



Vox Populi

23 January 2025

As we begin our Pilgrimage of Hope in this Holy Jubilee year, we all have the opportunity to reflect this weekend on our national identity.

Australia Day is marked in many different ways by those who call this country home.

For the first inhabitants of this land, Australia Day looks very different from those whose families can be traced back generations or those who have arrived more recently after escaping war, poverty or persecution.

While ignoring the past will not heal the wounds of injustice, we can pray for reconciliation, understanding and compassion.

Most Australians want a peaceful, harmonious way of life in which we respect each other – whatever our cultural, religious, and political differences - and abhor racism and prejudice, as displayed in recent anti-Semitic attacks.

Our faith will allow us to seek and find ways of integration and rise above those actions that threaten social identity fragmentation.

Deeper reflection will allow us to see that how we communicate in our family life, our places of work, schools, and parishes will greatly influence and shape our society, delete and address the inequalities, and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable Australia.

Whatever our personal circumstances, as Pilgrims of Hope, we thank God for the gifts this country has given us and renew our commitment to living as disciples of Jesus Christ – spreading compassion, fostering respect, and working for a society where everyone feels at home.