

PREPARING TO BE RECONCILED
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (YEAR B) – 29 November 2020



ARE WE READY FOR CHRISTMAS

Are we ready for Christmas? Yes? No?

This weekend we begin the four weeks of Advent, preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Are there some among our family and friends, and neighbours and those with whom we work, that this Advent we would like at peace with them?

To forgive? To be forgiven? To be reconciled with?

Let us gain insights from the Mass Readings this weekend.

BOOK OF ISAIAH 63:16-17; 64:1,3-8

From Isaiah in the Old Testament we acknowledge

- that it is God who is our Redeemer – always. God never deserts us.
“... you, O Lord, are our father; our Redeemer from of old is your name.”
“... From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways.”
- that we need to admit our sinfulness, admit our unworthiness.
“... We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”
- that we need to be humble like clay, and turn to God who is our potter.
“... Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.”

1ST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS 1/3-9

God as the potter, fashions us in grace and strength and community fellowship.
In today's Second Reading we learn from St Paul, writing to a community with divisions.

- We can be reconciled. But we cannot do it alone.
"... the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus"
"... He will also strengthen you to the end"
"... God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

GOSPEL OF MARK 13:33-37

In being reconciled, we need to be alert and aware, to stay awake.

"Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. "
"And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

RECONCILIATION

Not only in Advent but throughout the years ahead, we are called to be reconciled.
For us as Australians, Reconciliation is a journey, a continual conversion.

Reconciliation Australia explains its perspective"

*'Our vision of reconciliation is based and measured on five dimensions:
historical acceptance; race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity and
unity.
These five dimensions do not exist in isolation, but are interrelated.
Reconciliation cannot be seen as a single issue or agenda;
the contemporary definition of reconciliation must weave all of these threads
together.'*

During the first weekend of February 2021 we will focus on Reconciliation.

In Catholic teaching we turn to the Jubilee 2000 document

'Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past'

Let us reflect today on more paragraph from this document:

*"one can speak of a solidarity that unites the past and the present in a relationship of
reciprocity.
In certain situations, the burden that weighs on conscience can be so heavy
as to constitute a kind of moral and religious memory of the evil done,
which is by its nature a common memory.
This common memory gives eloquent testimony to the solidarity
objectively existing between those who committed the evil in the past and their heirs
in the present.
It is then that it becomes possible to speak of an objective common responsibility.
Liberation from the weight of this responsibility comes above all
through imploring God's forgiveness for the wrongs of the past,
and then, where appropriate, through the "purification of memory"
culminating in a mutual pardoning of sins and offenses in the present."*

WE ARE INVITED

We are invited to discuss as Australians what we mean by

- common memory
- solidarity
- sinfulness
- evil and wrongdoing
- objective common responsibility
- purification of memory
- forgiveness and pardoning
- liberation

We are one of several parishes to pilot the **Archdiocesan Reconciliation Action Plan**.

Let us now view a five-minute video clip prepared by our Archdiocese about Reconciliation.

<https://youtu.be/dwbX-qz7r-o>

We pray to you, O God, that as potter,
you fashion us in love. Amen

Fr Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/112920.cfm>

