

Bishops Urge Prayers for Parliamentarians

As Parliament wrestles with the complexities of competing claims for land title and usage we pray for a resolution that respects justice and promotes true reconciliation.

It is absolutely vital for the future of our nation that the present divisiveness be resolved fairly and permanently.

We have always hoped, along with so many other Australians, that this nation through mature dialogue and goodwill would reconcile all legitimate claims so that Native Title is protected while security for pastoralists and others who depend on the land for their living is guaranteed. The parliamentary debate should not be ended until this accomplished.

Any legislation that ignores the legitimate claims of the various parties to this dispute will only perpetuate ill-feeling and division.

It would be wrong to resolve the present impasse by destroying the hard-won rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. It would also be wrong to leave pastoralists and other claimants to land insecure about the nature of their title.

We invite all Australians to join with us in praying for our Parliamentarians that they will seize this opportunity to re-unite our nation.