**7. Crossing the Ditch**

In 1992, Stephen Hall[[1]](#footnote-1) invited me to Perth to run a series of seminars based on my poverty and justice work in New Zealand. My recently published book, *Hearts and Minds,* had been well received across the Tasman. I was impressed to see the partnership Stephen had developed with Aboriginal people around the Swan River. It was my first contact with such work and would turn out to be an important first step in my introduction to Australia.

Travelling home, I had been invited to make whistle-stop calls in Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney. The stop in Canberra was to prove especially significant. I had been invited to give a brief address on social responsibility issues in New Zealand at an end-of-year function at St Mark’s Theological Library.

The library had been founded by Ernest Burgmann, arguably the diocese’s most influential bishop in church and nation. Elected bishop of Goulburn in 1934, he retired as Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn in 1960, the diocese having changed its name in 1950 to include Australia’s fast-growing capital city. Burgmann had a love for theological education, and wanted theology to inform key issues of the day. Psychology was part of his studies and he was committed to social justice and workers’ rights.

As president of the Australia-Soviet Friendship League, he opposed legislation to ban the Communist Party in 1951, this earning him the title ‘the red bishop’. A prolific writer and public speaker, Burgmann was described once by Prime Minister Robert Menzies as ‘that most meddlesome priest’. Bishop for 26 years, he retired at age 75. The library he founded was opened in 1957 and now operates as St Mark’s National Theological Centre within the School of Theology of Charles Sturt University.

So it was to this place with its rich history that I came on a very wet evening in December 1992. My plane was late and, as I arrived, plates and glasses from the end-of-year function were being cleared away, many party-goers having already departed. An extended address at that stage was clearly not wanted, so I spoke briefly on socio-economic issues in New Zealand and the churches’ response, followed by a brief discussion. Next day I went on to Sydney and then home, where Jackie and I celebrated our silver wedding anniversary with family and friends just before Christmas.

I had stayed in Canberra with a retired priest, Ted Arblaster, and his wife, Mary. We had much in common and Ted, along with Ken Batterham, Geoffrey Brennan and others, was behind an invitation that came out of the blue shortly after. The diocese was looking for a new bishop: would I be prepared to be nominated? After discussion with Jackie and the family, I felt I should allow my name to go forward, and in January 1993 found myself on another whistle-stop tour, this time around the diocese meeting small groups of Anglicans in town and countryside.

There was something vaguely hush-hush about all this as twenty years ago it was considered not done to be ‘canvassing’. However, I was consoled by the fact that it was not my idea and, having bumped into one of the other candidates by accident, felt satisfied this was not some brash Kiwi initiative. Things are much more open today and it makes a lot of sense for people to have a Q&A with someone who might be their leader for years to come.

George Browning, an assistant bishop from Brisbane, was elected as bishop, but I was surprised some months later to be asked if I would consider coming to Canberra as assistant bishop with responsibility for the Church in the wider community. Vocationally this built squarely on my social responsibility role in New Zealand and it seemed right to Jackie and me to accept.

‘Crossing the ditch’ to New Zealand’s ‘west island’ had some family implications. It was not a case of the ‘chickens leaving the nest’ but rather ‘the nest leaving the chickens’. As a family we had enjoyed 16 settled years in Wellington, during which time Rebecca completed high school and was about to graduate from the University of Otago medical school and marry David. Jo had moved from school entrant to university graduate in the same period, completing her BA in English, arts and drama.

Jeremy had just finished high school and came with us to Canberra at one point to consider university enrolment there. He preferred to be with his Wellington friends, however, and we agreed to help with accommodation in Wellington as well as travel to Canberra in vacations. Jo spent much of 1995 with us in Canberra, pursuing her reading and writing, and undertaking voluntary work as a ‘diversional therapist’ at Brindabella, an Anglican aged care facility in Canberra. We greatly enjoyed her company as we settled into a new environment.

Jackie faced the biggest challenge of finding work in a new city. It is a mark of our largely male-dominated culture that wives and families generally follow along where ‘the man’ goes. There are some changes in the next generation, but I readily concede that Jackie is the one who has said ‘whither thou goest I will go’, at some cost to herself and her own counselling gifts. For that I am grateful and somewhat chagrined.

With the help of Canberra friends, Jackie explored options for counselling positions in the Canberra state school system as well as the Catholic one, all to no avail. But a position was advertised for school counsellor at Canberra Grammar, the Anglican boys’ school. She was flown over for interview and we were delighted when she was offered the position. CGS was a far cry culturally from Viard College in Porirua, but the challenge of individual, relationship and school dilemmas no less deep.

At the end of 1994 we moved from Wellington to Canberra. I went six weeks ahead of Jackie, gallantly leaving her with much of the burden of packing up. Friends were very supportive as we got ready to go. Two sent a card with Moses, having parted the waters, saying to some disgruntled followers: ‘What do you mean it’s a bit muddy?’ Others prepared us culturally with the CD *My Home Amongst the Gum Trees,* and another entitled *Great Australian Trucking Songs,* the latter including such all-time Aussie favourites as *The Lass on Goulburn Hill* and *A Light Shines for Me in Tarcutta.*

*Radical from New Zealand for Canberra* was the headline in the English *Church Times[[2]](#footnote-2)* over an article by its Australian correspondent, Muriel Porter, noting that I had been a ‘marked figure in New Zealand for (my) criticism of economic rationalism, and of the purchase of Australian-made naval frigates’.

St Thomas’ Day, 21 December 1994, was chosen for my consecration service in St Saviour’s cathedral at Goulburn. The early summer temperature was over 40C degrees, with iced water being handed out at the door. Many from the diocese were present, along with bishops from different parts of Australia. I was greatly moved to see a contingent from New Zealand including parishioners from St Peter’s, our old Wellington parish, church colleagues, the New Zealand high commissioner in Canberra, Graham Fortune, and a solid team of clan Randerson. My good friend, Bruce Gilberd, was the preacher that night, and it was special to have our daughter Jo as my chaplain.

My pastoral staff had a special history. A St Peter’s parishioner, Nola Bayliss, had brought back from Australia a simple unadorned shepherd’s crook made from Australian wood. When my appointment was announced she felt she should pass the crook to me so that it might be taken ‘home’ and used pastorally in my new role. In no way did it match the standard episcopal crook, elaborately carved with silver encrusted ornamentation, but I was honoured to receive it and use it during our years in Australia.

