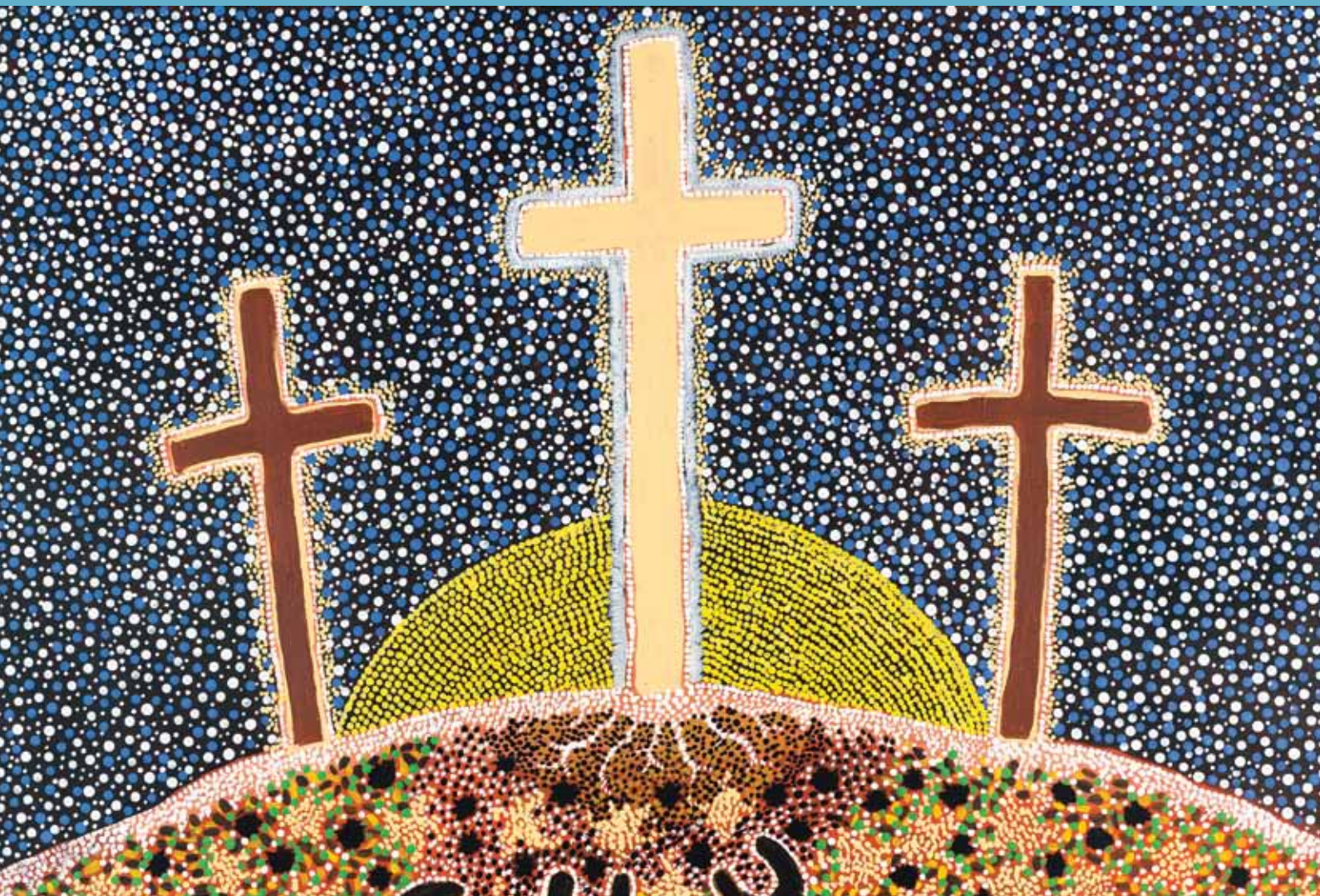


Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Sunday Celebration 2 July 2017



Resources provided by
The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Catholic Council

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.

