

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Australian Catholic University (ACU) is proud to inaugurate the NSW Interfaith Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast in 2014.

Parliamentary prayer breakfasts involving both religious leaders and parliamentarians exist in a number of parliaments; however, interfaith breakfasts are rare and have not been part of the Australian tradition. We hope that this interfaith parliamentary prayer breakfast presents parliamentarians of all parties with the opportunity to join with leaders of different faiths to pray for wise deliberations over the coming parliamentary year.

Through the breakfast parliamentarians will have the opportunity to meet with a range of faith leaders from different faith denominations, while faith leaders will have the opportunity to interact with parliamentarians and explain something of their traditions and their culture to them.

For ACU the event provides a chance to demonstrate our mission in action, namely, to foster an appreciation of the sacred in life and a commitment to serving the common good. It is an opportunity not only to embrace and better understand our diverse faiths, but also to reflect on the important role that faith plays in our everyday lives and in our calling to serve the community of NSW.

We are honoured that the address for this 2014 breakfast will be given by ACU's former Chancellor and Governor-General designate, General Peter Cosgrove AC, MC, CNZM.

We are also honoured by the support of The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP, Premier of New South Wales and The Hon John Robertson MP, Leader of the Opposition.

At this time, I would also like to acknowledge the recent appointment of one ACU's founders, His Eminence George Cardinal Pell AC, DD, as Prefect for the Economy of the Holy See and Vatican City State. ACU and, more widely, Catholic education in Australia, owes much to Cardinal Pell for his foresight, dedication and commitment.

Finally, we hope that this booklet, which offers prayers and readings prepared by leaders from a range of faith traditions, will provide inspiration for all leaders in our State over the coming year.

Professor Greg Craven

Vice-Chancellor, Australian Catholic University



ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Master of Ceremonies

Julian Leeser, Director of Government, Policy & Strategy, Australian Catholic University

Acknowledgement of Country

Leanne King, Academic Coordinator – Yalbalinga, Australian Catholic University

Australian National Anthem

ACU Strathfield Choir (Director: Dr Clare Johnson)

Welcome

Professor Greg Craven, Vice-Chancellor, Australian Catholic University

Welcome

The Honourable Andrew Stoner MP, Deputy Premier of New South Wales

Welcome

The Honourable John Robertson MP, Leader of the Opposition

Breakfast served

All Things Bright and Beautiful – Text: C.F. Alexander; Music: John Rutter
Lord of Earth and All Creation –Text: Michael and Honor Thwaites (adapt); Music: Anima Lauda
The Lord Bless You and Keep You – Text: Numbers 6:24-26; Music: John Rutter
ACU Strathfield Choir

Interfaith prayers and readings

Address: “Faith and Leadership”

General Peter Cosgrove AC MC CNZM, Governor-General Designate

Concluding remarks

Julian Leeser



INTERFAITH PRAYERS AND READINGS

BAHÁ'Í

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbour, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility.

Submitted by National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Australia, Inc. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, US Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1990 pocket-size edition, p346)

BAPTIST

Our Heavenly Father,

Today we pray for those who are the elected representatives of the people of New South Wales who have been given the responsibility of governing our state. We give thanks for their willingness to serve in political office and pray that you will bless them as they exercise their responsibilities on our behalf. May they fulfil their responsibilities worthily.

We ask that you will enrich them with your grace that the state of New South Wales will be governed with all wisdom and godliness. May they be empowered in their leadership with discernment that assimilates genuine wisdom and rejects naïve interpretations of reality, so that they will make wise choices which seek that which is right for the citizens within this state. We pray that they will have the fortitude to act on those decisions in a timely way.

We particularly pray for the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition as they lead their respective parties. May the members of both the Lower and Upper Houses have a clear sense of direction in their deliberations. God, watch over them so that the people of this state will continue to live in security and peace always.

Grant them a vision for New South Wales, a place where we strive for truth, justice and goodness for all. Lord, grant them the ability to move beyond human reason, feelings and intuition to discern truth from yourself and to act out of the best interests of society. May their decisions be ones that strengthen and prosper the state and its people. No less to you now than the mastodon then.

Enable them to be community focussed, having courage to govern for the betterment of all, particularly for the disempowered, the oppressed, the marginalised, minorities and the disadvantaged. May they develop sound policies for the well-being of all of society.

Grant that they understand and care for their constituents and provide leadership that is clear yet demonstrates humility towards yourself and others. Deliver them from self-interest, cynicism and pride.

We pray that they will live and govern as men and women of integrity and their choices to reflect your values. May they lay aside any negativity and discord so that the needs of citizens are kept at the forefront.

We ask in Jesus name. Amen

Submitted by NSW and ACT Baptist Churches. Author: Rev Ken Clendinning, Director of Ministries, Prayer for New South Wales Parliamentarians, 2014

BUDDHIST

Great, compassionate Buddha!
With the greatest sincerity,
We are here to express our gratitude for your great protection:
Please let our nation make education available to all;
Please let our people raise their standard of living;
Please let our science and technology continue to improve;
Please let our politics remain democratic.

With great sincerity, we would like to express ourselves clearly:
Although education is available to all,
Our ethics have degenerated;
Although our standard of living has been raised,
Our public morality has eroded;
Although our science and technology have advanced,
Our industries have reported frequent incidents of pollution;
Although our political system is democratic,
Our society has been turbulent and ill at ease.

We thus ask for your great protection:
May the mercilessness and cruelty of our society
Be transformed into harmony and happiness;
May the impudence and impropriety of our society
Be transformed into proper manners and order;
May the rampancy of crime and misdirection of our society
Be transformed into joyous giving and friendships;
May the cheating and imposture of our society
Be transformed into honesty and righteousness;
May the anger, hatred and jealousy of our society
Be transformed into compassion, kindness, and benevolence;
May the wrong knowledge and wrong views of our society
Be transformed into right knowledge and right view.

BUDDHIST CONT.

We pray for your great support:

May we grasp the concept of cause and effect,
And understand the reality of life;
May we have the strength of a heart full of patience and tolerance
And never retreat in the face of adversity;
May we be imbued with clear and wise foresight,
And have no fears or worries;
May we have the courage to subdue evils,
And complete the mission of life.

Great, compassionate Buddha

We pray for your blessing and protection:

May our country have favourable weather;
And never have natural disasters or man-made calamities;
May our politics be honest, clean and just,
And never have corruption or bribery;
May our ethnic groups embrace those who are different,
And never have racial disputes;
May our society be steadfast, prosperous and powerful
And never have wars or upheavals;
May our lives be abundant in food and clothing,
And never suffer economic instability;
May our bodies and minds be healthy and carefree,
And never be disturbed by sickness.

Great, compassionate Buddha!

Please accept this prayer for our nation!

Namo Shakymuni Buddha

Submitted by Nan Tien Temple. Author: Venerable Master Hsing Yun;
A Prayer for our Nation, 2014

BUDDHIST

May all beings everywhere
Plagued by sufferings of body and mind
Obtain an ocean of happiness and joy
By virtue of my merits.

May no living creature suffer,
Commit evil, or ever fall ill.
May no one be afraid or belittled,
With a mind weighed down by depression.

May the blind see forms
And the deaf hear sounds,
May those whose bodies are worn with toil
Be restored on finding repose.

May the naked find clothing,
The hungry find food;
May the thirsty find water
And delicious drinks.

May the poor find wealth,
Those weak with sorrow find joy;
May the forlorn find hope,
Constant happiness and prosperity.

May there be timely rains
And bountiful harvests.
May all medicines be effective
And wholesome prayers bear fruit.

May all who are sick and ill
Quickly be freed of their ailments.
Whatever diseases there are in the world,
May they never occur again.

May the frightened cease to be afraid
And those bound be freed;
May the powerless find power,
And may people think of benefiting each other.

For as long as space remains,
For as long as sentient beings remain,
Until then may I too remain
To dispel the miseries of the world.

Submitted by Vajrayana Institute. Author: Arya Shantideva; Excerpt from
Dedication Chapter, Bodhisattvas *Way of Life*, 2014

COPTIC ORTHODOX

Dear God,

Thank you for a new start to a new day.

Be with all the members of Parliament and don't leave them as they serve your people through their role as representatives of the Australian people in the Parliament.

Bless O God the decisions and conversations that occurs in the Lower House and Upper House of Parliament when its sits.

Bless O God all the Parliamentarians, all the Committees and all the Departments of Parliament.

Remember O God, the Premier of this day and the Government and their leaders.

Remember O God, the Opposition and its Role.

Grant me wisdom each day to govern your people in righteousness and equity.

