ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

September 2026 – September 2028



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE

ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



Wungar Daray Dancers (Sunset Dancers - Riley family)

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Acknowledgements:
Designed by Joseph Thorley.

Artwork:
Archdiocese RAP Artwork
(Cover) Shara Delaney.

Photos:
All photographs featured in this RAP have been used with permission from photographers and individuals pictured.

Warning:
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware that this document may contain images or names of individuals who have passed away.

On the 'Acknowledgement of Country' page the Publisher has sought to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians within the geographic area defined by the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

At the date of publication, the spelling and list of Traditional Custodian names was obtained from Traditional Custodian websites, Elders and public sources (government publications).

ABOUT THE PAINTING

This artwork represents the Archdiocese of Brisbane as the face of the Catholic Church of South East Queensland.

My design shows the journey of faith, which is guided by the Spirit. It is depicted where the blue meets the green, and that main path represents the journey of faith which is heading towards the centre. It's the spirit figure that is guiding them. The main circle also represents the Archdiocese of Brisbane's community as a whole. From the centre, it branches out to the smaller circles to support and stay connected to the vulnerable in our communities. The white dots are the healing power (coming from the Spirit) which is highlighted throughout the design. I have placed the smaller circles to represent different people throughout the community and to be seen as inclusive. The little figure in the smaller circles are my interpretation of a person, using Aboriginal symbols. The black lines that flow in the background represent the spreading the good news simply and effectively. I really enhanced the main circle with layers and dots, to express governance structures and systems in bright colours as being responsive and innovative.

ABOUT THE ARTIST SHARA DELANEY



My name is Shara Delaney. I'm a descendant of the Noonuccal, Ngugi and Goenpul clan groups of Quandamooka that is located on the east coast of Brisbane. I grew up in the Redlands and always maintained my connection to country. I find the importance of belonging and having a relationship with the land and sea is intrinsic to my identity. Having a sense of community has always been important to me. Being able to engage with community through art as a cultural practice brings me joy.

A GUIDE TO ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND WELCOME TO COUNTRY

What is Country

In terms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, 'Country' refers to a specific tract of land or sea traditionally owned by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural/language group. More than 260 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander countries and language groups are represented across Australia. In Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures, land, sea, air, language and spirituality are deeply connected, so Country includes all of these elements. © *The State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2026*

A 'Welcome to Country' is a ceremony where Traditional Custodians, usually Elders, welcome people to their land. This is a significant recognition and is made through a formal process, although it is up to the Elder how they decide to carry out the ceremony. It also depends on the location of the event and the practice of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community which can vary greatly according to the regions. Practised for thousands of years, it reflects a deep spiritual connection between people and Country. The form of the welcome varies by community and may include spoken word, song, dance, didgeridoo, or a Smoking Ceremony.

A Smoking Ceremony is a sacred act. When included as part of a Welcome, a Smoking Ceremony holds deep spiritual significance. The smoke is used to cleanse and prepare the space and those present, promoting healing and peace. As a Church, we recognise and respect these cultural practices. When approached with openness and reverence, they can deepen our sense of unity, humility, and shared faith. © *NATSICC - The peak Indigenous advisory body to the Catholic Church*

An 'Acknowledgement of Country' is a way that we can show awareness and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage, and the ongoing relationship the Traditional Custodians have with their land. Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people can perform an 'Acknowledgement of Country'. It is a demonstration of respect dedicated to Traditional Custodians of land, sea and waters where the agency, parish, community event or Mass, takes place. It can be formal and informal.

Why do we conduct a Welcome to or Acknowledgement of Country?

'Welcome to Country' and 'Acknowledgement of Country' are protocols that have been practiced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for thousands of years. For non-Indigenous Australians, Acknowledging Country is an authentic expression of reconciliation and unity. It recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and the continuing and deep connection to Country.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Archdiocese of Brisbane respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, work, worship, and serve. We honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first Peoples of this land, whose deep spiritual relationship with Country has been expressed through culture, language, story, song, art, and ceremony for thousands of years.

As people of faith, we give thanks to God for their enduring presence and wisdom, and for the shared call to care for Creation. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians across the Archdiocese of Brisbane, north, south, east, and west and commit ourselves, in the spirit of the Gospel, to walking together in truth, reconciliation, and hope.

Jinabara, Gubbi Gubbi (Kabi Kabi), Yagarabul People,

Turrbal, Quandamooka, Yugambeh, Mibin People,

Wakka Wakka, Wulli Wulli, Butchulla, Bai Lai,

Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng and Taribelang Bunda.

A PRAYER FOR OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Creator Spirit, we come with humble heart,
Bringing the wounds of our shared history.
We bring all the pain of Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander peoples,
The sorrow of the Stolen Generations,
the silencing of voices, the stories never told,
the loss of land, of language and culture.
We bring the strength and enduring spirit of our Elders.

Forgive us, Lord God
for the injustices committed,
for the many denials of truth,
for policies that caused harm,
for that were hardened.
May your mercy transform us and your grace bring healing.

Open the hearts of our leaders, and of all who dwell in this land,
That we may embrace and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures,
Learning from what they teach.
May our Reconciliation Action Plan
sow the seeds of unity, justice and peace.

Amen

Joni McCourt, proud Burunggam
and Wulli Wulli person.
RAP Manager Archdiocese of Brisbane



A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

From the launch of our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2020, we have made significant steps forward throughout the Archdiocese of Brisbane in responding to the Gospel call to work for justice and reconciliation. It has been heartening to see the various ways that parishes in Brisbane engage actively in the journey towards reconciliation. Nationally, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference publicly endorsed the Uluru Statement from the Heart and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice enshrined in the Constitution. Despite these efforts, since the disappointment of the referendum on The Voice, we have witnessed a new wave of racism and discrimination. At this moment, when there is less popular engagement with initiatives for reconciliation, it is even more important for the Church to reaffirm our commitment to work towards healing, truth-telling and reconciliation. We need to strengthen our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, guided by a continued deep listening to First Nations' voices. This new RAP will provide a framework that assists all in the archdiocese to further our contribution to the work of building reconciliation in Australia. I am grateful to all who have worked hard in the development of this new iteration of the RAP, and I pray that it may help renew the journey we are undertaking together.



