



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE BRIGIDINE TRADITION



St Joseph's College Reconciliation Covenant 2020 – 2023

If we listen strongly to the Jesus Dreaming law very special Spirit times can occur. The great Creator Spirit sent Jesus to tell us the greatest story of all. It is a simple yet powerful story, one that says that if we believe his law of love and keep it strong, just as we kept the old law, we will not die forever but will live again. Jesus spoke first to the women, telling them to go at once to his close friends and followers with this good news. Of course, some did not believe the women. Then Jesus himself came to his friends, talking and eating with them. Finally, Jesus returned to his own true country with the Creator. He told his friends and followers not to worry. They would not be left alone. The Spirit would come who would stay with them always. Again they waited together till the special ceremony time the Jewish people called Pentecost. This was a time of thanks for good seasons and plenty of food. Mary stayed with the followers of the New Way for many years until it was time for her to go to her true Dreaming place with the Creator and her son Jesus. She is the mother of God.

(Source: Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, 'Dreaming in the City' taken from the Kildare Ministries, Principles of Living Justice Framework Resource, 2020))

Covenant

We recognise the special place and culture of the Indigenous peoples of Australia, and acknowledge that the Aboriginal peoples have been the caretakers of this land for more than 60,000 years. We respect their spiritual connection to our Earth through the Dreaming.

What is Reconciliation:

“An apology begins the healing process. Apology means understanding, a willingness to enter into the suffering. It implies a commitment to do more” (The last Sir Ronald Wilson, the Chair of the Nation Inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families). We understand that practical measures need to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people in education, health, employment and general opportunity.

Reconciliation is an active pursuit, it's about getting what's needed and what we know to get the results we want and that's the mixture of measures that target the body, mind and the Spirit. *(Mick Dodson, Australian of the Year, National Press Club address, 17 February 2009)*

Reconciliation does not work to a strict timeline like other projects. It succeeds or fails in the hearts of all Australians. *(The late Dr Evelyn Scott, AO, 1935 -2017)*

“The prophet will persist for as long as it takes to make the present what God intends it to be as well as to prepare the future to maintain it. (Joan Chittister *osb*, in the *Kildare Ministries, Principles of Living Justice Framework Resource, 2020*)

Our School

St Joseph’s College is a hope filled and welcoming Kildare Education Ministries’ school with a rich Brigidine Christian heritage. Our school promotes excellence and equality through our strong sense of interconnectedness with the local community for the mutual benefit of both College and wider community. Guided by the Principles of Living Justice Framework we challenge our College community to be a community of witness, learning for justice and being courageous in its leadership. In all that we say and all that we do we ask our community members to think and act with courage and conviction to walk in solidarity, call to action, build right relationships and welcome without prejudice. By instilling in the students an understanding of the collective responsibility for building relationships, an appreciation of Reconciliation is fostered. In recognising this, we as a College continue to actively pursue positive and purposeful partnerships not just for today, but for tomorrow.

The St Joseph’s College Reconciliation Group is made up of our commissioned FIRE Carriers: this group consists of both teachers and students. The FIRE Carrier Project (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education) is an initiative of *Victorian Aboriginal Catholic Ministry* and the *Opening the Doors Foundation*. The *Sandhurst CEO* encourages its schools to actively pursue Reconciliation. St Joseph’s College is an active participant in the Sandhurst Diocese Fire Carriers Project. Our Fire Carriers are convened from our Staff and Student bodies. The students who comprise this group come from a range of year levels and from both indigenous and non- indigenous backgrounds.

The Fire Carriers are led by:

School Principal: Mr Michael Delaney

Koorie Educators: Mrs Donna Walsh and Mr Jye Warren

Teacher: Mrs Kirrilee Westblade and Mr Adam Prime

St Joseph's College Echuca commits to completing or putting steps in place to complete all Actions through Measureable Targets outlined below. These will be completed by the dates set out in the timeline. Ongoing review of the Covenant will be conducted and the plan will be updated and amended as necessary or desirable.

We hope to develop a relationship marked by equality, empathy and understanding of culture and difference. We want the Reconciliation we are involved in to be a process of healing and a process of putting right.

(NB-Fire Carrier Commissioning Ceremonies are inducted each year at our College Leaders Induction Ceremony usually conducted in National Reconciliation Week and adhere to the new guidelines published by Catholic Education Sandhurst, 2020).

Spirituality			
Focus Area: Learn , Teach, Share, Grow towards understanding Aboriginal Spirituality (holistic)			
Link to the Living Justice Charter: all creation is recognised as sacred... we must all respect, care for and share the resources of the earth, which are vital for the common good of people. Everything is connected in an integral ecology and we need to restore our connectedness to a healthy state.			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
Through Prayer and knowledge gain/engage a deeper awareness of justice issues		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate Aboriginal prayers and symbols in liturgy <input type="checkbox"/> Use the message stick during reading of the Word at School Masses <input type="checkbox"/> Learn and use the Aboriginal Our Father <input type="checkbox"/> Flag ritual – proudly fly the Aboriginal Flag in our school grounds <input type="checkbox"/> Undertake an Art Project for display in the school - Involvement in the Aboriginal Art Project (2020 - We are currently engaging Australian artist Treahanna Hamn in an Artist In Resident program, working with some of our young Indigenous art students).
Explore the significance or Spirituality in Aboriginal art		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Perform ‘Turning of the Coolamon Ceremony’ using the Coolamon Liturgy during Advent Liturgies <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate Aboriginal Creation stories into relevant liturgy
Create an Aboriginal Australian identity during time of Advent linking to the Catholic Faith Tradition		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that Aboriginal stories are read, viewed, listened to in order that people can gain a greater understanding of Aboriginal identity and spirituality. This is to happen in a cross curricular/integrated manner across all Domains. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop relationships with local Aboriginal people and welcome them in to our community to tell their stories
Listen to Aboriginal Stories			

