Apology

Some reflections on the nature of Christian apology[1]

with reference to Kevin Rudd's apology to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia and for enforced child migration and adoption within Australia

Introduction

In the context of secular society the word 'apology' typically denotes an expression of regret for some action.[2] It can imply that the one apologising is acknowledging a fault or some sort of offense against another. The word can carry connotations of putting right a fault – such as when an apology for misreporting is carried in a newspaper. There are problems however in many contexts in secular society when the notion of apology carries *admission* of fault, rather than merely regret for some incident or action, because admission of fault is often connected with issues of compensation. So people are often advised not to offer an apology which carries admission of fault, lest they or their organisation be sued. In a litigious culture, gestures of apology can be tied up with all kinds of other matters, especially those leading to financial compensation. Apology therefore carries risk and cannot take place in a vacuum. Its content and process has to be balanced against the likely response of the recipient and the possible outcomes.

The first issue, then, is whether the use of the word 'apology' is helpful in describing Christian expressions of sorrow and regret for past actions. We will argue that the kind of theological language we would prefer to employ, - repentance, forgiveness, renewal and reconciliation – language which places *God* at the heart of our intent and our actions, enables a more meaningful theological discussion and depth of understanding to come about, but which has little relevance unfortunately to the fault-compensation axis of the secular world. In this sense then, Christian 'apology' is constantly in danger of being misrepresented and misunderstood on both sides.

[1] MTAG will publish in the autumn its work on issues in Christian peace and reconciliation entitled *Unreconciled?* In this work we examine many of the issues raised here in much greater theological depth.

[2] We are not here concerned with 'apology' as a defence or justification - as in Christian 'apologetics'.

Recent Christian 'apologies'

The issue of Christians apologising for past actions has been raised in connection with a number of such 'apologies' in recent times. To some extent there is even a trend for such apologies with denominations being pressured by various groups to apologise for a raft of injustices, including most recently the 'doctrine of discovery'.[3] [4] Such apologies have included: for not speaking out against the Holocaust, for slavery, for child abuse, and in Australia, apologies offered to the Aboriginal people for their treatment by the Australian authorities and to those children forcibly adopted and sent to live in Australia. These last two apologies, made publicly by Kevin Rudd, the former Australian Prime Minister, on 13th February 2008 and 16th November 2009 are the focus of this paper. Kevin's Rudd's speeches deal in particular with those children who were removed from their birth parents and adopted into Australian families.

Kevin Rudd's apologies are interesting in that he afterwards discussed with Professor John Drane of MTAG his reading of Scripture and a particular attention to Bonhoeffer in preparation for his words and actions, and his intention that the apology flow out from his understanding of his Christian faith. In particular Kevin Rudd was interested in issues of how to make sense of undeserved suffering, the nature of evil and the place of forgiveness. In Bonhoeffer's words: 'Forgive my lack of faith and any wrong that I have done today, and help me to forgive all who have wronged me.' Notwithstanding, as Prime Minister of Australia Rudd also had to work within parameters of government language and responsibility, trying to feed his Christian understanding into the mechanisms of state. We will see that this produces both opportunities and ambiguities about the resulting actions.

We will look at a number of theological issues which surround these kinds of actions and which must be considered against both secular and religious backgrounds:

Felt Wrong and Human Flourishing

The next issue which arises is the acknowledgment of a felt wrong. The word 'felt' is operative because often the communities which are offered the apology are not those individuals against whom an injustice took place. Notwithstanding, historical circumstances and actions occur which, played out over time, result in some groups being unable to flourish. From the Christian point of view we would be concerned if people do not flourish as God intends all human beings to flourish. We learn about God's intention for human beings from biblical sources such as Isaiah 65. 21-23. In this Isaiah vision, people should be free to make

[3] An edict stating that if an explorer discovered a land which was not inhabited by Christian people, it could be seized for their own nation with impunity.

[4] Allied concepts of *terra nullius* and Manifest Destiny are discussed in the 'Mission and Power' track of the Edinburgh 2010 World Mission Conference. See the relevant chapter in Balia D., and Kim, K., *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*, Volume 2, (Oxford: Regnum Books) pp. 86-115.

homes and to prosper and should not be overpowered or exploited by others; they should have the opportunity to work and to raise their children without fear. To paraphrase Tweed,[5] human flourishing sees people experiencing love, joy and spiritual nourishment in their lives; actively confronting human suffering with a view to overcoming it; making homes and community; and being able to explore creatively. From the secular point of view, those communities which present the felt wrong may see it in terms of denial of their human rights, or the abuse of power by the Church, resulting in damage to individuals or communities which requires redress.

Kevin Rudd noted that those actions which led to or involved the splitting up of families has resulted in a particular inability for communities to flourish and concluded that in the process of planning for a future Australia, those actions must be acknowledged and regretted. It is a duty of Christians to commit themselves to enabling human flourishing as God intends and therefore where individuals, groups or communities are unable to thrive and progress, the felt wrong must be acknowledged and addressed. At the same time a level of objective truth about the felt wrong has to be established. Jesus, for example, cut through the tissue of helplessness and blame in the story of the man at the pool of Bethesda, by asking him if he really *wanted* to be healed (John 5.1-9). It is not enough for people to make claims about what may or may not have happened, or to claim hurt feelings, hardship or suffering (which can be compensated in the courts) without some evidence that the outworking of past actions has resulted in detriment to individuals or to a community. If there is agreed evidence that a community has not flourished or has suffered harm, then there is a basis on which the parties can move forward. There needs to be evidence within both synchronic (what's happening now) and diachronic (what happened in history) dimensions. It is worth noting that where such evidence exists, the *legitimacy* of the felt wrong may be a secondary issue and may be one in which different parties cannot agree, either about the nature of the wrongful actions, their outcomes or the events or personalities involved. Individual events may be extremely complex and difficult to disentangle after a great deal of time has passed. The actions which led to the felt wrong may also have generated good and meaningful outcomes, but their contribution to human flourishing may be undermined by structural evil which results in persistence of the felt wrong. Similarly, there may be questions about the *ownership* of the events surrounding the felt wrong. In Rudd's case, there was an owning up on the part of the government, but this raises questions about whether apology can be meaningful if it comes from people who were not, and have never been, involved in the original actions or events which generated the felt wrong. To this extent, an apology which is delivered within the living memory of those directly involved makes a difference.[6]

[5] Tweed, T., (2006) *Crossing and Dwelling, a theory of religion* (Cambridge, Mass.:Harvard University Press)

[6] For example, Prime Minister David Cameron offered an apology on behalf of the Government for the Bloody Sunday killings in 1972 following the Savile report. This was seen as significant to those people who continue to 'live with' the aftermath of Bloody Sunday. See http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/jun/15/david-cameron-bloody-sunday-apology

We must also distinguish between apologies aimed at individuals who have suffered (such as victims of abuse) and whose stories may be each very different and require particularised address, and those communities which corporately believe that they cannot flourish. Similarly, there is also the question of who offers the apology, - whether it comes from Christian individuals in public positions (like Kevin Rudd) or from the leadership of the Church. In the wider Church, it may make more sense to say sorry as a community. This may also make a difference to how the apology is viewed or received.[7]

Power and Powerlessness

> For these failures to offer proper care to the powerless, the voiceless and the most vulnerable, we say sorry (Kevin Rudd: 2009)

The next issue is that a context needs to be established in which the felt wrong can be addressed. Those groups which express a felt wrong are often those who have been, or who continue to be, in a condition of powerlessness. Families of children who were forcibly adopted into Australian homes had no power to object; Aboriginal people who were removed from their land and culture and 'normalised' into white Australian homes and culture were similarly powerless. That powerlessness is the matter at issue and is operative whether or not those people can be said to have 'suffered' or not. Although many people have acted in what they understood at the time to be the best interests of others, the lack of free choice or assent for those others can continue to remain a source of grievance and inability to flourish in subsequent generations. In Luke 4. 14-19 Jesus responds to the Isaiah vision of God's desire for all people by proclaiming that he is on the side of the powerless and the oppressed, and so in following him, Christians must also be concerned for the needs of these people, to look to liberation of those trapped by human actions and to raise up those who have suffered.

Truth-Telling

> To those of you who were told you were orphans, brought here without your parents' knowledge or consent, we acknowledge the lies you were told, the lies told to your mothers and fathers, and the pain these lies have caused for a lifetime (Kevin Rudd: 2009)
>
> In doing so, we are also wrestling with our own soul.
>
> This is not, as some would argue, a black-armband view of history; it is just the truth: the cold, confronting, uncomfortable truth - facing it, dealing with it, moving on from it.

[7] For example, Nick Spencer in *Beyond Belief* (LCC 2003) showed that many people receive information from the Church through a 'negative filter' disposing them to see even positive and life-giving actions with suspicion.