NATSICC Councillors 2015-2018:

Chairperson, South Australia
John Lochowiak

Queensland
Evelyn Parkin

Youth Councillor
Sabrina-Ann Stevens

Treasurer, Tasmania
Jaimi-Lee Armstrong

Torres Strait Islands
Dolly McGaughey

New South Wales
Doreen Flanders

Deputy Chairperson,
Western Australia
Shirley Quaresimin

Northern Territory
Dean Chisholm

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Sherry Balcombe

Secretary, Australian
Capital Territory
Sally FitzGerald

Cover Artwork THREE CROSSES by YVONNE TJINTJIWARA EDWARDS

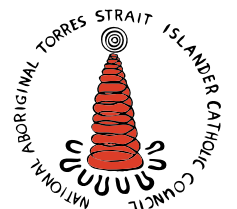
Language: Pitjantjatjara

Country: Ooldea, Yalata, Southwest South Australia

Born on her traditional country near Ooldea, SA, after the closure of the United Aborigines' Mission (UAM) in 1952, Yvonne and her family were forcibly removed eastward in care of the Lutheran missionaries, eventually settling at Yalata, while their traditional country was taken over for the British Nuclear Test Series 1953- 1963. Yvonne, a devout Christian, when asked to do a painting for the Reconciliation service at St David's Anglican Church, Burnside, SA. The work has since been featured on the cover of the Guardian paper of the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide and it hangs permanently in St David's Church.

National Administrator
Craig Arthur

Acknowledgements:
NATSICC Liturgy team, Br Laurence
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for use of Cover Artwork),
and Michael Arthur



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

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Sand Circles — Minjerribah (Stradbroke Island) 2017



NATSICC Liturgy Team Welcome

With over 120,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics in Australia, our first nation people form an important part of the fabric of Church life. Every State and Territory in Australia has an Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Ministry, and we strongly ask you to consider making contact with them in preparation for the celebrations on 2 July.

The theme ‘Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me’ resonates strongly with our people. It is a reminder to keep an open mind and heart to not only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but to all who are marginalised including refugees, the disabled and impoverished.

The resources included have been carefully developed to assist Parishes and Schools to celebrate the gifts and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics to the Church in Australia.



About the Resources

Use: 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.

- Parishes and Schools without Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members may use the additional prayer suggestions, homily notes and Prayers of the Faithful to enrich the Mass.

Appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols may be used in a prominent place during the Mass to reflect the enduring presence of Australia's first people in the Church. The opportunity exists for these Parishes to reach out to the local Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Ministry to participate in the planning of the Mass and the celebration.

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

OUR MOB, GOD'S STORY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders share their faith

A must-have resource for schools and parishes wanting to gain insight into Indigenous culture, spirituality, faith and art.

This glossy hardcover art book is an exclusive and powerful collection of more than 115 paintings by 67 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from 40 First Nations of Australia.

The vibrant paintings depict some of the most loved stories from the Old and New Testament - from creation to crucifixion - through the eyes of Indigenous Australians.



Available from www.bibleshop.org.au/ourmob, Koorong Books, or by calling 1300 242 537.



Visit www.natsicc.org.au for a range of activities to help you celebrate on 2 July



Liturgical Resources



Creating a Welcoming Space



Youth Activities



Multimedia Resources

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country Ceremonies

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, school or organisation stands and surrounds, or where a speech, event or presentation is taking place.

Sand Circles — Dunwich, Minjerribah (Stradbroke Island) 2017



An **‘Acknowledgement of Country’**

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

A **‘Welcome to Country’** is a small ceremony where traditional custodians, usually Elders, welcome people to their land.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Parish stands in a physical form (signage, plaque) on Parish grounds
- Provide an Acknowledgement to the Traditional Owners in Mass booklets, websites and other media produced by the Parish
- An Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country regularly on the Liturgical Calendar or on significant days. NATSICC is happy to assist you to implement any of the above recommendations. Additionally, your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Ministries work very hard in the community and provide a great resource to Parishes.

