

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.

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. It's easy to love people far away. It's not always easy to love those who live right next to us.

Mother Teresa

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.

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 that are linked to the eight Australian Indigenous Millennium Development Goals to show solidarity with Indigenous peoples struggling against poverty across the world.

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.

Professor Lowitja O'Donoghue

9 DAYS OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR THE JOURNEY OF HEALING

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.

WANT MORE?

INTERNET

check out our **website** –
www.makeindigenouspovertyhistory.org

E-MAIL

send us an **e-mail** –
natsiec@ncca.org.au

TELEPHONE

phone us – (02) 9299 2215



National Council of
Churches in Australia
NATSIEC

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ecumenical Commission (NATSIEC) of the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) is the peak ecumenical Indigenous body in Australia. 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.



**PRAYING
IN SOLIDARITY WITH
ABORIGINES
+
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDERS**

DAY 1

Pray for the Removal of Inequalities of Wealth between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

Indigenous Australians earn 62% of the income of non-Indigenous people. The median weekly gross individual income for Indigenous peoples in 2006 was \$278 compared to \$473 for non-Indigenous people. Income levels tend to decline with increased geographical remoteness.

- + For better employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- + For encouragement and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic enterprises.

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 2

Pray for Equal Education for All

At 17 only 36% of Aboriginal children are attending school compared with 66% of non-Indigenous children.

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

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 3

Pray for the promotion of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of 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 and Torres Strait Islander women.
- + For greater access to employment opportunities.

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 4

Pray for a Reduction in Child Mortality

More than twice as many Indigenous infants die before their 1st birthday. The death rate of children from external causes and preventable diseases is 5 times higher for Indigenous children.

- + 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 primary health services.
- + For Indigenous families, health and community development workers.

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 5

Pray for an Improvement in 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.
- + For greater childcare and support provision for Indigenous women.

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 6

Pray for the Prevention of Chronic and Communicable Diseases

Life expectancy for Indigenous people is approximately 17 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 at risk of suicide and all who work to support them and build up self-esteem.

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 7

Pray for the Development of 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

Pray for 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 restitution and reparations for the Stolen Generations

Lord, in Your Mercy, Hear our Prayer

DAY 9

Pray for Support for Indigenous Peoples throughout the World

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