Preaching in a country parish one Sunday, I asked the children what they thought the crook was. They were totally mystified but at length the silence was broken by a retired sheep farmer who told us about his life running sheep and how they didn’t use wooden crooks anymore because they now used metal ones if they used one at all. It was a long step from there to why a bishop should be carrying one today, but hopefully the connection of ‘tending the sheep’ was made.

The Canberra & Goulburn diocese, with some 60 parishes, occupies the south-eastern part of New South Wales. It is a delightful part of Australia, although drought is at times a harsh reality for farmers. From its centre in Canberra, the diocese extends east via the Great Dividing Range to the coast at Batemans Bay. The Snowy Mountains lie across the southern boundary with Wagga Wagga marking the western end.

Sundays for a bishop are generally spent leading worship in one or other of the parishes. In and around Canberra this would usually mean a morning visit to lead worship and preach. During the second part of the year such visits often included a confirmation service when younger people (and sometimes older) would confirm their baptismal promises and receive the laying on of hands by the bishop. It was always very moving to see the commitment of candidates, learn of their backgrounds and hopes for the future, and experience the heightened sense of faith in the life of clergy and people.

No parish was more than a three-hour drive from Canberra, but for the more distant ones Jackie and I would often drive out together on the Saturday for a social event, dinner and address before staying over for the Sunday service. On one occasion we were at Tumbarumba where the parish was holding a parish gala. Jackie was asked to judge the baby show and, knowing the potential such events can have for inter-parental friction, I quickly moved off to try my hand at the coconut shies. Baby shows, in my experience, can only be successful when the number of prizes and categories exactly match the number of babies entered. Whether it be the darkest, blondest, cutest, curliest, sweetest or whatever, make sure no one goes home without a prize. I didn’t score a coconut but Jackie managed the baby show without any outbreak of hostilities.

At Eden, an old whaling and forestry town on the south coast, and on another occasion at Boorowa, I was asked to receive the debs at a debutante ball. The last such ball I had attended was 30 years earlier when Bishop Eric Gowing had received the debs in the Auckland town hall. So it felt like a time warp to be receiving the debs myself on the other side of the Tasman. I felt a little conflicted at Eden insofar as the All Blacks were playing the Springboks and I had to sneak out to an adjoining bar between fox-trots to catch the score. The social ethos surrounding debutante balls may have changed out of sight over recent decades, but it was moving to experience the warmth of a local community and to celebrate the gifts and grace that young people bring to it.

It was always a great gift to have Jackie with me on parish visits. I was usually the designated preacher or speaker but Jackie, a talented and indefatigable conversationalist, always sparked lively discussions. Often, having finished greeting parishioners after church, I would look across and see Jackie surrounded by a dozen or so women, all leaning in and hanging on to every word as she shared ideas on life, faith, church, families, young people, counselling, relationships, politics and most topics in between.

The All Saints’ parish church at Ainslie in Canberra had an intriguing history as a mortuary station on the railway line from Sydney to the Rookwood cemetery. Trains operated daily carrying mourners and coffins to the cemetery, discharging passengers (both living and departed) within the beautifully pillared brown stone station at Rookwood. Two angels with trumpets, one of Death, the other of Life, adorned the station archway, warning or assuring all visitors. Only the living required tickets for the train, the fare schedule noting ‘corpses free’.

The mortuary train was discontinued in 1948 as motorised traffic grew, and in 1957 the Rookwood station was put up for sale ‘as is where is’. It was a time when Canberra was rapidly expanding with clergy scrambling to build churches in newly-established parishes. The first priest at Ainslie was Ted Buckle, well known to many in New Zealand as priest and subsequently assistant bishop in the diocese of Auckland. Ted, with his wife Mona, had lived in the Snowy Mountains where Ted had been the Anglican chaplain to the Snowy Mountain Scheme. As the huge hydro construction came to an end, Ted was appointed to Ainslie, his photo on the church wall showing a determined young man with both vision and glint in his eyes.

Ted and the parish purchased the mortuary chapel for 100 pounds, had it dismantled stone by stone and moved by rail to Canberra where it was painstakingly re-erected with stained glass windows from England, and a new roof following a fire at Rookwood. The two ends were closed in, leaving an interior space with impressive pillars each side of the centre aisle marking the path of the single rail track into the station. The two angels with trumpets were strikingly repositioned at the entrance to the choir, although the angel of Death leaked badly in heavy rain. The overall impression was superb and I found the church had a beauty and gravitas which made it an inspiring place in which to worship.

Dennis Vanderwolf, the very colourful rector of the parish during our time, had a strong sense of ministry within the wider community. More than once I preached at the annual AIDS Day service, led musically with rousing songs from the Gay and Lesbian Quire, and with the more risqué Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, gay men dressed in nuns’ habits, in attendance. Another event at All Saints was the Police Association service recalling the lives of members lost on active duty, and affirming the service provided by police to the community.

As part of my role as bishop in wider society, I was able to adapt the poverty and justice seminar format from New Zealand to the Australian scene. I also chaired the diocesan social services and aged care boards. Aged care was expanding fast with new facilities under construction in Canberra and at Merimbula on the south coast. Diocesan Careforce had a voluntary funding base which expanded during my time to make possible the appointment of a full-time staff person soon after I left.

There was a general interest in trans-Tasman approaches to poverty and I was several times invited to address conferences locally and nationally. I wrote opinion pieces for *The Canberra Times,* including one on the Goods and Services Tax being proposed at the time for Australia. The proposal led to a hot public debate with a demand from social service groups that essential basic food items should be exempt, an exemption that does not exist in New Zealand. My own view has been that provided adequate income compensation is made to those on low incomes, they need not be disadvantaged, the critical word being ‘provided’*.* The GST was subsequently introduced in Australia, including the exemption.

During our time in Australia two official delegations were dispatched from Australia to review the economic restructuring in New Zealand. Both returned with similar conclusions that while there might be a few things to be learned, the Australian government would not want to consign 25 per cent of its population to the extremes of poverty being experienced across the Tasman. I reflected that Australia was adhering to a far higher standard of social morality than could be said for New Zealand.

A controversial public statement I made concerned the 1998 national waterfront dispute. The waterfront employers’ group, the Patrick Corporation, had introduced major changes to improve productivity by reducing worker entitlements and introducing non-union workers to counteract the influence of the Maritime Union of Australia. In April 1998 when the union took industrial action, Patrick moved to lock out its whole waterfront workforce and replace them with non-union labour. In this they had the support of the Liberal-National Government of the day.

