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Archbishop’s Message for National Reconciliation Week



Today marks fifty-four years since the referendum that became a milestone in the reconciliation of the wider Australian community with the country’s indigenous people. An important breakthrough in this process was the historic decision of 3 June 1992, by which the Supreme Court of Australia justified Eddie Koiki Mabo, recognising the land rights of the Aboriginal people and the inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands. Eight years later, tens of thousands of Australians, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, crossed the Sydney Harbor Bridge together, marking another crucial step forward towards the coveted path of reconciliation.

Clearly, we are all still moving in the same direction, with either small or bigger steps. However, the beginning of National Reconciliation Week presents an ideal opportunity to step up our pace and drastically reduce the distances that separate us.

Let us seize the opportunity. Let’s journey through National Reconciliation Week with the inclination to meet and to get to know each other.

Learn every aspect of the history of Australia with an emphasis on the history of the first peoples. And then, let us meet; become closer and learn about each other, share anxieties, expectations and visions.

The shorter the distances become, and the more the lines of division fade, the more the notion of reconciliation will be transformed into a living experience in Australian society.

Let these days become our creative springboard!

