



Could I simply share with you some of the incredibly inspiring prayers which saints and heroes of the Church have shared with us on the missionary journeys of their lives, and which support us in key aspects of our mission as Church today:

...the search for faith, reaching out to the poor, working for justice and especially in Australia our support for the hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Prayer for Those Searching for God

O Lord my God,
Teach my heart this day where and how to see you,
Where and how to find you.
You have made me and remade me,
And you have bestowed on me
All the good things I possess,
And still I do not know you.
I have not yet done that
For which I was made.
Teach me to seek you,
For I cannot seek you
Unless you teach me,
Or find you
Unless you show yourself to me.
Let me seek you in my desire,
Let me desire you in my seeking.
Let me find you by loving you,
Let me love you when I find you.

St. Anselm

A reflection on reaching out to the poor

Your humanity will only begin to blossom when you come into intimate contact with the lives of the poor. The poor, by virtue of their 'lower' state, will not approach you. You must find ways to seek them out.

From them, and in their presence, you will discover much about humanity. Without realising it themselves, they will be your teachers. You will learn a lot about suffering,

about patience, about hunger, about trust, about sharing,
about community, just by observing them with an open heart.

Believe me, you will rarely learn such things in the halls
of fame! At the same time as you make these discoveries, you
will come to a better understanding of your own weakness
existing within yourself.

Far from being fearful of this discovery, you will
experience a sense of liberation, because the true self
encompasses the complete range of positive and negative
forces. Allowing yourself to acknowledge and reflect on this
ongoing self-revelation is helpful in making real choices.

Thomas Merton

Justice Prayer

O God, we pray for all those in our world
who are suffering from injustice:

For those who are discriminated against
because of their race, colour or religion;

For those imprisoned
for working for the relief of oppression;
For those who are hounded
for speaking the inconvenient truth;

For those tempted to violence
as a cry against overwhelming hardship;
For those deprived of reasonable health and education;
For those suffering from hunger and famine;

For those too weak to help themselves
and who have no one else to help them;
For the unemployed who cry out
for work but do not find it.

We pray for anyone of our acquaintance
who is personally affected by injustice.
Forgive us, Lord, if we unwittingly share in the conditions
or in a system that perpetuates injustice.

Show us how we can serve your children
and make your love practical by washing their feet.

Mother Teresa

Prayer for our first people

God of Steadfast love and kindness,
there have been many times when Australia's history
has swept through the lives of her first people
like the bushfire sweeping through the timber,
scorching the leaves and scarring the bark.

But inside the tree the sap still flows
and under the ground the roots are strong.

Grant that new life may rise from these roots,
so that Aboriginal people and their land
may be reborn in justice and in new partnership
with all who live under the Southern Cross.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ,
the bright Morning Star,
the first of all creation and
your re-creating world.

Amen

**Based on the address given by John Paul II
to the Aboriginal people of Australia, Alice Springs, 1986.**

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