listen, Live - Share the Bread of Life Together" - 2005 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday Homily notes By Bishop Brian Heenan, (former member of the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)

St Teresa's Elders Art and Spirituality Camp

Our camp was postponed several times this year due to diocesan events. As a result, we were only able to go away for one night. . Twelve people, including myself and Joni McCourt spent the night at Wanderers Holiday Camp at Lucinda in 4 cabins. It was a great setting for our art and spiritual reflection.

We travelled by hired bus and a car so the group met at Frosty Mango on the way to Ingham where we prayed a blessing on our journey. We continued to Ingham where we enjoyed morning tea followed by a visit to the Tyto Wetlands Centre. Part of the group walked into the wetlands while the others enjoyed the wetlands near the centre. A picnic lunch in the park in Ingham sustained us for the final leg of the journey to Lucinda.

We shared a scripture reflection on 'sand' using the blessing from 1 Kings 4:29, which was then adapted to be used as a blessing to be tied on to our coloured sands bottles. Fishing, rest and a walk on the beach came next. Fish and chips were a welcome meal.

Morning began with a re-flection on an adaptation of the creation account from Genesis.

Our next activity was painting birds/flowers with chimes attached. We also made hangings with hessian, handprints and a blessing glued on. While the time was brief we achieved quite a lot but were unable to deepen our reflective time due to brevity of our stay.

We hope to return next year.

Sr Judith Foster



Fishing, waiting for, enjoying fish and chips.



Update All Paths Lead to Christ

National Consultation
into Indigenous
Inculturation of the
Catholic Church
in Australia



In August, NATSICC released a survey to every Catholic Parish in Australia. The survey focused on the current levels of involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics on a Parish level.

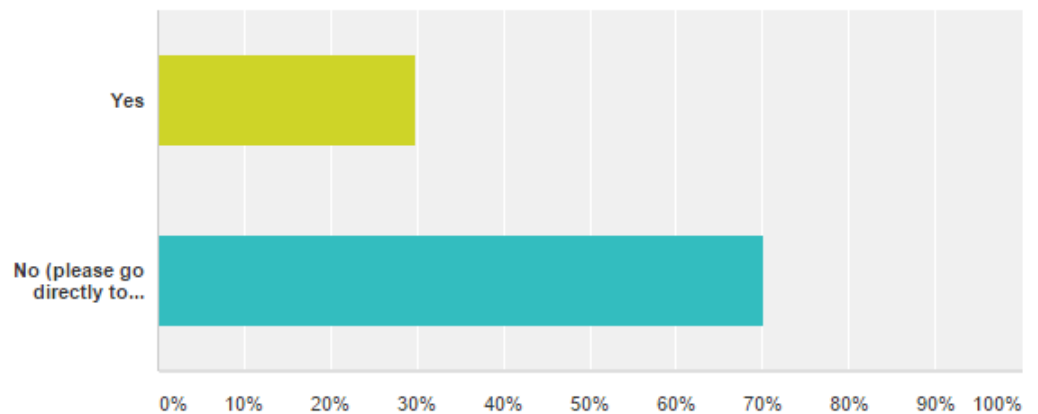
The council hopes that the results we have received will afford us a clearer view of the good things that are happening as well as identify areas that we need to work harder to address.

Additionally, the survey served as a reminder that there are actually Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in every Parish in Australia and that they need to be considered as an integral part of Church life.

