

Running Sheet

NATIONAL SORRY DAY LITURGY

FRIDAY 26 MAY, 2017

WE GATHER:

Tatyana King-Smith:

Good morning and welcome. My name is Tatyana King-Smith and I'm a Year 12 student. I am a proud descendant of Kulkalgal (cool-cul-garl).

As Australians, we are all woven into this country's stories. This morning we gather to commemorate National Sorry Day. We take this opportunity to hear the stories of our first peoples, to accept the fact that past laws, practices and policies deeply affected the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to recognise moments of resilience, healing and the power of saying Sorry.

We acknowledge that the journey towards reconciliation forms a significant part of Australia's story, as do the stories of both trauma and triumph told by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Today also marks the beginning of National Reconciliation Week which runs annually from 27 May – 3 June. In 2017, we reflect on two significant anniversaries in Australia's reconciliation journey – 50 years since the 1967 referendum, and 25 years since the historic Mabo decision. Today, we take the time to recognise that reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and actions of all Australians as we move forward, in the knowledge that we believe in fairness for everyone, that our diversity makes us richer, and that together, we are stronger. We are called, as the theme of Reconciliation Week suggests to 'Take the Next Steps' together.

PROCESSION

Procession will start when the music begins.

- Aboriginal flag carried in by and Sherlana and Mona Wolmby
- TSI flag carried in by Imani Tamwoy

Place the flags on either arm of the big Cross.

- Framed Apology carried in by Alaina Walker and Torue Palm
- Holding hands the other ATSI students walk in in pairs
 - Leilani Hale and Ackron Gavin
 - Alaina Walker and Maddy Sandell-Hobbs
 - Bella Cattanach and Porsha-Jewel
- Invited guests including Chelsea Bond, Debbie Duthie, Uncle Eric & Shirley Law, Torue Palm's family, Danita Martin from Brisbane Catholic Education and Jessie Green.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Leilani Hale

Good morning, my name is Leilani Hale and I am in Year 8 and I am from the Kuku yalanji. It is my honour to welcome our special visitors to our National Sorry Day ceremony at Stuartholme School. I acknowledge Uncle Eric Law, his wife Aunty Shirley and his family, invited guests' Dr Debbie Duthie and Dr Chelsea Bond from the 'Our Stories, Our Way' project and Danita Martin from Brisbane Catholic Education. We also welcome Jessie Green from the Cape York Leadership Program as well as Sr Carroll and Sr Bannon, and parents and family who have come to mark this solemn day. As with any significant event at Stuartholme, we begin today with an Acknowledgment of Country.

Ackron Gavin

My name is Ackron Gavin and I'm in Year 8. I am a descendent of the...

LOOK UP

I invite you now to pause as we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather.

PAUSE

We remember and honour the Jagera and Turrbul peoples and their elders who have *lived, loved and suffered* on this country.

WE LISTEN

Imani Tamwoy

My name is Imani Tamwoy and I'm in Year 11. On my mother's side I am a descendant of the Putch clan of the Wik Mungkan people of Aurukun. On my father's side, I am a descendant of the Samu people from Saibai Island and Thupmul people of Badu Island.

The sharing of stories is a significant part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and today I would like to tell you the story of my grandmother, Alison Woolla from Aurukun in North-West Queensland.

My grandmother and her younger brother were part of the Stolen Generation, and were separated from their family and put into a dormitory at the age of 5 and 6. They were put in dormitories to isolate the young from the influence of their clan, so that they did not get to know their own culture. My grandmother's Mum still lived in the same community but they were only allowed to see her on a Sunday at Church. In the dormitory, they slept on the floor with a hard, scratchy blanket that was usually shared between two and they had no pillows or mattresses. To try and fix this, they would stitch pillows and use coconut husks as stuffing.

In the morning, they would get up and get ready to eat their breakfast, which was usually one cup of porridge that usually had weevils in it. Their second meal of the day was dinner, and this was usually just a cup of soup with a piece of damper. During the day, they had to perform duties – the boys would do all the manual labour while the girls did gardening, pulling weeds and raking the grounds with their hands. If they didn't do their duties, they would be punished which would include caning the boys on their backside, legs and back, and for the girls a caning across their hands. And if they were naughty they would have to wear a pair of red romper pants, and when they did, they would get extra duties and no one else was allowed to talk or interact with them or else they would be punished. And even if they had sore and bloodied hands, my grandma still had to pull out the weeds and rake the ground with her bare hands.

My grandma talks about how the dormitory was lonely and scary, and how she would usually cry herself to sleep because all she wanted was to see her Mum again. Her Mum was sent away when she was 10 to Palm Island and my grandmother never saw her again. When her and her brother asked if they could attend the funeral they were denied this opportunity. They both describe this day to be the single, saddest day of their life. This left my grandma having to raise her younger siblings and naming one of them, even though this sibling grew up in Townsville away from her and the rest of the family.

My grandmother's story is just one of the many stories of the Stolen Generation, and it teaches us about the pain and sadness these laws inflicted upon the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Alaina Walker:

Good morning, my name is Alaina Walker and I am a proud descendant from the Wik Mungkan and Southern Kaantju people. Today I am here to talk to you about my great grandfather and what happened to him and his family as a result of past laws.

My great grandfather's name was Thomas Creek and he was an elder of my clan. He lived during the time when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were not considered citizens of Australia, and when they were not allowed to own their own land. He saw the effects of this on his family and the people of Coen and this story has been passed down to me by my grandfather and my grandfather's sister.