+Shane Mackinlay

Archbishop of Brisbane

2026

MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia commends the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With over 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. The Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on *relationships*, *respect*, and *opportunities* gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for the archdiocese to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of the archdiocese's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer - Reconciliation Australia



ENDORSEMENT FROM ARCHDIOCESAN AGENCY EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

As leaders of the Archdiocese of Brisbane's agencies, we proudly endorse the 2026 – 2028 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and are dedicated to its ongoing implementation. Our goal is for the archdiocese to be a community that values mutual respect and shows deep solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We commit to taking action with mercy, love, justice, truth-telling, and peace to heal past wounds while acknowledging and addressing present injustices faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples within the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Building on our first two RAP iterations, we celebrate milestones like the Reconciliation Garden at the Cathedral of St Stephen, the appointment of a full-time Cultural Advisor, committing to a process of consultation with Elders and community leaders addressing some of the historic needs of the Cherbourg Catholic Community including much needed renovations and repairs to St Peter Claver Chapel. Other key milestones include launching the annual Honouring Our Elders Speaker Event and the increased number of parishes engaging with the RAP. Initiatives such as cultural immersion programs, RAP Around the Ridges networking events, and the annual Reconciliation Dinner have helped our truth-telling, community engagement, and collaborative action.

This new RAP challenges us to embed reconciliation as a core commitment within the communities we live, work and worship in. We aim to continue to deepen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, celebrate their contributions, and ensure our archdiocesan culture reflects the inclusive, reconciled Church we aspire to be.

As Pope John Paul II expressed, "[W]e long for the day when we are fully the Church that Jesus wants us to be, a Church where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make their contribution to her life, and that contribution is joyfully received by others." (Address to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, Alice Springs, 1986).

Dcn Peter Pellicaan PhD
(Executive Director,
Archdiocesan Ministries)

Stuart Rodney
(Executive Director, Centacare)

Andrew Musial
(Executive Director,
Archdiocesan Services)

Bernard Baker
(Archdiocesan Financial Administrator)

Ross Tarlinton OAM
(Acting Exective Director,
Brisbane Catholic Education)

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The Archdiocese of Brisbane vision for reconciliation is to be a community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged and respected as the First Peoples of this land, and where all of us, with our diverse heritages, walk together in mutual respect, solidarity and shared hope.

We seek to be a Church that listens with humility, and acts with compassion. A community committed to healing the wounds and wrongs of the past, confronting injustices, and nurturing relationships grounded in mercy, love, justice, forgiveness and peace.

We aspire to be a catholic community that is firmly committed to recognising, honouring, and learning from the significant contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the Church of Australia. This requires the archdiocese to listen deeply and engage in respectful dialogue with the aim to advancing justice and reconciliation in our church communities and structures. In this journey, we are grounded in the vision shared by Pope Leo XIV in his October 2025 Message to the Indigenous Peoples' Network and the Indigenous Theologians Network whereby he acknowledged that '*Indigenous Peoples… history, spirituality and hope*' constitutes '*an irreplaceable voice*' within the life of the Church.

In light of the Plenary Council Decrees and the actions of Archdiocese of Brisbane Synod, we are compelled as a Church to a deeper engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This involves committing to a genuine listening in the belief that we can and must learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes the recognition of the unique contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and requires both change and action, in the Church and wider community.

> *As identified by Pope Francis in Laudato Si', Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples "…are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed. For them, land is not a commodity but rather a gift from God and from their ancestors who rest there, a sacred space with which they need to interact if they are to maintain their identity and values."* (Pope Francis, Laudato Si', page 146).

Continuing this journey of reconciliation, we are committed to creating spaces where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and voices are celebrated, valued, and reconciliation becomes a lived reality woven into our prayer, ministry and daily lives.

When we have
power over our destiny
our children will flourish.

They will walk in two worlds
and their **culture will be**
a gift to their country.

Statement From the Heart



QLD NATSICC REPRESENTATIVE (2025-2028) BERNICE FISCHER



Bernice Fischer, Queensland Aboriginal Councilor for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Council (NATSICC) 2025-28

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) was formally established in 1992 to act as the peak advisory body to the Australian Catholic Bishops on First Nations matters. It was formed as an evolution of the previous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (AICC), which was founded in 1973. Its role is to provide a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics and to facilitate the incorporation of culture into the Catholic faith. Queensland also has a Torres Strait Islander, Councillor Aunty Dolly McGaughey.

I am a Traditional Custodian from Quandamooka Country and have connections to all three Clans Groups: Ngugi, Nunukul and Goenpul. Quandamooka Country starts south of the Brisbane River down to the Logan River, taking in Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) the smaller Bay Islands and parts of the adjacent mainland.

Prior to my appointment as the Aboriginal Councillor for Queensland I have been an active member of the Archdiocesan Reconciliation Reference Group since 2020. My parish is Star of the Sea Cleveland, and I attend St Paul of the Cross Dunwich on Minjerribah.

Our parish was invited to be part of the RAP Pilot Parishes and was tasked with the role of meeting deliverables within the RAP and reporting back to the RAP Manager. My years of being on the Reference Group, the RAP 10 Liturgy Group and the Parish RAP Working Group has only instilled in me the utmost importance of endorsing the next stage of the Archdiocesan RAP in achieving its goals.

As stated on Reconciliation Australia's website, "we promote and facilitate reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples." This is also the heart of our Archdiocesan Reconciliation Action Plan.

This goal cannot be realised without the shared commitment of all clergy and parishioners across the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Reconciliation is not something done for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. It is something we walk together.

As we continue this journey of reconciliation, I invite you to walk with us, to sit, to listen, and to engage in honest conversation, so that together we may build a community grounded in faith, respect, and understanding. In doing so, we answer God's call to "act justly, love kindness and mercy, and walk humbly with Him" (Micah 6:8).

Together, may our actions reflect our faith and strengthen our shared commitment to reconciliation.

OUR ARCHDIOCESE

Reaching from 100 to 300 kilometres west to Eidsvold and Gatton, the archdiocese meets the Auburn Range and follows the Great Divide to the Blackbutt Range. From there it runs in a straight line to the junction of the Lockyer and Ma Ma Creeks, to the McPherson Range and to the Queensland/New South Wales Border – a land area of 77,000 square kilometres. (See attached map of archdiocese). The land that makes up the Archdiocese of Brisbane has been home to a number of ancient and unique cultures for many thousands of years. During this time, the Traditional Custodians from a number of language groups and their associated clan and family groups have cared for and lived with the landforms, plants, and animals that make up this archdiocese. Their systems of knowledge, their spirituality and respective cultures continue to be intimately connected to the mountains, rivers, swamps, plains and seas found in and around our archdiocese. The land and the seas have sustained and nurtured countless generations of the Traditional Custodians. Colonisation severely impacted upon culture and language but the close relationship and connection of Traditional Custodians to their country still continues. According to the 2021 Census statistics, there are over 714,000 Catholics living within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Of those, over 15,230 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. The archdiocese employs approximately 3278 people*. Of those, 27 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, of the overall workforce. There are 93 parishes in the archdiocese.

**Does not include Brisbane Catholic Education Employees. Within Brisbane Catholic Education 3.8% of students and 0.99% of employees identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Brisbane Catholic Education aims to create a workforce that is representative of the students, families, and communities served. The new Brisbane Catholic Education RAP was launched in August 2026.*

Archdiocese of Brisbane Reconciliation Dinner 2025




Diocese of Rockhampton
North Country
Childers
Hervey Bay
Gayndah
Maryborough
Murgon
Gympie
Kingaroy
Nanango
Northern Rivers
North Coast
Caboolture
Diocese of Toowoomba
Esk
South Country
Gatton Laidley
Logan
Archdiocese of Brisbane
South East Queensland
Legend

OUR HISTORY

From early on in the period of European occupation of Australia, there were important voices in the Catholic Church expressing concerns for the rights of Aboriginal people as colonists took over the land. In his 1849 Lenten pastoral letter, Australia's first bishop, Archbishop John Bede Polding, challenged colonists to be mindful of the effect of their settlement on Aboriginal people:

"... Aborigines of the country – the first occupants of the lands over which your flocks and herds now roam – have a very strong claim upon you. Nor will the Lord hold you innocent if you have not used your best endeavours to promote their temporal and eternal well-being".

On numerous occasions during his life, Archbishop Polding expressed his dismay and his deep concern about the way in which white settlements were overtaking Aboriginal peoples, their cultures and their way of life. He complained to the legislative bodies of his day about the ongoing destruction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their spiritual attachment to the land.

It should be acknowledged that, for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Churches contributed to this mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Church missions and reserves often stir feelings of hurt and anger among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples because they contributed to their loss of cultures and connection to Country and peoples.

Their experience of missions was one of pain, humiliation and indignity.

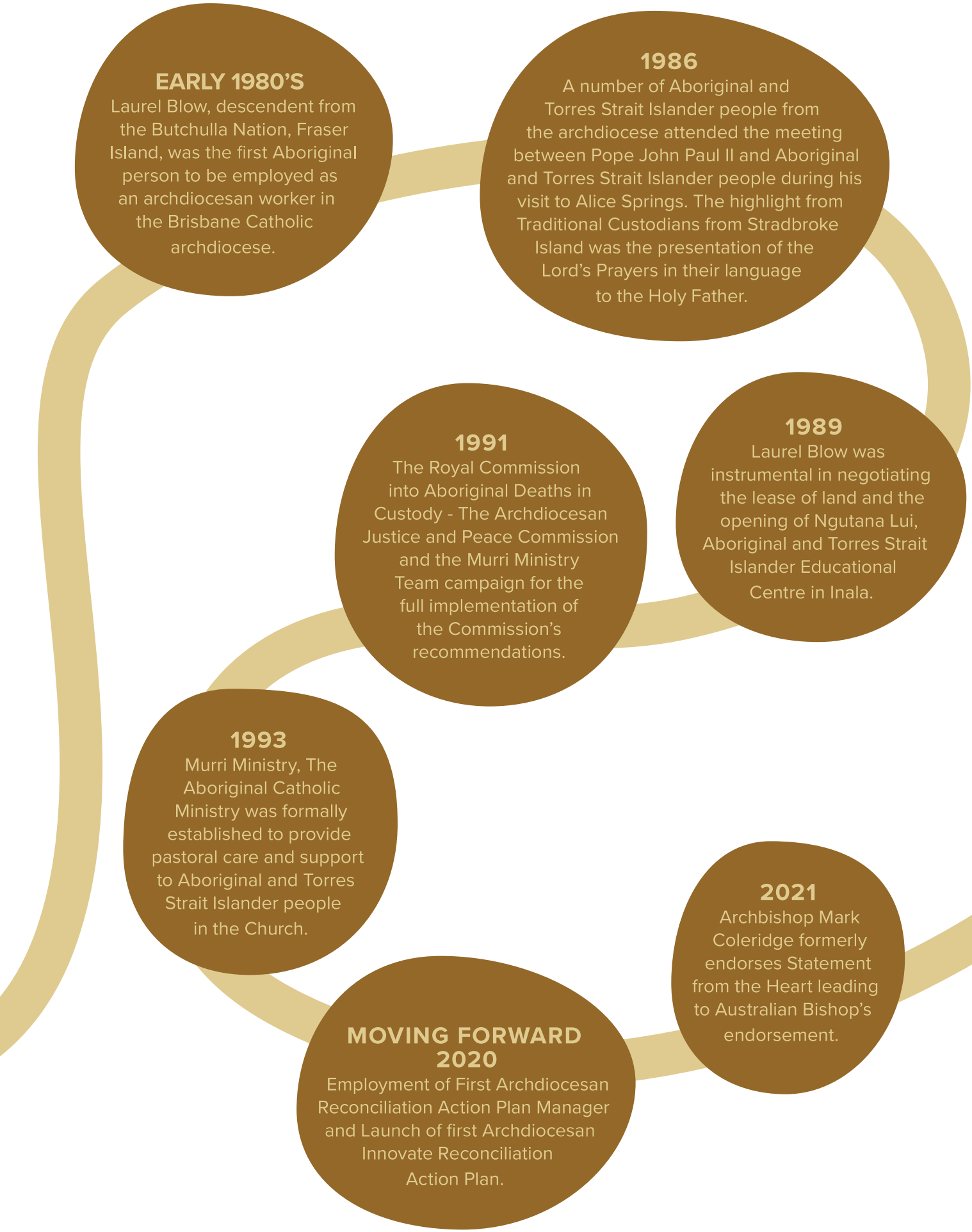
THE EARLY YEARS 1843 -1847
The Passionist Religious Order established a mission at Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) on Quandamooka Country which was the first Catholic Mission to Aboriginal peoples in Australia.

1875–1880
Fr Duncan McNab, cousin of St Mary MacKillop, ministered to Aboriginal people in South East Queensland. He lobbied politicians and Catholic leaders about injustices experienced by Aboriginal people.

1972
The Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Council (AICC) was established nationally to advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's greater inclusion within the Church.

1973
A priest was appointed to the Aboriginal Apostolate within the Archdiocese of Brisbane until 1990.

1975
The Brisbane Aboriginal and Islander Catholic Council (AICC) was established. Local AICC branches were subsequently formed following 1975.