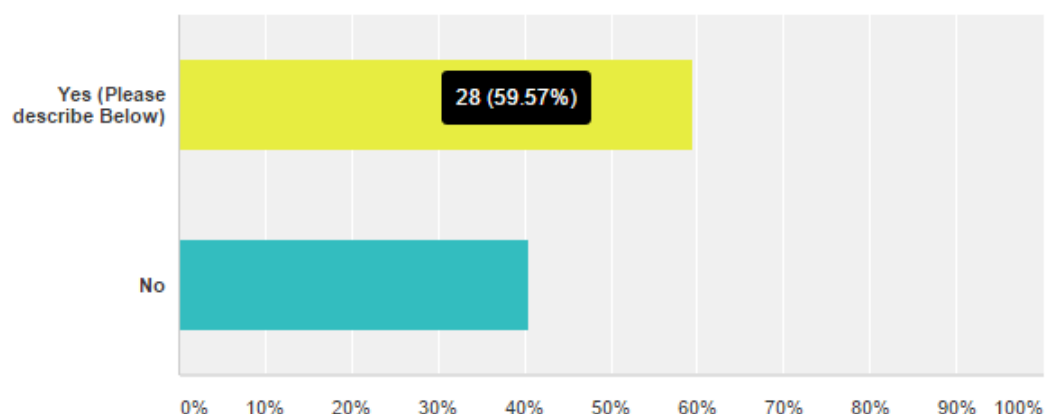
100 Parishes took the time to respond and share their opinion as well as experiences. It was an excellent response and gives us a large enough sample to make some clear findings from the exercise.

The data will be analysed further, however, some of the interesting responses are highlighted here.

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

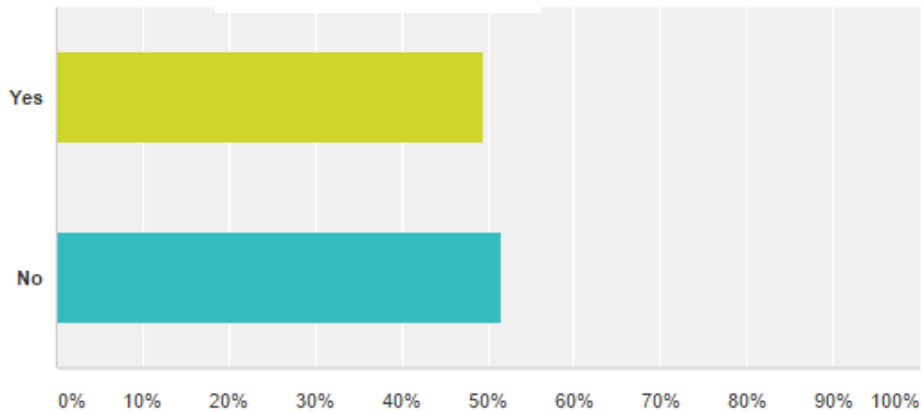


Do you have symbols in your Parish that recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture?



Does your Parish acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Land on which the Parish is situated prior to Mass or physically on Parish grounds?

Answered: 99 Skipped: 1



The survey question of Acknowledgement received a 50/50 response from Parishes.

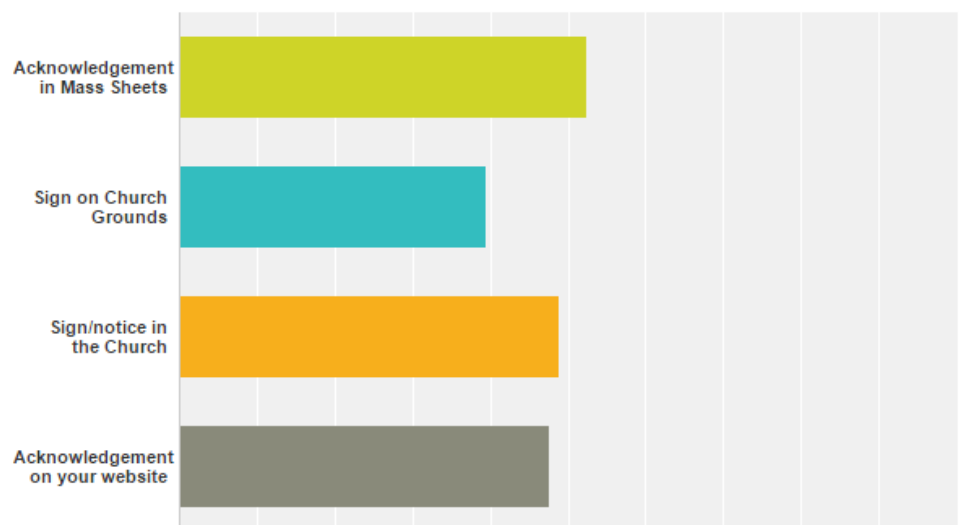
NATSICC feels this is representative of the anecdotal experiences of our Councillors who note that some Parishes do Acknowledge the Traditional Owners, whilst others do not.

The Follow up question highlighted the many ways in which Traditional Owners can be Acknowledged.

86% of respondents answered this question positively, showing that there is strong support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on a Parish level.

The challenge for NATSICC is to work with local ACMs and AICCs to facilitate Parishes to install/initiate Acknowledgements to the Traditional Owners on some level.

Which of the following forms of physical acknowledgement of your local traditional Owners would you consider installing?



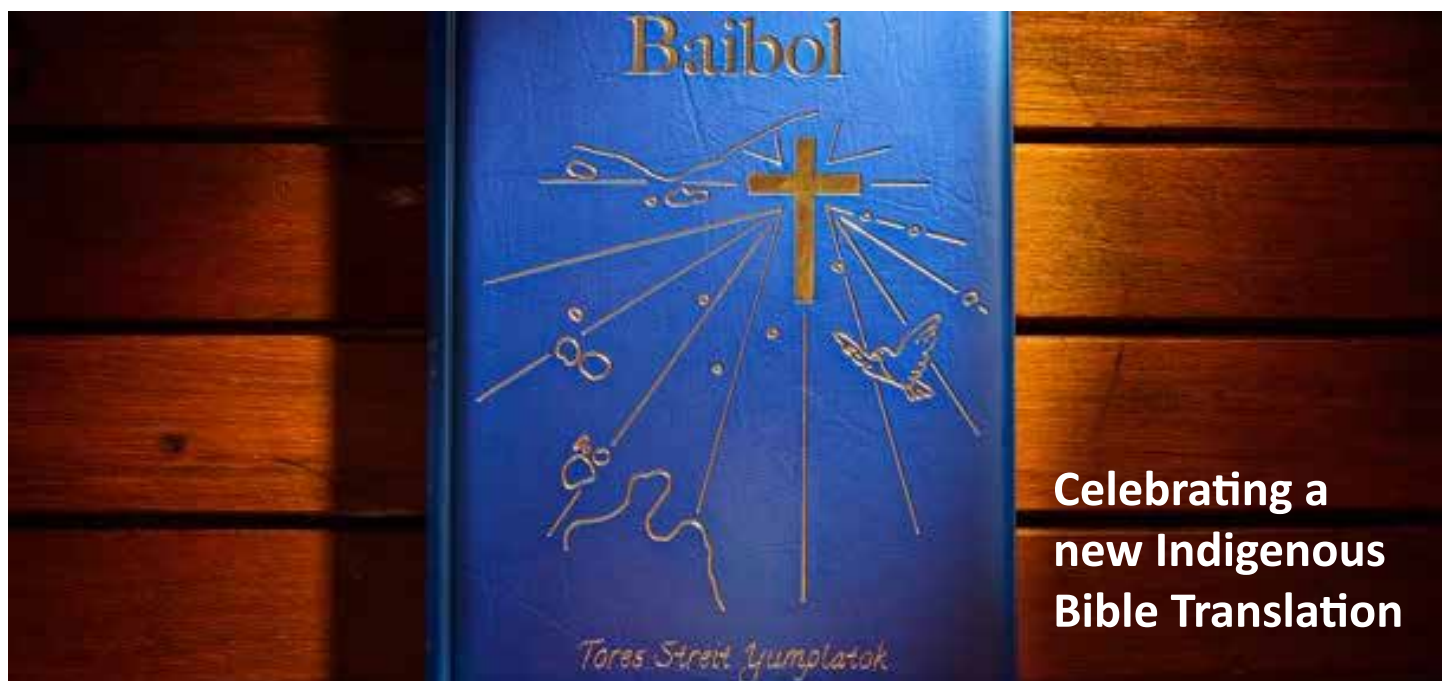
Acknowledgement of Country in Parishes

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. It has become very popular following the increase of the adoption of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs), which places an Acknowledgement of 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.

NATSICC has discussed the issue at our recent face to face meetings and 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.



Celebrating a new Indigenous Bible Translation

500 New Testaments in the Yumplatok creole language travelled the great distance from Cairns and Darwin from Sydney last week. The Scriptures took an even longer journey over time, though, having been being painstakingly translated over 27 years. When the translation team—coordinated by AuSIL translators, Michael & Charlotte Corden—completed their work, the equally careful checking stage began, but on Saturday a special “blessing of the Bible” in Townsville celebrated the finished work. Bible Society Australia has published 3,000 of the long-awaited New Testaments, compiled together with Old Testament books Genesis, Ruth and Jonah.

Yumplatok is an English-based creole spoken by over 30,000 people in the Torres Strait Islands. It’s one of Australia’s largest Indigenous language groups, and is spoken in parts of northern Cape York, in Islander communities along the Queensland coast down to Brisbane as well as in South Western Coastal Papua. This language group has waited a long time to hold God’s written word in their mother tongue. Saturday marked a new era for them, and already the word is spreading via Torres Strait media. One person is reported to have said, “Now I don’t need a dictionary when I read the Bible. It is in my language and it is clear.”

The ‘blessing’ took place during the Synod meetings of the Anglican diocese of North Queensland. Many Torres Strait Islander Anglican priests and elders, as well as other non-Anglican islanders, were at the ceremony, and will no doubt spread the word back in their communities.

“This is really just the start of the project,” says Michael Corden. “We now need to get these Bibles into the hands of the people, and to be used. The Bible looks fantastic and we are thankful to so many who have helped the project in so many ways, and have stayed the course to bring the Bible to its printed stage. It is no longer a Bible that people have heard about. It is printed, and is available for purchase.”

Bible Society consultant, Steve Etherington who’s also involved in Scripture translation work for Australia’s First Peoples, says “The published Scriptures will be a huge encouragement to our Indigenous and Torres Island friends who have no access to the extravagant riches of English language Bibles and Christian books that we take for granted in the mainstream churches.”

Every year on July 1st, Torres Strait Islanders observe the “Coming of the Light” which celebrates 150 years since missionaries first took the Scriptures to their lands. This year they were also celebrating the arrival of the Yumplatok NT. “A copy was taken into a men’s prison that day,” says Corden, “where it was the instant highlight of the celebration. Many of the Torres Strait inmates were clamouring to hold the Bible. It was hard to retrieve it.” Many more among the Torres Strait community will soon have the same pleasure, when they hold the Yumplatok NT for the very first time. Pray that many more copies will be printed so that more Yumplatok speakers will get into God’s word in their own language, and never want to set it down.

- See more at: <http://www.biblesociety.org.au/news/celebrations-completion-27-year-indigenous-translation-project-new-testament-yumplatok#sthash.7MFaTZ8f.dpuf>

Archbishop Tutu's Prayer For The Rights Of Aboriginal Peoples



Desmond Tutu at the 2008 Freedom Awards. University of Southern California, Los Angeles

A statement from Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu on 21 September 2014, International Day of Peace

On World Peace Day 2014, I pray for the rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Australia to determine their own destiny.

It is a severe indictment on Australia that many of its indigenous people still feel that their culture and dignity are being eroded, and that they continue to be treated as second class citizens – 42 years after the country signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Aboriginal elders say that although the Aboriginal Land Rights Act of 1976 transferred control of much of the Northern Territory to Aboriginal peoples, the people never had the opportunity to draw true advantage from the land.

They were ill prepared to deal with complex Western bureaucracies, and their efforts have been undermined by under-development and neglect.

The imposition of legislation generally known as the Northern Territory Intervention, in 2007 virtually stripped them of their voice.

Community councils have been closed down and management of many aspects of the peoples' lives has been transferred to non-indigenous institutions.

The exclusion of local Aboriginal perspectives from decision-making is directly eroding customs, laws, languages and land-use aspirations. Nearly 50% of the youth in detention in Australia are Aboriginal, although the Aboriginal population constitutes just 3% of the Australian population.

There are no first-class and second-class citizens on earth, just citizens; sisters and brothers of one family, the human family, God's family. Our diversity is a Gift from God. It strengthens and enriches us.

All people, regardless of their looks, cultures and beliefs – including the Aboriginal Peoples of Australia – are equally entitled to dignity, to justice, and to the right to participate in decisions affecting their lives.

I support those who have called for a Truth and Justice Commission for Aboriginal Peoples to lay bare the horrors of the past and, finally, commence a national healing process for all Australians.

- See more at: <http://mediablog.catholic.org.au/p=3235#sthash.T3CebQmu.dpuf>

Let's Reconnect!

Send your email address to assembly@natsicc.org.au or call 08 8363 2963

Pope Francis writes to Tony Abbott, calls for G20 not to forget poor



In a letter dated November 6, the Pope has asked Mr Abbott and his fellow heads of government “not to forget that many lives are at stake” behind the political and technical discussions of the G20 weekend.

“It would indeed be regrettable if such discussions were to remain purely on the level of declarations of principle,” Pope Francis wrote.

“There are far too many women and men suffering severe malnutrition, a rise in the number of the unemployed, an extremely high percentage of young people without work and an increase in social exclusion, which can lead to criminal activity, and even the recruitment of terrorists.”

Advertisement

The Pope also warned there were “constant assaults” on the environment as a result of “unbridled consumerism”.

In calling for consensus among world leaders, he said he hoped that assessment of the G20’s results “will not be restricted to global indices, but will take into account as well real improvements in the living conditions of poorer families and the reduction of all forms of unacceptable inequality”.

The Pope also used his letter to call on all G20 member states to be “examples of generosity” in meeting the needs of victims of conflict, “especially [those] of refugees”.

“It should also lead to eliminating the root causes of terrorism, which has reached proportions hitherto unimaginable; these include poverty, underdevelopment and exclusion.”

Pope Francis also wrote about the need for G20 leaders to address the “vital issue” of climate change in his letter.

“There are constant assaults on the natural environment, the result of unbridled consumerism, and this will have serious consequences for the world economy,” he said.

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/pope-francis-writes-to-tony-abbott-calls-for-g20-not-to-forget-poor-20141112-11100c.html#ixzz3JHe0vI2r>



Councillor in profile Mitch Firth - Youth

Mitch Firth is the Youth Councillor on the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council. Mitch has been involved in NATSICC for several years and was officially voted in as Youth Councillor at the Melbourne Assembly in 2012.

Mitch is a Didgeridoo player, traditional Indigenous dancer and singer, who has already made his way from country Australia to the World Stage.

His renowned and celebrated didgeridoo playing has already taken him to Rome (Italy) to lead the procession at the Canonisation of Australia’s inaugural SAINT MARY MacKILLOP and had him open for Australian icon JOHN WILLIAMSON at the Sydney Opera House accompanied by the SYDNEY SYMPHONY orchestra.

Latest News

WA REMOTE COMMUNITIES AT RISK

The Premier of Western Australia Colin Barnett recently told the State Parliament that the \$90 million given by the Federal Government for infrastructure maintenance and care at remote Aboriginal Communities had been expended. In a surprise announcement he suggested the closure of between 100 and 150 remote communities as a means to balance the budget. Bishop Christopher Saunders Chairman of the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (BCRATSI), along with others, responded to this suggestion. here is the statement released by Bishop Saunders, who is also the Bishop of Broome, WA.

Authorities recently visiting Balgo, West Australia's most remote major Aboriginal community, threatened its demolition if a feud between family groups did not stop. Tossy Baadjo, a local elder said: "where will we go. We don't suit to live in town. This is our home."

Now the Premier of the State of WA is brandishing similar threats to smaller remote communities in an effort to balance the budget.

In a serious reversal of policy, Federal and State governments are turning their backs on the needs of our nation's First Australians and are promising a new dispossession that can only result in further injustices and gross suffering

Mr. Barnett appears to be receiving inaccurate advice from bureaucrats regarding the small communities that are in his sight. He appears to be of the opinion that they deserve destruction because they are too expensive to run, they need subsidy, and in his words they "are not viable".

However, the social dividends that will arise from these proposed extreme measures of deportation to major centres will be catastrophic for the peoples involved. Never have State or Federal authorities been capable

of managing the needs of marginalized town-dwellers. The numbers of Aboriginal people who live on the edge now in towns like Broome, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and Kununurra are overwhelming services provided by agencies. And now, the addition of people "from 100 or more" communities to these centres will simply exacerbate a situation that is already appalling for those who have previously left their traditional country to live as town fringe-dwellers.



There is not one Shire Council in the Kimberley that is financially viable and all these receive subsidies. And yet there is no protest against their continued existence nor have they been threatened with closure or told they should move to larger towns.

The forced removal of Indigenous people from their Homelands is a serious step backwards in race relations and ultimately will prove more costly in terms of health, housing and well-being for those who once again in their history face the daunting prospect of dispossession not seen on such a scale since the earliest days of colonization.

The advancement of Aboriginal people depends on initiatives that are generous and respectful of homelands, that are essential for those whose lands are held as "country" and are essential to their understanding of who they are.

More resources, not less, are needed for education and housing and health to solve problems that have been two hundred years in the making.

The neglect we are presently observing is the result of an accumulated neglect by governments and the solution proposed is more neglect made omnipresent by actions threatening expatriation and marginalization of a people who surely have suffered enough in their history.

NATSICC SECRETARIAT

80 PAYNEHAM RD. STEPNEY SA 5069 | 08 8363 2936 | craig@natsicc.org.au

Aboriginal & Islander Catholic Ministries

in focus



The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry and Reconciliation Church, Sydney Archdiocese.

Our Ministry encourages Aboriginal people to embrace the Catholic Church and to feel welcome and comfortable in a culturally appropriate way. The Reconciliation Church is a Catholic Church which has been refurbished in the spirit of Aboriginal Culture and Art. We have beautiful original paintings, which are our Stations of the Cross, painted by Richard Campbell, who is a renowned Aboriginal artist.

For one week in May this year, Richard spent his valuable time at the church painting, to bring our dream of a portable Aboriginal cross for the Reconciliation Church to fruition. The cross bears symbols depicting The Holy Trinity and the twelve apostles and Mary and Joseph. The cross and stand was made by Grant Dooner, a teacher at Pagewood school.

The Executive Officer of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Sydney is Graeme Mundine, a Bundjalung man, the Ministry Coordinator is Valerie Bryant, a Gumbaynggirr woman. Cate Wallace looks after the office and administration.

We strongly encourage reconciliation, and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are active parishioners. Our ministry is instrumental in educating religious, staff, students, and many other organisations in Aboriginal culture, stolen generations, social justice, spirituality and reconciliation. Graeme and Valerie speak on these subjects both in the church and in the wider community.

We celebrate mass on the first Sunday of each month, with no mass in January. Aboriginal Sunday is on the first Sunday in July and this is a big celebration at the church. We also hold

an Aboriginal mass on the third Sunday of the month at St. Mary's Church, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour at Erskineville.

Graeme Mundine travels extensively, giving speeches and educational workshops on all aspects of Aboriginal people and their relationship with the Catholic Church, learning about national and international related issues, while promoting the Ministry work. Valerie Bryant hosts students, teachers, religious and ecumenical groups for workshops and liturgies. She speaks on Aboriginal spirituality, culture and identity and shares her family's journey.

The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry is financially supported by the Catholic Works Fund, in the Sydney Archdiocese.

Advisory Board Members

In 2012 Cardinal George Pell approved and welcomed a group of Aboriginal elders to be part of an Advisory Board for the Ministry; Mrs. Ruth Bryant, Mrs Anne Weldon, Mr. John Allen, Elsie Heiss and Monsignor John Usher.

Opening of a new Prayer Garden

In December 2013, Cardinal George Pell celebrated mass at The Reconciliation church for the first time. The mass was beautiful and about 100 people were in attendance. On the same day the Cardinal opened a new prayer garden dedicated to Aunty Elsie Heiss. Elsie worked as Coordinator of the ministry for 22 years and secured the premises to make the Reconciliation Church a reality. There was much celebration on the day with Aboriginal didgeridoo playing, dancing and a smoking ceremony.

Sorry Day – Utopia

Sorry Day fell on Monday 26th May this year. We held a screening of the film Utopia by John Pilger. It was a hard hitting and sometimes controversial film, which highlighted the neglect and unfair treatment of the Aboriginal people of Australia. The night was attended well and the group continued with discussion and a light supper afterwards.

Aboriginal Sunday

Father Frank Brennan celebrated mass at the Reconciliation Church and it was well attended by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parishioners and visitors. The mass was dedicated to Father Frank Fletcher. Father Frank passed away in 2013 and who was one of the founders of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Sydney. After mass the community celebrated with a barbeque. This was enjoyed by everyone and a wonderful opportunity to chat and meet other parishioners.

Healing

We held a prayer and healing evening in March and although it was a small group, we shared stories and prayed together. We hope this will grow in the future.

Baptisms

It has been a joy to celebrate the Baptism of many Aboriginal children in the Reconciliation Church this year. We welcome new families and we are committed to their spiritual support in the future. These celebrations are so important for the spiritual growth of our community and church. We are proud that the Baptisms of Aboriginal Children is growing.

THE RECONCILIATION CHURCH PRAYER

God of all creation,
as we journey together in this Great Southern Land,
we pray for healing forgiveness and unity,
creating a path of good will,
with justice and compassion.

Jesus through the power of your love,
You have given us the courage, wisdom and strength
to share our gifts and talents in humility.
In peace and understanding we reconcile with each other.

Creator Spirit, we come together in prayer and thanksgiving
for the many blessings we have received.
Allow your Spirit to wash over us and give us strength,
to walk together, as one.



OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

- To give Aboriginal aspirations a voice in the Sydney Archdiocese.
- To develop Aboriginal Catholic communities with local Aboriginal leadership and ministries.
- To encourage and guide the work of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry team.
- To educate the wider Australian society, especially the Catholic community, to understand Aboriginal people, their culture and history.
- To promote reconciliation among our parishioners and the wider community.
- To research and support these aims.

Useful Multimedia Resources

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Bible's online

www.aboriginalbibles.org.au, www.torresstraitbibles.org.au



The [aboriginalbibles.org.au](http://www.aboriginalbibles.org.au) and www.torresstraitbibles.org.au websites are a collection of electronic Bibles in a variety of Australian Aboriginal languages.

The resource has an indigenous Australian language concordance feature. It allows you to search for certain words as they occur in the text.

