

National Sorry Day

May 26



Photo courtesy World Youth Day, Darwin Diocese

This day is an opportunity to become more conscious of past harm done and the healing needed in relationships between Aboriginal and white Australians. In 1998, Australia stopped to recognise for the first time a National Sorry Day on 26 May, the eve of the commencement of National Reconciliation Week. Genuine reconciliation requires acknowledgement of the harm done by the perpetrators and beneficiaries of past policies so that healing can reach the whole community. This prayer invites us to pray together for such healing.

Greeting and Doxology

God, Source of Life

Mother of Mercy

bent over us in love

Praise to You

All: Amen

Psalm 119

Out of God's deepest mercy, dawn will come from the heavens.

God, teach me your ways
and I will follow them closely.
Help me understand your will,
that I may cherish your law.

Guide me along your path,
a way of delight.
Open my heart to your laws
and not to riches.
Let me speak the whole truth,
For I await your justice.
I keep your word, now and always.

Remember what you promised me,
I wait in hope.
In sorrow, this is my comfort:
Your life-giving word.

Reading

Ephesians 4:1-6

Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Intercessions

On this National Sorry Day we remember Indigenous Australians with deep respect and honour their presence on this soil for thousands and thousands of years before white settlement.

God of Mercy, we acknowledge our history and we are sorry.

Speaking with one voice we own that we are the inheritors of the stories and actions of the colonizers of this land.

God of Mercy, we acknowledge our history and we are sorry.

Our ancestors stripped many of the creative ways that Indigenous Australians cared for the land, thus productivity and vitality were greatly diminished.

God of Mercy, we acknowledge our history and we are sorry.

Today we join with people all over Australia to say sorry for the actions that have robbed Indigenous Australians of their life, culture, law and language.

God of Mercy, we acknowledge our history and we are sorry.

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer

God, Mother of Mercy, stir within us compassion and a deep desire for reconciliation. On this National Sorry Day may this compassion and reconciliation be strong and true so that justice flows, action flourishes, a difference is made and peace is accomplished. Amen

Blessing

May God's blessing be upon us! **Amen**

May God's light lead us to reconciliation! **Amen**

May our lives be filled with reconciliation and compassion! **Amen**

Source: "Supplement to Morning and Evening Prayer of the Sisters of Mercy", Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia