

National Reconciliation Week
Youth Liturgy of the Word
Grounded In Truth,
Walk Together With Courage



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Please Note:

Elements of this liturgy may be integrated into a Eucharistic Liturgy or adapted for a prayer ritual or class prayer.

There may be videos in our online video library relevant to this theme. To check availability please select the video menu on our homepage menu bar.

Readings have been taken from Sixth Sunday of Easter Year C (26 May 2019) which coincides with National Sorry Day.

Preparation for Liturgy:

A sacred space consisting of the National Reconciliation Week image (available from <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/>), some red, yellow and black material, some native plants/cuttings, a large empty bowl for water, a large lit candle, a cross and a Bible/Book of the Gospels is suggested.

The Penitential Act requires 3 jugs of water and 3 readers. Each jug is processed in and water poured into one bowl in the sacred space. The water is then taken from the space, sprinkled over the people by the Presider/leader with an appropriate aspergillum (e.g. some native cuttings taped together) and returned to the space.

Local indigenous elders could be invited to join the Liturgy. If appropriate in your local context, they may like to lead an appropriate Welcome to Country which could include a smoking ceremony.

If appropriate, the didgeridoo or clapsticks could accompany the music for the entrance procession.

The final prayer is broken up into two sections, which will need to be negotiated before commencing the Liturgy.

Introduction:

Leader: National Sorry Day is held on 26 May each year to acknowledge and recognise members of the Stolen Generations. This day coincides with National Reconciliation Week which is held annually from 27 May – 3 June. In 2019, the theme is “Grounded in Truth, Walk Together with Courage”.

At the heart of this time of reconciliation is the relationship between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. National Reconciliation Week is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories and cultures and continue to explore reconciliation in Australia.

Reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and actions of all Australians as we move forward, creating a nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

If an elder is present, they could be invited to lead a Welcome to Country here. Otherwise the following Acknowledgment of Country could be used instead. If the traditional name of the country is known, it could be named during this time.

We begin by acknowledging that we are on Holy Ground...ground that has been cared for since time immemorial by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters. We pay our respect to the elders – past, present and emerging – to their unique way of living and for their stewardship of this land we now call our home.

After a moment of silence:

I invite you now to stand in solidarity as we begin this time of prayer.

Gathering Hymn:

Love Is What We Need (Steve Angrisano – High Above Our Way)

Gather Your People (Bob Hurd – As One Voice: Vol 1)

We Are Called (David Haas – As One Voice: Vol 2)

Penitential Act:

Reader 1: This water is symbolic of tears shed...

Water is poured into the basin.

Reader 2: Tears that cried at the loss of children, the loss of mothers and fathers and the loss of community, which caused immense pain, suffering and hurt.

All: For this, we say sorry.

Pause

Reader 1: This water is symbolic of tears shed...

Water is poured into the basin.

Reader 2: Tears that cried at the indignity and degradation inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture.

All: For this, we say sorry.

Pause

Reader 1: This water is symbolic of tears shed...

Water is poured into the basin.

Reader 2: Tears that cried at the immense joy and overwhelming relief when voices that were suppressed and hidden for so long were finally heard beyond the deafening injustice of the past.

All: For this, we say sorry.

Presider or leader takes the water and using an appropriate aspergillum, sprinkles the water over the congregation and then returns it to the sacred space.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray...
Creator Spirit,
You call each one of us your children in the heavenly kingdom
where there is mutual respect, resolve and responsibility.
As we continue to write this new chapter in our Australian story,
help us to move forward with the Spirit of humility and grace
instilled in us by Jesus,
who broke down the divisions imposed by our human imperfection.
May your love that knows no end
continue to dwell in our hearts
as we work for peace and harmony in all times and places.
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, the peacemaker.

All: Amen.

First Reading: Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

Responsorial Psalm: **Psalm 40: Here Am I, Lord** (Steve Angrisano – A New Day)

Gospel Reading: Jn 14:23-29

Breaking Open the Word:

The reading from the Acts of the Apostles today highlights that our own Christian tradition, much like our Australian history, is wracked with destructive and despicable behaviour caused by those who try to impose a single-minded and authoritarian point of view.

Yet our story as a Christian people begins with Jesus who speaks of peace, which is the polar opposite! One of the most important gifts Jesus leaves to his disciples is peace. It's not a peace that comes naturally from us, but peace that God alone gives and instils within each one of us. It is the peace that comes from God's Spirit, gentling whispering to us and stirring within our hearts.

In this celebration of National Reconciliation Week, it is that same peace of God that we are called, urged and challenged to share with one another – especially our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters.

Amidst the tragedy and violence that seems to grip our world, God remains ever-present. As we continue to recognise our shortcomings as a nation, let us ask ourselves: how do we ensure that the peace of the Lord is with us always? How do we ground ourselves in the peace of God, and move forward courageously to work towards healing for the future?

Prayer of the Faithful:

Leader: Loving God, we now turn to you as we pray for our needs and the needs of our world.

Reader: For a better understanding and respect between all peoples of our country. God of reconciliation...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For hearts that are open to listening and learning. God of reconciliation...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For those who are pushed to the margins of society, and those who are burdened with suffering. God of reconciliation...

All: Hear our prayer.

Reader: For dignity, compassion, grace and equality within our world. God of reconciliation...

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Uniting God, with the sure knowledge that you provide for all that we need, we place our prayers into your hands and ask that you grant them through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Final Prayer:

Leader: Let us pray...

Section 1: Almighty and loving God, who created all people in your own image,
You gave your only Son, Jesus,
who died and rose again so that sins would be forgiven.

Section 2: We live in faith that all people will rise, like Jesus,
from the depths of despair and hopelessness.

Section 1: In your mercy, we place the pain and loss of the past into your keeping
and ask for your Spirit to continue to walk beside us
as we continue in our journey of healing
so that we may create a new future
that brings hope and prosperity to the future of our home, Australia.

Section 2: Help us to walk alongside one another as brother and sisters
as we heal from the brokenness of our past into the new dawn.

All: We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, our Risen Lord.
Amen.

Dismissal

Leader: May God the author of all reconciliation bless us now and into the future.
The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Recessional Hymn:

For Your Name (Faith + Hope + Love - Hillsong)

City of God (Dan Schutte – As One Voice: Vol 1)

Let There Be Peace on Earth (Jill Jackson & Sy Miller – Journeysongs 3rd ed.)

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