

Suggested Prayers
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday

Prayer of the Aboriginal People
NATISCC Prayer
Reconciliation Prayer
Statement of Faith
Prayers of the Faithful

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 the Aboriginal People
Pope John Paul II's visit to Alice Springs 1996.

Students from Wanalirri Catholic School, Gibb River, scan the pages of the Diocesan magazine, Kimberley Community Profile, with Bishop Saunders. The students were in Broome for an excursion and visited the Diocesan Office. Photo supplied by the Diocese of Broome

NATISCC Prayer
Father Our Creator
You created all things seen and unseen.
Listen to my silent prayers 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 the 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.
Prepared by NATSICC Leadership Gathering 1995
Reconciliation Prayer
Holy Father, God of Love
You are the creator of this land and all good things
We acknowledge the pain and shame of our history
And the suffering of our peoples.
And we ask your forgiveness.
We thank you for the survival of Indigenous cultures.
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
Give us the courage to accept the realities of our history
So that we may build a better future for our nation
Teach us to respect all cultures.
Teach us to care for our land and waters.
Help us to share justly the resources of this land.
Help us to bring about spiritual and social change
To improve the quality of life for all groups in our communities,
Especially the disadvantaged.
Help young people to find true dignity and self esteem
by your Spirit
May your power and love be the foundations
On which we build our families, our communities and our nation
Through Jesus Christ our Lord
Amen
Prepared by Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group
13th March, 1997, Brisbane QLD

Children from Sacred Heart School Beagle Bay wearing reindeer headress at a Christmas function. Photo supplied by the Diocese of Broome

Statement of Faith
Deep down, we Aborigines are religious people. We did not have many material goods, but we are rich with spiritual goods. It is this strong religious side that made us. It gave us our identity, our dignity, our self-assurance. My People existed here in Australia thousands of years before Abraham. In all that time, God was with my people. He worked through their culture. He was saving us despite human weakness. He was preparing us for the day we would see the features of Aborigines in the image of His Son. Deacon Boniface Perdjert, Wadeye (Port Keats, NT)
Prayers of the Faithful
Eternal Father We thank and praise you for all children throughout the world. We pray you bless, protect and guide the youth, that they may come to a deep knowledge and understanding of you and your everlasting love. Lord hear us
God of Love We especially pray for those who are experiencing despair and hopelessness, through loss of identity and separation from family and place of belonging. Help them Lord, by your Holy Spirit, to be strong and to find love, faith, hope, peace and happiness in you. Lord Hear Us.
Creator God We pray for our ancestors. Thank you, for their way of life which was so free of many of the materialistic ways, that cause us to become selfish, greedy and unloving towards one another. May we learn from them to be respectful of the land, sea and all the things you have created, so that we may live in harmony with the environment and one another. Lord Hear Us
God of Wisdom We pray for a better understanding, and respect between all peoples of our country. Help us as we grow to appreciate the diversity of cultures, languages and backgrounds. In your eyes Lord, we are one. Help us not to see colour, race or creed, but to see you Lord, in each person created by you to be accepted and loved. Lord hear us.