Suggestions for Acknowledgements

On Parish grounds, buildings, newsletters and websites:

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

On published documents (traditional and electronic):

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

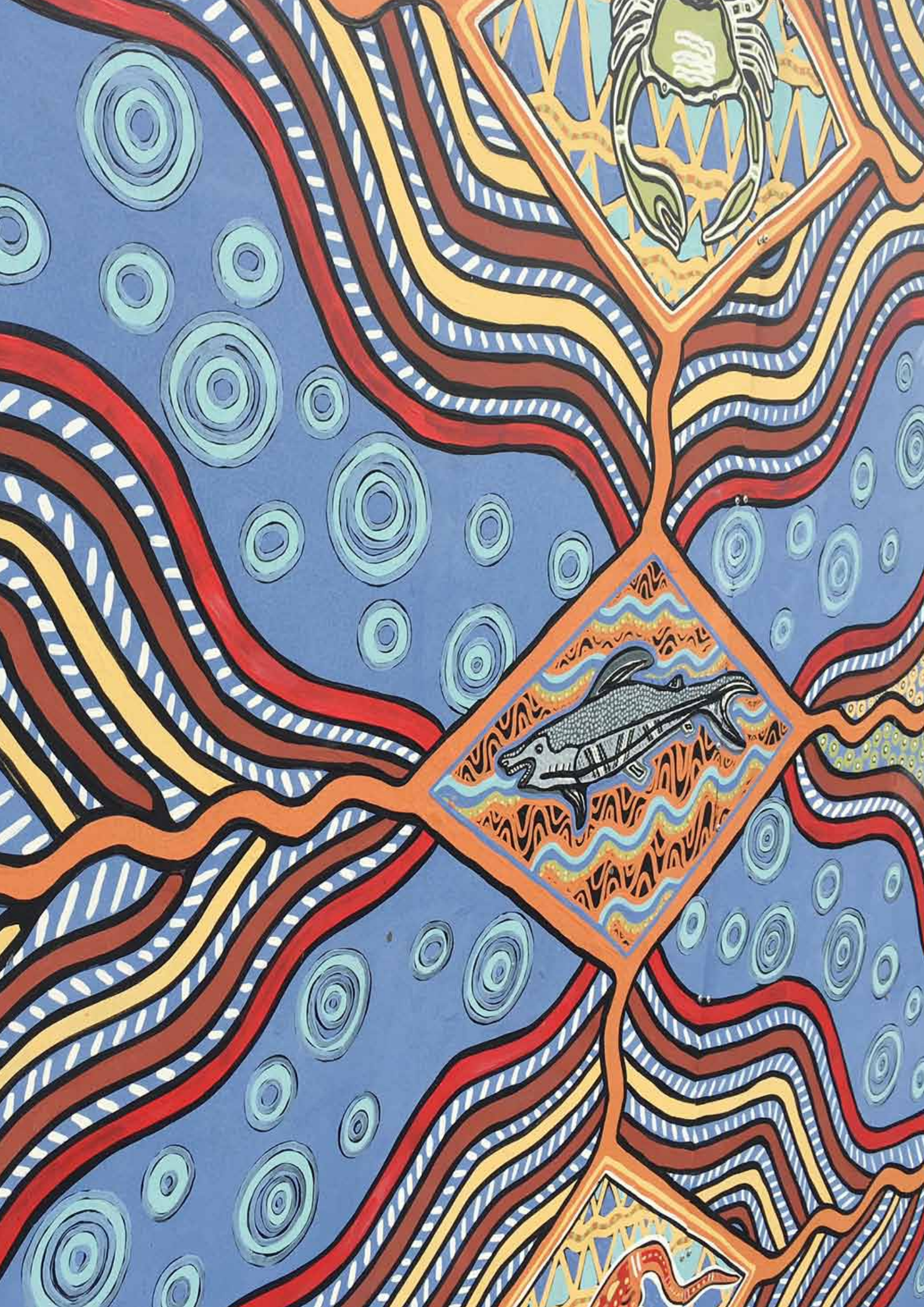
Acknowledgement of Country where the language group is not known:

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

Acknowledgement of Country using a specific nation:

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

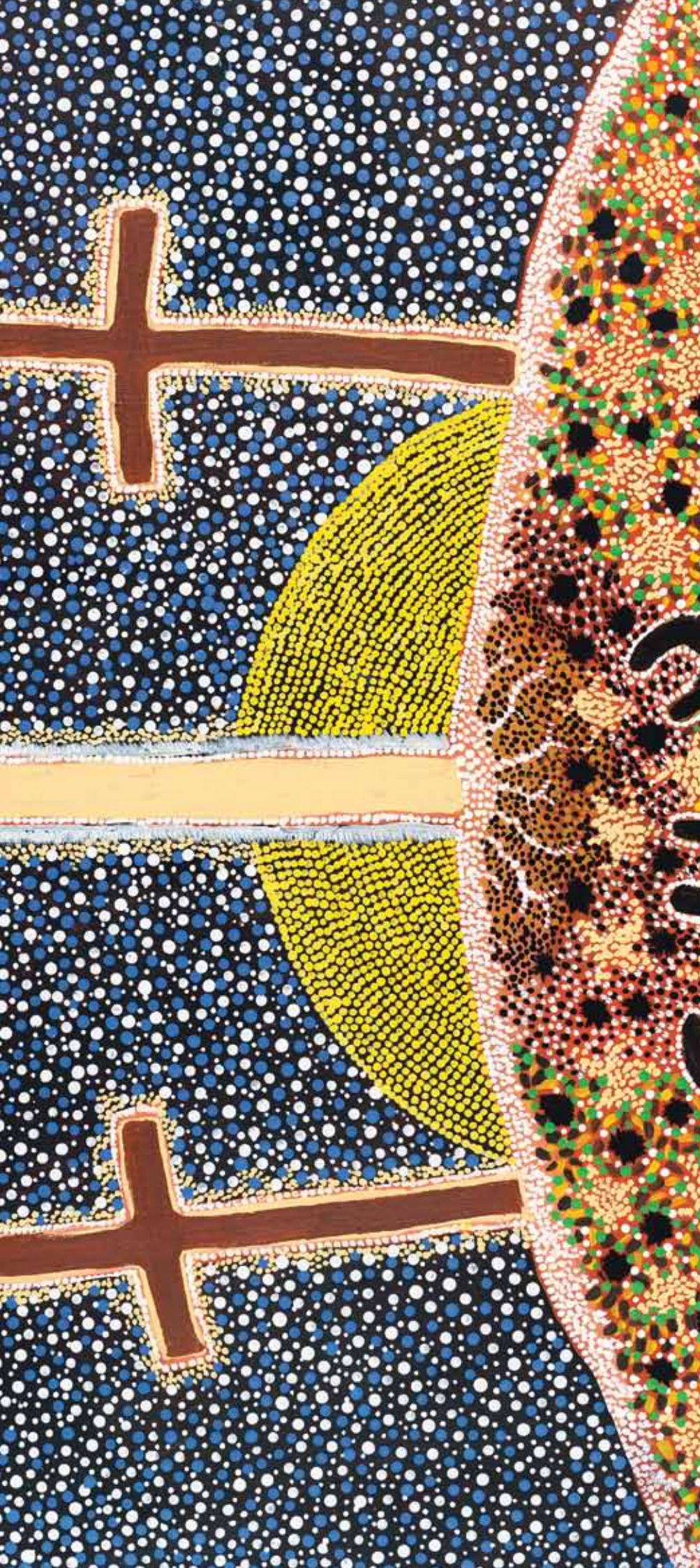
Public artwork Minjerribah (Stradbroke Island)



Anyone who
welcomes you,
welcomes me

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Sunday Celebration 2 July 2017

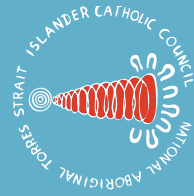




Full resources for the celebration at www.natsicc.org.au

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Catholic Council

80 Payneham Rd. Stepney | (08) 8363 2963 | www.natsicc.org.au



Artwork THREE CROSSES by YVONNE TJINTJIWARA EDWARDS
Used with Permission from Christobel Mattingly

Creating a welcoming space

Bringing to life Saint John Paul II's vision of a universal and welcoming Church by embracing and including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elements into the celebration of the Eucharist.

Introduction:

We acknowledge that God has been walking with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, making his presence known through a living culture that has been maintained till this present time.

In many and varied ways God spoke to many ancient cultures through prophets and traditions, but know he speaks to us through Jesus Christ whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom he also created the world (Heb 1:1-2)

Elements of Aboriginal culture can be included in the church's liturgy – especially when Aboriginal people are members of the celebrating assembly. Please follow the suggestions given, and NATSICC strongly advise that you work closely with your Parish Priest and Liturgical team to ensure the suggestions conform with the Liturgical norms of the Roman Missal.

Involving your local Aboriginal or Islander Catholic Ministry (AICM): Visit www.natsicc.org.au and go to 'About NATSICC' and click on your State or Territory to find your local AICM. These ministries work very hard to serve local Indigenous Catholics and do 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.

Language:

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 that follow 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 speakers.

How Language can be used:

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



Presentation of Gifts:

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 and Torres Strait Islander gifts: a boomerang, woomera, Indigenous painting, clap sticks)
All gifts presented are intended to be given to the poor; they would not be returned to the giver, but shared with others.

Ceremonies:

The following ceremonies are ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring the gift of culture and tradition to the Catholic Church in Australia. Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must conduct these ceremonies and should be involved in the planning process.

Smoking Ceremonies:

Traditionally celebrated by Aboriginal people. Since the beginning of time our ancestors used to smoke away evil spirits and receive the good spirit.

We acknowledge Aboriginal Elders to lead Smoking Ceremony.

“Today we share with you one of the oldest living ceremonies, to remove our sins and ask for forgiveness. We invite you now to share our smoking ceremony like our ancestors have done for thousands of years.”

NATSICC Spirituality Gathering — Minjerribah 2017



A Rite of Water Blessing:

Traditionally in the Roman Rite the water ritual is the Asperges to acknowledge our baptism. This replaces the Penitential Act. In the absence of Aboriginal Christians the Asperges could be introduced with the words:

Water to Aboriginal people, and to all of us, is always a sign of God's peace and fulfilment in everything that is good; the promise of food, of God's love, and protection, and a sign of the new life in Christ, which in Baptism we have all received.

It is customary in some areas, when Aboriginal people gather for important ceremonies to use water. Water containers can be a large shell or coolamon and a small branch from an appropriate native tree can be used to sprinkle the water. Please collaborate with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group to ensure this rite of water blessing is appropriate.

A suggested text for this blessing is:

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.

Art:

Art is used to enhance the beauty of a Church building, and as a means of assisting the community to celebrate, meet God and pray. The art should be truly significant in the life and tradition of the people. Communities should enjoy freedom of expression, as it enhances the beauty of the building and liturgical rites, endowing the respect which is their due.

Churches around Australia house Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, side by side with western images. The amalgamation of traditional and western artwork transforms the church into a living symbol of contemporary society and forms tangible representation of Reconciliation.

An Excerpt from the Bible Society's *Our Mob, God's Story* (Louise Sherman and Christobel Mattingley):

For over 50,000 years Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across this great land we now call Australia, have been celebrating in their stories, songs and ceremonies. From the Torres Strait and Tiwi Islands in the north to Tasmania in the south, from the east coast across the blood red centre to the west coast, generation after countless generation has created art, both ephemeral and enduring.

Art and conservation have gone hand in hand, protecting, preserving the created order, passing on the common culture, the secret and the sacred, the blood, bone and sinew of Aboriginal society. With the coming of Europeans over 200 years ago and their missionaries, English, German, Spanish, Italian, came change. Change both destructive and creative.

Some missionaries sought to graft the body and blood of Christ into cultural customs. They sought to counteract the fear of the finality of death with the hope of salvation and the promise of eternity. So the seeds were sown. As hearts and minds were freed from the tyranny and bondage of fear, and as new mediums of expression were introduced, a flowering of art erupted across the continent – a celebration of Christ in all His pain, suffering, humanity, love and glory.



How Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art can enhance liturgical celebrations:

- **Artwork can be placed around the church – particularly when it has story value for the local community.**
- **Altar candles can be decorated with Aboriginal designs.**
- **Altar cloth and stole can be decorated in traditional designs.**
- **Aboriginal colours may be used to decorate a space to the side of the sanctuary.**
- **A long term project might be to collaborate with an Aboriginal artist and commission a piece for a church community.**



Public artwork Minjerribah (Stradbroke Island)

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 as long as 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.

How music can be used:-

- Didge and clapsticks can accompany the choir.
- Didge 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, or gifts.

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.

Example:

The message stick (where appropriate) can accompany the entrance procession and be placed at the ambo. In some Aboriginal communities the message stick is a communication tool, a symbol of the word being proclaimed to be passed onto others.

