

## Remembrance Day

By Maureen Gaul Leader – Formation Identity and Outreach Team

### Acknowledgement of Land, Seas, Skies and Waterways

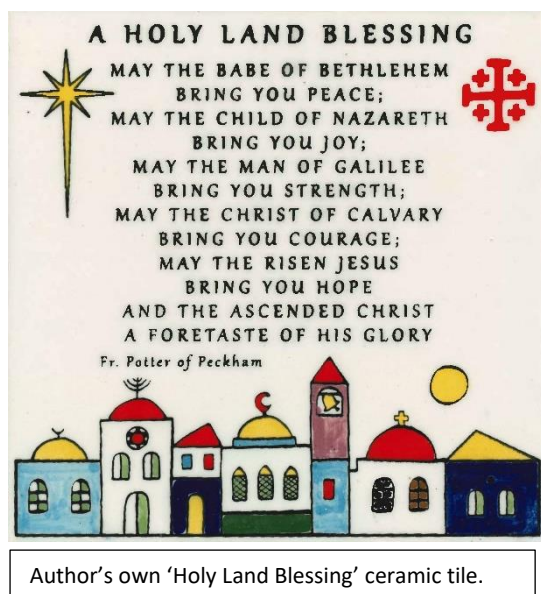
I acknowledge the First Nations peoples who have long sought to defend their land, protect their people, and provide a better future for the generations to come. The land, seas, skies, and waterways have nourished their bodies, nurtured their spirits, and healed their sorrows in times of conflict and peace. I recognise that connection to Country and kin are a vital part of the First People's identities and the continuance of Dreaming and look to the Uluru Statement from the Heart as an offering of peace made by Indigenous Australians for reconciliation, truth-telling, and healing.

### Context of Prayer

On 11th November 1918, at 11am, the guns of the Western Front fell silent, after more than four years of continuous warfare. Though this happened a little more than a century ago, we remember the Australians who served with courage and fortitude in the 'Great War' and in other armed conflicts since. This Saturday, on 11<sup>th</sup> November, Remembrance Day will be observed across the world, where we honour the collective self-sacrifice and give thanks for the freedoms afforded. I turn to prayer for consolation at this time...



Waiben's war memorial photograph taken by Maureen Gaul on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023.



Author's own 'Holy Land Blessing' ceramic tile.

### Scripture

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid." [John 14:27](#)

### Reflection

Turning on the nightly news has become less automatic lately. The images and stories of people caught up in the daily struggle for survival amidst various scenarios of conflict is distressing. In a reflection on the crisis unfolding in Israel, Pope Francis has appealed, "to take just one side in this conflict, that of peace. But not with words, with prayer and total dedication." (NCR)

Pray for dignity to be upheld. Pray for love of 'the other'. Pray for freedom from injustice. For men, women, and children whose lives have been affected by war...we pray for peace. For those who work for liberation and armistice...we pray for peace. For the people who suffer the oppression of war today...we pray for peace. For the children who are the hope of the future...we pray for peace.

*"Enfold them in your love.*

*Encircle them O God and surround them with your love.*

*Come fill them with your love."* [Monica Brown – Holy Ground \(Adapted\)](#)

## **For Peace** by John O'Donohue

As the fever of day calms towards twilight  
May all that is strained in us come to ease.

We pray for all who suffered violence today,  
May an unexpected serenity surprise them.

For those who risk their lives each day for peace,  
May their hearts glimpse providence at the heart of history.

That those who make riches from violence and war  
Might hear in their dreams the cries of the lost.

That we might see through our fear of each other  
A new vision to heal our fatal attraction to aggression.

That those who enjoy the privilege of peace  
Might not forget their tormented brothers and sisters.

That the wolf might lie down with the lamb,  
That our swords be beaten into ploughshares

And no hurt or harm be done  
Anywhere along the holy mountain.

### **Call to Action**

- Attend a Remembrance Day prayer liturgy (see your school's message app);
- Celebrate mass on Remembrance Day;
- Commemorate Remembrance Day with some [family weekend activities](#);
- Share stories of family members who were dedicated to living in peace and with love for others;
- Create a sacred space in the family home to honour those who have served in the armed forces, for example: a cross, a sprig of rosemary, the red poppy, a simple wreath, and unlit candle. You may also have medals or photographs of family members to add to this.
- Consider how you may support veterans and their families through RSL's Poppy Appeal.

### **Inspiration for Reflection...**

- [National Catholic Reporter](#) (NCR)
- [La Civiltà Cattolica](#)
- John O'Donohue's "Benedictus A Book of Blessings"
- Prayer Liturgy Ritual
- Biblegateway



Sadao Watanabe's stencil print of Jesus and the little children from [Sacred Art Meditations](#) Viewed 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023