Because my great grandfather and his people were not recognised as citizens or land owners, when the mining companies came in to mine the area where he lived, they had to leave without getting any money or being able to fight the decision. They had to move from the land where they had lived for generations to other areas in Cape York. It hurt the Aboriginal people to move off their land, and to watch their traditional sites be destroyed. Worst than that, Aboriginal men from the area were forced to work as slaves in work that was destroying their land. This had a significant impact on my people and their connection with the land and their culture.

This year we remember 50 years since the referendum where a large proportion of Australia voted to recognise Aboriginal people as citizens of this land, and 25 years since Eddie Mabo's court ruling recognised him as a traditional owner of the land. My family's story is just one account of how Aboriginal people were treated before these decisions and the effects it had on them.

Tatyana King-Smith

It is my pleasure to now welcome, Dr Chelsea Bond. Chelsea is a Munanjahli and South Sea Islander health researcher with over 15 years' experience as an Aboriginal health worker and researcher in urban and rural communities in south east Queensland. She has been awarded Lowitja's Emerging Indigenous Health researcher, UQ's Young Alumnus of the Year, and National NAIDOC Scholar of the Year and is here to speak to us about the significance of this day.

GUEST SPEAKER

Dr Chelsea Bond

PRESENTATIONS

Torue Palm

Thank you very much Dr Chelsea for your moving words. We really appreciate your presence here today and what you have shared.

Good morning, my name is Torue Palm and I am a descendent of...

Ziphoria Minniecon – Poem

Good morning, my name is Ziphoria Minniecon and I am a descendent of the kuku-Yalanji, Gubbi-Gubbi, South Sea Islander's and Torres Strait people.

A poem by Amy

Torue

Only one years old
when she was taken away
taken from her home
where she wanted to stay

Taken from her parents
no chance to say goodbye
unprepared
for living a lie

Along with her sisters
she was taken to a place
too young to understand
the difference of race

Treated like dogs
taught and trained
told how to act

and how to behave

Separated once again
put on display
some strangers came
and took her away

Lost identity
given a new name
put into a white home
thinking shes the same

Zippy

Brought up to think
that she really is white
taught their beliefs
and what they think is right

Treated badly
but she has no idea
that shes different to them
but its oh so clear

One day finds out
about her past
who she really is
her world is falling fast

So confused
not knowing what to do
thinking about her real family
do they think about her too?

When shes grown up
she leaves to find
the missing pieces
left behind

So hard to handle
real culture unknown
not even knowing
wheres her real home

A whole language lost
in the mist of time
her background
she cant seem to find

Doesn't belong
anywhere
acts white, looks black
it isn't fair

A generation
taken away
lost forever
stolen away

Torue:

As we begin National Reconciliation Week, we look forward to the future in hope. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students of Stuartholme would now like to share with you, what our hopes for the future are.

Ackron: I hope I live in a country where all indigenous and non-indigenous people work towards reconciliation

Alaina: I hope I live in a country where I have the opportunities to choose whatever profession I want

Mona: We hope we live in a country that has closed the gap in Indigenous and non-Indigenous health

Maddie: I hope I live in a country where no one is judged because of their racial background or skin colour

Leilani: I hope that I live in a country where each person from different nations is welcomed and gets along

Torue: I hope I live in a country where the number of indigenous peoples in prison is not over represented

Imani: I hope I live in a country where all people in Australia get equal access to education,

Tatyana: I hope that I can lead by example for the younger Torres Strait Islander people.

PLEDGE

Ms Andree Rice

All Australians are invited to participate in our nation's reconciliation journey. Reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and actions of us all as we move forward, creating a nation strengthened by respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples. As we mentioned earlier, the Reconciliation theme for the year is 'Let's Take the Next Step'. Today, as a school community, we commit ourselves to taking the next steps towards Reconciliation. We understand that this cannot be a verbal commitment alone, but one that involves unified action towards a unified Nation. To symbolise this commitment, our whole community will 'take the next steps' together to the lawn above the pool. Here we will read out the words of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's Apology and take the next step to commit to a reconciled Australia.

I invite our ATSI students, invited guests and the Year 12 students to move now to the oval.

Year 11 please stand and follow in silence

Year 8 please stand and exit through the centre aisle.

Year 7s please stand and exit through the aisles.

Year 10 please stand and exit through the side aisles.

Year 9.....please stand exit.

Lucy Lloyd-Morgan:

We will now take our pledge as a school community. Please respond to each statement from the Sorry Day speech with:

We say sorry and take the next step

As you do, we ask you to take a step towards the centre, symbolising our commitment as a school to take the next steps and close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Imogen Weston-Kelly

We apologise for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

All:

We say sorry and take the next step

Tara Griffin

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind

All:

We say sorry and take the next step

Romy Cole

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities

All:

We say sorry and take the next step

Lucy Lloyd-Morgan

For the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture.

All:

We say sorry and take the next step

Imogen Weston-Kelly

For the times we have not recognised the importance of reconciliation for all Australians, and worked to see it realised in our minds, hearts and actions.

All:

We say sorry and take the next step

PRAYER

Ms Sarah Daff:

For our closing prayer, I invite you to please join hands as a sign of our commitment as a community for reconciliation.

Let's begin in the name of the Father...

Holy Father, God of Love,
You are the Creator of this and of all good

things.

We acknowledge the pain and shame of our history and the suffering of our indigenous peoples, and we ask your forgiveness.

May Stuartholme be a community where reconciliation is lived out on a daily basis and where diversity of culture is embraced as part of the richness of our school.

We end our prayer today, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

All:

Amen.

Thank you for your contributions to today's ceremony and for your commitment to reconciliation. To our invited guests, families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, please move to the Australian Room for some light refreshments.

Thank you, please move quietly to your first period.