

Prayer Guide: THE FIRST PEOPLES OF AUSTRALIA

Prayer Requests

Aboriginal people today live in third world conditions, they:

—experience homelessness at a rate four times higher than non-Indigenous Australians

—are 3.2 times more likely to be unemployed and 11 times more likely to be imprisoned

—are 10 times more likely to live in an overcrowded home and 12 times more likely to be hospitalised after an assault

- —are more likely to commit suicide and six times more likely to be murdered
- —die earlier than non-Indigenous Australians (67.2 years for males, as compared to 78.7 years for non-Indigenous males; 72.9 years for females, as compared to 82.6 years for non-Indigenous females)
- —will need aged care services between 11 and 17 years earlier than will non-Indigenous citizens
- —are between 1.8 and 2.4 more times likely to suffer a disability

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

— Mother Theresa



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Excerpts of a prayer from Daphne Lowe , Vic 1981:

“God help all people try to understand and bridge the ‘gap’ between each other..... help us to understand all cultures and other people to understand our culture, our land, our needs!

Heal the hurts , Heal the heart- aches, heal the ‘sorry business’ , heal the disappointments we ALL have when we don’t understand each other help us to give ALL peoples Aboriginal peoples & European people’s, many chances.

God teach us to treat each other like human beings, not dogs!”

Excerpts of a prayer by Darby JAMPIJINPA ... a Warlpiri elder from YUENDUMU in Central Australia, Early 1900s

“Dear God, european peoples, Aboriginal peoples - we’re living in one lot , now. We are ALL family , no matter where ‘nother countries , there our people everywhere.

God help us all to know that Aboriginal people & european peoples are both not dogs, we’re not animals . That’s a man , that’s a girl, and they children.

Children be grown up “FATHER” to be like you, father & mother, got to grow them up proper way, not to see trouble all the time, not to bring and speak war all the time.

The world, HE’LL BE FINISHED ANYTIME SOON, we’re worrying for all the people, all people Aboriginal and European

“If we are to better the future we must disturb the present.”

— Catherine Booth



got to take it easy way, got to take it slow and got to take it 'good', and think about you "FATHER, and not think about anything else, our country cries for 'mob'.

No more fighting! No more thinking about war, hate, words like spears! No more ... we are ALL family, living in one lot, one big 'mob'. No more 'sorry business', too tired now!

Poor people, might we finish, longa this country...!"

"From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries."

Acts 17:26

Prayer

Thank you God for the FIRST PEOPLES of this nation. We know that you are the creator of all things, and we thank you for creating our Aboriginal BROTHERS AND SISTERS and for placing them on this land AUSTRALIA from ancient times.

YOU determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. Your times are not finished and so we HONOUR your choice in our land.

Prayer

Thank you for giving us guidance towards the way of reconciliation and forgiveness. Help us to humble ourselves, and to follow you. Help us all to embrace our First Peoples and show grace and humility and love. Soften the hearts of the oppressors and the oppressed so that we may sit together and share in your fellowship made possible by your sacrifice.

We pray for a deep understanding of reconciliation across the churches and across the nation. May this be the foundation for all we do in relation to the First People of our land. May we see that they are indeed first in God's eyes because of his choosing. As they are first, please pray that we as God's people would honour them as such and hear their voice.

Help us to grasp this concept: Ministry "from", instead of ministry "to". Help us to be people who are praying for and supporting Aboriginal people. Help us to hear from Aboriginal elders and help us to be faithful to them in their leadership of their people.

Lord, show me how you want me to be part of the restoration of the ancient boundaries in this, Australia, the great south land of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, help me to see what you are doing to heal the hurts of our First People, and help me to have the courage to take part in your holy and reconciling work.

Aboriginal Children

The needs of Aboriginal children in Australia need special prayer attention from the whole body of Christ before God. Each corps is encouraged to lift up the following specific needs of Aboriginal children:

—That all Aboriginal babies would be safely delivered, and that the high rates of infant mortality amongst Aboriginal people will drop.

—That all Aboriginal children would be born with a healthy birth weight, helping to ensure their future health and protecting them against associated risks of neonatal death and various diseases in later life, including diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

—That all Aboriginal children would have nutritious food to eat, that they will be protected against the effects of malnutrition such as problems with mental development and disorders including anemia and recurring infections.

—That God would be at work in the systems and groups that most influence Aboriginal children's wellbeing, to ensure that they have the very best care possible.

—That Aboriginal families would be strong, so that children can grow up with the love and support of their own families.

—That the damage to Aboriginal culture caused by white settlement would have limited effects on Aboriginal children's development and identity, and that they may grow up proud of their Aboriginal culture and background.

—That the government would take a stance of gentleness and respect in the ways it works to improve the circumstances of Aboriginal children.

—That Aboriginal children would have equal access to educational opportunities as non Aboriginal children, and would have appropriate support to make the most of those opportunities.

—That by the time this generation of Aboriginal children have grown up, that they and their communities would enjoy the same levels of well-being as their non- Aboriginal peers.

"Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land."

2 Chronicles 7:14
