



Auxiliary Bishop of Perth

On the 10-year Anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generation, the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth renews its apology to the Aboriginal community for the role the Church played in the removal of children. In the words of JP II speaking after the Ecclesia In Ocean Synod in 2011, we say “

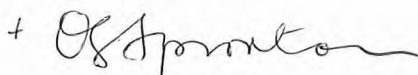
“The Church expresses deep regret and asks forgiveness where her children have been or still are party to these wrongs. Aware of the shameful injustices done to indigenous peoples in Oceania, the Synod Fathers apologized unreservedly for the part played in these by members of the Church, especially where children were forcibly separated from their families.<sup>(103)</sup>”

The relationship between the Church and Aboriginal people is a complex one. We can recall the great work of many Christian missionaries who supported, loved and cared for Aboriginal people from the beginning of settlement, such as Bishop Rosendo Salvado. However, we also acknowledge that we did not always live up to the vision of Jesus Christ and participated in actions that at times oppressed Aboriginal people. Today many Aboriginal people experience deep pain because of this.

As a Catholic community we continue to work with the survivors of the stolen generation and their families towards truth, justice and healing. This occurs through the various ministries and services of the Catholic community who work alongside these families on a daily basis. These include Day Dawn Advocacy Centre, Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, Shopfront, larger organisations like St Vincent de Paul Society, Caritas Australia Catholic Missions as well as our schools and hospitals.

In fidelity to our ongoing commitment to reconciliation, today I announce that we will be embarking on a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) journey with the establishment of a Working Group to explore the development of a RAP Plan for the Archdiocese of Perth.

For all enquiries related to Aboriginal ministry please contact the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry on 93287529.

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Bishop Don Sproxton  
Auxiliary Bishop Archdiocese of Perth  
Member of the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aborigines

30 January 2018