



13 August 2024

My Dear People,

In 2020 my predecessor Bishop Bill Wright decreed that the Sunday on or immediately prior to 15 September each year would be inscribed in the liturgical calendar of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle as the 'Perpetual Day of Remembrance'. Those familiar with the Church's liturgical calendar would recognise that 15 September is also the day for "Our Lady of Sorrows". How could any of us fail to see and understand that the abuse of children by those placed in positions of leadership and trust in the Church is one of, if not the greatest, cause of sorrow in our Church's long history.

Even the mere recognition that such abominations have occurred in our Church causes us great pain and sorrow. How much greater is the pain of those who have been abused and still suffer because of that abuse, and how much greater than our own sorrow must be the sorrow of Our Lord Jesus and his mother Mary.

"To remember" can be a deeply spiritual and religious action. In the Old Testament, God's chosen people were often exhorted to remember the many good things that God had done for them as well as remembering their own sins and transgressions. Remembering God's goodness, both to ourselves as individuals and collectively as his people, produces gratitude and hope. Remembering our transgressions, both our own personal transgressions and the transgressions of the collective Church, produces redemptive sorrow and genuine conversion.

To assist us as the Church of Maitland-Newcastle to pray in this space the Perpetual Day of Remembrance Standing Committee of the Diocesan Liturgy Council once again offers a range of resources for use in our parishes, schools, agencies, groups, and homes. It has been determined that the resources this year include only minor changes from last year since later this year my office will undertake a review into the best way for us as a community to observe the Perpetual Day of Remembrance.

The resources for 2024 are available on the diocesan website for parishes and schools who wish to begin their preparation. There is something there for everyone including Diocesan agencies, individuals, households and community groups. [Resources - Perpetual Day of Remembrance](#)

I commend these resources to you and your local community for our remembering and praying.

Yours in Christ

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy  
**Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle**