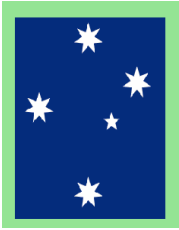


Staff Prayer Ritual for Sorry Day: Handout

We Gather

Welcome & Introduction ...



Sign of the Cross ...

Lighting of the 3 Candles ...



Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray in the words of the Aboriginal People, asking God to bless our Indigenous races with new hope ...

All: Father of all, You gave our Aboriginal People the Dreaming
You have spoken to them through their beliefs,
You then made your love clear to them in the person of Jesus.
We thank you for your care of these people.
You own them. You are their hope.
Make them strong as they face the problems of change.
We ask you to help us, the people of Australia,
To listen to them and respect their culture.
Make the knowledge of you grow strong in all people
So that you can be at home in all of us,
And so that we can make a home for everyone in our land.

Amen.

Adapted from the Prayer prepared by the Aboriginal People for Pope John Paul II's visit to Alice Springs 1996.

We Listen

Gathered around a PC (or with the aid of a data projector), **follow this link** to listen to Kevin Rudd's motion to Parliament regarding the Apology of Australians to the Indigenous Peoples - complete with an inspiring Power Point presentation.

<http://www.smh.com.au/multimedia/2008/national/australia-says-sorry/main.html>

Scripture Reading

Reader: *A reading from the prophet Isaiah (Is 62: 4)*

No more will you be known as 'Forsaken' or your country be known as 'Desolation';
instead, you will be called 'My Delight in Her'
and your country 'The Wedded';
for Yahweh will take delight in you
and your country will have its wedding.

SHORT PAUSE ...

Sharing

Leader: How does this ancient Word of God speak to our recent experience of the Apology?
People may like to share for a few minutes ...

We Respond

Leader: Let us pray a special *Prayer for Reconciliation*

All: Holy Father, God of Love,
You are the creator of this land and of all good things.
We acknowledge the pain and shame of our history
and the suffering of our peoples – especially the grief of those who were taken
as children from their homes and families,
taken from all they knew and loved.
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, forgive and accept us.

Give us the courage to acknowledge 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 in the ways of 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.

Adapted from a Prayer prepared by Wontulp Bi-Buya Indigenous Theology Working Group 13th March, 1997, Brisbane QLD

We Go Forth

Blessing / Dismissal / Sign of Peace



“If you stay closely united, you are like a tree, standing in the middle of a bushfire sweeping through the timber. The leaves are scorched and the tough bark is scarred and burnt; but inside the tree the sap is still flowing, and under the ground the roots are still strong. Like that tree, you have endured the flames, and you still have the power to be reborn”. (JP11)