Cultural Recognition & Awareness

Focus Area: Recognise Cultural Perspectives, Demonstrate Awareness

Link to the Living Justice Charter: *Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore has inherent dignity. The dignity of every person, independent of ethnicity, creed, gender, sexuality, age or ability, is the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching. Everyone belongs to one human family, regardless of their national, religious, ethnic, economic, political and ideological differences. Everyone has an obligation to stand with others, especially those who have their rights compromised.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities / Resources
<p>Embrace Aboriginal stories and culture within school ceremonies</p> <p>Publicly display our schools respect for Aboriginal people.</p> <p>Seek advice from ACM on cultural wisdom and seek knowledge of the local Aboriginal community.</p> <p>Recognition and celebration of significant dates</p> <p>In particular: 13 February</p>		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge Country at School Assemblies and meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Invite Elders to Welcome visitors to Country at significant events <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum. Conduct an audit into the presence and breadth of Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum 7 – 12. <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge Country on School website and school's printed material <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that this Reconciliation Covenant is available for download from the College website. <input type="checkbox"/> Annually induct FIRE Carrier staff and students the FIRE Carriers Team <input type="checkbox"/> Have a FIRE Carrier ceremony at assembly in during National Reconciliation Week to induct new FIRE Carriers <input type="checkbox"/> Display Aboriginal Art throughout the school <input type="checkbox"/> Display the Message Stick at the Office in the front of the school <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Fire Carrier Flame at the Office in the front of the school <input type="checkbox"/> Educate the school community of the Aboriginal story of the land on which the school is situated – When, Where? <input type="checkbox"/> Publish materials on the College website in regard to Aboriginal history, current news, photographs and the like. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Library has an Aboriginal section available to all students and is easily identifiable. <input type="checkbox"/> Engage with Catholic Education Sandhurst Aboriginal Network – Kalik , the local Aboriginal Co-o, LAECG., LAN or other local groups <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate National Apology Day <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate National Reconciliation Week <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate NAIDOC Week including building a profile of a Naidoc Week Award Winner so that our students have a greater appreciation of award winning Aboriginal people in our Nation. <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day and OTDFs Birthday <input type="checkbox"/> Contribution to artwork activities such as Reconciliation Week banner for the Echuca Walk. <input type="checkbox"/> Organise excursions for students to visit local sites of Aboriginal significance, such as Kow Swamp, the Mooropna Flats.

<p>26 May - 3 June</p> <p>1st Sunday in July</p> <p>4 August</p>			<p><input type="checkbox"/> Work with the local bridge project to learn about the processes that were undertaken to liaise with local the local Aboriginal community to ensure consultation was an important part of the process, how important and sacred sites have been protected and what measures have been put in place to accommodate the needs of local Aboriginal people.</p>
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Practical Reconciliation & Justice

Focus Area: Walk the Journey together, Put Learnings into Practice

Link to the Living Justice Charter: ...we strive to build inclusive communities... - *Every person should have sufficient access to the goods and resources of society so that they can live fulfilling lives. Subsidiarity requires that all people have the right to participate in decisions that effect their lives.*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Measureable Target
Take Practical Measures toward Reconciliation and Justice		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of Koorie Education Workers <input type="checkbox"/> Koorie students to speak to future Aboriginal students <input type="checkbox"/> Close attention paid to the building of PLPs for Aboriginal students identifying areas of need and invention strategies. <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of additional assistance for students with further learning needs – through tutoring programs. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities for families of Aboriginal students to build connection with the school, through BBQs, morning teas, guest speakers <input type="checkbox"/> Fly, display and maintain the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag <input type="checkbox"/> Display and maintain Aboriginal Acknowledgement plaque <input type="checkbox"/> Hold activities promoting awareness of Aboriginal issues or the journey toward reconciliation during Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June) and or NAIDOC Week (prior if this week falls in term break) <input type="checkbox"/> Embrace, connect with and listen to local Aboriginal Elders <input type="checkbox"/> Have a school presence in community events e.g. Diocesan School Masses, Shire of Campaspe Reconciliation Week Flag raising ceremony, Echuca's Reconciliation Walk. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that students have access to Open the Doors Foundation Funds for assistance with uniforms and books. <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraise for the Open the Doors Foundation (via Nicholls House) commit to an ongoing giving commitment. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide Staff with Cultural Competency Training <input type="checkbox"/> Staff representative (Mrs Donna Walsh) to be on Sandhurst Aboriginal Education Network and the local LAN (where applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Staff PD around the AITSL Standards, Intercultural Capability Strand, Kalik and The Reconciliation Stones. <input type="checkbox"/> To look into promoting and financing our staff's involvement in the Stronger Smarter campaign and online course commencing in 2020. <input type="checkbox"/> To encourage our Staff to be involved in the CEO Yingardi Immersion in August of each year and to share their learning with the school community. <input type="checkbox"/> To continue to look for and engage students in TAFE based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Programs.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Connection with the Madec IYLP – Indigenous Youth Leadership Program for the provision of indigenous scholarships.□ To ensure Aboriginal students are able to access meaningful work experience and work placements
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