



# Heal Country

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday 4 July 2021**

Visit [www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au) to access a variety of resources



# ABOUT NATSICC

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) is the peak Advisory Body to the Australian Catholic Bishops on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics. The Council was founded in 1992 and the Secretariat is based in Adelaide.

Each State and Territory nominates a representative via their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministry. The Council meets monthly via teleconference and twice yearly on a face to face basis. NATSICC advises the Bishops Commission for relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

NATSICC is a not for profit organization that is funded by the Catholic Church and Caritas Australia's First Nations program.

## 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 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.

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**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are advised that this publication may contain images, words and mention of those that have passed.**



## USING THESE RESOURCES



These resources have been designed by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council to inspire and assist Parishes, Organisations and Schools to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday.

The Liturgical resources have been designed to reflect the diversity of Parishes and Schools across Australia and allow for appropriate adaptation.

Parishes and Schools with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members are able to incorporate the Traditional rituals suggested in the resources in consultation with the local people.

NATSICC encourages discussion with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the congregation to further develop ways in which Traditional rituals and symbols can be used to enrich the Mass.

## NATSICC LITURGY TEAM WELCOME



Every year, Catholics come together across Australia to acknowledge and celebrate the gifts of Australia's First peoples. This year is particularly important following the COVID 19 Pandemic and its impact on the ways in which we interacted and made contact with one another.

For these resources NATSICC has decided to adopt the NAIDOC theme for 2021 – **Heal Country**. Today our world is in need of healing – environmentally, spiritually and socially. We must all come together as a global community to fight the injustices of inequality, racism and environmental damage.

We hope that these resources will help your community to begin to Heal and in turn aid in the healing of those in most need.



# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CATHOLICS IN AUSTRALIA

First Nations Catholics are the youngest and fastest growing demographic in the Australian Catholic Church.



**133,528**

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics



**5.8%**

The percentage of Catholic population aged under 5



**16**

The number of Dioceses which have over one-fifth of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population who identify as Catholic



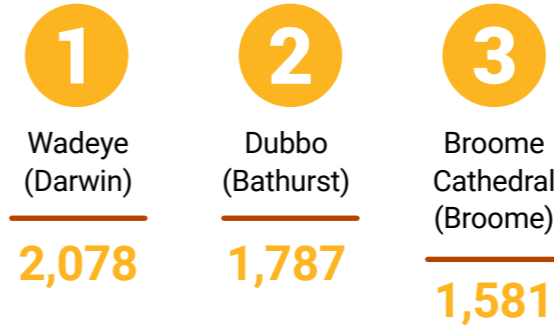
**10.2%**

The percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics aged under 5

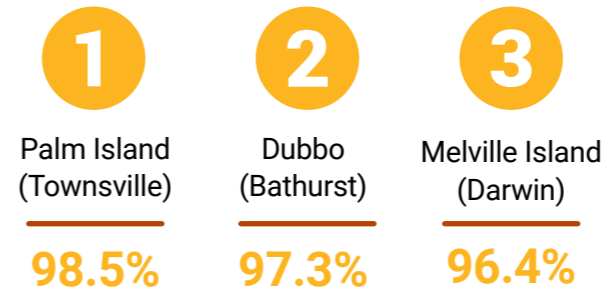
## Top three

### Parishes

with the highest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics:

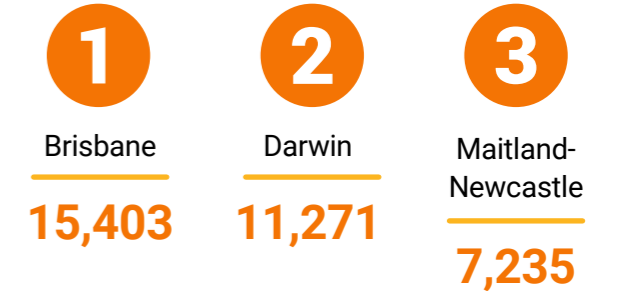


with the highest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics:

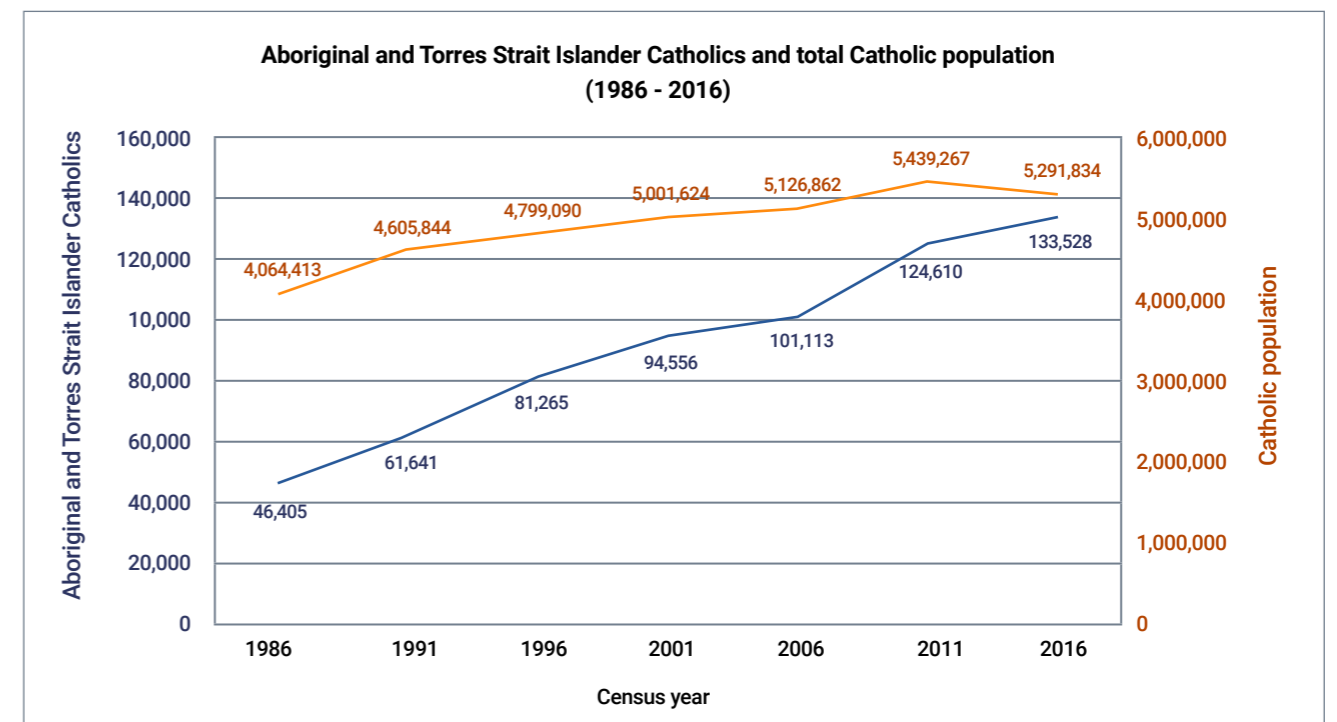
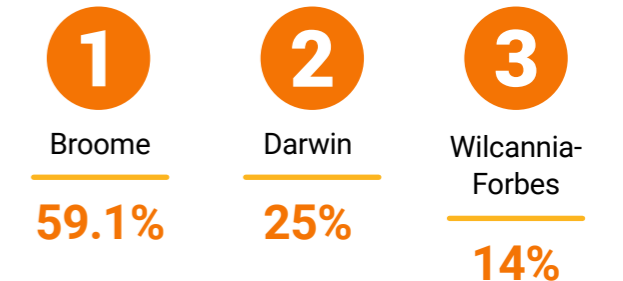


### Dioceses

with the highest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics:



with the highest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics:



Notes:

Prepared by the ACBC National Centre for Pastoral Research as part of the National Catholic Census Project. Data on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population for some years and prior to 1971 is not recorded here due to the poor quality of data collected.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND WELCOME TO COUNTRY CEREMONIES

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

A **'Welcome to Country'** is a Ceremony where Traditional Custodians, Elders, welcome people to their land. This is a significant recognition and is made through a formal process, although it is up to the Elder how they decide to carry out the Ceremony. It is also dependent on the location of the event and the practice of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community - which can vary greatly according to region.

During a Welcome to Country the Traditional Custodians welcome those in attendance, guests, staff and students to their Country. It might be just a simple speech or a performance of some sort, like a song, traditional dance, a didgeridoo piece or any combination of these.

