What is Reconciliation?

About reconciliation

Jesus is the love of God breaking into the world, reaching out beyond the barriers that separate people from each other and offering reconciliation and peace. Those who were marginalised by others around him were accepted and loved by Jesus. Those who had suffered persecution and isolation from the world around them, found in Jesus freedom and hope and the courage and strength to transform their lives.

Reconciliation is based on Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians coming to an honest understanding of our shared history, a commitment to building cooperative partnerships based on trust and respect and a recognition of the distinctive rights of Indigenous peoples.

Reconciliation requires commitments and action from both governments and the community.

National Reconciliation Week and Week of Prayer for Reconciliation - 27 May to 3 June

The Week of Prayer for Reconciliation gives us the opportunity to reflect, through prayer, thought, discussion, and act on what still needs to be done in reconciliation.

Week of Prayer for Reconciliation was started in 1993, and expanded to become National Reconciliation Week in 1996, becoming an Australia-wide focus point for reconciliation activities.

National Reconciliation Week and the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation coincide with two important dates in Australia’s history:

- 27 May marks the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum in which more than 90 percent of Australians voted to remove clauses from the Australian Constitution which discriminated against Indigenous people.

- 3 June marks the anniversary of the judgement in the 1992 Mabo case in the High Court, which recognised the Native Title rights of Indigenous people as the original inhabitants of Australia and overturned the belief that the land was unowned and empty – terra nullius – prior to the arrival of Europeans in 1788.

The theme for National Reconciliation Week in 2010 is ‘Reconciliation: Let’s see it through!’ a call to make sure recent positive steps, including the National Apology to the Stolen Generations, are carried through into concrete actions for reconciliation.