



Practical  
Reconciliation  
and Justice



Spirituality



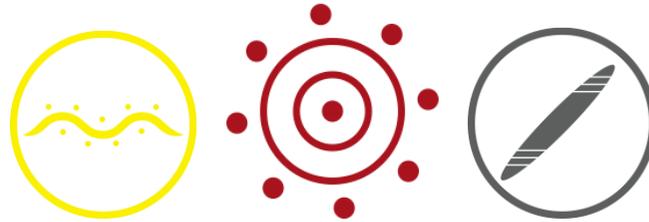
Cultural  
Recognition  
and Awareness

# OLSH COLLEGE RECONCILIATION COVENANT

**Established 2010**  
**Reviewed annually by the FIRE Carrier Committee**  
**Ratified by Leadership Team**

**26 October 2020**

*On this day in 1985, Uluru was returned to its traditional owners*



## Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College Reconciliation Covenant est. 2010

### Covenant

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

### Covenant Prayer

Today, we make a covenant with this land.

As a branch is grafted onto a mature tree,

May we wish to be grafted onto the ancient heritage  
of this land of our first peoples,

So that its life may flow through us.

We commit ourselves to the land we live in and to all who belong to it,

Most particularly our Indigenous peoples  
and also the newcomers to this land.

We will care for it with gentleness, patience, simplicity and compassion,

Rather than merely something to be bought and sold.

We will look on the land as a gift for which we are truly thankful,

And undertake the privileged duty of respecting and looking after it.

We thank God, the Great Creator Spirit, for all the earth provides:

Water, food, and all the riches above and below the ground.

We undertake to use them sparingly and thoughtfully.

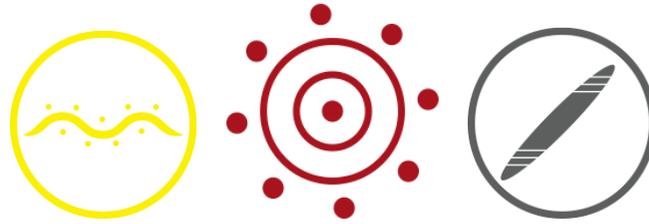
As we enter more deeply into the Spirit of the land,

We see the land as a Sacrament and Icon of our Mothering Creator Spirit.

Let us be still now -

Listen to the breath of the Spirit  
that has blown through it for ages

***Elizabeth Pike***



## Our School

The OLSH College community acknowledges that the Aboriginal People have suffered personal harm, cultural dislocation and dispossession since colonisation. This past has resulted in Aboriginal People becoming one of the most disadvantaged peoples within our society and we are committed to action to close this gap. We commit ourselves to listen and walk with the First Peoples in the true spirit of reconciliation: coming together after this long painful struggle for recognition and true justice for all Australians. For us, reconciliation means,

- firstly, acknowledging the great injustices which have been endured by Aboriginal Australians;
- secondly, to listen and then engage in dialogue with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters about the shared task of reconciliation; and
- thirdly, to actively promote and work towards mutual self-understanding and healing, which also involves addressing remaining issues of injustice.

The development of right relationships and the healing of broken relationships is central to our Christian faith. In inviting Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College to enter into a Covenant with Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry is asking us to appreciate the stories of our Aboriginal brothers and sisters, and value their spirituality and their rituals, recognising the words spoken to them by Pope John Paul 11:



**'The Church in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made a contribution to her life.**

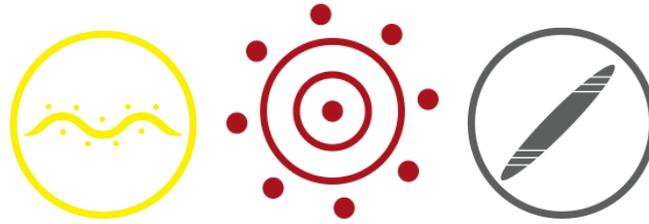
**Your culture, which shows the lasting genius and dignity of your race, must not be allowed to disappear.**