Liturgical Resources

(Readings from 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Yr. A)

Suggested Introduction

Today is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday a day where we acknowledge and celebrate the gifts of Australia's first peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday is the start of National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee or NAIDOC week where all are welcomed and encouraged to join in the celebrations.

Scripture Readings

First Reading

A reading from the second book of the Kings, 4:8-11. 14-16
That is the holy man of God, let him remain there.

One day as Elisha was on his way to Shunem, a woman of rank who lived there pressed him to stay and eat there. After this he always broke his journey for a meal when he passed that way. She said to her husband, 'Look, I am sure the man who is constantly passing our way must be a holy man of God. Let us build him a small room on the roof, and put him a bed in it, and a table and chair and lamp; whenever he comes to us he can rest there.'

One day when he came, he retired to the upper room and lay down.

'What can be done for her? He asked. Gehazi (his servant) answered, 'Well, she has no son and her husband in old.' Elisha said, 'Call her.'

The servant called her and she stood at the door. 'This time next year,' Elisha said 'you will hold a son in your arms.'

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

R: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord;
Through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth.
Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever,
That your truth is firmly established as the heavens.

R: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Happy the people who acclaim such a king,
Who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,
Who find their joy every day in your name,
Who make your justice the source of their bliss.

R: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

For it is you, O Lord, who are the glory of their strength;
It is by your favour that our might is exalted;
For our ruler is in the keeping of the Lord;
Our king in the keeping of the Holy One of Israel.

R: For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans, 6:3-4. 8-11
Having been buried with him through baptism, we shall walk in a new life.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more.

When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are a chosen race, a royal

priesthood, a holy people.

Praise God who called you out of darkness and into his marvellous light.

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew, 10:37-42

Anyone who does not accept his cross is not worthy of me. Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me.

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows:

‘Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.

‘Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me.

‘Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet’s reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man because he is a holy man will have a holy man’s reward.

‘If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.’”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Prayers of the Faithful

Celebrant: Sisters and Brothers

We pray for Pope Francis, our Bishops, Clergy, Deacons and Religious, may they continue to guide all cultures to live in harmony and peace.

Let us pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for forgiveness for the times when we have treated others with disrespect and ignorance. May our hearts and minds be filled with God’s love and peace to spread his good news to all people.

Let us pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for the sick and dying, the homeless and imprisoned, those in detention and refuge centres- May they experience compassion and understanding from those intrusted with their care.

Let us pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

We pray that the Holy Spirit touch the lives of all peoples throughout Australia and the world. May they be guided to love, respect and honour all people of all cultures.

Let pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for our Aboriginal community who have lost loved ones. May they be comforted in knowing that they are at peace with the Lord.

Let us pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for our young people.

May they discover the way of life God has planned for each one of them, through strong leadership from community Elders.

Let us pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

We pray for all our departed Elders, family and community members. May they experience the fullness of God’s love.

Let pray to the Lord

R. Lord hear our prayer

Conclusion

Celebrant: Gracious and loving God, we ask you to receive our prayers from a people made one by your Holy Spirit, who always dwells within us. We ask this, through Christ our Lord.

Amen

Aboriginal Our Father

(For use in Aboriginal Communities)

You are our Father, you live in heaven
We talk to you, Father you are good
(repeat)

We believe your word Father
We your children, give us bread today
(repeat)

We have done wrong, we are sorry
Help us Father, not to sin again
(repeat)

Others have done wrong to us
And we are sorry for them, Father today
(repeat)

Stop us from doing wrong, Father
Save us all from the evil one
(repeat)

You are Our Father, you live in heaven
We talk to you, Father you are good
(repeat)

(Used with permission Broome Diocese)

Hymns and prayers

Entrance Processional

May be accompanied
by a Didgeridoo

Entrance Hymn:

Here I am, Lord (AOV 90 or GA 496)
How Great thou Art (AOV 94)

Gospel Acclamation:

“Alleluia” as per local choice

Aboriginal Our Father:

If appropriate. Contact your local
Catholic Aboriginal Community.

