

National Sorry Day 2019  
Children's Liturgy of the Word  
Walk Together With Courage



**Please Note:**

Elements of this Liturgy of the Word may be integrated into a Eucharistic Liturgy or Prayer Ritual or adapted for Class Prayer.

For online videos that may be relevant to this resource, please view our Emmaus Online Video Library Index on our New Resources/Calendar page by following this link:

<http://liturgyritualprayer.com/new-resources>

**Website Background & Information:**

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week-theme-announced-grounded-in-truth-walk-together-with-courage/>

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-sorry-day-an-important-part-of-healing/>

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/historic-partnership-agreement-a-significant-step-towards-reconciliation/>

*Some symbols that could be used today in the sacred space include a large cross, the Word of God, Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, a didgeridoo and several lit candles of varying sizes and heights. There could also be some burnt logs (symbolizing the past), some red earth in a glass bowl (symbolising the present) and some native plants such as eucalypt or grevillea (symbolising the future) The cloth in the space could be purple as a symbol of reconciliation and white as a symbol of hope for the future.*

*For the Penitential Rite you will need 6-8 confident and capable students. As each line is read by the reader, have the children stand in a pose suggested by the text. Hold that pose strongly for a few seconds and then drop their arms by their sides, heads bowed, facing the front, while everyone says, Lord, forgive us.*

**Welcome & Introduction:**

**Call to prayer:**

*A child stands at the front and turns the rain maker 3 – 4 times slowly and reverently. Or A didgeridoo (live or recorded) is playing, and then continues more quietly in the background during the welcome.*

Leader (or a child/adult of aboriginal descent):

As we gather today we acknowledge the traditional owners of this land,  
..... *(insert name of local people)* people, who have walked and  
cared for this land for thousands of years, and their descendants who maintain  
these spiritual connections. Let us reflect on the millions of footprints that  
travelled the Dreaming pathways and give thanks for their wisdom and  
knowledge. *(Pause)*

We remember and recognise the people of the Stolen Generation and all those  
who were directly or indirectly affected by this terrible time in our history.  
Through our celebration today, we are reminded that God's dream for humanity  
is one of justice and equality, of compassion and understanding, of forgiveness  
and mercy, to be shared by all peoples on earth. We pray that we walk together  
with courage.

**Gathering Hymn:**

**You and Me, a Peace Prayer** (M. Brown – One People, One Land) **OR**

**Land of the Southern Cross** (Michael Mangan – Sing Jubilee)

**Penitential Rite:**

Leader: Let us reflect on the times we fail to see Jesus in the people around us – in our  
families, in our classrooms, in our school, in our community.

Reader: When we have clenched our hands in anger to hurt or harm, *(pause & hold position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

Reader: When we have gripped our hands to hold on to things selfishly, *(pause & hold  
position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

Reader: When we have pointed a finger to laugh at or judge another, *(pause & hold  
position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

Reader: When we have thumbed our noses at others to exclude or reject, *(pause & hold  
position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

Reader: When we have covered our eyes to avoid seeing another's needs, *(pause & hold  
position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

Reader: When we have closed our ears to the cries of another in pain, *(pause & hold position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

Reader: When we have held our hands behind us and done nothing to help, *(pause &  
hold position)*

All: Lord, forgive us.

**Leader:** May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to life everlasting.

**All:** Amen.

**Opening Prayer:**

**Leader:** God of love and peace,  
you are full of mercy and compassion.  
Through your Son Jesus  
you show us how to live in harmony with others,  
to be peacemakers.  
Give us the grace we need to walk with others with courage and commitment.  
May we always be ready to admit our faults  
and seek forgiveness of those we have hurt.  
Help us to be accepting and understanding  
so that our communities can be strong in peace and understanding.  
We ask this prayer in Jesus' name.

**All:** Amen.

**First Reading:** Colossians 3: 12-15 *Clothe yourselves with compassion...*

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Create a New Heart** (Michael Mangan – Forever I Will Sing) OR

**Lord Teach Me Your Ways** (John Burland – Lord Teach Me Your Ways)

**Gospel:** Matthew 22: 36-40 *Love the Lord your God...*

**Response to the Reading:**

- Ask children to sit very still and close their eyes. Have some gentle music playing in the background.
- Say something like this to the children: Imagine you are getting dressed in the morning not in your school uniform but dressed something like this.
- First put on your robe in the colours of compassion and kindness. *(Pause)*
- Next put on your shoes of humility and understanding so that you can walk in another's footsteps. *(Pause)*
- Now put on your robes in the calming tones of listening, gentleness and patience. *(Pause)*
- Next put on the purple sashes of tolerance and forgiveness. *(Pause)*
- Over all that, wrap a big, bright golden cloak of love. *(Pause)*
- On your cloak pin your badge that says. "Do to others as you would have them do to you."
- Now you are ready to live in Jesus way showing his face to all you meet, not just your friends, but everyone.
- If this is how you are going to dress, how does it mean you will act? *(Take a few minutes of quiet time to reflect on this).*
- Take a minute to pray that you will walk in Jesus' way with courage and strength.

**Prayer of the Faithful:**

**Leader:** Gracious God, we turn to you and ask the help of your Spirit as we try to make our world a more peaceful place.

**Reader:** We pray for all Australians, that we may have humble hearts and be willing to acknowledge the hurts of the past that we have caused. May we look to a future of genuine reconciliation. *(pause)* We pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, let us walk together with courage.

**Reader:** We pray for the leaders of churches and governments in this country, that they may be guided in the ways of compassion, justice and reconciliation. *(pause)* We pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, let us walk together with courage.

**Reader:** We remember those who were and are a part of the stolen generation. May they come to know healing of past hurts and look to a future of peace in heart and mind. *(pause)* We pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, let us walk together with courage.

**Reader:** Lord, we pray for all Australians, that we may see the differences in each other as a strength that unites us, not a sword that divides us. *(pause)* We pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, let us walk together with courage.

**Leader:** We pray that we become a community that strives for justice and looks to create unity through respect and acceptance. *(pause)* We pray to the Lord.

**All:** Lord, let us walk together with courage.

**Leader:** God of mercy, love and peace, be with us as we pray the prayer which unites us as one family.

**All:** *(Aboriginal Our Father.... )*

You are our Father, you live in Heaven

We talk to You, Father, you are good.

We believe Your Word, Father, we your children.

Give us bread today.

We have done wrong, we are sorry.

Help us Father, not to sin again.

Others have done wrong to us

And we are sorry for them, Father today.

Stop us from doing wrong, Father.

Save us all from the evil one.

You are our Father; you live in Heaven.

We talk to You, Father, you are good.

Amen.

**Final Prayer:**

**Leader:** Let us pray.

Loving God, you call us to work together to be one people.

May we work together  
to bring hope and healing to all who live here in Australia.  
Help us to show compassion and justice to all,  
especially our indigenous brothers and sisters,  
whom we have treated so badly in the past.  
May we walk forward in a spirit of healing and reconciliation  
so that all may live with dignity and respect.  
We make our prayer in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

**Recessional Hymn:**

**Spirit Dream** (Monica Brown – Bless Our Land) **OR**

**Thank God** (Jen Charadia – Renew Our Hearts)

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