

*The Bishops Committee for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, acknowledges the special significance of this year's Sorry Day in Australia.*

*Sorry Day , Monday 26 May 2008, is the first since the momentous Apology offered by the Prime Minister, The Hon Kevin Rudd on February 13<sup>th</sup> this year. That apology was the culmination of many calls to acknowledge the harm done to Australian indigenous people, not only at the time of white settlement, but through a prolonged lack of respect for aboriginal people, including the removal of children from their parents – the Stolen Generation.*

*Aboriginal and Islander people believe that the truth has finally been acknowledged, allowing them to experience an equality, a dignity and an acceptance in their own land. The hope of all Australians is surely that the Prime Minister's apology and this annual Sorry Day, will translate into a continuing process of cultural respect and acceptance for all the peoples who make up the Australian nation.*

*For the Christian community, the words of Jesus are a challenge to us all "by this shall all know that you are my disciples, if you have love, one for another" (Jn 13:35) There is no room for racism or discrimination; there is only a call to harmony through mutual respect and a future based on hope.*