



# *The Anglican Church of Australia*

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## GENERAL SYNOD

### ***Guidelines for Groups Preparing Liturgical Resources for Special Observances or Commemorations on Sunday***

***May 2004***

In the course of each year, various agencies prepare and distribute resources for parishes, including material for use during Sunday services.

The Liturgical Commission offers these Guidelines to assist groups preparing such materials in order that any references to special observances or commemorations will be well integrated with other elements of the Sunday liturgy.

1. The faith-narrative unfolded through the Sunday lectionary, texts and feasts is of primary importance for a principal Sunday service. Material relating to a special observance should be seen in the context of the overall purpose of the Sunday celebration - to recall the life, death and resurrection of Christ and offer praise and thanksgiving to God who “has begotten us again, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, into a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3).

The primary purpose of the Sunday assembly is not to promote or educate people about a particular cause, however worthwhile it may be. Any special observance associated with the principal Sunday liturgy needs to be well-integrated into the service, and serve its main purpose.

2. The Sunday Lectionary readings and Prayers of the Day are basic components of our common worship, both within the Anglican Church and amongst other Churches. The message of these texts should not be replaced by references to special observances, for instance by the substitution of prayers or Scripture passages related to such commemorations.
3. It may be appropriate to refer to the special observance or commemoration in the words of welcome. Agencies might provide a short text giving an example of such introductory words, without ignoring the celebration of the day or season.
4. Special observations can be recognised during the sermon. While the sermon is normally based on the Scriptures for the day, the special observance can be referred to in the course of the preaching, but this should flow from the proclamation of the word. Agencies may wish to provide a brief text (perhaps of one or two paragraphs) which the **preacher** could use as the basis for a reference to the special observance. A full sample sermon gives the impression that the preacher is being invited to preach on a particular cause or observance.
5. The special observance or commemoration could be included in the Prayers of the People. Whilst it would not be appropriate for a particular topic to dominate these intercessions, it is appropriate to include a petition or two related to the special observance as one element in the community’s prayer. Agencies may wish to provide a few examples of petition, but not a complete set of prayers: again, this would give the impression that one observance alone was important, to the exclusion of all others.

6. There might also be mention of the special observance or commemoration in the notices. Agencies might provide a text for such a notice.
7. In addition to these references within the liturgy itself, there are other avenues that can be employed to publicise a special observance or cause. These include a notice for the parish bulletin and posters for display. Agencies may wish to provide these items amongst the resources they distribute. Study materials for use outside Sunday services in homes or small groups are always a welcome possibility.

### ***Checklist for agencies***

A checklist of liturgical resources that agencies could distribute in relation to special observances or commemorations:

1. An example of **words of welcome**, including a reference to the special observance or commemoration.
2. One or two paragraphs which the preacher could use as the basis of a reference to the special observance in the sermon. If this is related to the Scriptures of the day, all the better.
3. One or two **petitions** to be included in the **Prayers of the People**.
4. A brief message to be included in the spoken Notices.
5. **Notices** for the parish bulletin, perhaps with illustrations/artistic material.
6. **Leaflets** to be distributed, perhaps as inserts in the pewsheet / bulletin.
7. **Posters** for display.