EARLY 1980'S
Laurel Blow, descendent from the Butchulla Nation, Fraser Island, was the first Aboriginal person to be employed as an archdiocesan worker in the Brisbane Catholic archdiocese.
1986
A number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the archdiocese attended the meeting between Pope John Paul II and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people during his visit to Alice Springs. The highlight from Traditional Custodians from Stradbroke Island was the presentation of the Lord's Prayers in their language to the Holy Father.
1989
Laurel Blow was instrumental in negotiating the lease of land and the opening of Ngutana Lui, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Centre in Inala.
1991
The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody - The Archdiocesan Justice and Peace Commission and the Murri Ministry Team campaign for the full implementation of the Commission's recommendations.
1993
Murri Ministry, The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry was formally established to provide pastoral care and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Church.
2021
Archbishop Mark Coleridge formerly endorses Statement from the Heart leading to Australian Bishop's endorsement.
MOVING FORWARD 2020
Employment of First Archdiocesan Reconciliation Action Plan Manager and Launch of first Archdiocesan Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

2023

Following the Plenary Council, Archbishop Mark Coleridge identifies 'Engaging anew with First Nations Peoples' as a key Apostolic Priority for the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The Inaugural Archdiocesan Reconciliation Dinner in honour of Laurel Blow is held to coincide with launch of the second iteration of the Archdiocesan Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (2023-2025).

2024

The Archdiocesan Synod identifies in the first actions in implementing the Plenary Council Decrees, a deeper long-term commitment by the archdiocese to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Reconciliation Garden opened by Archbishop Mark Coleridge in celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Cathedral of Stephen.

2025

First phase of renovations completed for St Peter Claver Catholic Chapel, Cherbourg, including employment of identified position of Parish Pastoral Worker.

Employment of first identified position for Archdiocesan Cultural Advisor.

Murri Ministry joins Archdiocesan Ministries to continue to provide pastoral support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

2026

Archbishop Shane Mackinlay meets with Elders and community leaders to develop relationships and hear directly regarding challenges impacting their communities.

In consultation with local Elders and Community Leaders, an archdiocesan submission is made to the Federal Joint Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Inquiry into racism, hate and violence directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Launch of the Inaugural Archdiocese of Brisbane Honouring Our Elders Speaker Event.

Archbishop Shane Mackinlay launches third iteration of the Archdiocesan Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (2026-2028).

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have suffered sexual and physical abuse by clergy and religious. We acknowledge the continual associated trauma of hurt, suffering, pain and loss of trust survivors deal with. We acknowledge and understand that these actions have caused a loss of faith, trust and respect for our Church by members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and wider Catholic community. We continue to pray for all survivors of abuse and the courage to speak out against these acts.

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The archdiocese is now committed to delivering its third Innovate RAP with clear intent, measurable action, and sustained accountability. This commitment requires more than reflection, it demands continuous, deliberate action to strengthen relationships, embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and ensure meaningful outcomes.

We will actively advance our reconciliation journey through truth-telling, listening deeply, responding respectfully, and acting decisively on what we hear. We will hold ourselves accountable for progressing reconciliation with integrity, humility, and compassion, ensuring our commitments translate into tangible change.

To demonstrate this commitment, the Archdiocese of Brisbane will actively engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to continue strengthening relationships and prioritising genuine partnerships. This includes a commitment for greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation and a voice at the table in determining decisions that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and communities.

We recognise that reconciliation requires ongoing effort and responsibility. We will regularly reflect on our progress, measure our impact, and take corrective action where needed. Our goal is to contribute meaningfully to reconciliation in the Archdiocese of Brisbane by improving outcomes for future generations and ensuring the creation of a more inclusive Church.

Archdiocese of Brisbane Reconciliation Reference Group (RRG)

Membership of the Reconciliation Reference Group (RRG) consists of 14 members, of whom eight are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The other members include six members from parishes, agencies, and external stakeholders.

NAIDOC 2026 Celebrations



ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

ARCHBISHOP SHANE MACKINLAY

Organisational RAP Champion for Archdiocese of Brisbane.

EXECUTIVE FORUM

The RAP is a standing agenda item on the Executive Forum. Executive Director Archdiocesan Ministries liaises with and provides progress reports to the forum.

RAP MANAGER (ARCHDIOCESAN MINISTRIES)

The RAP Manager is employed by Archdiocesan Ministries.
The RAP Manager is tasked with the overall management of the RAP across the archdiocese (all Church agencies, parishes and communities excluding BCE).

ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE RECONCILIATION REFERENCE GROUP (RRG)

The Reconciliation Reference Group (RRG) is established to work as an advisory body to Archdiocesan Ministries, providing advice and recommendations on the implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

Membership of the RRG of 14 members of which of eight are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The other member consists of six members from parishes, agencies, and external stakeholders.

ADS/CENTACARE RAP WORKING GROUP

Responsible for overseeing the delivery of RAP initiatives specific to ADS and Centacare, and for reporting progress, and outcomes to the RAP Manager.

ARCHDIOCESAN MINISTRIES RAP WORKING GROUP

Responsible for overseeing the delivery of RAP initiatives specific to Archdiocesan Ministries and for reporting progress and outcomes to the RAP Manger.

ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE LITURGICAL RAP WORKING GROUP

Responsible for overseeing the delivery of RAP initiatives specific to liturgy and for reporting progress and outcomes to the RAP Manger. Chaired by a member of the Archdiocesan Commission of the Liturgy.

PARISH AND COMMUNITY RAP WORKING GROUPS

Responsible for overseeing the delivery of RAP initiatives specific to parishes and communities and for reporting progress and outcomes to the RAP Manger.

We long for the day when we are fully the Church that Jesus wants us to be, a Church where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make their contribution to her life, and that contribution is joyfully received by others..

Pope John Paul II, Address to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, Alice Springs, 1986.



Aunty Evelyn Parkin – Quandamooka Elder

OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY, LEARNINGS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, endorsed by Reconciliation Australia, was launched by Archbishop Mark Coleridge in November 2020 with six pilot parishes across the Archdiocese of Brisbane and commitment from all Church agencies. The RAP marked the next step in the Archdiocese of Brisbane's ongoing reconciliation journey with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It formalised existing social justice efforts, strengthened accountability, and introduced a focused commitment to creating and sustaining culturally safe and welcoming environments across agencies, parishes, and communities.

OUR LEARNINGS

As we continue with our third iteration of the Innovate RAP, we are proud of what we have achieved to date. We are acutely aware there is still much to be done across parishes, communities and Church agencies toward building relationships grounded in respect, partnership, and shared faith.

Through our RAP journey, we have learned that meaningful reconciliation requires deep engagement across a highly diverse network of parishes, communities and church agencies. Each setting brings its own history, priorities, capacities and cultural dynamics, which makes consistent engagement both essential and complex.

The breadth of our archdiocese geographically, culturally and organisationally presents unique challenges, particularly when working to inspire and sustain widescale culture change. Shifting long held practices, building shared understanding, and embedding reconciliation requires time, trust, and ongoing collaboration.