Addressing the Canberra May Day rally two weeks later, I affirmed the importance of trade unions as a means to achieve just wages and conditions for working people. But I also noted that the Canberra & Goulburn diocese had many rural parishes and that the capacity for farmers to get their produce across the docks in a reliable and cost-effective manner was vital to their survival. I deplored the fact that the Federal Government, having put much emphasis on fair dealing between employer and employee free of outside influence, had weighed in heavily in support of Patrick’s move in locking out the workers. I suggested the Government was sowing the seeds of a bitter harvest: it might win the waterfront battle but lose the more significant goal of long-term industrial harmony. I called for the abandonment of partisan power in the dispute in favour of a mediated settlement that would benefit all Australians.

The statement was even-handed and carefully worded. Nonetheless it stirred up a hornet’s nest among farmers in the diocese, many of whom had bitter memories of union action over many years. To them any supportive reference to unions was anathema. Some threatened to withdraw their financial contributions to the church. Here is a challenge for any bishop: does one keep silent on key issues to avoid alienating parts of one’s constituency? Too often bishops keep silent or make bland utterances to keep the peace and maintain church revenue and membership.

Yet here was a major issue that was splitting the nation. What does it say if the Church says nothing in the face of major issues of social justice and conflict? The Archbishop of Melbourne, Keith Rayner, affirmed the Church’s role in speaking out on contentious issues. ‘We have no axe to grind, no need to impress an electorate at the next election, to maximise profits, or maintain inherited work practices. We cannot enforce a solution: but we can at least call for principles of justice and honesty.’

A less controversial local issue involved the seizure of a working couple’s home by the ACT Supreme Court sheriff to recover an unpaid debt. The action arose when a boy had been throwing stones at a couple’s house. The husband, an Eastern European migrant, had taken the boy inside and called on the boy’s parents to intervene. The parents laid a charge of kidnapping and the husband was brought before the court. The magistrate, sensing the reality of the situation, fined the man some paltry amount which he refused to pay ‘on principle’.

The situation escalated, further fines and charges inflating the amount owed, until eventually their house worth $295,000 was seized and sold for $80,000. The reason for the pathetically low sale price was that the sheriff could sell property to recover a debt with no reserve price. No effort to market the property was made other than a minimalist public notice. A government insider was able to pick up a valuable property for a fraction of its price, resulting in this case in a $200,000 loss to the couple.

I was outraged by such institutional injustice, especially in a comparatively small jurisdiction such as the ACT where one might expect a better chance of sorting things out. I said that clearly this was a case where the law had not delivered justice, and that ‘it was not enough for officials merely to follow the rules. They must ask whether or not the rules deliver a just outcome’. I also suggested that the ACT Government had a moral responsibility to make good the huge amount of money lost by the couple. There was a lengthy television interview and the case was a news feature in *The Canberra Times,* its billboard for the day trumpeting: BISHOP TO GOVT - PAY UP. I don’t think they ever did, but action was taken to repair what really amounted to insider trading at the expense of the powerless.

An ally and friend on the social justice front was Bishop Pat Power, my opposite number in the Roman Catholic diocese. Pat was born in Cooma, south of Canberra, and grew up in Queanbeyan on the outskirts of the ACT. He had a fine sense of justice and a special affinity with working people and those on the margins. Together we appeared at several events, one of them being a public rally on the parliamentary lawn in Canberra at a time when newly elected federal MP Pauline Hanson was making a huge impact. Pauline had won the Brisbane seat of Oxley in 1996, describing herself as a mother of four, sole parent and successful proprietor of a fish and chip shop.

She placed great emphasis on her opposition to multi-culturalism, immigration and federal assistance to Aborigines. Against that background Bishop Pat and I, along with others, spoke on the importance of national policies that were inclusive of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, and welcomed newcomers to Australia. Pauline won great acclaim from many but her parliamentary time was short-lived, lasting only until the next election.

On another occasion Pat and I travelled to Cooma to oppose government plans to close the local jail. We were not greatly in favour of jails, but the closure of the Cooma jail would entail long journeys for family members wishing to visit inmates, with all the cost of time and travel. The jail was closed for three years but reopened in 2001 because of an increased prison population.

Bishop Pat and I also made a joint appearance before the ACT housing committee to advocate for better housing for the poor. The date was 17 March, St Patrick’s Day, and Pat felt it appropriate that we should honour his patron saint with some liquid sustenance before making our appearance. In good ecumenical spirit I concurred without demur.

My public critiques of policy-makers notwithstanding, I was invited in 1998 by the ACT government to chair an enquiry into the nature and extent of poverty in Canberra. This was a significant opportunity to lead a committee comprising representatives of community groups as well as of various departments of the ACT public service. Teamwork between those working at the grassroots and public policy-makers was a visionary and constructive opportunity which I was excited to lead. I was able to oversee foundations for the enquiry before leaving Canberra, and I was pleased Bishop Pat was able to take on the leadership of the group.

I spent three days behind the ancient barb-wired grey stone walls of the state-run prison at Goulburn. With others from local churches, including the Roman Catholic archbishop Francis Carroll from Canberra, we ran a voluntary programme on life issues and relationships for inmates. The programme had a faith dimension and around 30 people opted in. Those three days gave me an insight into the basic humanity of people whose path in life seldom crosses that of the comfortable middle class. These men had a genuine desire to make a new start but I could see just how hard that would be, going back into the same social milieu from which they had come, and with the added stigma of being a ‘convict’.

A new prison under construction in Junee was opened during my time. It was the first privately run correctional facility in New South Wales and, compared with Goulburn jail, had all the advantages of a new complex with innovative and attractive features. As arrangements for the new prison were being made, I received a call one morning from the human resources manager at Junee. He wanted to know how many church services he could purchase for $5000 per year.

His contract with the state government required the provision of spiritual and religious services to inmates. I wondered if he was thinking that a Sunday church service might cost around $100, and if he purchased 50 we might throw in the other two for the year as part of a bulk deal. I explained that the provision of spiritual care was not based on the purchase of church services, but that our local priest in Junee, along with other clergy and church visitors in the area, would be very willing to act as chaplain to the new correctional centre. I helped him make the contacts with our clergy.

Work within church schools had a particular challenge. I loved the exchange with students on key issues of religion and society. On one occasion at Radford College, a co-educational Anglican high school, the topic for the day was religion and science, and we quickly got into a debate about the creation of the world. Many see this as a simple polarity: either you believe in Stephen Hawking and the Big Bang, and Charles Darwin and evolution, or you believe in the biblical account in *Genesis.* The two options are mutually exclusive in the popular mind, the choice not being helped by biblical literalists.

