

Staff Prayer Ritual in the week of ANZAC Day: OUTLINE of Ritual

- We Gather:** *Welcome*
Sign of the Cross
Lighting of the 3 Candles
Opening Prayer
- We Listen:** *Scripture Reading*
Reading about the Rising Sun
Sharing
- We Respond:** *Silence (in remembrance)*
The Ode
Closing Prayer
- We Go Forth:** *Blessing*
Dismissal
Sign of Peace

The Environment

Ideally, set out chairs in a circle – creating a space that where people can be present to one another. Three candles are placed near (or on) a small table in the centre of the circle. It is on this small table that the bible rests open.

You will need:

- ✓ a Leader of prayer; a Reader (who will read from the Bible); person(s) to light the candles at the appropriate time in the ritual
- ✓ a Bible (open at the Reading) on a small table covered with a white cloth (or draped with the Australian flag) If using just the white cloth, one or more red poppies may be placed on the table, near the bible.
- ✓ 3 candles (one for those who defended the Land; one for those who defended the Sea; one for those who defended the Sky) + matches
- ✓ handouts for each staff member
- ✓ full text of the ritual for the Leader



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We Gather

Welcome & Introduction

Leader: This week, we remember those who gave their lives for our freedom. We remember all who died, both friend and foe, and those who lived to return home, bearing the scars of war in their bodies, in their emotions and in their lives ...

Sign of the Cross

Leader: We begin our prayer with the sign of Christ's self-sacrifice– a sign which also shines at night over our great Australian land.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Lighting of the 3 Candles

Leader: We light our 3 candles, to remind us of the members of our Armed Forces who served in the defence of our country on land, sea, and sky.

A member of the group lights the candles in the centre of the prayer space.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ...

**All: God of love and liberty,
we thank you for the peace and security we enjoy.
It was won for us through the courage and devotion of those who gave their lives in
time of war.
We pray that their labour and sacrifice may not be in vain, but that their spirit may
live on in us and in generations to come. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus and
in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

We Listen

Scripture Reading

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of John (Jn 12: 23-24)
Jesus replied, "Now the hour has come for the Chosen One to be glorified. The truth of the matter is, unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest."

The Rising Sun Badge

Reader: One of the mainsprings of an army is its esprit-de-corps - that spirit which gives a soldier purpose and the endurance to carry on when others might give up. In the prolonged and bitter struggles of World War 1 and World War 2, the soldiers of the 1st and 2nd AIF (Australian Imperial Forces) had this esprit-de-corps, and its focal point was a humble badge. The so-called 'Rising Sun' badge, worn on the upturned brim of a slouch hat, typified the spirit of ANZAC - the camaraderie of Australian soldiers to fight for the Crown and the British Empire.

Warrant Officer C. JOBSON 1998

Sharing

Leader: What connections can you see resonating in these two readings?

Group members respond in pairs and/or with the whole group as they are comfortable.



We Respond

Leader: Our brave men and women have served Australia so generously. Let us respect their memory by keeping silence ... *(pause for 30 seconds)*

... And now, holding them in our hearts, let us recite "The Ode" together:

All: **They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them. Lest we forget!**

The Ode comes from For the Fallen, a poem by the English poet and writer Laurence Binon and was published in London in The Wincing Fan: Poems of the Great War in 1914. This verse, which became the Ode for the Returned and Services League, has been used in association with commemoration services in Australia since 1921.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ...

All: **God of our Mothers and Fathers,
we pray for the peace of the world.
We especially entrust to your mercy the homeless and refugees;
those who have been dispossessed through war;
those whose lives and families have been disrupted;
and who mourn the loss of loved ones.
We pray for countries who are war-torn even today.
May sanity return and kindness win through wherever there is warfare.
We ask our prayers through Jesus Christ. Amen**

We Go Forth

Blessing

Leader: May the God of Peace and Friendship bless us all in the name of the Father,
+ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **AMEN!**

Dismissal

Leader: Go, daring to believe in a new humanity
– a world where justice and peace will flourish

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Sign of Peace

Leader: Grateful for the freedom that we know today,
Let us offer each other a Sign of Peace. ...