Grant me grace and strength to complete this day for the Glory of Your Name.

Grant wisdom for the parliament of the day in their conversations and discussions that it will be fruitful in the management and legislation for the State of New South Wales.

Protect and bless the State of New South Wales to prosperity and peace.

Today O Lord, I surrender my will to You, that You bless all that I do for the Glory of Your Name, Amen!

Submitted by Coptic Orthodox Church – Diocese of Sydney & Affiliated Regions. Author: His Grace, Bishop Daniel, 2014

GREEK ORTHODOX

Lord our God, the source of life and immortality, the author of all created things both visible and invisible, who placed all seasons and years in your power and who directs all things with your most wise and all-gracious providence: we thank you for your bounties, which you have so lovingly poured upon us during our life and on this land; we continue to pray for these, especially seasonable weather and peaceful times.

O Lord, we ask that you bless the crown of the coming year with your goodness; preserve your beloved servants, our Queen Elizabeth, all our civil authorities and all the faithful. Enlighten the hearts of those who govern; grant them a spirit of wisdom, a spirit of understanding, enlighten the eyes of their souls, that they may bear fruit in every good work granting furtherance in all things. Deliver your holy Church, this city and country, and all cities and lands from every evil assault and give them peace and tranquillity.

Grant, o Lord, that we may always offer thanksgiving and praise, to you, the Father, who is from everlasting, together with your only-begotten Son, and your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, God glorified in one essence, and hymn your all-holy name now and always and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Submitted by St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College.
Author: Dr Philip Kariatlis, 2014

HILLSONG CHURCH

SIGNIFICANCE is not found in the advancement of self... but in your impact on others.

Leadership is just as much about OTHERS as it is about you. So often, the values we live by are amplified when it comes to leading others because our strengths and weaknesses have a way of surfacing and impacting the people we do life with.

Who we are and how we behave matters – it matters a great deal. We should never underestimate the power we have over one another, especially the power that our leadership decisions have over those who look to us for direction or support. It's not as though we have to be a 'perfect' person to qualify in life, not at all, but we must be honest and teachable and live with authenticity.

Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.' This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' These two commands are pegs; everything in God's Law and the Prophets hangs from them."(Matthew 22:37-40 THE MESSAGE)

Leadership by definition means that someone is following us – it is influence. The degree of influence we have over those we lead is in direct proportion to the level of responsibility we have for them which should never be taken lightly. Who you lead must be as important as why you are leading. When we value people as well as their gifts it will lead us toward connection and growth. You cannot lead others well unless you have an authentic love for people and a commitment to inspire them to live to the fullness of their potential.

I once heard someone say "Align your interests with the best interests of those you lead, and there will always be plenty of followers." Sometimes we value the call or purpose we live for above the actual people who help us achieve it.

Affirm others and encourage them. Believe in people, champion their dreams and spend time cultivating their unique gifts. Leading people requires selflessness, and it is this kind of leadership that OTHERS will follow.

Submitted by Hillsong Australia Christian Church. Author: Mr Brian Houston, Senior Pastor, *Leading OTHERS*, 2014.

HINDU

GAYATRI MANTRA

Aum
Bhuh Bhuvah Svah
Tat Savitur Varenyam
Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi
Dhiyo Yo nah Prachodayat

~ The Rig Veda (10:16:3)

Translation:

We meditate on the Creator of the Universe, who is the embodiment of knowledge and light. May this light enlighten our intellect, inspire our minds and guide us in the right direction.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Om Asato Maa Sad-Gamaya
Tamaso Maa Jyotir-Gamaya
Mrtyor-Maa Amrtam Gamaya
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih

~ Brhadaranyaka Upanishad (1.3.28)

Translation:

We meditate on the Creator of the Universe, who is the embodiment of knowledge and light. May this light enlighten our intellect, inspire our minds and guide us in the right direction.

Submitted by the Hindu Council of Australia. *A note on the translation:
“They are very ancient sacred mantras, and have depth of meaning way beyond these simple translations; the Sanskrit language is very full and deep in richness of terms that we have not even English words to match.”, 2014

JUDAISM

Oh God of our ancestors, Creator of all, Who taught that all humankind was created equal and each individual in the image of God; Who charged us to tend to creation, to enjoy and preserve its resources.

Your Psalmist urged: "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." (Psalms 34:15)

And Your Prophet exhorted: "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you? To do justice, and to love loving mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

Grant us hearts serene and pure, alongside the courage, the charity, the faith and the humility to perceive the good and the worth in every person.

As we meet to consider the affairs of State and the welfare of the community, endow us with wisdom and understanding, that we may carry out our mandate with responsibility and discernment.

May we seek the common good. May our actions embrace the rights of the individual, the will of democracy, the preservation of diversity, the protection of the minority and expression for all in liberty.

May we be worthy of the trust that is placed in us by our fellows.

May You, God, guide us in constancy and conscience, that we may join as Your partners, collaborating in the moral quality of our society; in the building and perfecting of Your world.

Grant that our deliberations commence in harmony and conclude in peace.

Grant that, in all we do and say, we may acknowledge Your ways, follow Your paths and be inspired in Your instruction. May we ever be among those who occupy themselves in faithfulness with the needs of the community and sanctify Your Name among humankind.

May we and our community merit Your ongoing blessing of prosperity, of lives filled purpose, that we and our neighbours may enjoy Your bounty in health and in peace.

Submitted by Great Synagogue Sydney. Author: Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence, Chief Minister, *Breakfast for Parliamentarians - Jewish Interfaith Prayer*, 2014

MUSLIM

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between them, and of the whole universe.

You alone O Allah we worship, and to You alone we seek for help and guidance

Oh Allah, Your love and mercy enshrine all Your creatures.

You are our Protector and You are our Sustainer.

We are gathered here this morning at the Inaugural NSW Parliamentary Interfaith Prayer Breakfast.

O Allah, strengthen our faith and compassion, and we humbly beseech Your forgiveness and protection. Unite our hearts so that we may feel the close relationship between us.

In this uneasy time of our life, where peace, justice and prosperity are seem to be values all of humanity still have to work hard to achieve them, we are coming to You O Allah, spreading our hands seeking Your guidance and assistance.

We ask your Protection and Intercession, that those who are suffering be relieved of their burden and that You save our country and our people and all the humanity from miserable life.

God said: O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and communities that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. (The Qur'an 49:13).

O ye who believe! be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do. (The Qur'an 5:8)

Our Lord,

May we be instruments of unity, within our individual communities and between our diverse Australian multicultural and multifaith society

May we be inspired by divine wisdom, as we navigate and guide our faiths and our faithful

Our Lord, to You we are seeking Your forgiveness and Your blessing

"Our Lord do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or made a mistake.

Our Lord, lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon those before us.

Our Lord, burden us not with that which we have no ability to bear."
(The Qur'an 2:286).

O Allah we submit ourselves unto You,

We entrust our affairs unto You,

We turn our face towards You,

And we totally rely on You, in hope and mercy from You.

Verily there is no refuge, nor safe haven from You, except with You.

Our Lord, grant us the best in This Life and best in the Hereafter.

Submitted by the Imam of the Zetland Mosque. Author: Imam Dr Amin Hady, *Opening Prayer, The Inaugural NSW Parliamentary Interfaith Prayer Breakfast: with reference to The Qur'an*, 2014.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, QUAKERS

Compassion, to be effective, requires detailed knowledge and understanding of how society works. Any social system in turn requires men and women in it of imagination and goodwill. What would be fatal would be for those with exceptional human insight and concern to concentrate on ministering to individuals, whilst those accepting responsibility for the design and management of organisations were left to become technocrats. What is important is that institutions and their administration be constantly tested against human values, and that those who are concerned about these values be prepared to grapple with the complex realities of modern society.

Submitted by Religious Society of Friends, Quakers in Australia. Author: Grigor McClelland – *Quaker Faith and Practice, Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Quakers in Britain, 1976*

ROMAN CATHOLIC

It gives me much pleasure to recognise and applaud the initiative of the Vice Chancellor Professor Greg Craven and staff of Australian Catholic University in arranging this inaugural NSW Interfaith Parliamentary Prayer breakfast. This is an historic occasion and one which one hopes will augment the spirit of unity and mutual respect that I believe has grown steadily stronger amongst people of all faiths and cultures in NSW and throughout Australia.

As leaders and loyal citizens of this state, in the presence of the Deputy Premier of NSW The Hon Andrew Stoner MP, the Leader of the Opposition The Hon John Robertson, MP and the Governor General Designate Peter Cosgrove AC MC CNZM, let us seize this opportunity, as leaders of a multi faith community, to demonstrate our mutual respect for one another. We declare publicly to Parliamentarians of all parties our sincere appreciation for the commitment each has made to honoring the values and traditions of this great Nation. By the grace of God may you discharge your responsibilities indiscriminately with courage, compassion and integrity respecting and upholding the dignity of all Australians and the whole of humanity.

May God bless you and keep you,

May the face of God shine upon you and be gracious to you,

May God look upon you and give you peace.

Book of Numbers 6:24-36

Submitted by Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. Author: Bishop Terry Brady, Auxiliary Bishop – *Blessing on the Parliamentarian of NSW on the Occasion of the Inaugural Interfaith Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast*, With reference: Book of Numbers 6:24-36, 6 March 2014

SALVATION ARMY

Lord of All, Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things, we confess our dependence on you.

Thank you for extending abundance, mercy, and protection to our nation through the years.

Every resource, liberty, and opportunity we have is a gracious gift from you.

Without you, we are bereft. With you, we have abundance.

In humility, we seek your face.

In repentance, we turn from ungrateful, destructive and selfish ways.

In faith, we call on your power to heal our brokenness, forgive our misdeeds and bless our land.

Extend your Holy Spirit on those who govern, the leaders of our nation, our states, and our communities.

Grant them a love for justice.

Open their minds with wisdom and compassion so that all people may be treated fairly and with dignity.

Open their ears to the cries of the desperate and powerless so cycles of poverty, disease, and abuse may be broken.

Open their eyes to see how best to respond.

Open their hearts to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with you, with courage – even when pressured to do otherwise.

Give us days of integrity and servant leadership upon our land.

May our leaders serve in collaboration for the common good that there may be lasting peace and justice for all.

Amen

Submitted by Salvation Army NSW Division. Author: Lisa Ann Moss Degrenia - *A Prayer for Those Who Govern* - Modified from Lisa Ann Moss Degrenia © 2012

SIKH

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥ ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ
ਭਲੇ ਕੇ ਮੰਦੇ ॥੧॥ ਲੇਗਾ ਭਰਮਿ ਨ ਭੂਲਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਖਲਕ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ
ਸ੍ਰਬ ਠਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥ ਮਾਟੀ ਏਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਭਾਂਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਾਜੀ ਸਾਜਨਹਾਰੈ ॥ ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਪੇਚ ਮਾਟੀ
ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਪੇਚ ਕੁੰਭਾਰੈ ॥੨॥ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਸਚਾ ਏਕੇ ਸੇਈ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਸਭੁ ਕਛੁ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਹੁਕਮੁ ਪਛਾਨੈ ਸੁ ਏਕੇ ਜਾਨੈ ਬੰਦਾ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੇਈ ॥੩॥ ਅਲਹੁ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਲਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਗੁੜੁ
ਦੀਨਾ ਮੀਠਾ ॥ ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਸੰਕਾ ਨਾਸੀ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਡੀਠਾ ॥੪॥੩॥

ਬੇਦ ਕਹਹੁ ਮਤ ਝੂਠੇ ਝੂਠਾ ਜੇ ਨ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ ॥ ਜਉ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਕਹਤ ਹਉ ਤਉ ਕਿਉ
ਮੁਰਗੀ ਮਾਰੈ ॥੧॥ ਮੁਲਾਂ ਕਹਹੁ ਨਿਆਉ ਖੁਦਾਈ ॥ ਤੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਭਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਪਕਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਆਨਿਆ ਦੇਹ ਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਮਾਟੀ ਕਉ ਬਿਸਮਿਲਿ ਕੀਆ ॥ ਜੇਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਨਾਹਤ ਲਾਗੀ
ਕਹੁ ਹਲਾਲੁ ਕਿਆ ਕੀਆ ॥੨॥ ਕਿਆ ਉਜੁ ਪਾਕੁ ਕੀਆ ਮੁਹੁ ਧੋਇਆ ਕਿਆ ਮਸੀਤਿ ਸਿਰੁ ਲਾਇਆ
॥ ਜਉ ਦਿਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਪਟੁ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਗੁਜਾਰਹੁ ਕਿਆ ਹਜ ਕਾਬੈ ਜਾਇਆ ॥੩॥ ਤੂੰ ਨਾਪਾਕੁ ਪਾਕੁ ਨਹੀ
ਸੂਝਿਆ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਮਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਭਿਸਤਿ ਤੇ ਚੂਕਾ ਦੇਜਕ ਸਿਉ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥

{ਪੰਨਾ 1349-50 SGGS}

ਬਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਗਦੈਵ,
ਸੈਕਰੇਟਰੀ
ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਸਿਖ ਕੌਨਸਲ ਅਫ ਅਸਟਰੇਲੀਆ

Punjabi original text submitted by Bawa Singh Jagdev OAM, National
Sikh Council Of Australia Inc. Author: Sir Guru Granth Sahib, Ref:- Page
1349-50, "Sikh Prayer from the Holy 'Guru Granth Sahib'", Hymn: *Saint
Kabeer* 1349-50 SGGS

SIKH

God first created Light; then, by His Creative Power, He created all mortal beings.

Since He created the entire universe from One Light, so how can we say who is good, and who is bad in this world?

O Siblings of Destiny, do not wander deluded by doubt about the creator.

There is only one Creator and the Creator is in its Creation and the Creation is in the Creator, totally pervading and permeating with each other at all times and places.

Like the potter who makes the pots, the clay is the same but the potter makes the pots in different shapes forms and sizes in various ways.

As the clay is the same in all the pots, likewise the True Lord abides in all its creation; by His making, everything is made.

Only he who realizes His Command, is said to be His devotee and he alone knows the One Lord.

The Lord is invisible and cannot be seen but the Guru has blessed me with His name.

Realising this all my anxieties and fear have disappeared and I see the immaculate Lord pervading everywhere.

Religious books are not false. Only those who do not understand them are false.

Oh mortal you say that the One Lord lives in every being, then why do you kill animals to eat?

You are still confused and the doubts of your mind have not been dispelled.

By killing a living creature you don't realise that you have only killed the pot of clay but not the soul.

The soul never dies it simply passes from one form to another. So tell me, what have you killed?

To wash your hands, feet and face to purify them and prostrate in the holy place is of no use .

What is the use of prayers and going to religious places for pilgrim when your mind is full of malice.

Not understanding the Lord and His mysteries you have missed out a place in paradise and you are destined for hell.

English translation submitted by Bawa Singh Jagdev OAM, National Sikh Council Of Australia Inc. Author: Sir Guru Granth Sahib, Ref:- Page 1349-50, "Sikh Prayer from the Holy 'Guru Granth Sahib'", Hymn: *Saint Kabeer* 1349-50 SGGS

SYRIAN ORTHODOX

Our Lord Almighty,
in a world that's demanding
We pray that you give
our leaders understanding
That you bind them in wisdom,
and fill them with knowledge
So that each person's heard,
and their hopes are acknowledged
Grant rain to our lands Lord,
and seed to our earth
And grant fruitfulness,
so that our livestock finds worth
Protect us from the fires,
which cause havoc and strife
Extinguish them,
You the true Water of Life
Give Australians strong spirits,
to pursue our own passions
And to rise up again
from the pain and the ashes
Grant peace among us
to live as sisters and brothers
And never tear down,
but support one another
Put your trust in our hands,
as we put our hope in Yours
Moving forward hand in hand,
opening promising doors
But above all we ask
for the guidance and patience
To make our home Australia
shine bright amongst nations.

Submitted by Australia and New Zealand Syrian Orthodox Church.
Author: His Eminence Archbishop Mor Malatius Malki Malki, *A Prayer
for Australia*

UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

Dear Heavenly Father,

We pray that our conversations will bear fruit in relationships that will enable all of us, who bear the title of “minister,” to genuinely fulfil that role as servants to the people. We pray that ideas and ideals will be freshly generated and flow to the improvement of society through legislation and programs that will beacon to the noblest aspects of common humanity.

I dare to call You “Lord,” Heavenly Father, even though some would feign to Your Lordship. Jesus said that many would call you Lord, yet their hearts would be so far from you. We pray that this interfaith breakfast would not degenerate into a patronising ritual towards religious leaders any more than it would deteriorate into a moral bashing of our political leaders.

God said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” in Hosea 4:6. As the elite classes lead the masses away from the Judeo-Christian foundations that this government was based upon, the blessings that naturally trickled down will continue to fade. We may find ourselves fighting against spiralling crime, multiplying divorce rates, escalating youth dysfunction – so much that no number of government or charity programs would be able to slow the descent.

We need to strengthen marriages, but not by redefining the term. We need to strengthen families, but not with unnecessary environmental tax burdens. We need to strengthen children, but they can’t find their dignity until they find their identity as purposeful children of God. We need to change the rallying call of our youth, “YOLO!” to one which calls them to serving others.

I pray that relationships would form, and dialogs would begin this morning that will reach far into the future as New South Wales’ political and religious “ministers” bind together to strengthen the moral fabric of our society in the 21st Century. I pray that our allegiances would unite to the improvement of the culture – not based upon the objectives of our professions, but squarely upon the better interests of the people as the objects of our affection.

God bless Australia!

In Jesus’ name,
Amen.

Submitted by Northern Beaches Pentecostal Church, Dee Why. Author:
Rev Don C Modarelli M.A., Pastor, *Prayer for New South Wales Interfaith
Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, 2014*

UNITING CHURCH

The Christian scriptures and the common ground of wisdom of all the major faiths call us to emphasize the Common Good in our communal life, including in our faith communities, our families and in our civic life.

The Prophet Micah poses the question “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God most high?”, then answers his own question from the insight of his being in God, “He has told you O mortal what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God”. (Micah 6: 6a, 8).

Jesus placed himself squarely in this prophetic tradition when he read and applied to himself these words from Isaiah: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour”. (Luke 4:18-19)

The Christian version of the Golden Rule, held in common by most major faith traditions, is as follows: “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets”. (Matthew 7:12)

We are called, by faith and common virtue, to strive for the Common Good, which modern day biblical scholar and prophet Walther Brueggemann has named as “The great crisis among us”.

LET US PRAY

Great God our Creator, our Sustainer and our Inspirer, this gathering of civic leaders and leaders of faith communities come before you to recognize our dependence on you, and our community with each other.

In your Spirit, may we find here together the will and the courage to serve the Common Good, identifying and respecting the various gifts of our faith and work professions. May we both support one another and hold one another accountable to the standards of public ethics required of those who are called and equipped to lead. May we do so with the conviction that it is the Divine will that all may flourish- not just humanity, but all creation.

We pray in your Holy Name,
AMEN

Submitted by Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW and the ACT.
Author: Rev Dr Brian Brown, Moderator, *Readings and a Prayer for the Common Good* 2014

WESLEY MISSION CHURCH

Gracious God, who has helped us to understand that righteousness alone creates a great nation, move in the hearts and wills of all your people in New South Wales, but particularly our leaders, so that we may recognise justice and decency in leadership and follow likewise.

Forgiving God, we offer to you the life of our State and confess that we have not always helpfully contributed to the building up of what is best for all. As we receive your forgiveness, grant us the power to forgive others. And raise up, we pray, a new spirit of collaboration as we work together for the common good.

Loving God, from whom alone we receive grace and trust, send into the hearts of those who govern a spirit of humility which makes for wisdom and correct choices. We thank you for the spirit of public service which we too often take for granted. Help us to shun what is evil, avoid what is less than good, and never to presume that we are wiser and better than those who have gone before us.

All-Powerful God, the source of all goodness, bless all in leadership, all who provide vital services, all opinion-shapers, our media and all who offer care in the community. May we know what it is to wisely deliberate, use our resources efficiently and display compassion especially towards the vulnerable and the marginalised. As we rise to face the many challenges before us, draw us in a united vision, give us greater understanding of others and a willingness to hear those voices lost in the incessant clamour of popular culture.

God of grace, forgiveness, love and power, keep us mindful of our precious heritage. Remind us that apart from you we can do nothing. In these significant moments we reach out to you, seeking the transforming power of your Spirit, so that we may break down all the barriers which separate us. Grant us singleness of mind and purpose as we discover unity in our diversity. Enrich us with your grace, enabling us to be the very best as a State under your authority.

This prayer we offer in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Submitted by Wesley Mission Church NSW. Author: Rev Dr Keith Garner, Superintendent/CEO 2014



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Australian Catholic University (ACU) is the largest English-speaking Catholic university in the world. ACU can trace its origins to the educational work of St Mary of the Cross (Mary MacKillop). While teaching, learning and research at ACU is inspired by 2,000 years of the Catholic intellectual tradition, ACU is a public university open to people of all faiths and of none.

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www.acu.edu.au/interfaith