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

Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture for thousands of years ([www.creativespirits.info](http://www.creativespirits.info)).

The use of an Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country has become more common place since the creation of Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP's), which places an Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country as an important step in the process of practical Reconciliation in this Country.

The Council is aware that some Parishes already do it, some do it on special occasions and some do not do it at all.

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

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

- Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which the Parish stands in a physical form (signage, plaque) on Parish grounds

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

For suggestions on wording and more detailed information, please visit <https://www.natsicc.org.au/acknowledgement-and-welcome-to-country.html>



# HYMNS, READINGS AND PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

## Readings

**First Reading** – Ezekiel 2:2-5

**Responsorial Psalm** – Psalms 123:1-2, 2, 3-4

R. (2cd) Our eyes are fixed on the Lord, pleading for his mercy

**Second Reading** – 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

**Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia – Cf. Luke 4:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Gospel** – Mark 6:1-6

## Hymns

**Entrance**

CWB 497 God Has Spoken By His Prophets or CWB 519 In Christ  
there is no east or west

CWB 543 Lord of Creation (cf. Second Reading) or CWB 535 All  
are Welcome

CWBII 539355 Lift Up Your Hearts-Roe O'Connor

**Prep. Of Gifts**

CWB 450 Amazing Grace (cf. Second Reading) or CWB 488 For  
the Fruits of all Creation

**Communion**

CWB 610 Taste and See or CWB 579 One Bread, One Body

**Recessional**

CWB 497 God Has Chosen Me (cf. First Reading/Gospel)

CWB 606 Sing a Song for Peace and Justice

CWB 545 Lord of Earth and All Creation (For Australia)

CWBII 577 How Great Thou Art-Stuart W K Hine

CWB II 557 Shout to the Lord

## Prayers of Intercession

**Introduction:**

Sisters and Brothers, let us pray for the needs  
of our world, especially the needs of Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander Peoples during this  
challenging time.

We pray for Pope Francis, our Bishops and all  
the clergy, religious and laity.

May they be faithful to Christ's teaching of truth,  
justice and peace.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all ministers of the Gospel: that  
they may bring us to a deeper understanding of  
the Christian faith and a stronger love for each  
other.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the success of the forthcoming  
Plenary Council: that all participants will listen  
to how God is calling the Church in Australia to  
be Christ-centred and inclusive.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for unity in our community and culture:  
that the journey towards reconciliation within  
the Church may encourage each and every one  
of us to make reconciliation our story.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all members of our communities:  
that they may discover the spiritual riches of  
God and our First Nations cultures so they can  
pass these treasures on to younger generations.  
Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all Elders in our communities: that  
we may honour their lives and legacy and  
embrace the love and peace that they show us  
every day by how they live their faith.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for all young people: that they find the  
love and peace Christ has for them as they  
search for meaning in their lives.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

We pray for Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Communities and all cultural  
communities: that God's Spirit of reconciliation  
will live in their hearts and minds and help them  
to embrace the diversity that makes for a richer  
country and stronger Church.

**Lord, hear us.**

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Conclusion**

**Lord of heaven and earth, gathered in faith and  
in response to your Word, we ask you to accept  
the prayers we make, through Jesus Christ, our  
Lord. R. Amen**

# LITURGICAL RESOURCES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WORSHIPPING ASSEMBLIES



**Elements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture can be included in the Church's Liturgy – particularly when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are members of the celebrating assembly. Please follow the suggestions given, and NATSICC strongly advises that you work closely with your Parish Priest and Liturgical team to ensure the suggestions conform with the Liturgical norms of the Roman Missal.**

## LANGUAGE

Language is a cultural element that is closely linked with identity and pride in oneself and one's culture. This year is an excellent opportunity to bring the gift of culture into the Mass by including local Language speakers to participate in elements of the Mass.

Careful consideration needs to be given to determine which elements in the language of the people can be properly introduced into Liturgical celebrations. The suggestions below would be most appropriate to worshipping Communities where Traditional Languages are predominantly used.

In other congregations, perhaps a word or phrase in local Language could be included with the permission of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers.

How Language can be used:

- \* The readings can be read in Language from a recognised scripture translation.
- \* One or more of the Prayers of the Faithful can be in Language – as above.
- \* Stanzas of a hymn can be translated into Language – as above.

