

*Litany of Repentance 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014*  
*1. Reconciliation with the First Peoples of Australia*

**Ngaala kaaditj Noongar moort keyen kaadak nidja boodja.**

**We acknowledge the Noongar people as the traditional owners of this land, and we pay our respects to the elders, past and present.**

Let us pray to the living God, saying "have mercy on us."

God the Father,  
**have mercy on us.**

God the Son,  
**have mercy on us.**

God the Holy Spirit,  
**have mercy on us.**

Holy Trinity, one God,  
**have mercy on us.**

In our sorrow for the First Peoples of this land,  
on whose dispossession others' prosperity has been built, we pray:  
**have mercy on us.**

In our grief for the First Peoples' languages lost,  
cultures despised and families fragmented, we pray:  
**have mercy on us.**

In our shame at continuing indigenous disadvantage  
in health, education, employment and housing, we pray:  
**have mercy on us.**

In our hope for constitutional change  
to recognise the full dignity of Australia's First Peoples, we pray:  
**have mercy on us.**

In our yearning for true reconciliation  
and grace to walk together into a just future, we pray:  
**have mercy on us.**

In our hunger for strength to make difficult changes  
of attitude and behaviour in our communities, we pray:  
**have mercy on us.**

God of holy dreaming, bring all Australians together as one  
and heal the wounds of our past, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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*2. Lament*

Let us pray for grace to weep for the suffering world, saying "Lord, hear our prayer."

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for people behind razor wire  
who have committed no crime. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for Australian officials  
who are required to implement policies they abhor. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for the temporarily protected  
who are given no hope for future citizenship. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for the forcibly deported  
who are returned to scenes of trauma. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for the separated families  
who ache for each other's presence. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for our nation's failure  
to be generous with our abundant resources. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for our own inaction  
when feelings of powerlessness overwhelm us. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for our wasted rage  
when we blame others instead of taking action. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

Give us tears to weep for those who exploit the desperate,  
who make money from misery. We cry out to you:

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

O God, you weep over all the sorrows of your people.  
Take our tears, our anger and our sorrow,  
and use us to make a difference  
for those who need it most, in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

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*2. Forgiveness for our actions and our failure to act*

Let us pray for forgiveness, saying "Lord, deliver us."

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of blaming the victims of conflict, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of selfish protection of our own privilege, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of failing to see the face of Christ in the stranger, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of passivity when others' needs are great, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of despair that our actions can achieve nothing, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of complacency in the face of others' trouble, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of refusing to share our abundance with the needy, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of colluding in negative talk about refugees, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of keeping silent when racism speaks loudly, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of belittling the suffering of others, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

From the sin of doing nothing when we could do something, we pray:

**Lord, deliver us.**

God our judge and our redeemer,  
you know the sins we hide even from ourselves:  
set us free to live differently, generously, joyfully,  
in the power of your Spirit,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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*3. Praying for compassion*

Let us pray with hearts longing for change, saying “Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.”

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for despised and persecuted people,  
and raise up allies and advocates for them, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for victims of war,  
and raise up healers and peacemakers for them, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for separated families,  
and bring them back together in lasting love, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for refugees in crowded camps,  
and give them shelter, food and hope, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for refugees in hostile countries,  
and lead them to protection and relief, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for refugees in peril of their lives,  
and bring them through danger to safety, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for refugees imprisoned in Australia,  
and bring them out into hospitable communities, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion for refugees imprisoned offshore in our name,  
and relieve their distress and fear, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among journalists and media presenters,  
and use their words and images to soften hearts, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among Navy and Customs officials,  
as they obey orders in difficult and dangerous places, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among police and prison guards,  
as they oversee crowded and stressful detention centres, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among lawyers and the judiciary,  
as they argue for justice and human rights, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among political leaders,  
as they shape policies and attitudes with their words, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among Christian communities  
to give practical help to refugees of other faiths and none, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among all Australians of goodwill,  
to learn the names and the stories of refugees and asylum seekers, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy.**

Stir up compassion among all whose hearts are hardened,  
to recognise the face of Christ in those they fear, we pray:

**Lord, have mercy; Christ have mercy.**

God of infinite compassion,  
write your law of love on every heart,  
beginning with ours,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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*This litany was drafted by The Reverend Elizabeth Smith for a 'Repenting of our silence: A Flag Washing Litany' conducted outside Perth Immigration Detention Centre on 27 January 2014. These words may be used in whole or in part to pray for justice in your own context. For more information or advice, please feel free to contact Elizabeth at [esmith@perth.anglican.org](mailto:esmith@perth.anglican.org)*