**Do not think that your gifts are worth so little that you should no longer bother to maintain them.**

**Share them with each other and teach them to your children.**

**Your songs, your stories, your paintings, your dances, your languages, must never be lost."**

*(Pope John Paul II Alice Springs Address, 1986).*



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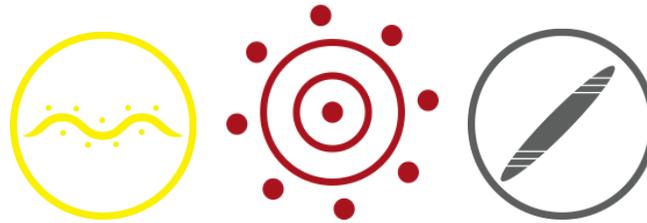
### Our Covenant

The idea for a Reconciliation Covenant was presented to the College by the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Melbourne. They remain involved in the continuing development of our Covenant. The Covenant has been drafted in its initial form with the assistance of the FIRE Carrier Committee. This Committee consists of:

- student representatives from Years 8-10
- FIRE Carriers from Years 8-10
- Student Senior FIRE Carrier
- 2 x staff representatives
- DP Faith and Mission
- a representative from the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

### The Fire Carrier Committee

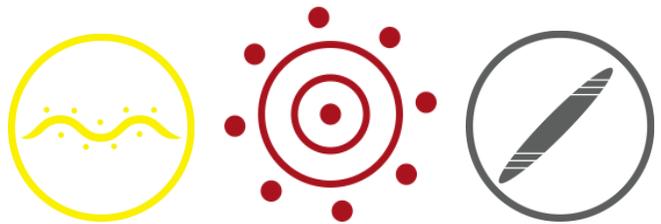
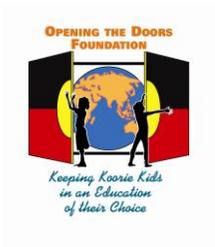
This Committee is a crucial advisory group to the Principal and to the school community. As initiatives promoting Reconciliation continue to be taken up, this Committee is the source of wisdom for the journey.



## Spirituality

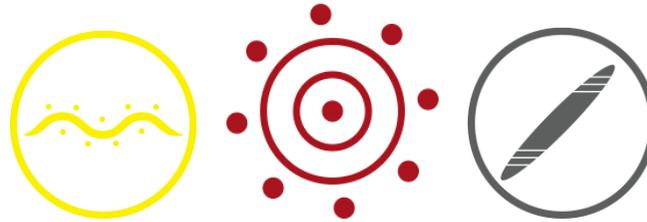
### Focus Area: Learn, Teach, Share, Grow towards understanding Aboriginal Spirituality (holistic)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
Through prayer, gain/engage a deeper awareness of justice issues	DP-Faith and Mission and the FIRE Carrier Committee.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledgement of Country is to be made at all formal school gatherings: School Liturgies and prayer services, whole school assemblies, Year Level Assemblies, Professional Development Days</li> <li>The message stick is to be carried in the procession of the Word during all school Masses or at times when sacred Scripture is proclaimed to the community. It should be displayed in a position of honour on the altar or in the sacred space</li> <li>Investigation by the FIRE Carrier committee on the use of other Aboriginal symbols, such as the use of the Aboriginal Our Father, turning the coolamon in our College assemblies and liturgies</li> </ul>
Investigate Aboriginal spirituality	DP Learning & Teaching and Curriculum Committee, HoD RE with staff representatives on the FIRE Carrier committee.	End of each school year (begin process mid Term 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake an audit of Aboriginal Spirituality within the RE Curriculum</li> <li>Identify areas where Aboriginal Spirituality and Justice issues can be incorporated into the curriculum and implement these key areas into relevant subject domains</li> <li>Advise Curriculum Committee to have all faculties audit their curriculum regarding coverage of Indigenous issues. This is to be done in line with the requirements of the Australian National Curriculum regarding Indigenous perspectives</li> </ul>



