

***A Prayer of Petition asking for Reconciliation***

The footsteps of God are there for us marked in Australia's landscapes,  
In the countless gifts and beauties that lie before us,  
In patterns of harmony and interweaving,  
In survival against the odds and the enduring hope for Reconciliation

The footsteps of God are there for us in the light tread of Christ  
Leaving hollows of love and grace,  
Inviting us to put our feet within God's life  
And find ourselves sinking deep in meaning,  
Held in purpose and carried forward into fullness as a nation.

The footsteps of God are there for us in the mystery of the Spirit,  
Gently touching the earth with comfort,  
Leaving tracks of truth and courage,  
And lifting her feet in dances of delight which leap over the laws the restrict  
And the racism which build boundaries around love.

Together we pray for the courage to work for Reconciliation.

***A Prayer of Petition asking for Reconciliation***

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

***A Blessing***

To all who walk this land  
May you always stand as tall as a tree  
Be as gentle as the morning mist  
As strong as the earth under your feet  
May the warmth of the campfire be in you  
And may the Creator Spirit of the Wurundjeri people always watch over you.  
*Betty Pike*

## A Creed for Australia

We believe  
That this ancient land with all of its unique creatures  
Is a precious gift from a loving God whose mercy is found in all his works.

We believe  
In God's care for the Aboriginal people who treasured it  
Through unnumbered generations:  
The One who grieves in their suffering and rejoices in every noble aspiration.

We believe  
In God's compassion for the patchwork of refugees  
Who for two hundred years have come to this continent  
Looking for a place to call their home.

We believe  
In God's steadfast love for this nation and all its children  
For many races, colours and gifts to fulfil a high destiny.

We believe  
That the best way forward is the path revealed by Jesus,  
Of faith, hope and love  
Where no needy person is neglected and no bidding of the Spirit is ignored.

*Words of Pope John Paul II*

*You are like a tree standing in the middle of a bushfire sweeping through timber.  
The leaves are scorched and the tough bark is scarred and burned; 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.*

## A Prayer of Praise

I am a child of the Dreamtime people  
Part of this land, like the gnarled gum tree  
I am the river, softly singing  
Chanting our songs on my way to the sea  
My spirit is the dust-devils  
Mirages, that dance on the plain  
I'm the snow, the wind and the falling rain  
I'm part of the rocks and the red desert earth  
Red as the blood that flows in my veins  
I am an eagle, crow and snake that glides  
Through the rainforest that clings to the mountainside  
I awakened here when the earth was new  
There was emu, wombat and kangaroo  
No other man of a different hue  
I am this land  
And this land is me  
I am Australia

A Prayer of Praise

### ***Let us face the East***

We praise you Lord the Creator of the East. The symbol of the East is the magpie which announces the coming of the sun at dawn. The magpie symbolises the Good News and is our symbol here of a new day dawning for us and for the Church. Aboriginal people get their bearings from the East. In Aboriginal way the East rather than the North orientates people as they travel the land. Christ is our morning star. As the sun rises in the East with a promise of a new day so Christ is our guiding light through the message of the Gospel leading us throughout the day so that we look forward in Hope.

### ***Let us face the North***

We praise you Lord, Creator of the North. The North represents the wisdom of the ancient sources from the past. The stream from the North represents the ancient wisdom of the Christians who came to Australia. The symbol of the North is the Kangaroo. It was a source of life for many Aboriginal people and a reminder of ancestral beings and creation. The Kangaroo has become a national symbol for all who now live in this country - a symbol of uniqueness, strength, endurance and abundance. The land is like the Scriptures in that it speaks to us through sacred stories and signs which are inscribed in the landscape and in the animals who inhabit it. Wisdom comes through reflection.

### ***Let us face the West***

We praise you Lord, the Creator of the West. As the sun travels the sky and sets in glory in the West this direction represents strength for the people of the future. The Kookaburra, the first of the birds, sings the sun to rest. The West represents hope for the future and strength for the people, sure in the knowledge that the sun it puts to bed will rise again bringing with it renewed hope and energy. The Kookaburra flies true and straight, sure of its purpose and goal. So we look to the West with hopes and dreams of peace. From the West comes the promise of gentle sleep, reflection and contentment and rest from our labour.

### ***Let us face the South***

We praise your Lord, Creator of the South. The South represents truth from within, insights from Aboriginal culture. Truths can be discovered in the land, the stories, the teachings, the history and the ceremonies. The insights reveal the presence of the Creator Spirit. The symbol of the South is the Emu. A bird that tracks the land and who searches with intense curiosity. It is in searching one's experience and culture that one discovers the tracks of God in our past and present. The Southern Cross hangs over Australia in blessing and protection of our Nation.

Creator Lord, Australia gives You praise.