

Remembrance Day prayer and reflection for families 2020

Acknowledgement of Land

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples of this lands, seas and waterways on which we gather. The First Nations peoples of these places were the first to dance stories and remember times of healing and hurt. We acknowledge the elders past and present, and future and know that these lands, seas and waterways, always were, are and will always be, the land of the First Nations peoples.



Always Was,
Always Will Be.
8-15 NOV 2020

Figure 1 2020 National NAIDOC logo.

Context of What is Remembrance day

At 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month each year we remember the moment in 1918 when World War I came to an end. On Remembrance Day, we remember Australian men and women who have served in war and peacekeeping activities. Remembrance Day does not glorify war – it honours the memory of all those who laid down their lives for Australia. As a mark of respect to those who have served, we stop to observe one minute's silence.

This year will mark the 102nd anniversary of the Armistice, which ended the First World War. One thing we can do for the people who fought for our country, is to continue the tradition of remembering them.



Figure 2 Photo by Chris Sansbury on [Unsplash](#)

Scripture

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

(John 15:12-17)

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection by Rachel McLean – Leader Formation, Catholic Education Services, Cairns

Images of war, violence and destruction fill our social media feeds. Pope Francis has been inviting us to think of our neighbour since he began his papacy and this year, as he releases his latest Encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, we are called again to consider who is our neighbour.

When we look through the news and some of our social media feeds, we can be brought to tears by the vulnerability of children caught in war zones, in places that we may have heard about in geography and religion classes, but not necessarily known about in terms of human cost and the impact of war. One image that was thrust into the global spotlight in 2016 was that of [Omran Dagneesh](#), the 5 year old who became the face of Aleppo's devastation as a result of the Syrian Civil war. For almost 12 months, Omran's bloodied face, was used to cast shade on the rebels and support the [Syrian government](#).

When Omran's face filled the news feeds in 2016, the war had been raging for 5 years...now, 4 years later, not much has changed. Whilst the barrel bombs and the rockets no longer rain daily in the capital, [the devastation remains](#). Not only to the buildings and infrastructure, but to the health and livelihood of the citizens of Syria who are dying from starvation and Covid-19.



Figure 3 [International Mine Action Center in Syria \(Aleppo\)](#)

Today, Omran and his family no longer fill our social media; yet they, and thousands like them need their stories told. Why not search beyond your 'likes' to see what is happening to those communities like Omran's in Syria who have been and continue to be effected by war. Let's do more than 'like' an image; engage in the image. Learn about the story and share the story with others. Let us foster a culture of encounter.

Perhaps the words of Pope Francis will help... *Mercy nourishes and strengthens solidarity towards others as a necessary response to God's gracious love, "which has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Rom 5:5). Each of us is responsible for his or her neighbour: we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. Concern for fostering good relationships with others and the ability to overcome prejudice and fear are essential ingredients for promoting the culture of encounter...let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God's mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey!*

Reflection – [Tree of Life sung by Gen Bryant](#)

As you listen to Gen sing about the Tree of Life, think about:

- How can you be a person of peace?
- What could you do to bring peace to your community?
- What could your community do to make our world a more peaceful place?



Figure 4 Photo by Sunyu on [Unsplash](#)

Remembering

On this day of Remembrance, we remember the courageous men and women who gave their lives in wartime and as a result of war. As we remember the lives that have been lost, let us promise each other to work for the freedom of all who are oppressed in the world today. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus who taught us how to live.

The Last Post

The Last Post is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day for a soldier, signalling it is time to rest. It is also sounded at military funerals as soldiers' bodies are put to their final rest. We [play the Last Post](#) today as we pray our soldiers can rest in peace.

Recitation of the ode

The Ode is the fourth stanza of Laurence Binyon's poem 'For The Fallen'. We read this now and then stand, honouring those who have died with a minute's silence.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them*

Action

Find some time on Remembrance Day to be a person of peace:

- Learn more about the Ode by reading Laurence Binyon's 'For the Fallen' and the inspiration for the verse [here](#).
- Listen to the Prayer of St Francis by [Sarah McLachlan](#)
- Learn about the [UN International Day of Peace](#) and consider what you could do next year to be an advocate of peace.