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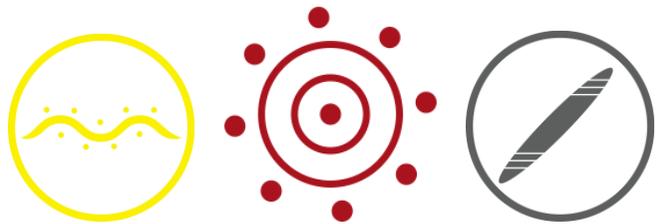
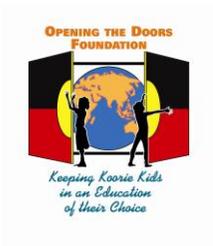
<p>Investigate the connection between Aboriginal spirituality and justice issues</p>	<p>DP-Faith and Mission.</p>	<p>Start of each school year:          - staff: in PL          - students: LMs, Houses or RE classes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite guest speakers from ACM to speak to students and staff about Aboriginal spirituality and perform a Fire Carrier ceremony/commission</li> </ul>
<p>Immersion Experience</p> <p>Seek advice from ACM on cultural wisdom and seek knowledge of the local Aboriginal community. 2021</p>	<p>DP – Faith and Mission</p>	<p>Bi-Annually</p> <p>Start of each school year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immersion Trip Experiences to Bathurst Island and Wadeye (Port Keats) N.T. offered to students and staff</li> <li>• Student and staff Fire Carriers to visit ACM</li> </ul>



## Cultural Recognition & Awareness

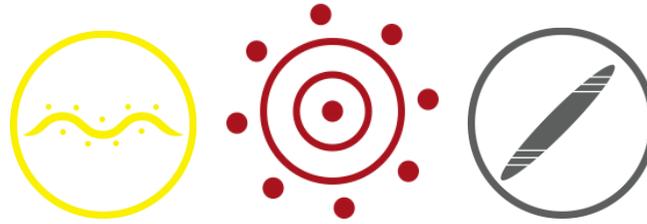
### Focus Area: Recognise Cultural Perspectives, Demonstrate Awareness

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities / Resources
Promote and celebrate the FIRE Carrier project	DP- Faith and Mission	Start of each School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually elect a Senior FIRE Carrier student representative and two representatives from each year level</li> <li>Invite ACM to perform the Fire Ceremony and Commissioning of FIRE Carrier representatives</li> </ul>
Publicly display our school's respect for Aboriginal people.	Staff representatives of the FIRE Carrier Committee	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene a FIRE Carrier committee which will meet fortnightly to plan and coordinate activities to promote Reconciliation within the school community</li> </ul>
	FIRE Carrier Committee	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Display the FIRE Trophy and Covenant (Reconciliation Action Plan) in the front office of the College</li> </ul>
		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Display the message stick in the Chapel</li> </ul>
		Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fly the Australian flag, Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag during school hours</li> </ul>
Embrace Aboriginal stories and culture within school ceremonies	Senior FIRE carrier student representative		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a FIRE Carrier noticeboard which will include information about upcoming events/celebrations and feature relevant news items about reconciliation and indigenous issues.</li> </ul>
Acknowledgment of Aboriginal culture within College publicity	DP-Faith and Mission And Fire Carrier Committee	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose an Aboriginal Dadirri garden (ACM approved) at the front of the College. To be considered as part of the school's Master Plan</li> </ul>



## Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College Reconciliation Covenant est. 2010

<p>Acknowledgment of Aboriginal culture within College publicity</p>	<p>FIRE Carrier Committee</p>	<p>2021</p> <p>Start of each year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite Elders to welcome visitors to Country to Opening Mass</li> <li>• Acknowledgement of Country on College website, email postscript and in Student Planner</li> <li>• Outline of the Covenant and the responsibility of a FIRE Carrier School in Student Planner</li> <li>• Display Reconciliation Covenant on school website</li> <li>• Establish a central folder within the Faith and Mission drive containing the covenant and additional information</li> <li>• Create an 'Acknowledgment of Country' plaque to be mounted in each Learning Mentor. To be included in the 'Responsibilities of Learning Mentor Teachers' outline</li> </ul>
<p>Celebrate Aboriginal ritual and language</p>	<p>DP – Faith and Mission with Fire Carrier Committee</p>	<p>2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significance of Indigenous print in each LM room to be explained by LMs through Sacred Imagery activity and document</li> <li>• Students and/ or staff attend Cultural Protocols workshop run by ACM</li> <li>• Engage with local Aboriginal groups</li> <li>• Learn and use some words from the language of the local Aboriginal community</li> </ul>