## INTRODUCTION

Use the Welcome to Country guide available at <http://www.natsicc.org.au/acknowledgement-and-welcome-to-country.html> to determine whether a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country is appropriate.

## SMOKING CEREMONY

An Elder could Smoke the Community and the precious objects – altar, place of the Word, Cross – at the beginning of the Mass.

## A RITE OF WATER BLESSING

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

We ask that through this water blessing we will all be renewed.

Water to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is always a sign of Your peace and fulfilment in everything that is good; the promise of food, of Your love, and protection, and Your power to love one another as true Christians. Lord, this truly is a sign of the new life in Christ, which in Baptism we have all received. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## GOSPEL PROCESSION

In the spirit of our ancestors the Message Stick can be carried forward with the Gospel Book. Other symbols and actions are used according to local practice. Traditional dance and instruments may also accompany a procession of the Word.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

These could be prepared by the Community prior to Mass or prayed spontaneously during Mass. Alternatively, you can use the suggestions provided.

## PREPARATION OF GIFTS

The bread to be used for Consecration might be carried to the altar in a coolamon.

Other gifts such as a boomerang, woomera, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander painting, clap sticks might be presented. Gifts of food etc. to share with others might also be presented and are intended to be given to the poor; they would not be returned to the giver but shared with others.

## EUCCHARISTIC PRAYERS FOR VARIOUS NEEDS AND OCCASIONS

Masses for Reconciliation, or one of the Eucharistic Prayers for social needs and occasions may be used. The Aboriginal Our Father may be also be used.

## ABORIGINAL OUR FATHER

The Bishop of Broome has granted permission for use of this prayer if it used, as is, unchanged.

You are our Father, You live in heaven,  
We talk to You. Father You are good.  
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 believe Your Word, Father,  
We are Your children, give us bread today.  
We have done wrong, we are sorry,  
Teach us, Father, all about Your Word.  
We have done wrong, we are sorry,  
Teach us, Father, all about Your Word.  
Others have done wrong to us,  
And we are sorry for them, Father, today.  
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.  
Stop us from doing wrong, Father,  
Save us all from the Evil One.  
(Repeat first verse)

## MUSIC / SONG / DANCE

Music and singing, which express the soul of the people, have pride of place in the Liturgy. Music forms melodies and musical instruments could be used in divine worship if they are suitable or can be made suitable, for sacred use, and provided they are in accord with the dignity of the place of worship and truly contribute to the uplifting of the faithful.

- \* Didgeridoo and clapsticks can accompany the choir.
- \* Didgeridoo and clapsticks together with other instruments can be used for reflective music.
- \* A Hymn can be sung in language. If a stanza of a hymn is translated it should be able to be used at an appropriate time in the Liturgy.
- \* Dance can be incorporated into the liturgy, especially as a procession – entrance, book, or gifts.
- \* Use Clapsticks rather than bells at the Consecration.

## ACTIONS

The gestures and postures of the assembly are signs of its unity and express its active participation and foster the spiritual attitude of the participants.

# NON ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CONGREGATIONS



**There are over 130,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in Australia.**

**However, your Parish may not have our people present. The following suggestions may be useful in preparing to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday and to keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in your thoughts and prayers on this day.**



## **INVITE A TRADITIONAL CUSTODIAN TO PROVIDE A WELCOME TO COUNTRY**

Healing is made real when people come together. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday is an opportunity to make contact with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community and invite them to provide a Welcome, or participate in ways outlined in this resource.

## **CONDUCT AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Use the Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country guide available at <http://www.natsicc.org.au/acknowledgement-and-welcome-to-country.html>

## **CONNECTING WITH YOUR LOCAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY**

To enhance your Liturgy, and to avail your parishioners of the gifts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, NATSICC suggests that you involve your local

Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Ministry (AICM) in planning your celebration.

Visit 'About NATSICC' at [www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au) and click on your State or Territory to find your local AICM. These ministries work very hard to serve local Indigenous Catholics and do a lot of good in the Community. You may be able to work together in preparing the Liturgy, sourcing speakers or presenters or learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in your area and ultimately build a relationship that will benefit the Parish.

## **CELEBRANT INTRODUCTION**

Today is the 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time and the day that the Australian Bishops and our National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council have invited us to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics number over 130,000 and are growing strongly.

Today we acknowledge that God has been walking with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, making His Presence known through a continuous living culture over many thousands of years.

We pray in thanksgiving for these ancient peoples who have enriched and sustained our continent over all that time. We praise God for the people who nurtured the land here in our Parish that we call home.

## **RITE FOR BLESSING AND SPRINKLING OF WATER**

May be used in place of the Penitential Act on this day (appendix 2 Roman Missal)

**PRIEST:** Dear sisters and brothers, let us ask our ever-living God to bless this gift of creation, this living water, that has nourished people of this land since the Dreaming and will now be sprinkled on us as a memorial of our Baptism.

May God bless us with the grace to remain faithful to the Spirit we have received. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **MUSIC**

Prior to Mass, during the arrival of the Priest or during the gifts procession, a recording of instrumental Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music (didgeridoo, clapsticks) might be played. We have made some music available at [www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au)

## **GIFTS PROCESSION**

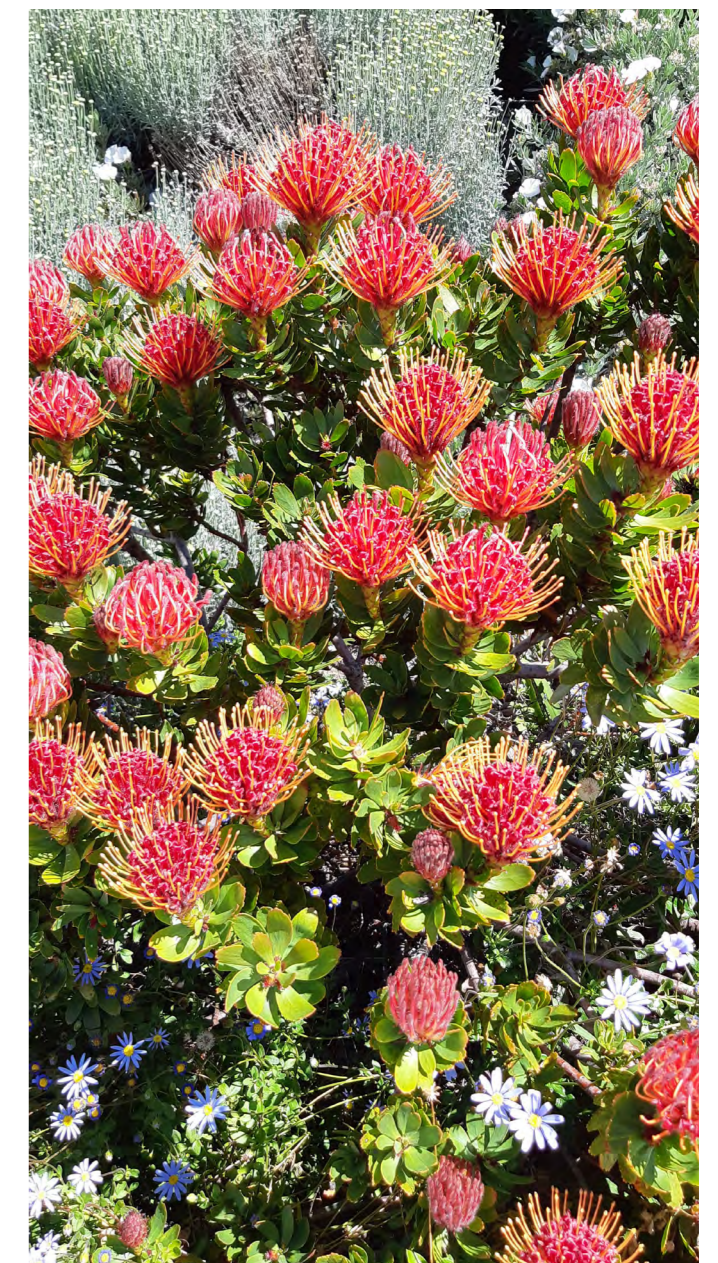
Besides bread and water for the Eucharist, gifts of food or a special collection could be brought forward for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in need. Additionally, a coolamon could be placed in front of the altar as a symbol of the absence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters at the table.

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II

## **AUDIO AND VISUAL**

- Display a Powerpoint prepared by NATSICC before Mass (Available at [www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au))
- Ask local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students to create artworks to celebrate the day and have them present their work in the Parish (or display)
- Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork in the Church during Mass and in the leadup to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday.
- Use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed cloth on the Altar. This is a powerful symbol of the presence of First Nations people, both physically and Spiritually in Australia.
- The Priest could wear an Indigenous stole/or some other chasuble





# HOMILY NOTES



This year the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council have adopted the NAIDOC theme for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday – **Heal Country**. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis has called us to continue to seek greater protections for our lands, our waters, our sacred sites and our cultural heritage from exploitation, desecration, and destruction.

Today's Gospel is very fitting because Mark tells us of Jesus returning to his 'native place' – Nazareth – to a non-accepting, hostile reaction. Jesus had been welcomed and revered in other places, why is it that he is mocked and disregarded in his own home? "Is he not the carpenter?" the crowd called because they saw him as "without honour" and were unable to believe in him. He did not fit into their ideological view and thus did not deserve respect in their eyes.

In Australia, our own First Nations people have suffered a similar reception to Jesus in Nazareth. Their knowledge and complex cultural systems, created and honed over millennia, are often dismissed as primitive and irrelevant to our fast-paced world of today. This could not be further from the truth, particularly as we become more aware of their continued care, love, and respect for 'country', grounded in a relationship with the creator that formed independently of Western influence.

2021 marks the 250th Anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in Australia. Yet the Spirit of God was poured out onto the original inhabitants of this great Southern Land many, many thousands of years prior. God's Spirit could be heard through the singing of the birds, the cascade of the waterfall, the rustle of the wind and, most importantly, in silence.

Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann, a respected Ngangiwumirr Elder, artist and 2021 Senior Australian of the year explains the importance of listening and understanding the silence:

***"My people today, recognise and experience in this quietness, the great Life-Giving Spirit, the Father of us all. It is easy for me to experience God's presence. When I am out hunting, when I am in the bush, among the trees, on a hill or by a billabong; these are the times when I can simply be in God's presence. My people have been so aware of Nature. It is natural that we will feel close to the Creator."***

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are



inextricably connected to country in Australia and its waters. This connection to country and all of God's creation is core to their spirituality as a people and that of their ancestors. The term itself – Country – encompasses far more than the physical land. ***"For us, Country is a word for all the values, places, resources, stories and cultural obligations associated with that area and its features. It describes the entirety of our ancestral domains."*** explains Professor Mick Dodson.

Deacon Boniface Perdjert, who was both Australia's first permanent Deacon and first Aboriginal Deacon clearly expressed the translational role that 'country' or nature plays bringing together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and Catholic faith:

***"We like the way he uses the things of nature to teach, and the important part nature plays in the Sacraments"***

Deacon Boniface specifically mentions sacraments, because to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, all elements of life are sacramental. The gifts of God are evident and intertwined into every aspect of life, not just on Sundays, or when convenient. First Australians are called to be stewards of creation, to care for and watch over their gift, and this responsibility is intrinsic to their belief systems. Many Language groups assign a Totem (a natural object, plant or animal) to a child at birth. This totem defines the responsibility of care between individuals and with creation itself. It is intrinsic and it is core to their survival and relationships.

For Catholics, the Eucharist itself is a foundational sacramental reality in which natural elements—grain

and grapes—symbolize not only our lives but also Jesus' farewell meal and his presence today. In those natural elements and through the Eucharistic prayer, Christ is truly present to us. These elements display the abundance provided by the Creator to sustain us, both physically and spiritually. It is a very natural and familiar 'ritual' to First Nations Peoples because it combines the elements of life with a greater being. It brings all aspects of life together.

Because of the connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people recognise between country, faith and the wellbeing, it is no surprise that when the world is in pain, Australia's First Peoples are in pain. During the COVID 19 Pandemic, many of the trappings of Western life became impossible. The rivers were calm and clear from the absence of boats, the cities were quiet and still as restrictions took hold. We saw images of animals returning to previous habitats, and the smog clearing from above cities across the world as our common home took a 'breath' from our constant consumerism and drive for development.

On this special Sunday, a day where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-indigenous Catholics come together and sit side by side (adhering to COVID restrictions of course!), we should acknowledge that we are united in a fight to save God's creation. It is one we cannot fight alone. We must combine the knowledge of First Australians with the technology borne of Western culture to ensure that future generations shall have the opportunity to experience the gifts of God's creation as intended.

