

Reconciliation Action Plan

The RAP process for the Diocese of Bendigo was born out of many years of intentional indigenous ministry and reconciliation work done by the Reverend Robyn Davis and Bishop Andrew.

At the 2014 Diocesan Synod, a motion proposing a RAP was put forward by the Reverends Andrew Eaton and Robyn Davis. This motion led to an understanding of co-operation with the Diocese of Melbourne to access the framework, content and recommendations of the Melbourne RAP and use that as the basis of a RAP specifically for the Diocese of Bendigo.

The work done after the 2014 Synod showed that, if the RAP was to become a workable and practical document, consultation and listening were the first steps.

REFLECT RAP

In 2016 the RAP Working Group began the consultation process and sent surveys to each parish in the Diocese to gain an understanding of Relationships, Opportunities and Respect in relation to reconciliation in that parish's specific geographical area.

We received responses from just 16 parishes, but those responses gave us a reasonable view of what is working in the area of reconciliation, and what we can do to improve our efforts towards reconciliation.

IMPLEMENT RAP

Each of the elements of the INNOVATE part of the RAP can be actions that are taken now. Over the coming months we call on parishes to work with local indigenous people to take an intentional step forward towards working on, at least, one of the elements of the INNOVATE RAP. The Working Group will continue to support parishes in this, and will work towards sharing appropriate resources such as liturgical resources, community agency contacts and publicity.

INNOVATE RAP

The INNOVATE part of the RAP is the next stage.

The results of the REFLECT RAP showed us that there are three key elements to focus on:

RESPECT RELATIONSHIPS OPPORTUNITIES

RESPECT: The Working Group will continue to bring the RAP to the attention of Synod and other Diocesan groups. We will also commit to providing regular articles for the Spirit to keep the RAP front of mind for parishes.

We will encourage all parishes to recognise important events such as Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. We will encourage parishes to show their respect to the first peoples by acknowledging the country on which our parishes stand.

RELATIONSHIPS: The Working Group will work with the Bishop to seek opportunities in our Diocese, and further afield, for advocacy, meeting with stakeholders, and for parishes to have cultural experiences. We will encourage parishes to walk alongside the first peoples of the land and listen to their needs and wants.

OPPORTUNITIES: The Working Group will continue to look for ways to engage with indigenous groups, to support our local indigenous people and to offer friendship and prayer to our indigenous neighbours.