

NATIONAL SORRY DAY 26 MAY

PRAYERS FOR USE IN CHURCHES



INTRODUCTION OR NEWSLETTER INSERT

May 26 and Matthew 25

Let us start by acknowledging the First Peoples of this country, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise their custodianship of this land since time immemorial, continuing to this day. Since 1997, May 26 has been a memorial day for the century of destruction that was visited upon Aboriginal families by government agencies and agents. Tens of thousands of families were torn apart, laying a foundation of instability that still affects Aboriginal families on a daily basis. While the National Apology of 13 February 2008 shows that we are starting to move forward, there are many needs which are still very present amongst Stolen Generations, their families and the wider community. In our prayers this Sunday, the 17th anniversary of the Bringing Them Home Report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, we pray for those needs.

Read Matthew 25.44-45

Churches with projector or printed liturgy, the bold print indicates response by the people.

For churches where prayers are spoken from the lectern, read the following straight through.

*If a repeated response is desired, insert at * the response: **We ask for justice truth and healing.***

Prayers for the Stolen Generations

God of all creation,
We thank you for this beautiful land,
for the First Peoples you entrusted to care for it,
for its wealth and many Second Peoples who have made it their home.

Australia has been good to us.

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We ask now for this land that we will all be healed,
For our ancestors made gains at the expense of the Aboriginal custodians.

Lands were taken and families destroyed by removal of children.

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We pray for those who were taken,
And those parents and grandparents whose arms lost little ones.

**We struggle to imagine how this would feel,
and how it could have happened.**

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For the pain and loss of identity and culture, **we ask healing.**
For a callous disregard of human rights **we ask forgiveness and healing.**
For wilful blindness and ignorance **we ask for your light to shine.**
For the descendants still affected by trans-generational trauma
we ask for ongoing support systems , in the name of justice.

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May we all be one.

May we be a nation who cares for 'the least of these'.

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In the name of Christ, Amen

Rev Dr Ian Robinson, Rev Sealin Garlett, Wendy Hendry

Further information:

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/bringing-them-home-stolen-children-report-1997>

<http://stolengenerationstestimonies.com/testimonies/>

<http://www.news.com.au/national-news/pm-moves-to-heal-the-nation/story-e6frfw9-1111115539560>

<http://www.healingfoundation.org.au/stolen-generations>