Again, today's Gospel also speaks of the need for faith

and acceptance to enable gifts to be shared. Mark says "So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them." Without faith, Jesus knew his miracles would not be accepted as such. This teaches us that we must have trust and faith to truly accept the wonders of God. To sit, talk, and listen is the first step towards acceptance and understanding. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have longed to share their knowledge and wisdom about the seasons, animals, and flora, but until we, as a society and a country are receptive, their contribution goes unappreciated and unutilised.

The more we share with each other, the more we realise that as humans, we have more similarities than differences. The differences between our cultures should not be seen as weaknesses, for they can also be where our strengths lie. Embracing these differences is an aspect of inculturation. Christian faith must find appropriate expression in each culture—that is what is meant by inculturation. Pope Francis, in his exhortation *Beloved Amazonia* says:

***"Inculturation elevates and fulfills. Certainly, we should esteem the indigenous mysticism that sees the interconnection and interdependence of the whole of creation, the mysticism of gratuitousness that loves life as a gift, the mysticism of a sacred wonder before nature and all its forms of life."***

Let us move forwards as a united people in Christ, committed to embracing the gifts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge to not only Heal Country, but to Heal our relationships with one another, and in doing so our creators' gifts to us all – this world.



# OTHER WAYS TO CELEBRATE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUNDAY



- Showcase the different services offered through agencies, organisations and movements in your area. Use the time before and after Mass to share this information.
- Invite a local Custodian to come and tell their story.
- For Parishes, showcase the different services offered through agencies, organisations and movements in your area. Use the time before and after Mass to share this information.
- Utilise the Youth Activities in this resource in your classes, youth groups or individually.
- Research and share the stories of the Traditional Custodians of your area. <https://aiatsis.gov.au/> has an interactive map to help you discover your Traditional Custodians. You could also google your area + 'Traditional Custodians' or search your local Government website.
- Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders from other Faith traditions to your celebration.
- Visit <https://www.naidoc.org.au/> and see what events are taking place in your area.
- Display the NATSICC Poster prominently.

# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CATHOLIC VOICES ON.....



The Catholic Social Justice Principle of Subsidiarity teaches us that all people have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Subsidiarity requires that decisions be made by the people closest and most affected by the issues and concerns of the community. Your support of our voices on important issues helps to make Subsidiarity a reality. It is important to note that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are made up of a diversity of Language Groups and each possesses unique experiences and points of view. Please take the time to talk with your Traditional Custodians.

Visit <http://natsicc.org.au/first-nations-voices-on.html> and navigate to 'First Nations Voices on.....' to gain a Catholic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective on:

## 1. The Environment - Laudato Si' and Querida Amazonia

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples see themselves as inextricably connected to country in Australia and its waters. This connection to Country and all of God's creation reveals our Spirituality as people and our ancestors, a home we have looked after with special regard for millennia.

"We notice, and have noticed, the changes in our environment through the behaviors of certain animals and the changes in our landscapes. Some are obvious – like the loss of our homes to rising sea levels in the Torres Strait, but some are more subtle, like the changes in our seasons. We want to help save our Earth."

"We invite the Catholic Church to stand in solidarity with us on caring for our country."

"Our future generations are crying out to the world for justice in this area."

## 2. An Indigenous Voice to Parliament

NATSICC made a submission to the Indigenous Voice co-design process and called on the Parliament to be receptive to our new voice. We emphasized that the responsibility for effective dialogue and conversation lies with both the voice and the listener.

"We believe that people in Australia have good hearts and that we need to appeal to the National sense of giving everyone a fair go to ensure that the Referendum is passed."

"Many people have stated that they need to see the ways in which any Voice to Parliament will help ensure that they have food for tomorrow or that their young son or daughter will make it home safely that day."

"As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Catholics we place our Faith in the inherent good of the Australian people to make an informed and compassionate decision when the time for the referendum arrives."

## 3. Emerging as a more equitable Nation after Covid-19

We find ourselves pondering whether Australia will ever be the same after COVID-19. However, it might be more useful to consider whether we should arise from the pandemic the same after COVID-19?

"After suffering together through the pandemic, Australians should forge forwards with humble hearts and a unity of mind and armed with a renewed sense of equality and care for one another."

"Our gifts of acceptance, tenacity, perseverance, and faith in a Greater Being are what we want to share with Australia and what we want Australians to embrace."

# PRACTICAL WAYS TO HELP



## NATSICC Palliative Care program

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples suffer from the worst health outcomes of any group in Australia. Hospital visits are more frequent and life expectancy is much lower than the Australian average.

NATSICC has developed the Palliative Care Packages to provide those at the end of their lives with items to ensure comfort, both physically and Spiritually.

The Packages include:

- blankets
- beanies
- shawls
- canvas and paints
- notebooks with a pen

## How can I help?

There are many ways you can help!

We are confident that the Catholic community as a whole can contribute to the project. School classes, lay groups, Parishes and individuals are encouraged to look below and see where your skills and gifts might be best utilised.

## Knitting or crocheting

Are you handy with the needles or hooks? We are always accepting beanies, blankets and quilts for inclusion in the packages. There are strict regulations regarding the sizes, materials and construction of the blankets going into Hospitals, Hospices and Palliative Care Services. Before starting construction, please refer to the below guide:

BLANKETS: (Knitted and crocheted):

- MUST be 8 ply acrylic wool
- Squares must be 20cm x 20cm
- Whole blankets MUST be 125 cm x 112 cm (or close to this size). All colours are acceptable.

## For schools:

We would like you to help all of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples who are very sick! Are you interested?

This is what we would like you to do. NATSICC are giving all of our sick people a knitted blanket and we would like you to help us achieve this. Would you be able to knit some squares that will be used to make the blankets?

**This is what you will need:**

- Size 4mm needles
- 8 ply acrylic yarn

**Below are instructions on how to knit the squares:**

- Cast on 42 stitches
- Knit plain stitch until your square measures 20cm x 20cm
- Cast off...not too tightly

The 8 ply acrylic yarn can be of any colour-maybe your favourite colour! Or, you can use a variety of colours-whatever suits you!

**For more information on the project and to find out where to send your finished items please visit <https://www.natsicc.org.au/palliative-care-packages.html>**

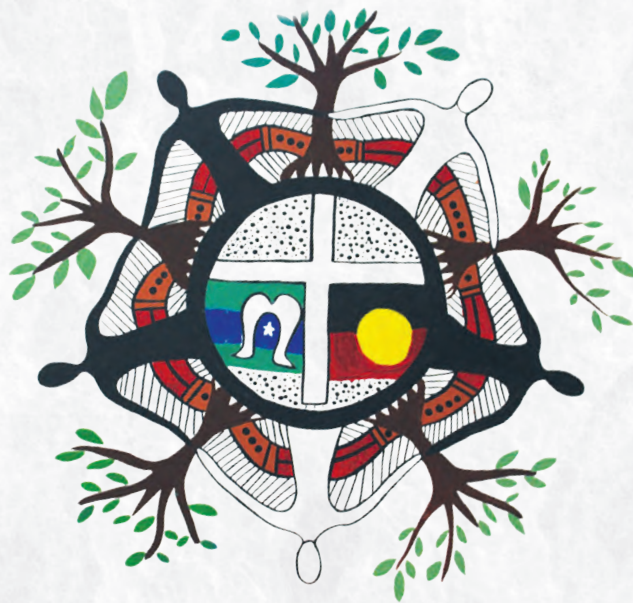
# NATSICC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PLAQUES

The practice of inclusion forms an important part of rebuilding the relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and non Indigenous Australians. The erection of a plaque in a Parish, School or Organisation is a symbol of welcome for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and an Acknowledgment that there is an understanding of Australia's past.

**The NATSICC plaque is endorsed by the Australian Catholic Bishops for use in Schools, Parishes and Catholic Organisations.**

The plaque features artwork designed by the Murri Ministry team in Brisbane, Queensland and depicts Reconciliation and togetherness in Christ.

Printed on aluminium and sealed with an automotive quality UV resistant clear coat, the plaque can be displayed inside or outside, ensuring your school, Parish or organisation is a place of welcome for Australia's First Peoples for years to come.



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years.

We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.



[www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au)

## Plaques can be purchased at [www.natsicc.org.au](http://www.natsicc.org.au)

### Two sizes are available:

A4 - \$55\* | A3 - \$110\*

\* Prices quoted do not include GST (for members of the GST Religious group). Non members of the group and individuals may purchase using a separate link which adds GST.



## The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council

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