## Cultural Recognition & Awareness

### Focus Area: Recognise Cultural Perspectives, Demonstrate Awareness

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities / Resources
Celebrate important days and weeks in the reconciliation calendar		Start of each school year  13 February  26 May - 3 June  First Sunday in July  4 August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate National Apology Day</li> <li>• Celebrate National Reconciliation Week</li> <li>• Celebrate NAIDOC Week</li> <li>• Celebrate National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day and Opening the Door Foundation's Birthday</li> </ul>

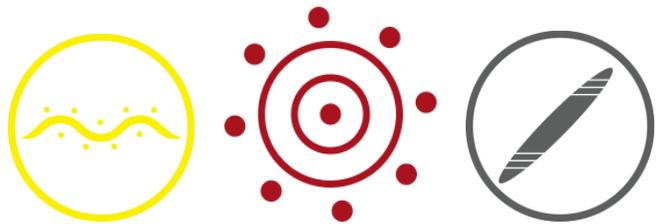
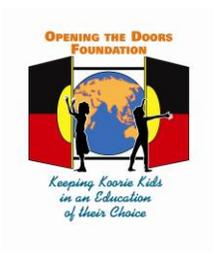


## Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College Reconciliation Covenant est. 2010

### Practical Reconciliation & Justice

#### Focus Area: Walk the Journey together, Put Learning into Practice

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities
Take Practical Measures toward Reconciliation and Justice	FIRE Carrier Committee	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find out about Opening the Doors Foundation</li> <li>Representation at Opening the Door Foundation birthday celebration in the Melbourne Archdiocese</li> <li>Disseminate promotional material in the College for the Opening the Doors Foundation</li> </ul>
	Fire Carrier Committee and Student FIRE Carriers	27 May – 3 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake fundraising for the Opening the Doors Foundation, particularly during Reconciliation Week</li> <li>Explore options for Exhibit travelling art exhibitions: Such as Dreaming in the City, Aboriginal Stations of the Cross and 'A River Dreaming' during Reconciliation Week</li> </ul>
	FIRE Carrier Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite a local Elder to speak to the College about ongoing social justice issues for Indigenous people during Reconciliation Week</li> <li>Have a strong school presence in Indigenous community events e.g. The Long Walk; NAIDOC March</li> <li>Explore, where possible, scholarship options for Indigenous students at OLSH College</li> </ul>



	<p>Senior FIRE Carrier, student FIRE carriers</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the student FIRE Carriers liaise with the Student Leadership Team about practical ideas regarding ongoing Reconciliation efforts within the College community.</li> </ul>
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The FIRE Carrier Project is an initiative of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry and the Opening the Doors Foundation with the Sandhurst CEO, aimed to promote and assist Reconciliation through Education in Victorian Schools.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College community pledges to make this Covenant of Reconciliation a priority in our College life. We commit to achieving or putting steps in place to complete all Actions through Measurable Targets set out in the timeline above. A review at the end of school year will be conducted and the plan will be updated and passed to the following year's FIRE Carrier at the inaugural School assembly.



***We, the OLSH College Bentleigh community are committed to acknowledging the great injustices which have been endured by Aboriginal Australians. Called to touch the hearts of others, we will work for Reconciliation, committed to growing healing, justice and peace in this land. We will listen deeply and humbly as we engage in dialogue with our Aboriginal sisters and brothers.***

*Angelique Kristianto, Issoudun Chevalier*