In this next iteration of our RAP, we are intentionally focusing on these complexities. We are advancing culture change through practical, locally informed approaches that strengthen alignment across the archdiocese. These learnings continue to guide and refine our work, embedding reconciliation into everyday practice.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday & NAIDOC Week 50 Years of Deadly Community Celebration.





Left: Cultural Immersion – Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) 2026; Right: Smoking Ceremony – Reconciliation Week Mass 2025

THE KEY AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT INCLUDE:

- Provision of time and resourcing to allow increased opportunities for consulting with and listening to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Church agencies, parishes, external stakeholder groups, Elders and members of the local community.
- Full integration of Archdiocesan Synod actions within the Reconciliation Action Plan deliverables.
- Continuing to strengthen opportunities for truth-telling to occur and increasing opportunities for parishes and church agencies to participate and engage with cultural competency initiatives.
- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the consultation process for developing and implementing an Archdiocesan Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
- Update the Code of Conduct and Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy to explicitly include a zero-tolerance stance on racism and discrimination, supported by mandatory anti-racism and anti-discrimination training for all employees.
- Develop and publish Archdiocesan Guidelines, endorsed by the Archbishop for the inculturation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, art, traditions, spirituality, music, rituals, and symbols in liturgy.
- Explore the possibility of having a dedicated chaplain for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries within the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Since the endorsement of our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2020, the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane has remained committed to advancing reconciliation through meaningful action, relationship-building, truth-telling and cultural learning.

A significant achievement has been the increased engagement of parishes in the Archdiocesan RAP, with a growing number actively participating in reconciliation initiatives and embedding RAP commitments within local communities. This growth has been supported through initiatives such as *RAP Around the Ridges*, which brings together parish, agency and community representatives to share ideas, celebrate successes, address challenges and hear from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and guest speakers.

The archdiocese has continued to create culturally welcoming and inclusive spaces through the incorporation of Acknowledging Country plaques, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, artwork and symbols across workplaces, parish offices and churches. This commitment was further demonstrated through the establishment of a permanent Reconciliation Garden at St Stephen's Cathedral, developed in partnership with local Elders. In addition to this a significant artwork was commissioned for the Cathedral Precinct celebrating shared histories and the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the life of the Church.

A growing focus on leadership, innovation and truth-telling has been demonstrated through initiatives including the annual Archdiocesan Reconciliation Dinner, National Reconciliation Week Masses, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday Masses, NAIDOC Week celebrations, and the annual *Honouring Our Elders Speaker Event*. These initiatives have strengthened opportunities for truth-telling, cultural learning, recognition of Elders and community connection.

The archdiocese has also strengthened relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through consultation, listening and partnership. This has resulted in practical outcomes in Cherbourg, including renovations to St Peter Claver Chapel, the employment of an identified position for a part-time Pastoral Ministry Worker and the introduction of regular Mass services.

Investment in cultural capability and leadership has been strengthened through the appointment of a full-time identified Cultural Advisor in 2024 and the delivery of cultural immersion and truth-telling experiences in partnership with Traditional Custodians and communities. These experiences continue to foster greater understanding, stronger relationships and collaborative action across the archdiocese.

A significant milestone was the Archdiocese of Brisbane Synod 2024, where reconciliation was identified as the first Synod Action, affirming its importance to the life and mission of the Church and providing a strong foundation for future RAP commitments and the archdiocese's broader strategic direction in relation to reconciliation.

Together, these achievements reflect our ongoing commitment to embedding reconciliation into the life of the Church and building a stronger foundation for the next stage of our reconciliation journey.

HONOURING OUR ELDERS SPEAKER EVENT

Established in 2021 through the Archdiocese of Brisbane's Reconciliation Action Plan, the Laurel Blow Speaker Series created a dedicated space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to share perspectives on reconciliation and community priorities. The initiative honoured Laurel Blow, a proud Butchulla woman whose leadership advanced social justice and education, including her role in establishing Ngutana Lui Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational Centre.

As our RAP has progressed, we have been privileged to walk alongside Elders whose knowledge, culture and guidance continue to strengthen our communities and shape our journey of reconciliation.

Building on this foundation, the *Honouring Our Elders Speaker Event* recognises and celebrates Elders, and honours an Elder each year whose wisdom, leadership and cultural knowledge continue to inspire, foster connection and create lasting, positive impact. Held annually, the event features Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers, creating opportunities for learning, reflection and deeper understanding, and inviting all to actively engage in the archdiocese's ongoing reconciliation journey.

Deacon Peter Pellicaan, Lucy Davis, Uncle David Miller, Professor Megan Davis AC, Eric Robinson, Joni McCourt



David Miller, Elder

As a descendant of the Gangalu peoples from Central Queensland and as an Elder on the Reconciliation Reference Group, I am honoured and privileged to provide an endorsement for the Brisbane Catholic Archdiocesan Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2026-2028.

Reconciliation is a concept that is well known to all Catholics. It is also an essential process for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. It is a movement that began in the 1990's under the stewardship of the then Council of Aboriginal Reconciliation (now Reconciliation Australia). It has become a grassroots movement that has been embraced by federal and state governments as well as the corporate and not-for-profit sectors. This document marks a major milestone in the history of the Catholic Church in Queensland.

I believe the Catholic Church has an important and ongoing role in walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples helping to deepen awareness and understanding of our rights, cultures and histories, while respectfully embracing and valuing our traditions and spirituality.

This RAP reflects a strong and shared commitment between the Church and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the archdiocese to walk together in genuine partnership grounded in dialogue, respect and meaningful action.

Never before in our history have we had such a timely opportunity to address many of the issues that have long been held as heartfelt aspirations of our peoples across the nation.

This is a time for healing and coming together in truth and respect.

A time to listen deeply, to learn, and to honour the stories, cultures and wisdom of our peoples.

It is a time for acceptance of our shared history, both painful and proud and for acknowledging the injustices our communities have endured.

It is a time to stand strong in our voices, to be heard within the Church, and to walk together in dignity.

A time to challenge racism and prejudice wherever it lives, and to replace it with understanding and compassion.

And most importantly, it is a time for action, walking side by side, building trust, and creating a future grounded in justice, respect and true reconciliation.



I am pleased to acknowledge all of those who have gone before us and walked this journey and the valuable contributions they have made to this process - our Elders, communities and especially those who are no longer with us.

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we have been living our spirituality for thousands of years. Our spirituality has many parallels with Christianity such as various traditional rites, rituals and customs. At the core, we are deeply spiritual peoples.

I would like to acknowledge the many thousands of footprints that have walked upon this ancient, sacred land as the oldest surviving culture in the world. May we take up our rightful place at the table and walk together in unity for justice, peace and reconciliation.

CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY

As we move into the next phase of our reconciliation journey, we recommit with renewed focus, purpose and accountability. We will prioritise the delivery of actions not achieved in our previous Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, recognising these as important opportunities for growth and learning.

We remain committed to strengthening and embedding reconciliation across the archdiocese as we shape our third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–2028. Through reflection and review, we have gained valuable insights into what enabled success and what limited progress. These learnings are guiding a more deliberate and coordinated approach.

We recognise the importance of the active engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, Elders, external partners, and community members at the table, informing, advising, and strengthening our ability to achieve our identified deliverables.

This next stage calls us to go further building on our foundations, deepening relationships, and walking together with intention towards lasting and meaningful reconciliation.

Reconciliation events across the Archdiocese of Brisbane 2025-2026



RELATIONSHIPS

The Archdiocese of Brisbane is committed to building and sustaining respectful, mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations. Through authentic collaboration, cultural recognition, respect, advocacy and community engagement, we seek to strengthen trust and promote understanding, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices play a central role in shaping our reconciliation journey.

As part of this commitment, we will nurture these relationships by celebrating and commemorating significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and dates of importance, and by promoting reconciliation throughout our parishes, communities and agencies. Through these efforts, we aim to create culturally safe environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are respected, valued and included. Recognising that meaningful reconciliation is built on listening and partnership, the archdiocese will continue to engage and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Islander Elders, leaders and community to provide guidance and advice to the Archbishop, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives inform our mission, decision-making and ongoing commitment to reconciliation.



ACTION 1.

Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Continue to build relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations and develop an organisational and community contact list for use by archdiocesan staff and parishes.	October 2027	**Lead:** RAP Manager
b. Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	April 2028	**Lead:** RAP Manager Director of Inclusion
c. Host an annual Honouring Our Elders Speaker Event presenting Aboriginal and Torres Islander guest speakers covering topics including Reconciliation, Aboriginal Spirituality, truth-telling, impacts of colonisation and Closing the Gap.	June (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager
d. Host an annual Reconciliation Dinner featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest speakers and performers to promote truth-telling, cultural understanding, and maintain community connection across the archdiocese.	September (2026, 2027 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager

ACTION 2.

Build relationships through celebrating and commemorating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Promote Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) resources and reconciliation materials to all agency employees to support awareness, understanding, and engagement in NRW activities.	May (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Agency RAP Working Groups Chair
b. Parish and community RAP Working Groups promote and attend key reconciliation events, activities and opportunities across the archdiocese to strengthen engagement and support culture change.	May (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Parish and Community RAP Working Groups
c. Every agency to organise at least 1 National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event for their agency staff each year throughout the month of May.	May (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Chairs of Agency RAP Working Groups
d. Record and report Agency and RAP Working Group participation in at least one Archdiocesan National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event, including examples of engagement, in the biannual progress report submitted to the RAP Manager.	May (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Chairs of Agency RAP Working Groups
e. Agency RAP Working Groups to register all Agency NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Chairs of Agency RAP Working Groups
f. Record and report annual participation numbers for employees and senior leaders in internal and external NRW initiatives, including examples of engagement, in the biannual progress report submitted to the RAP Manager.	May (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Executive Directors **Support:** Chairs of Agency RAP Working Groups

ACTION 3.

Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of Importance, including: Sorry Day, Close the Gap, Coming of the Light, Apology Day and Mabo Day.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Parishes and communities will host at least four annual events or initiatives that celebrate or commemorate significant dates recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.	Review September (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Parish and Community RAP Working Groups
b. Agencies will host at least four annual events or initiatives that celebrate or commemorate significant dates recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.	Review September (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Agency RAP Working Groups
c. Parishes, communities and agencies to host or participate in a minimum of two truth-telling and/or walking on Country events annually to strengthen opportunities for truth-telling to occur in parishes, communities and agencies.	Review September (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Parish and Agency RAP Working Groups

ACTION 4.

Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Review, update and implement an annual RAP Communication Plan utilising archdiocesan communication channels, campaigns, and priorities to promote reconciliation outcomes consistently.	September (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager AM Communication Manager AoB Director Communication and Engagement
b. Continue to ensure that RAP implementation resources and protocol guides are easily accessible and prominently located on the archdiocesan website for employees, parishes, communities, agencies and the wider public community.	November 2026	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** AM Communications Manager AoB Director Communication and Engagement
c. Continue to communicate our public commitment to reconciliation to all employees, parishes, agencies through existing communication channels, leadership messaging, formation opportunities, digital platforms, newsletters and key organisational events.	Review November (2026 – 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager Director of Inclusion
d. Collaborate, support and where appropriate mentor RAP organisations, agencies and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	Review November (2026 – 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager Director of Inclusion

e. Ensure all Early Learning Services are engaged in the Reconciliation Action Plan process including registering and publishing their RAP on the Narragunnawali Reconciliation program website.	July 2027	**Lead:** Director – Early EdCare **Support:** Catholic Early ED Care Managers CEEC
f. Develop a video resource to support engagement and uptake of the Archdiocese Reconciliation Action Plan across parishes and communities.	November 2027	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** AM Communication Manager

ACTION 5.

Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Update the Code of Conduct and Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy to explicitly include a zero-tolerance stance on racism and discrimination, supported by mandatory anti-racism and anti-discrimination training for all employees.	November 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
b. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on the update of the Anti-Discrimination Policy and the development of the Anti-Racism Policy.	November 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
c. Develop and implement a communication plan to raise awareness on anti-discrimination and anti-racism policy and strategy with employees in the archdiocese, agencies and parishes, including education of senior leaders.	November 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)

ACTION 6.

Establish and maintain an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Archdiocese of Brisbane advisory body to the Archbishop and bishops.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Establish and maintain an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Archdiocesan Support Network with Elders, community leaders and organisations that will convene quarterly to provide cultural insights and knowledge in addition to raising topical and current community issues with the Archbishop and bishops.	February, May, August, November (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry Coordinator
b. Hold an annual meeting between the Brisbane Archdiocesan Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Network and the Archbishop to provide cultural advice, discuss community issues, and support the Synod aligned commitment to deep listening and meaningful engagement with First Nations peoples. *# Archdiocese of Brisbane Synod Action Plan 1.1*	June (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry Coordinator Archbishop
c. Explore opportunities for supporting the establishment of a Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Advisory Body, which would meet quarterly including one face-to-face meeting annually. This body would aim to meet with the Queensland Bishops annually to raise and address challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics across the Archdiocese of Brisbane.	February, May, August, November (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** : Murri Ministry Coordinator Queensland National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) Representative

RESPECT

Through this RAP, we will create opportunities for Church agencies, parishes and communities to participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning experiences. This will provide understanding, cultural capability and confidence in establishing and strengthening respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also acknowledge that respect is demonstrated not only through learning and acknowledgement, but by creating culturally welcoming spaces where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities, voices and expressions are visible, valued and celebrated. We are committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to guide the authentic expression of culture in our liturgies and to strengthening cultural visibility and inclusion across the archdiocese. The Archdiocese of Brisbane promotes reconciliation by embracing cultural protocols, celebrating NAIDOC Week, and increasing the visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



ACTION 7.

Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	March 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture) **Support:** Cultural Advisor (People and Culture)
b. Publicly launch the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Learning Plan and Cultural Capability Framework.	March 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture) **Support:** Cultural Advisor (People and Culture)
c. Continue to update and maintain accessible cultural learning resources (e.g. videos, guidance materials, and prayers) and share them with parishes and communities.	Review July (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** AM Communication Manager
d. Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to survey cultural learning needs and co-design culturally responsive training aligned with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Learning Plan and Cultural Capability Framework to strengthen cultural capability across the archdiocese, agencies and parishes.	September 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture) **Support:** Cultural Advisor (People and Culture)
e. Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop and implement online training that supports the introduction and uptake of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Learning Plan and Cultural Capability Framework across the archdiocese.	September 2028	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture) **Support:** Cultural Advisor (People and Culture)
f. Agency Leadership to attend a minimum of one truth-telling initiative or cultural learning immersion experience annually.	Review October (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Executive Directors, Directors **Support:** Agency Leadership
g. Host four cultural learning events annually for archdiocesan agency employees, parish employees, and community participants, including truth-telling, On Country learning, workshops, and cultural immersion experiences, to strengthen cultural capability development.	Review November (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry Coordinator
h. In alignment with archdiocesan *Laudato Si'* actions, provide at least two archdiocese-wide truth-telling presentations or workshops each year, co-delivered with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to strengthen understanding of culture and spirituality, the impacts of loss of Country, and caring for and healing Country, and accessible to parishes, agencies, clergy, religious, and lay leaders.	Review October (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry Coordinator

ACTION 8.

Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Review and update the RAP cultural protocol guide, including protocols for Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of Country, and Smoking Ceremonies.	July 2027	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry
b. Include a Welcome to Country by a Traditional Custodian for all significant events (e.g. major archdiocesan event or Mass featuring prominent dignitaries, Elders & community leaders). Agencies, parishes, and communities to observe cultural protocols, such as hosting a Smoking Ceremony where appropriate.	Review December (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Agencies, Parishes, and Communities
c. Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important meetings, liturgies, and events.	Review July December (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Agencies, Parishes, and Communities
d. Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the start of all online workshops, webinars and online courses.	Review December (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** AM Communication Manager AoB Director Communication and Engagement

ACTION 9.

Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Agency, parish and community RAP Working Groups to actively promote and participate in at least one external community NAIDOC Week event.	July (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** All Agency, Parish and Community RAP Working Groups
b. Review and update Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff cultural leave entitlements in line with relevant BCE policy to ensure staff are supported to participate in significant cultural events.	June 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
c. Update the definition of compassionate leave to appropriately recognise cultural obligations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	November 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
d. RAP parishes and communities host an annual Aboriginal Sunday liturgy or event, to be celebrated on the first Sunday of NAIDOC Week or at another time during the month of July.	July (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Manager Parishes and Communities, Murri Ministry
e. Agencies, RAP parishes and communities host one annual NAIDOC Week event. This may involve collaboration with other agencies parishes or communities.	July (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** All RAP Working Groups
f. Record and report on employee attendance at internal and external NAIDOC week events.	July (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** All RAP Working Groups

ACTION 10.

Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to discuss ways in which their culture can be expressed within liturgies in the archdiocese.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Develop and publish Archdiocesan Guidelines, endorsed by the Archbishop for the inculturation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, art, traditions, spirituality, music, rituals, and symbols in liturgy.	July 2027	**Lead:** Liturgy RAP Working Group **Support:** Archdiocesan Commission on the Liturgy Archbishop RAP Manager
b. Explore opportunities to increase Aboriginal and Torres Islander Art to be displayed in places of significance within the archdiocese.	September 2028	**Lead:** RAP Manager
c. Explore opportunities for cultural and theologically appropriate commissioned artwork to be installed in the Cathedral of St Stephen.	May 2027	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry Coordinator
d. Archbishop to release statement outlining the culturally and theologically appropriate use of Smoking Ceremonies within a church context. This statement will be developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, Community Leaders, and the Archdiocesan Commission on the Liturgy.	August 2027	**Lead:** Archbishop **Support:** Liturgy RAP Working Group
e. Hold an educational workshop for parishes, communities and clergy focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inculturation in the liturgy, during which the archdiocesan guidelines will be launched.	September 2027	**Lead:** Liturgy RAP Working Group **Support:** RAP Manager Murri Ministry Coordinator

ACTION 11.

Increase inclusiveness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in public access areas.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Acknowledging Country plaques and culturally inclusive welcoming spaces in workplaces and parish offices, in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Review November (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Agencies Parishes and Communities
b. Review archdiocese office spaces to ensure Acknowledgement of Country signage is clearly visible and appropriately placed.	Review July, November (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Agencies

OPPORTUNITIES

The Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane is committed to creating opportunities that strengthen the social, cultural and economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the life of the Church.

In this RAP, we will strengthen support for employees and volunteers, improve employment outcomes through recruitment, retention and development, and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and participation across the archdiocese.

We are also committed to strengthening economic participation by increasing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and enhancing our procurement practices to support sustainable economic and community outcomes.



ACTION 12.

Explore ways to improve support of ongoing pastoral care and activities provided for employees and volunteers in ministries working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Host an annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employee/ Community Volunteer Retreat to provide pastoral care, prayer, culturally specific learning and formation opportunities.	October (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager, Murri Ministry Coordinator **Support:** Director of Inclusion
b. Establish and host monthly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mass within the Archdiocese of Brisbane.	September 2028	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Murri Ministry
c. Explore the possibility of having a dedicated Chaplain for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries within the Archdiocese of Brisbane.	December 2027	**Lead:** RAP Manager, Murri Ministry Coordinator **Support:** Director of Inclusion Executive Director AM
d. Continue supporting the transition of Murri Ministry pastoral services from Centacare to Archdiocesan Ministries by ensuring ongoing pastoral care needs are met. This includes reviewing workload and resources to strengthen support for employees and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people they support.	November 2027	**Lead:** Executive Director AM **Support:** Director of Inclusion AM
e. In line with Synod Action 6.1, work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to establish leadership development pathways, mentoring opportunities and culturally appropriate formation initiatives that support participation in governance, leadership and decision-making roles across the archdiocese.	July 2028	**Lead:** RAP Manager, Murri Ministry Coordinator **Support:** Director Inclusion Executive Director AM

ACTION 13.

Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the consultation process for developing and implementing an Archdiocesan Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	November 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
b. Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	September 2028	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
c. Facilitate gatherings twice annually for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to explore professional development opportunities and career progression strategies.	March, October (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)

d. Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce to 2% (this is in line with current practice and BCE RAP).	September 2028	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
e. Advertise job vacancies through targeted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander channels and job board stakeholders to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prospective staff.	Ongoing September (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
f. Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander vacancy and talent pool to support recruitment and employment across archdiocesan agencies and parishes.	July 2027	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
g. Host an annual Archdiocesan First Nations Staff Forum for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, which offers a culturally safe space to connect, debrief, yarn, network and explore opportunities to improve employment satisfaction.	October (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture) **Support:** Cultural Advisor

ACTION 14.

Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

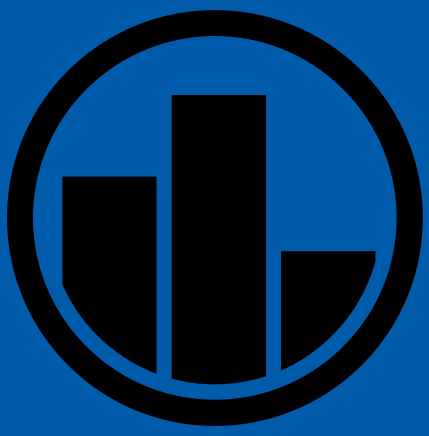
Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Increase engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses by establishing opportunities for participation, promotion and procurement at archdiocesan events, including National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and reconciliation-focused events.	May, July, September (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager
b. Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement plan.	September 2028	**Lead:** ADS Executive Director **Support:** Executive Directors
c. Strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier engagement across the archdiocese by developing and maintaining a procurement directory and promoting opportunities to procure goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	November 2027	**Lead:** RAP Manager

Eric Ellis – Laurel Blow Speaker Series



GOVERNANCE

The Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane is committed to embedding reconciliation through strong governance, leadership and accountability. The Archdiocese Reconciliation Reference Group (RRG), supported by agency-specific RAP Working Groups (RWGs), will provide strategic advice to support the implementation and to monitor progress to ensure reconciliation remains a key organisational priority. Through transparent reporting, informed decision-making and continuous evaluation, we will strengthen accountability, measure impact and apply our learnings to advance reconciliation outcomes. This governance framework will guide the development of future RAPs that deepen relationships, foster respect and create meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



ACTION 15.

Maintain an effective Archdiocese of Brisbane Reconciliation Reference Group (RRG) along with agency specific RAP Working Groups (RWG's).

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on all Agency RAP Working Groups.	September (2026 – 2028)	**Lead:** Agency RAP Working Group Chairs
b. All agency RAP Working Groups meet at least four times a year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August, November (2026 – 2028)	**Lead:** Agency RAP Working Group Chairs
c. Each Agency RAP Working Group will provide an annual progress report on agency specific deliverables to the RAP Manager, with content supplied by the identified person responsible for each RAP deliverable.	July (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Identified position responsible for each agency specific RAP deliverable **Support:** Agency RWG Chairperson
d. Review and refresh the Archdiocese of Brisbane RRG Terms of Reference annually.	January (2027 – 2028)	**Lead:** Director Inclusion **Support:** RAP Manager
e. Each Parish, Community RAP Working Group to meet at least four times a year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August, November (2026 – 2028)	Parishes, Communities
f. Each Parish, Community RAP Working Group will provide an annual progress report on agency specific deliverables to the RAP.	August (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Parish, Community RWG Chairperson

ACTION 16.

Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Identify and measure the financial, staffing and operational resources needed to deliver all RAP actions effectively.	September (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Director Inclusion
b. Allocate and maintain annual RAP funding, including fair remuneration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributors, with agencies, parishes and cultural communities implementing budgets to support reconciliation initiatives, cultural protocols, learning, engagement, resources, artwork and events.	Ongoing September (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Director of Account & Financial + Accounting Services **Support:** RAP Parish Finance Councils All Agency Directors
c. Executive Directors will provide oversight and support to ensure senior leaders and employees are accountable for delivering agency specific RAP commitments and progress.	Ongoing September (2026 - 2028)	**Lead:** Executive Directors
d. Consider appropriate staffing requirements within Centacare to support implementation of the RAP that may include appointment of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to dedicated RAP functions.	November 2027	**Lead:** Executive Director Centacare

e. Review and improve systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	September (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager
f. Maintain the Archbishop as RAP Champion for the Archdiocese of Brisbane and provide an annual RAP progress update from the RAP Manager to the Archbishop.	November (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager

ACTION 17.

Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Maintain up-to-date primary and secondary contact details with Reconciliation Australia to ensure ongoing receipt of RAP communications.	June Annually	**Lead:** RAP Manager
b. Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	February, May, August, November (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager
c. Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September Annually	**Lead:** RAP Manager
d. Report RAP progress Executive Forum twice annually.	July, November (2027, 2028)	**Lead:** Executive Director AM
e. Publicly share our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	Ongoing February, May, August, November (2026, 2027, 2028)	**Lead:** RAP Manager **Support:** Communication Managers All RAP Working Groups – Parishes, Agencies and Communities
f. Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. Results to be shared with RAP Manager and RWG Chairs.	September (2026, 2028)	**Lead:** Human Resources Director (People and Culture)
g. Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP in 2028.	November 2028	**Lead:** RAP Manager

ACTION 18.

Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.

Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
a. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	August 2028	**Lead:** RAP Manager

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE RECONCILIATION DINNER

The Archdiocesan Reconciliation Dinner was established through the Archdiocese of Brisbane's Reconciliation Action Plan as part of the Laurel Blow Speaker Series. The initiative reflects a commitment to creating a respectful and welcoming space for truth-telling, cultural celebration, and meaningful connection.

Inspired by reconciliation work across the Church, the Dinner brings together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, parishes, agencies, and broader networks to listen, learn, and walk together. It provides a platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices through keynote speakers, cultural performers, artists, and musicians, enabling the sharing of stories, knowledge, and culture with the wider community.

First held in 2023 to coincide with the launch of the Archdiocese's Innovate RAP (2023–2025), the Dinner has grown significantly in both profile and impact, cementing it as a key annual event and one of the most important nights on the archdiocesan calendar.

Grounded in respect and connection, the Reconciliation Dinner continues to build unity, celebrate culture, and invite all to actively participate in the shared journey of reconciliation.

Archdiocese of Brisbane Reconciliation Dinner 2025









ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

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