

LIGHT A CANDLE

for each petition on each day.



DAY 1: Remove Inequalities of Wealth between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians earn 62% of the income of non-Indigenous people, decreasing from 64% in 1996 (HREOC 2001) The median weekly gross individual income for Indigenous peoples in 2001 was \$226. For non-Indigenous peoples in 2001 it was \$380. Income levels tend to decline with increased geographical remoteness

- For better employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- For greater childcare and support provision for Indigenous women
- For encouragement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait economic enterprises

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 2: Achieve Equal Education for All

For Year 12, the retention rate for Indigenous full-time students in 2004 was 40% compared to 77% for non-Indigenous students.

- For more investment in and better directed education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- For nurture of culture and wider cultural awareness
- For Aboriginal and Torres Strait teachers, liaison and support workers

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Indigenous women are 19 times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be imprisoned, and are the least likely to be in the labour force with a participation rate of 43 %.

For Indigenous women prisoners and their families

- For Indigenous women leaders and the nurture of young Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women
- For greater access to employment opportunities

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Indigenous women are twice as likely to have a low birth weight baby, and more than twice as many Indigenous infants die before their 1st birthday.

- For a reduction in the main causes of death among Indigenous babies: congenital disorders, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, respiratory and cardiovascular disorders and accidents
- For greater and more effective provision of health services, especially in remote areas
- For Indigenous families, health and community development workers

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 5: Improve Maternal Health

Indigenous mothers made up 3.5 % of all who gave birth in Australia in 2002, yet between 1997 and 1999 9% of maternal deaths where Indigenous status was known were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

- For better health care and education for Indigenous mothers
- For a reduction in smoking, alcohol and substance misuse during pregnancy

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 6: Combat Chronic and Communicable diseases

Life expectancy for Indigenous men is 59.4 years and for Indigenous women it's 64.8 years: approximately 18 years less than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

- For a reduction in the incidence among Indigenous Australians of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, diabetes, tuberculosis, hepatitis A and B, and other ravaging illnesses
- For those in risk of suicide and all who work to support them and build up self-esteem

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 7: Develop Safe and Sustainable Environments

Indigenous people are 6 times more likely to be murdered than other Australians. In the Northern Territory the leading cause of Aboriginal female death is homicide.

- For adequate housing, the overcoming of violence and growth of safe environments
- For sustainable development in land use and a reverse in the loss of cultural resources

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 8: Develop a National Partnership for Development

Indigenous Australia fits the description of Fourth world communities very well: *Fourth world communities are characterised by their experience of being colonised or of being a minority in relation to the dominant encompassing state. Many have been forced to assimilate, losing most of their land and their economic base, and therefore their autonomy.*

- For Indigenous control in the managing of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander affairs
- For genuine apology & reparations for the Stolen Generations

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 9: Support Indigenous Peoples throughout the World

In reporting in 2005, the World Bank noted that in the 5 Latin American countries with the largest Indigenous populations (Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico & Peru) simply being born Indigenous virtually means condemnation to a life of poverty.

- For Indigenous Peoples throughout the world in their struggle to overcome poverty
- For the rich nations of the world, the UN, World Bank and global Make Poverty History campaign: that they may respond generously with understanding

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer



Make Poverty History - everywhere

The Make *Indigenous* Poverty History campaign seeks to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) do not overlook the poverty suffered by Indigenous Peoples around the world including Australia. The MDGs do not specifically target Indigenous Peoples but Indigenous Peoples are often the ones most affected by extreme poverty and usually rank at the bottom of most social and economic indicators. Without the meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples our marginalisation and exclusion will continue.

'I know you think you should make a trip to Calcutta, but I strongly advise you to save your airfare and spend it on the poor in your own country. Its easy to love people far away. Its not always easy to love those who live right next to us.'

Mother Teresa

Prayer for the Journey of Healing (NATSIEC):

Almighty and loving God,
you who created ALL people in your image,
lead us to seek your compassion as we listen to the
stories of our past.

You gave your only Son, Jesus, who died and rose again
so that sins will be forgiven.

We place before you the pain and anguish of dispossession of land,
language, lore, culture and family kinship that Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander peoples have experienced.

We live in faith that all people will rise from the depths of despair and
hopelessness.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families have endured the pain
and loss of loved ones, through the separation of children from their
families.

We are sorry and ask your forgiveness.

Touch the hearts of the broken, homeless and afflicted and heal their
spirits.

In your mercy and compassion, walk with us as we
continue our journey of healing to create a future that is just and
equitable. Lord, you are our hope. **Amen.**



Indigenous
MAKE POVERTY HISTORY.

**This Nine Days of Prayer is a
resource for use in association
with the *Make Indigenous Poverty
History* campaign.**

**It includes prayers and reflections
linked to the 8 Australian Indigenous
Millennium Development Goals
and in solidarity with Indigenous
peoples struggling against poverty
across the world**

Check out

**www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/miph
for more resources and information**

or contact: NATSIEC

ph. 02 9299 2215

email: natsiec@ncca.org.au

You don't have to dig too deeply to see
the very real consequences that have
flowed from 218 years of injustice since
white settlement in Australia. On any
social measure of health and well-being,
Indigenous people, my people, are
hugely over-represented at the wrong
end of the scale. (Prof. Lowitja O'Donoghue)

The National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) is the peak ecumenical indigenous body in Australia. It is part of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA). With NATSIEC's guidance, the churches are working together for a fair deal for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and for the healing of our nation.

Indigenous
MAKE POVERTY HISTORY.

Nine Days of Prayer



**PRAYING IN SOLIDARITY
WITH ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS**

