

ASCENSION & NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2022

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD – 29 MAY 2022

Ascension & National Reconciliation Week

Father Gerry Hefferan



A SACRED TIME BETWEEN ASCENSION & PENTECOST

The time between Ascension and Pentecost is a very sacred time to all of us.

Ascension Thursday comes forty days after Easter.

Pentecost Sunday comes ten days after Ascension Thursday.

On the 27th May, we begin the annual National Reconciliation Week.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK IN AUSTRALIA

On Friday morning we celebrated *National Reconciliation Week* Mass with Year 1.

On Friday night at 7pm in our church we celebrated an ecumenical Reconciliation Prayer Service, led by some of our First Nations faith leaders in Brisbane, and with a guest speaker from [Reconciliation Queensland](#).

This week is a time for solidarity, and a time for overcoming racism.

A sacred time to acknowledge each other before God.

On Monday evening June 6th, Clint McGoldrick will lead a session on *truth-telling* in our parish. It will be held in our church at 6.30pm, with a cuppa outside from 6pm as we arrive. More information to come in our social media and in next weekend's parish bulletin.

TRUTH-TELLING

In search of Reconciliation, we look at the importance of truth-telling.

Today we reflect on several events between 1788-1790 around Sydney.

We recall from the pages of history, men and women such as

Bennelong, Governor Arthur Phillip,

Royal Marines Captain and judge advocate **David Collins,**

Boorong, a translator who survived the smallpox epidemic in autumn 1789,

Rev Johnson the chaplain,

Arabanoo who died while caring for people who had smallpox,

Pemulwuy, Yemmerrawanne, Colebee,

Lt Henry Waterhouse, Maugoran, Barangaroo,

Willemering and his medical, spiritual and initiation roles among his people,

the efforts of **Patyegarang and Lt William Dawes,** in preparing notebooks

with words and phrases from a local Aboriginal language,

and years later, the baptism of **Dickey** as a young adult.

We look at some of the differing historical interpretations behind the factual events of

- Captain Phillip ordering the kidnap of some Aborigines, which led to the kidnap of Arabanoo at Manly Cove on December 31st 1788 and his death from smallpox about May 18th, 1789.
- of the spearing of Arthur Phillips by Willemering on the 7th September 1790 at Manly Cove
- the exchange of gifts between Phillip and Maugoran of the Burramattagal, ten days later on the 17th September that year
- and the visit by Bennelong and others on the 8th October that year.

[sharing for a few moments on the above truth-telling and interpretations]

ASCENSION

Ten days after the Ascension, the disciples changed forever at Pentecost with the coming of the Holy Spirit.

(In Australia, Ascension Thursday is not a public holiday,

and it can be difficult for people on a workday to get to Mass.

So we reduce the ten days from Ascension Thursday to Pentecost,

to seven days from the Sunday after the Ascension to Pentecost Sunday,

so that we can all celebrate the Ascension together at weekend Mass.)

Before today's text, we read

'Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures'

Jesus explained at the Ascension about the coming Pentecost.

ACTS 1:1-11

In the First Reading today from Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11, we hear

'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me;

for John baptized with water,

but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

and

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;

and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,

in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

Christians are witnesses of Jesus.

Jesus did not say to capture or conquer other nations or peoples.

He commissioned the disciples as witnesses.

From a Christian perspective, *truth-telling* also admits our sins against Jesus, and against humanity and creation.

Through the Holy Spirit, we have the courage to speak the truth.

Let us listen to today's Gospel.

It reminds us of the joy of witnessing to Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL OF LUKE 24:46-53

'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.'

May we bless God in our lives throughout this week between Ascension and Pentecost.
May we seek the truth always.
May we be open always to the healing power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Let us pray.

Father Gerry

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/052922-ascension.cfm>

[Pope Francis recent Vatican News article: Study of history can offer valuable way to foster peace](#)



L-R Uncle David Miller Aunty Ravina Waldren ([Murri Ministry](#)), Aunty Jean, Rev'd Canon Bruce Boase ([Greenhills Anglican Community](#)), Lower L-R Linda Harnett ([Reconciliation Queensland](#)), Clint McGoldrick. Marlon Riley ([Ngutana-Lui Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Studies Centre, Brisbane Catholic Education](#))