Communion Hymns:

I'll be Always Loving You (AOV 82)
Communion Hymn (AOV 187)
One Bread, One Body
(AOV 129, GA 193)

Recessional

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

Recessional Hymn:

Companions on the Journey (AOV 188)
All Over the World
We Walk by Faith (AOV 63, GA 447)

Prayer of Healing

God of Mercy and Compassion,
Our hearts too, are heavy with the pain
of our people.
We are sorry.
Hopelessness and despair of life has
caused much hurt and anger
They have lost their way.
We ask you to touch the hearts of
our broken people.
Mend their paths and walk with them.
May they feel the Spirit
of our Ancestors.
May the Spirit of our Ancestors
strengthen and guide us,
On our journey back to the
light of hope,
And the love of life
in Christ
Amen.

*Written by AICCQ Working Group
27 October 2000*

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)*



Jubilee Prayer

Father Our Creator,
You created all things, seen and unseen,
Listen to my silent prayer 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 their images become real to me.
I see my Grandfathers standing tall and
strong, warriors of long ago
I hear them singing I see them dancing
And my spirit moves within me.
They told of the emus fighting
And the kangaroos picking up the scent
of our hunters
The images fade away as I feel the hurt
of my people.
I can hear the cries of my
Grandmothers as they cry
for their children
Grandfather, you can see me as I stand
here and feel this hurt
Father Creator, is this the purpose of
my being here
Or is it your plan to reshape my people
To be once again the proud race
it once was?
Let me walk with you
and my Grandfathers
Towards the dawning of a proud
and new nation.
I thank you for my Sacred Being.
Amen

*(NATSICC Leadership Gathering
November 1995)*

Prayer of the Aboriginal People

Father of all, You gave us the Dreaming,
You have spoken to us
through our beliefs,
You then made your love clear to us in
the person of Jesus
We thank you for your care.
You own us, you are our hope.
Make us 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

*Prepared by Aboriginal people for Pope John
Paul II's visit to Alice Springs 1986*

Homily notes



Every primary school child knows that Captain Cook ‘discovered’ Australia in 1770. But such a simple statement masks the fact that, in the centuries before Captain Cook, seafarers from several countries had visited our region and made a number of landings on the coast of this country. But most significantly of all, before any of these newcomers came our way, the country had already been discovered and inhabited for some 60,000 years.

In that almost unimaginable length of time the original discoverers of this land developed and sustained a radically non-material culture that was supported by a profoundly spiritual understanding of the world around them. Part of the enduring tragedy for modern Australia is that when European Christians eventually began to occupy this country they had neither the eyes to see nor the ears to hear the richness of what they were encountering. The people who lived the ancient spirituality of this land found no welcome in the material culture that overtook them. There was no welcome either for the prophets and the holy men of the Dreaming and so much of what could have enriched our Christian spirituality was ignored.

But hope still prevails. We are an Easter people and today we stand ready to take up the cross of lost opportunity. Today, as a Christian people, we stand ready to work together towards a genuine reconciliation and a truly inclusive Australian Church.

Much has already been achieved. Legal discrimination that was once a soul destroying part of the daily life of Indigenous people has been substantially removed. Constitutional recognition, treaties and sovereignty are being proposed. All this is good. But the law has no jurisdiction over the heart and no amount of legislative or constitutional reform can, by itself alone, achieve the goal we seek.

Genuine reconciliation and a truly Australian Church depend upon what we hold in our hearts and the personal relationships we can each build between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of our country. Offering a cup of cold water may be a beginning but we long for the day when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and Australians of other backgrounds can all take their place together around the same table to partake of the banquet that could be ours to enjoy.

Fr. Robert Greenup
Indigenous Connections – Mareeba, QLD



Youth activities

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 assembly@natsicc.org.au so that we can display all of your good work!

Create a Prayer Space

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

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.

Liturgy of the Word

Para-Liturgies are a great way for a class or two to explore worship outside the constraints of the Mass. The variety of participation is only limited by the organizer.

- Readings can be limited to a Gospel according to your chosen theme.
- Homily can be a shared discussion based on a brief commentary.
- Hymns/Music can relate to a theme – using the didge, clapsticks, recorded music, actions etc.
- Prayers of the faithful can be written by the children.
- Signs and symbols can be used in enhance the setting – Aboriginal colours and artefacts, native plants. Drawings or paintings done by the children can be presented during the prayers of the faithful or shared homily.



The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
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