

Year Adopted: 2012

RECONCILIATION

Policy R/C304

Preamble

Reconciliation starts with an acknowledgment that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the traditional custodians of this country with a deep spiritual connection to land, seas and waterways. Reconciliation acknowledges past injustices and embraces a spirit of mutual respect.

Rationale

Spirituality is a universal aspect of human nature. Spirituality of the Aboriginal peoples and of the Torres Strait Islanders peoples is unique and has developed over many thousands of years. God was always here in the land, the lore, the kinship and the spirituality of the Indigenous peoples.

Values

Pope John Paul II in his 1986 address acknowledged the *lasting genius and dignity* of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Reconciliation is based on truth, forgiveness and hope.

St Mary's affirms its strong commitment to promoting reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, guided by the principles of personal dignity, social justice and equity, as reflected in living the Gospel message and according to the mission of the Church.

Reconciliation is central to Catholic Education and the development of trust, understanding, communications and mutual respect so that the mission of honouring the past, enriching the present, shaping the future and finding meaning in life can be fulfilled.

Policy

St Mary's promotes attitudes, behaviours, perspectives and knowledge so that reconciliation lives in peoples' hearts, minds and souls.

Implementation Issues

1. St Mary's will participate in cultural awareness programs e.g. Crossing Cultures, Kanyini & Harmony Day.
2. St Mary's will build a culturally safe environment by:
 - a. Acknowledging traditional custodians
 - b. Celebrating significant dates in the Indigenous calendar
 - c. Flying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags
 - d. Considering enrolment practices
 - e. Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait culture by displaying appropriate symbols in the school.
3. Members of St Mary's community will embrace the culture and spiritual beliefs, values and traditions of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and incorporate the spirit of reconciliation in all aspects of educational activities.
4. St Mary's community will develop relationships with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Reflection Material

The Heart of Our Country, Reflections on Pope John Paul II's 1986 Address to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Social Justice Sunday Statement 2006, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Corroboree 2000: Australian Declaration Towards Reconciliation, The Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2000.

Reconciliation Australia: Building relationships for change between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australia. <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

Replaces Policy No:	NA
Approved by Diocesan Education Council	17 August 2012
To be reviewed:	2017