

## **NATSIAC Report**

**Rev. Canon A/Prof. Glenn Loughrey**

**October, 2022**

### **St Oswald's**

- **School engagement**

Within the parish area of St Oswald's we work with in:

- 2 primary schools on a regular basis
- 3 pre-schools on a regular basis.
- Korowa Secondary School

These schools are visited, supported, and assisted to engage with Aboriginal issues.

This engagement is both in-school and within the combined facilities of St Oswald's which includes the:

- Murnong Art Space
- Wominjeka Reconciliation Garden and firepit
- Woi-wurrung word labs
- Church

To allow me to do this I have been appointed as an Approved Cultural Educator in schools by Victoria Education department (only in our area).

- **Empowertoteach**

- <https://empowertoteach.com.au/>
- Empowertoteach was developed over the last 3 years by qualified teachers under my direction and project management. The online resource is for the formation year to year 10. The resources are suitable for cross curriculum use in all education facilities. They are designed to help non-indigenous teachers to begin to explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island history and culture. These were developed from funding by the ABM and NCCA.
- We are now employing a specialist to manage, update and promote this program.
- **Wordlabs@ St. Oswald's**

- Through the Arts Fund for Aboriginal Artists set up by the parish through the Diocesan Arts Trust we fund an artist each year to produce a piece of art for the church or other appropriate space.
  - This year Lewis Bursill Wandin has produced 10-word blocks from local timber based on the Woi-wurrung language and the art symbols of Barak. Glen Iris Primary School grade 4 students provided a list of words and Lewis selected 10 of the words for his word blocks.
  - These will be installed so that passersby, including children, can engage with the wordlab and start to learn some elements of the Woi-wurrung language.
- **Boroondara Council –**
    - Over the last three years I have worked closely with the Boroondara Council and the Boroondara Reconciliation Network and the local elders to make significant changes to Council policy.
    - Spoke to council regarding the flying of the Aboriginal flag on all Council properties and, where appropriate, the TSI flag.
    - Supported the Mayor of the time to work to change the attitude of the Council and its members toward Acknowledgements of Country. Prior to this action most refused to do so. Now almost all do.
    - Acted as an adviser to the Mayor and Council officers in the strategy to develop the Council's Reconciliation Strategy which was passed and launched this year. Again, a very significant act of which I am proud to have represented St Oswald's to make happen.
- **Garden –**
    - The Wominjeka Garden was opened in 2018 and has developed into a significant local community space.
    - It provides opportunity for locals to visit, bring their children/grandchildren, take time out and enjoy meals around the firepit.
    - It is primarily a native garden and not only attracts people but has become a gathering place for birds of all kinds.
    - In the development process of the Boroondara Council's Reconciliation Strategy the Wurundjeri Elders and Council have Named it as one of 5 significant Cultural sites.
    - This is significant as I think it is the only such site on Anglican property, at least in Victoria, that has this Indigenous recognition.

- **Art Gallery –**
  - Aboriginal owned and run Art Gallery@St Oswald’s that provides an inner east space for artists to show work.
  - Dialogue on collaboration and the final development of the space to be an Aboriginal co-op space is under way with Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, Boroondarra Council, Inner East Aboriginal Network, and others.
- **Aboriginal Artist Fund** - Provides an annual commission for emerging Aboriginal artist. This is a commitment made as part of hosting the art gallery.

**Melbourne Diocese:**

- The Reconciliation Working Group of the Diocese’s report is attached for your information.
- **At the 2022 Melbourne Synod the following Property Strategy was CARRIED**
  - **That this Synod:**
    - (a) Notes that, as per the reports and answers to questions at its last meeting: i. approximately \$69 million has been realised from sale of church properties in the last decade, ii. \$2.7 million sits in the Ministry Presence Initiative Fund, iii. 7 congregations in this diocese are currently renting their place of worship, and iv. 1 new place of worship has been built with diocesan assistance in the last decade.
    - (b) Directs Archbishop in Council to form a strategy —including engagement with First Nations concerns—for better allocating the assets of the church to ensure that the word of God is preached and the sacraments duly administered in compelling and outward-looking congregations throughout this diocese.
    - (c) that any such strategy take note of clauses 8-10 of the 'STATEMENT OF ABORIGINAL COUNCIL TO PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP' tabled at AiC in 2018.  
Page 24
    - (d) Requests Archbishop in Council to report back on the acts done in this matter at the next Synod.
  - Moved: The Reverend Dr Andrew Judd; Seconded: The Reverend Angela Cook
  - I moved and Garry Deverell seconded the Amendment that added (c).
  - Details of (c)

- 8. That all properties granted the Church by government (without fee) be made available for First Nations access and use: and, in the case of such properties being disposed of, that First Nations groups with a traditional claim to such properties be granted title without fee.
  - 9. That 15% of proceeds from the sale of any other church properties be given over to First Nations people – 10% into a Trust Fund to be divested to traditional owners on the completion of a process of treaty and 5% into a Provincial fund set aside for resourcing the Anglican ministries outlined in this document; this as a fundamental act of REPARATION for past acts of thievery.
  - 10. That all local parishes and congregations in the diocese be encouraged to pay an annual rent of 5% or more to either a local First Peoples organisation or else into a Fund held in the Province for resourcing the ministries outlined in this document.
- **Water Justice Hub, ANU, Canberra**
    - Over the last two years I have worked closely with the UNESCO Chair in Water Economics and Transboundary Water Governance at the Australian National University. This work has seen me:
      - Visit Wilcannia and Menindee lakes on two occasions developing art and engaging with local elders, community groups and schools in relation to the health or otherwise of the Baaka River (Darling) and what action needs to be taken to ensure Aboriginal communities can maintain water in its practical and cultural import.
      - Take part in a dialogue as an artist interrogator with 3 land councils and the Water Justice Hub researchers in Broome to develop knowledge and strategies to protect the Matawarra River (Fitzroy River) from proposed agricultural development which we will see the river dammed, water taken for irrigation, flood plain harvesting and more which lessen the water available for Aboriginal communities and cultural use.
      - Co-author of the academic paper entitled “Tale of Two Rivers” telling the story of the Matawarra and the Baaka.
      - Develop art for the Aquawhen exhibition alongside posters developed from the 2019 Citizen Inquiry and a video documenting the failure of the river over that time.



- **Provided significant pieces of art to:**
  - Fenner School of Science ANU Canberra. This is as part of my role as Cultural Artist Residency with Water Futures Institute for 2022.
  - School Cybernetics, ANU, Canberra. A painting has been purchased to take centre place in the new Birch building being opened late November.
  - Art for St Paul's in the form of 2 paintings and their sister glass designs for the Narthex screen on entry to the cathedral in collaboration with the Wathawurrung Glass Artists. As Canon Artist in Residence, I am developing a strategy to decolonize the Matthew Flinders statue that stands in a prominent position on Swanston Street outside the cathedral and other similar projects.

### **Conclusion:**

While some of the above seems personal, both the local and wider activities are embedded in the St Oswald's strategic plan devised by a strategic planning group within the parish which was led by the husband of a parishioner whose profession is strategic planning.

The parish understand that they want to make change, not just in the parish (this has and is occurring) and in the local community, but also in the wider society. It is not unlike parishes who spend a lot of energy in overseas mission activities or working on the streets etc. As an older parish they see this as the best way they can impact wider society with the love of Jesus.

I could do none of this without their support. In fact, I was doing little of this before I came here because previous appointments were not conducive to doing so. St Oswald's has played a significant role over the years in campaigning for women clergy, Aboriginal matters, refugees and much more and continues to be a powerful change agent in a complex world.