<https://twitter.com/pontifex>



[Pope Francis on Twitter](#)

Pope Benedict XVI made history by becoming the first pope to send a tweet, and again by becoming the first pope to officially join Twitter. Pope Francis, already fast becoming known as a pope of the people, has now followed in those footsteps.

The Pontiff uses the @Pontifex handle used by Pope Benedict XVI to share thoughts, scripture and news with his 4.2 million followers.

NATSICC
TELEVISION



www.youtube.com/user/TheNATSICC/videos

NATSICC TV is continually being updated with interesting programs that share Indigenous spirituality, youth issues and the stories from our Elders. If you have a project or story that you would like to share, please contact us and we can arrange to come and record for all the world to see.



[Catholic Religious Australia Retreat Centres](#)

Planning a retreat or a conference somewhere in Australia? The Catholic Religious Australia website has a list of centres in every State and Territory in Australia.

<http://www.catholicreligiousaustralia.org/index.php/resources/retreat-centres>



[Christmas Prayers](#)

Catholic Online has a range of prayers for all occasions.

The link above includes a variety of Prayers for the Christmas Season and reminds us of the real reason behind Christmas - the Rising of our Lord.

<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=345>

Adelaide ACM visits the Coorong

On the 9th November, the members of the Adelaide Aboriginal Catholic Ministry travelled the 3 hour Journey to South Australia's magnificent Coorong. The Ngarrindjeri have a strong spiritual and cultural connection to the land and are the Traditional Owners. There are many traditional and archaeological sites in the region.



Fr James McEvoy celebrated Mass as the wind whistled through the dunes and sea grass, giving everyone a constant reminder of the link between the land and the spirit.

It is the first Mass that has been held outside of the newly renovated Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Chapel. "The Ministry is really growing at the moment and it is a very exciting time to be involved" said June Romeo - Office Coordinator - "Claire and Bill Denny, a member of our community and board member of Reconciliation SA was very kind to offer their property to hold the Mass. We have some wonderful people!"

Chair of the ACM and Manager John Lochowiak said "It was great to go back to country. Personally, it was very significant as it was where my Great Grandfather Anzac Walker was born.

ACM Adelaide - 80 Payneham Rd. Stepney, SA. Call 08 8362 3185.



FAREWELL BISHOP TED



It was with much sadness that NATSICC received the news of the passing of Bishop Ted Collins on Friday 8 August 2014. 'Bishop Ted', as we knew him, was a great friend to Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory. He guided us and walked beside us on our journey of self determination and for equality in the Catholic Church.

A quote from an interview he did with the Stateline program in 2007 epitomised the way he went about building relationships with people:

"Take me as I am. It's not an act, you don't try to go around getting people to like you, you just try to be yourself. In a way I think you've got to try to be Christ-like."

We took him as he was, and in return, he took us as we were.

The defining image of Bishop Ted is standing next to then Pope, and now Saint John Paul II in Alice Springs 1986. He walked beside the Holy Father and witnessed, along with thousands of others the ground breaking address he made to Indigenous people.

Bishop Ted will be always in our minds and in our hearts. NATSICC plans to honour Bishop Ted at the NATSICC Assembly in Darwin from 2-6 July 2015.

Vicki Clark nominated for award



ACM Melbourne Coordinator Vicki Clark was nominated for not for profit section of The Australian Financial Review and Westpac 100 Women of Influence Awards. The awards showcased the country's highest-achieving women in 2014. Some are well known, others are forging a leadership path out of the public eye.

The 100 winners have been selected across 10 categories: board/management, innovation, public policy, business entrepreneur, diversity, young leader, global, social enterprise or not-for-profit, philanthropy and local/regional.

They have been chosen from a broad field which includes scientists, doctors, creative directors, journalists, executives and humanitarians, whittled down over the past six weeks by a nine-member judging panel.

Although Vicki did not receive the final Category Award, it is fitting to acknowledge a person who that been the coordinator of the Melbourne ACM for almost 25 years and also started the Opening The Doors foundation 13 years ago.