

Day 8 ... National Reconciliation Week of Prayer

National Reconciliation Week ([NRW](#)) first started as the **Week of Prayer for Reconciliation in 1993** (the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples) and was supported by Australia's major faith communities. In 1996, this became known as National Reconciliation Week.

The NRW 2021 theme: **More than just a word. Reconciliation takes action.**

The final day of NRW commemorates the anniversary of Australia's [High Court Mabo Decision](#), 3 June 1992. This decision recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have rights to the land – rights that existed before the colonists arrived applying the concept of *Terra Nullius*. Importantly it acknowledged First Nations peoples' unique connection with the land. As you meditate on the following word consider the actions you can contribute to this reconciling prayer.

Thursday June 3 | Closing Prayer

By Bruce Prewer (adapted). Used with permission. Tear Australia Reconciliation Action Kit, pg 18

**God of all ancient peoples,
Lord of all tribes,
show those of us who are more recent arrivals
in this Great South Land
how best we can support Indigenous Australians
to live with dignity,
and to make their rich contribution to our growing nation.**

**Thank you for those in government,
and in the church community who are really listening
and responding with true wisdom to their cries for justice.**

**Thank you for rights restored,
for apologies made,
for emerging Indigenous leaders,
poets, priests, campaigners and visionaries.**

**We pray with anguished soul for the descendants of peoples disinherited long ago,
for those broken spirits
who gather without aim or hope in parks and lanes and dusty streets.**

**We pray for children without a childhood;
For women without security;
For men without respect.**

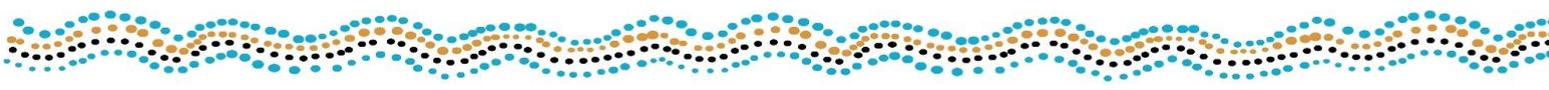
**Lord, we just don't know what we can do –
except perhaps to admit to them that we are burdened to belong to the race that
dispossessed them.**

**Lord, hear our cry;
We long to undo the many wrongs,
as far as that is possible.**

**But how do we start, Lord?
Where do we start?**

Lord, hear our cry!

For further information about this significant event for First Nations peoples, [click here](#)



National Reconciliation Week | May 27 – June 3

The above prayer is from TearAustralia's [Reconciliation Action Kit](#), and [Reconciliation Liturgy](#) (developed by the Rev Sally Apolis, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 2008, Port Melbourne, Vic).

These have been designed to support groups in prayerfully moving towards reconciliation.

TearAustralia provides the following acknowledgement on page 2 of their Action kit:

Acknowledgements

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Thank you to the contributors of the Reconciliation Action Kit: Greg Hewson, Barbara Deutschmann, Dave Andrews and Beth Koch, and to Sue Earl for her photography.

TEAR acknowledges that different communities and organisations prefer different terms when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. TEAR Australia uses "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" while Concilia uses the term "Indigenous". Please be assured that these terms are used with the utmost respect and it is our hope that they are received in this spirit.