I explained that to see the biblical account of creation in scientific terms was a category mistake. The question of how the universe was created is essentially a scientific one. Religion has a totally different role to paint a picture of how humans should understand the world and live in it. The creation stories in *Genesis* offer a vision of life which is essentially relational – a relationship with God and with all people, seeing all humanity as family. From this concept of family stem all our endeavours for reconciliation, justice, peace and the well-being of all. We live also in relationship with the universe, planet earth and all living creatures, seeing these as gifts to be nourished and sustained to provide life for future generations.

All civilisations have their stories of origin of the earth and its species, and the biblical one has parallels with the dreamtime in Australian aboriginal mythology, and the Maori story of Rangi and Papa. I have never heard either of those two mythologies portrayed as scientific accounts of the world’s creation, but they share with the *Genesis* story themes of the connectedness of all human life and creation, and the mandate of stewardship and care for all life. To explore such issues with lively young minds is a great privilege.

A different challenge awaited me at an open forum for the senior classes at Canberra Girls’ Grammar School (CGGS). About 120 students gathered in the school’s auditorium for an ‘ask the bishop’ session. Written questions had been submitted in advance, and 75 per cent were about sex. Now you could say there’s another category mistake with an ageing male cleric giving advice to a large crowd of young women on sexual relationships. A wide variety of views was doubtless present, and it wasn’t much use just trotting out the Church’s traditional teaching of ‘no sex outside of marriage’.

Instead I suggested there is a broad spectrum of types of sexual relationship, from promiscuous and abusive relationships at one end of the spectrum to a relationship at the other end arising from a deep love and ongoing commitment to another person. And that what mattered was not so much where we might currently be on the spectrum, but what we aspired to in terms of a committed relationship grounded in love. Again a lively discussion ensued and I found it both enriching and enlightening to engage with the thinking of students 40 years my junior. Staff members sitting in on the session said they felt it had been constructive.

Some time later I was invited to chair the CGGS Board. It cannot be assumed that being a bishop automatically equips one for chairing a large school board. For me it was a steep learning curve, and I am greatly indebted to the mentoring I received from Lynette Glendinning. Lynette, an Anglican, is a management consultant with great skills in helping groups listen to each other, set new goals and develop team relationships. She consults with large government departments and in business, and gives much time voluntarily to church and community groups.

I invited Lynette to lead a planning day for the board and from that changes began to take place. The board was hard-working and committed, and it was impressive to see many projects in new building and curricula development under way. But several board members had been there for 15-20 years, and likewise among the teaching staff there was a need for rejuvenation. Lynette assisted us to reflect on the future challenges in education and to set in place strategies for change.

When I became chair the official name of the school was Canberra Church of England Girls’ Grammar School. This was an anachronism since the title ‘Church of England in Australia’ had been changed to ‘The Anglican Church in Australia’ in 1981. ‘Church of England’ smacked of colonial days, whereas the new title asserted the independence of the Australian Church within the worldwide Anglican Communion. I consulted the board who felt we should explore with parents, ex-pupils, staff and students the option of removing ‘Church of England’ from the school’s name.

I anticipated stiff opposition, but was pleasantly surprised to find widespread acceptance of the change. I did, however, have a long series of email exchanges with a parent working in the armed services who was quite certain the move was a covert step down the road to republicanism. The change was agreed to and the school is now known as Canberra Girls’ Grammar School.

I especially appreciated invitations to address gatherings of people outside the Church - opportunities to engage in dialogue with people from other walks of life, listen to their issues, and reflect on the deeper purposes and values of human endeavour. I spoke at conferences of judges and magistrates, the medical profession, educators, business leaders and social service agencies.

In August 1998 I delivered the Langford Oration to the Royal Australian College of Medical Administrators. I entitled the address *C*o*rpus Sanum cum Spiritu Sano* and asked questions about the over-arching purpose of health organisations. The World Health Organisation in 1946 defined health as ‘a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of infirmity or disease’. Maori have a similarly broad definition, defining the four pillars of health as te tinana (physical health), te wairua (spiritual health), te hinengaro (mental or emotional health) and te whanau (family or community well-being).

In dealing withte wairua or spiritus sanus I described spirituality as that background of beliefs and values that gives meaning, purpose and direction to our lives. Peter Berger[[3]](#footnote-3) used the term ‘sacred canopy’, and spirituality is a life lived mindful of that canopy. It is a wider term than religion, although many people express their spirituality in theistic terms in a religious context.

In an address at a service in Goulburn cathedral in March 1995 to mark the opening of the legal year of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, I affirmed that the ultimate purpose of any profession is to serve individuals and the community. A lawyer had said to me that the great danger for the legal profession today was that professionalism in a narrow sense might obscure the wider purpose of justice.

That narrow sense of professionalism has been described by Sir Gerard Brennan[[4]](#footnote-4):

It has now been clearly recognised that legal knowledge, like lawyers’ time, is a valuable commodity. It can be turned to financial account... Note, however, the significant change in attitude that that approach engenders...The meaning of the profession is (no longer) the pursuit of justice according to the law for the community, but the provision of opportunities for each individual member to turn his or her expert knowledge to financial account.

Complementing Sir Gerard’s warning, Sir Owen Dixon[[5]](#footnote-5), outlined a higher view of professionalism:

Members of a profession master and practise an art which is indispensable to the progress of society, and the skill and knowledge of the profession must be available to the service of the state or the community.

The question we must always ask, in any profession, I suggested, was ‘Whom do we serve?’

After the service I walked out with Supreme Court judge, Justice John Dowd. A local reporter wanted a photograph of the two of us in our colourful robes, sitting on a large rock outside the Cathedral with our backs to each other. Neither of us felt this was a great message to be sending, and the outcome instead was a very nice photo of the two us standing side by side.

Another initiative I took in public values was to establish the Canberra Forum. The forum was designed to create a space where leaders in their respective professions might share some of the background to their work, and the ethical challenges they faced. Forum events began with a sit-down meal in one of Canberra’s social clubs and were then followed by the invited speaker and discussion.

The Hon Michael Kirby[[6]](#footnote-6) attracted a capacity crowd the night he addressed the forum. Justice Kirby is a significant Australian jurist who recently led the UN Human Rights Council Inquiry into abuses in North Korea, his report being published in February 2014. He has given strong support to gay and lesbian rights, having declared in 1999 in *Who’s Who* in Australia his 30-year relationship with Johan van Vloten. As a lifelong Anglican who had grown up in the suburb of Concord in Sydney, he said he had always felt singled out for God’s blessing by the Anglican prayer that begins ‘O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord’.

Justice Kirby presented a stimulating background that night to many contemporary issues of justice and law. One questioner asked how one made a judicial decision in the absence of precedent. He replied that when there was no previous case law one needed to refer to higher principles, such as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Laws that fail to reflect higher purpose cannot deliver justice.

The bishops of the seven dioceses in New South Wales[[7]](#footnote-7) met regularly at the home of the Archbishop of Sydney. The Sydney diocese swamps all the others in terms of numbers and finance, and is well known for its conservative and often fundamentalist viewpoints. A current example of that in my time was a debate in the Sydney synod about lay presidency at the Eucharist, or Holy Communion. It is universal Anglican practice that only a priest may preside at such services, so for Sydney to be contemplating lay presidency was a major departure from long-standing tradition.

The issue surfaced from time to time at meetings of the New South Wales bishops which were graciously hosted by the Archbishop of Sydney, Harry Goodhew, and his wife Pam. Harry was the glue that held together the diverse views of the bishops. An evangelical himself, an essential qualification for being Archbishop of Sydney, he was mindful that Anglicanism was a broad church and reflected this in his inclusive approach to those with differing theological views.

The lay presidency issue put him under intense pressure. A large majority of the clergy and laity in the Sydney synod supported it, but without his vote it could not proceed. ‘Help me, fellas,’ he said to the bishops one day. ‘I don’t want to step out of line with the worldwide Anglican consensus, but standing against the majority of one’s own synod is not easy either.’ Harry withstood the pressure and the Sydney diocese has not yet gone down that track.

Nationally, Australia’s 40 or more bishops met annually in conference at Gilbulla, a Sydney diocesan conference and retreat centre with basic facilities, situated next to a large pig farm. An unfavourable wind brings a pungent reminder of Jesus and the Gadarene swine[[8]](#footnote-8). Since my departure the bishops’ meeting has moved to more salubrious locations such as the Barossa Valley, the Gold Coast or Western Australia.

Differences of theological opinion were evident at these meetings. From time to time the Sydney bishops would table an agenda item on the uniqueness of Christ. None of us had any doubt on the subject, but it was important to Sydney to check we were all doctrinally orthodox. One year the bishop of Wangaratta, Paul Richardson, shared that in his previous post in Papua New Guinea he had found certain parallels between Christianity and indigenous religions. Temperatures rose as the potential for ‘pagan influences’ raised its head and the primate[[9]](#footnote-9), Keith Rayner, well-honed in managing such situations in the national church, gently moved the agenda on to the next item.

My first national meeting of the Australian bishops was attended also by the newly elected Anglo-Catholic bishop of Ballarat, David Silk, who had migrated from England a few months earlier. Work on the revision of *An Australian Prayer Book* had been going on for several years and the bishops were now being asked to approve the final draft to go to the forthcoming General Synod. David had a background in matters liturgical and was sitting in the meeting with a huge pile of papers beside him.

When the topic of prayer book revision came up he intervened to say he had reviewed the various forms for the Holy Communion service and found them inadequate in several respects. The papers he had brought contained major revisions or substitutions for those services. This news stunned the meeting, its members, including the primate, expecting more of a consensus assent to a document worked over and revised many times. In the silence David asked the Primate: ‘Shall I distribute my documents first, Your Grace, or would you like me to speak to them before passing them around?’

His Grace clearly wished to have them neither distributed nor spoken to but, bowing to the inevitable, agreed it was better to have them passed around and then discussed. David proceeded to summon several of the bishops to hand out the papers. ‘Harry,’ he said, nodding to the Archbishop of Sydney, ‘would you kindly pass this lot around?’ It was the most astonishing ecclesiastical coup I have ever experienced. David was successful in getting much material of an Anglo-Catholic nature incorporated into the new prayer book, even although this made it much less attractive to Sydney.

The new Australian prayer book was further debated at the General Synod in Melbourne in 1995 and finally adopted. The communion services display many contemporary features, but none of them captures the quintessentially Australian flavour of a prayer by an Aboriginal woman, Lenore Parker. It includes evocative images:

God of holy dreaming, Great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of creation you have given your children the good things of Mother Earth. You spoke and the gum tree grew. In the vast desert and dense forest, and in cities at the water’s edge, creation sings your praise. Your presence endures as the rock at the heart of our Land.[[10]](#footnote-10)

The prayer appears as a separate prayer of thanksgiving but, turning a blind eye to constitutional niceties, I would on occasions use it in lieu of the first part of the eucharistic prayer. An earlier proposal had been that the prayer in fact be part of one of the eucharistic prayers, but sadly it had been relegated from that more prominent spot as the liturgical commission wrestled with the proposals brought by David Silk. It was a sad triumph of neo-colonial partisan churchmanship over indigenous tradition.

At the same General Synod I was stunned by one of the opening procedural motions dealing with such matters as hours of sitting and order of business. The motion that shocked me accorded to the sole Aboriginal bishop, Arthur Malcolm, the right to speak ‘if called upon by the President but not to propose motions or to vote’. The Aboriginal bishop was not a member of his own national synod!

I could hardly believe this but found on enquiry how it came about. Australia is divided into separate dioceses with synod representation based on diocesan delegations. Diocesan bishops are members of synod as of right, but clergy and laity are elected by each diocese in numbers proportional to size of diocese. Anachronistically, assistant bishops are not members of the House of Bishops, even though many of them oversee large metropolitan regions that numerically dwarf small rural dioceses.

Assistant bishops have to be elected to General Synod as one of the clergy delegates for their diocese, this displacing a clergy person from election. Arthur Malcolm held the office of assistant bishop in the diocese of North Queensland, a very small diocese which qualified for only a few seats. Bishop Arthur had not been elected to one of them and was thus a stranger in the General Synod in the country where his people had lived for 40,000 years.

I was appalled, and described it as a situation of ecclesiastical *terra nullius,* the doctrine of European colonisers that Australia was *terra nullius,* ‘belonging to no one’, and hence could be freely occupied. It was clear to me that the Anglican Church was operating on the same principle. With Australia divided into geographical dioceses, and synod representation arising exclusively from that base, there was no land whereby indigenous Australians could gain representation. Only within the colonisers’ system of church governance could an Aboriginal stand part of his own synod. In this case he had been excluded.

I shared my sense of outrage with a senior colleague who advised me that as a newcomer to Australia I should keep silence. Keeping silence has never been one of my better developed skills and in August that year I put my thoughts on paper for the Samaritans Foundation in Newcastle, speaking on *The Year of Tolerance, Social Justice and the Church.* In my paper I said:

The Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders are the host peoples of Australia, but the history of Australia, as in most colonial nations, has not been one of reciprocity. As the settlers have gained in numbers and power, they have taken over the land. Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have been killed, driven from their traditional lands, impoverished in terms of culture, spirituality, socio-economic well-being and political representation. Large numbers of indigenous people are in prison and may die in custody. Adequate income, housing, education and employment are not available to many of Australia’s indigenous people today.

On the question of indigenous church representation, I quoted Article 19 of the United Nations Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate fully, if they so choose, at all levels of decision-making in matters which may affect their rights, lives and destinies through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

I suggested that the Church’s constitution should be varied to allow for General Synod representation other than on the current exclusive basis of diocesan land areas and that a case should be made for indigenous representation in its own right. I said that the current church structures were assimilationist, subsuming indigenous peoples into a settler structure where their own cultures were not affirmed. I continued:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on General Synod should not be seen as a granting of some concession by the Settler Church to indigenous Australians. Rather it would be a step into a new relationship which would be mutually enriching. God’s gifts have been given to all peoples, and the bringing of gifts previously neglected into a full and rightful partnership would enhance both the life and the mission of the Church as a whole.

In 1997 Ted Mosby became a bishop for Torres Strait Islanders, based on Thursday Island. His appointment was on the same subordinate basis as Arthur Malcolm’s, as an assistant bishop in the diocese of North Queensland. Writing in a NATSIAC[[11]](#footnote-11) publication, Ted said:

The system and understanding of the time when the Anglican Church was established in Australia erased any chance of equality and rights in all levels of decision-making. Our indigenous leadership system was not given due dignity and respect by those who had come to be Australians. We did not ask them to come, and they did not ask us if they could come and share this life in this land. Our leadership system was humiliated, making it weak. Still today the General Synod speaks for the body of Anglicans who came from other countries to Australia, and not the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglicans.

Ted and NATSIAC were likewise pushing for indigenous representation in its own right.

In August 1995 I circulated my paper around the church leadership and received an appreciative response from the primate, Keith Rayner, who felt the suggestion should be furthered by the Constitution Review Commission. Bishop Bruce Wilson from Bathurst sent a longer letter which was both supportive and reflective. The issue was not a new one, and Bruce had been addressing it ecumenically in his role as chair of the National Council of Churches’ Task Force for Reconciliation. One of the issues the council had faced was that indigenous representation was often experienced by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders as tokenism. The membership was predominantly white and decisions reflected the majority white view. Indigenous members were being described by some as coconuts – brown outside but white inside. In Bruce’s view, only an equally weighted membership system could succeed.

This was precisely the problem experienced by Maori Anglicans in New Zealand. There had been a Maori bishop with subordinate status until 1978 when the incumbent took on episcopal status in his own right. Maori quickly recognised, however, that independence was one thing, but being a continuing minority another. Further constitutional review led in 1991 to a system whereby agreement between Maori and the dioceses was required before any decision could be made by the General Synod.[[12]](#footnote-12)

To further the discussions within the Australian Church, the primate called a two-day conference in Brisbane where those of us present explored the issue and discussed ways of making progress. I was not part of the formal constitutional review process but at the next General Synod in Adelaide in 1998 a proposal was brought to establish six indigenous places in the synod – a bishop, priest and lay member for each of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island groupings within the Church. Furthermore, the two bishops were to sit as members of the House of Bishops. The motion was passed unanimously amidst much singing, shedding of tears, and prayers of thanksgiving.

The Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls’ Training Home was located in our diocese. The ‘Coota girls’ belonged to Australia’s stolen children generation. Opened as a hospital in 1897, the Cootamundra Home housed 1200 young Aboriginal girls from 1911-1969. These girls were ‘stolen’ from their families under the 1909 Aborigines Protection Act, part of a policy of forced assimilation whereby young Aborigines could be removed from their families and communities so that they might be ‘saved’ into European society.[[13]](#footnote-13)

In places like the Cootamundra Home they were trained for a life of servitude in European homes, separated from family and culture. Any trace of Aboriginal thinking had to be erased if they were to have any future in a white society. Their vocational assignment as domestic servants was an indication of the prevailing view that they were of inferior intelligence. Children who were less black than others were particularly targeted as it was thought that being brown rather than black would enhance the chances of assimilation.

I visited the home on one occasion and found that memories of the Coota girls and their sufferings lingered. The home had later been taken over by the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship as the Bimbadeen Christian Training and Conference Centre, which trains Aborigines for ministries in church, community, workplace and family.

In 1995 the Federal Government established a National Inquiry into the Stolen Children, jointly chaired by Sir Ronald Wilson[[14]](#footnote-14) and Mick Dodson[[15]](#footnote-15) and aided by an indigenous commissioner in each region. In less than a year the Inquiry heard from 777 groups and individuals all over Australia, 535 of whom had been stolen children or families affected by the forced removal policy. A formal report[[16]](#footnote-16) was produced in April 1997 and tabled in federal parliament the following month.

‘I am afraid that my wife will cimmit suicide if the boy is not back for she is good for nothing only cry day and night… I have as much love for my dear wife and churldines as you have for yours…so if you have any feeling atole pleas send the boy back as quick as you can. It did not take long for him to go, but it takes a long time for him to come back.’

*- A father, pleading with the Aborigines Department in WA for the return of his son, 1903.*

Michael Horsburgh[[17]](#footnote-17) and I made submissions to the Inquiry in Canberra on behalf of the national Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission, stating:

The Social Responsibilities Commission joins with other parts of the Anglican Church in offering its unreserved apology for the involvement of Anglicans, both individually and corporately, in the policies and practices that allowed the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children from their families…It may be that many of those involved believed that they were acting in the best interests of the children concerned. The SRC does not wish to impute any particular motives to those involved. It simply states that no amount of explanation can detract from the now observable consequences of those misguided policies and practices.

‘We may go home but we cannot relive our childhoods. We may reunite with our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunties, uncles communities, but we cannot relive the 20, 30, 40 years we spent without their love and care, and they cannot undo the grief and mourning they felt when we were separated from them.’

 *Link up (NSW)*

The Inquiry recommended a variety of proposals including counselling, formal apology to the Stolen Children generations, family tracing and reunion services, and monetary compensation under such headings as racial discrimination, arbitrary deprivation of freedom, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, disruption of family life and loss of cultural and native title rights. The churches were charged with making available personal records that might assist family reunions, providing culturally appropriate services, and returning mission and institutional land to indigenous peoples.

A formal apology was never contemplated by the federal government, Prime Minister John Howard insisting ‘we must not have a black armband view of history’, although ‘personally he was very sorry’. The Inquiry asked us if this generation could be guilty for the sins of our ancestors. I replied that while we cannot be personally guilty for the wrongs of others yet our generation is responsible for putting right the wrongs that had been done.

In May 1998, as chair of the ACT Churches Council, I tendered an apology to the stolen children on behalf of the ACT churches at an ‘Honour the Grief’ ceremony in Parliament House. We passed over a ‘Sorry Book’ which was a heartfelt expression of our grief and sorrow, along with a commitment to do what we could to put things right. As part of my address, I said:

An apology that incorporates both an acknowledgment of wrong and a commitment to rectify the wrong has the spiritual capacity to evoke from those who have been wronged a spirit of forgiveness which lays the path for reconciliation and future partnership. Such forgiveness is not something that we, the descendants of the wrong-doers, are entitled to, but if forgiveness is offered we should accept it humbly as an act of grace.

It was not until 13 February 2008 that Prime Minister Kevin Rudd offered a formal apology to the Stolen Generations, an apology endorsed almost unanimously by the federal parliament.

At Christmas 1997, following the issue of *Bringing Them Home,* I was preaching at the midnight Eucharist at St John’s, Reid in Canberra. I drew a parallel between Jesus, Mary and Joseph as outcasts in the manger and the stolen children as outcasts in their native land. Many saw the link but there were complaints from a few who believed I should be preaching about Christmas, not politics.

Diocesan life had some lighter moments. In the late 1990s there was a proposal to introduce a faster rail service between Canberra and Sydney. The existing train took four hours to cover the 300 kilometres and there were two proposals to accelerate the schedule. One was a tilt train which would use the existing track and trim an hour from the schedule. The other, Speedrail, would revolutionise the service, cutting the time in half with a German mag-lev train on completely new track.

It must have been a slow day at the diocesan office when, pursuing my lifelong interest in rail, I decided to issue a media release in support of Speedrail. Since opinions on rail technology lie outside the normal expertise of a bishop, I based my support on socio-economic benefits such as new jobs and enhanced family incomes. It must have been an equally slow day at the Canberra TV studios for, within an hour, a camera crew came by to do an interview. Dressed in my purple gear outside St John’s church I spoke solemnly about jobs and income.

The TV crew, however, could not keep off the rail technology dimension and asked me what I thought about the tilt train, my reply being that it was not fast enough to bring the benefits of Speedrail. In what has gone down in family annals as a great hoot, the interview was introduced with the words: ‘In a surprise move today the Anglican Church has come out in support of Speedrail,’ and concluded with the statement: ‘Bishop Randerson has ruled out the tilt train as being too slow for the route.’ Fifteen years later, no change to the service has been made.

In July 1998 Jackie and I set off for the 10-yearly Lambeth conference of bishops and spouses in Canterbury, UK. In chapter 3 I wrote of my experience at the 1988 conference as a staff member, and the significant insights I gained. Perhaps I was at a different stage ten years later as I found the 1998 event less exciting. There were good times sharing with colleagues from around the world in prayer and biblical studies, but fewer speakers of substance, and the main agenda topics somewhat institutional.

The question of same-sex relationships dominated the 1998 conference with heated divisions between African bishops and the more liberal West. Jackie and I had some close encounters with two African bishops and their wives with whom we shared accommodation. At the conference venue at the University of Kent, six bed-sitter student units had been re-arranged to accommodate three episcopal couples. This was our base for three weeks, the other two couples being from Uganda and Nigeria.

Breakfast was self-serve after the early morning Eucharist, with all food delivered to the unit. A huge commercial carton of loose cornflakes sat on the floor (we only got through half of it), and there were daily deliveries of milk, eggs, bacon, yoghurt, bread, butter and jam. While Jackie and I busied about organising our own breakfasts, the two African bishops sat down at table awaiting service by their wives. Each morning as the meal ended I would jump up to clear dishes and start the washing-up. But I had scarcely got the dishes in the water before one of the African wives would appear by my side saying: ‘No, no, my Lord, you must not go near the sink’, and taking me by the elbow she would steer me back to my seat at table. I could see I was living in the wrong culture.

The Ugandan bishop had become a de factospokesman for the anti-gay African bloc at Lambeth and was often quoted in the morning newspapers. While waiting for his breakfast he would study the papers and share snippets with us. The atmosphere was not very conducive to contrary opinions but I did on the last day express the view that any anti-gay outcome from the conference would make it much more difficult for us in western nations. This thought was too much for him and he leapt up, slamming his hand on the table and saying: ‘THERE ARE NO GAYS IN AFRICA’. His dear wife, Faith, sitting next to Jackie, leaned across and whispered: ‘There are gays in Africa’.

During my time in Canberra, and later back in Auckland, I had to handle cases of sexual misconduct by clergy. Prior to the mid-1990s the Church, along with other institutions, did not have an effective system to deal with such situations. Too often reported cases had been swept under the carpet, or the cleric concerned moved on to another diocese. Local bishops acted at their own discretion, leading to a variety of practices which were inconsistent, often ineffective, treated complainants unfairly and did not protect church members from further abuse.

By the 1990s, however, dioceses on both sides of the Tasman were scrambling to put precise protocols in place for dealing with sexual misconduct. The protocols typically require of offenders a period of stand-down, repentance and reparation, and counselling to ensure a priest may only return to ministry if it is judged safe to do so. In some cases clergy may never resume ministry if it is felt they would be an ongoing threat to those under their pastoral care. As a bishop I was greatly relieved when the protocols came into place. It is both easier and more effective for a bishop and the priest concerned to follow a detailed process which ensures the safety of parishioners as well as providing an opportunity for the rehabilitation of the priest where this is possible.

Our five years in Canberra concluded at the end of 1999, but there were two pleasant occasions at Canberra Grammar School before we left. The first was the school’s end-of-year Speech Day where I had been invited as guest speaker. My theme was *A Spirituality for Australia,* which I illustrated with examples of lifestyle and vocational choices.[[18]](#footnote-18)

At the same event I knew confidentially that the Ian Powell award for outstanding staff member of the year was to be awarded to Jackie. As different elements of the winner’s background were described it gradually became clear who it was. I watched Jackie’s stunned reaction to the personal lead-up, and others also who were clearly delighted with the choice. As school counsellor for five years, Jackie had given everything to the hundreds of boys she counselled, as well as to the wider fabric of school life. She had a special bond with the headmaster, Tim Murray, and would meet him at the end of each week to review overall trends or issues within the school. Receiving the Ian Powell award was a great affirmation of Jackie’s work and a warm conclusion to her time at the school.

A few nights later Canberra Grammar held its senior prize-giving in the school hall. This was a formal occasion when all the graduating students came with their parents for speeches, dinner and the awarding of prizes. The guest speaker was former Prime Minister, the late Gough Whitlam, a pupil of the school in the 1930s. Mr Whitlam, with his wife Margaret, had got lost in the leafy circular roads around the school and the entrée was already being served when they arrived.

I attended the prize-giving on behalf of the diocese and was sitting opposite the chairman of the board, Dale Budd. Margaret Whitlam was to my left, with Gough next to the chairman and Jackie on his right. The speech was to follow the entrée and Margaret whispered to me: ‘make sure he knows how long he has to speak for, or he’ll go on for ever.’ I felt this was an assignment for the chairman, with whom I could not discreetly speak because of the seating arrangements.

The speech got off to a good start with Mr Whitlam recounting how he had got top marks in religion at school but the headmaster decided to award the prize to Francis James[[19]](#footnote-19), who came second. When Gough asked for an explanation the headmaster said: ‘You know it all, Whitlam, but James actually believes it.’ Gough said he became an agnostic from that day.

This opening story was well received, and the speaker moved on to discuss church statistics and the declining numbers in mainline Australian churches. He had a sheaf of notes and after each page would dramatically thrust it behind him for me to field. At the 20-minute mark Margaret again whispered urgently in my ear that I had to do something to stop him. I leaned across and conveyed this information to the chairman who said: ‘Oh, I think you should tell him, you’re the bishop.’

I didn’t feel up to the task either but at the 40-minute mark came another urgent communication from Margaret to do something. By this time Gough was canvassing an obscure point of Church-State relations in Europe in 1866 *(‘*or was it 1867? No, I think 1866’*).* I wrote a note that it was time to serve the meal and placed it on the podium. Gough stopped in mid-sentence to read it and said: ‘Huh! The bishop says it’s time for me to stop and I haven’t even got to my second point yet.’ He carried on, the serving staff by now standing at the doors with hot food trolleys. As the hour came up they started to serve the food and in a clatter of crockery and cutlery the speech came to an end.

After the meal came the prize-giving. I was sitting on the stage next to Gough, who presented the Whitlam Prize early in the piece. We settled back to observe the procession of prize-winners across the stage, punctuated by small rounds of applause. Gough started a conversation: ‘SO WHERE ARE YOU FROM, THEN?’ he asked in a voice that could have been heard halfway down the hall. ‘New Zealand,’ I whispered. ‘HA! NEW ZEALAND. I WENT THERE ONCE. MET YOUR PRIME MINISTER. NOW WHO WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN?’ ‘Umm...Norman Kirk, perhaps?’ ‘KIRK, YES, THAT’S THE MAN. GREAT MAN, KIRK.’

But there was no doubt who was the star of the show. As the formalities concluded, Gough Whitlam was mobbed on stage by students wanting his autograph on their programme. It was after midnight when people were taking their leave, and I commented to the Headmaster that this must be the first occasion on which the school prize-giving had extended over two days.

Our five years in Australia had been enriching. Australia has much in common with New Zealand but is different enough to offer new experiences. I had a sense of being at home and yet also challenged by a new environment. A larger population has a greater range of people to reflect on issues of the day. I felt this in the General Synod where the depth of wisdom went far beyond the merely pragmatic. I was a smaller fish in a bigger pond, but the stimulus of the larger body was enlivening.

I felt well received by my fellow bishops, local churches and the community at large, although as a newcomer I lacked the background knowledge of clergy or the flavour of parishes. Professionally, chairing the boards of social services and a significant grammar school was a steep learning curve, but one I enjoyed. Opportunities to address professional groups and social service gatherings I always valued. Jackie and I both loved moving around very diverse urban and rural parishes where we experienced Australian life at a personal level.

I had been invited to bring something to Australia from across the Tasman, but also gained much in new challenges and insights. For Jackie too it had been a high point professionally. We were inspired by amazing places such as the Snowy Mountains, Kakadu and Uluru. We had each been engaged in a variety of challenging personal and national situations. We came away with good friendships that have lasted. We came home to a new millennium with the next step in ministry still in the melting-pot.

1. Anglican Social Responsibility Officer in the Diocese of Perth. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 18 February 1994. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Berger is an American sociologist, one of his books being entitled *The Sacred Canopy – Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (1967). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Chief Justice of Australia, 1995-98. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Chief Justice of Australia, 1952-64. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Justice of the High Court of Australia, 1996-2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Sydney, Newcastle, Grafton, Armidale, Bathurst , the Riverina and Canberra-Goulburn. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Matthew 8.28. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In ecclesiastical circles, a primate is the archbishop who heads a national church. Not to be confused with primates of the animal species, there was nonetheless an interesting exchange when a research primatologist accidentally sent a letter to the Anglican Primate of Canada. The latter’s secretary completed the questionnaire noting similarities between the species. His boss, he said, had a penchant for eating bananas at lunch-time, and had once been found on all fours searching for his spectacles under his desk. He pointed out, however, a significant difference between the species, which was that the Anglican primates were the only known all-male species on earth at that time able to reproduce themselves without female agency. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *A Prayer Book for Australia*, shorter edition, p. 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. See chapter 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Films like *The Rabbit-Proof Fence* graphically portray the pain and heartbreak for both parents and children as they were torn away from each other, in some cases never to be reunited even decades later. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. *Bringing Them Home:*  *The Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families.* [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. An associate professor at the University of Sydney where he taught social policy from 1972-1999. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Chapter 1 in my book *A Word in Season.* [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Francis James was a professional journalist and lifelong Anglican. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)