> Until we fully confront that truth, there will always be a shadow hanging over us and our future as a fully united and fully reconciled people.
>
> It is time to reconcile. It is time to recognise the injustices of the past. It is time to say sorry. It is time to move forward together (Kevin Rudd: 2008)

Another element in the process of Christian apology is to create a space for truth telling and to permit elements of people's lives which may have been silenced, suppressed or otherwise concealed to emerge fully for evaluation. This is not a matter of simply laying out a set of alternative stories or re-writing history, however. There is a series of issues about exposing untruth (as emphasised by Rudd) and creating spaces for stories which may have been suppressed. Nor is it a matter of accepting such stories uncritically but of allowing the felt wrong to be expressed in an unfettered way. An apology offered in a reconciliatory space should offer a permission-giving for these things to happen and to be evaluated.[8] It is notable then that reconciliation work often focuses on making it possible for stories to be told and is a feature of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, Minjung theology, the Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland, and the Forgiveness Project. Such stories are often reported in the media as particularly one-sided, but analysis of such stories often shows that many people are involved and that events and actions are complex and many-layered. We would prefer to point up the importance of this story telling within the context of a process of Christian reconciliation, rather than reducing it to a laying out of the injustice and the subsequent apology.

Empowerment and Victimhood

A context can therefore be established where those who experience a felt wrong can be empowered to lay that grievance, injustice, emotional pain or sense of suffering before others. This is not to dispose such people necessarily as victims, although in secular society they may be typically represented as victims. Some people refuse the status of victimhood because it further disempowers them.[9] Others may seize upon victimhood as a way of avoiding reconciliation and perpetuating the sense of injustice. Yet others may be seeking to rid themselves of a victim label which has been placed upon them by others. The issue is rather to create a space in which their story may be made known and their feelings acknowledged, a means of giving 'voice' to those whose voice has been denied or whose story has been misinterpreted, re-constituted by others or simply ignored. Kevin Rudd acknowledged the importance of hearing stories as providing a framework for apology. Indeed, creating a space in which the story can be told is part of the process:

[8] *Unreconciled?* contains a chapter on truth and lies

[9] In North America, the concept of 'survivance' denotes an active commitment to remain present, to preserve indigenous culture and refuse the status of victimhood.

> I asked Nanna Fejo what she would have me say today about her story. She thought for a few moments then said that what I should say today was that all mothers are important. And she added: Families - keeping them together is very important. It's a good thing that you are surrounded by love and that love is passed down the generations. That's what gives you happiness.

He continues:

> There is something terribly primal about these firsthand accounts. The pain is searing; it screams from the pages. The hurt, the humiliation, the degradation and the sheer brutality of the act of physically separating a mother from her children is a deep assault on our senses and on our most elemental humanity.
>
> These stories cry out to be heard; they cry out for an apology.(2008)

Reconciliatory Space

Once a felt wrong has been acknowledged and a context established for that wrong to be aired, there is the matter of appropriate response. A public apology from a person with authority and power creates a number of conditions within the reconciliatory space. First, an apology makes the felt wrong a public matter, worthy of recognition and interrogation. Kevin Rudd's speeches were specifically made personally, but also on behalf of the Australian government, parliament and people. Second, words of apology can act as reconciliatory bridges establishing equal power relations and passing the power to make relationship to the person or group with the grievance. Third, apology acts as an invitation to make a new relationship so that both can flourish in the future. Kevin Rudd's speeches were oriented towards a future of communities living and working in peace and harmony in the future. In other words, the act of apology is not so much about 'dealing' with the past or judging the sins of others, but about creating conditions for new relationships so that all may move forward.

> It is also aimed at building a bridge between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians - a bridge based on a real respect rather than a thinly veiled contempt.
>
> Our challenge for the future is to cross that bridge and, in so doing, to embrace a new partnership between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians - to embrace, as part of that partnership, expanded Link-up and other critical services to help the stolen generations to trace their families if at all possible and to provide dignity to their lives.
>
> But the core of this partnership for the future is to close the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians on life expectancy, educational achievement and employment opportunities.
>
> This new partnership on closing the gap will set concrete targets for the future: within a decade to halve the widening gap in literacy, numeracy and employment outcomes and opportunities for indigenous Australians, within a decade to halve the appalling gap in infant mortality rates between indigenous and non-indigenous children and, within a generation, to close the equally appalling 17-year life gap between indigenous and non-indigenous in overall life expectancy (2008)

Fourth, words of apology create conditions for other kinds of reconciliatory action such as compensation, restitution or reparation. But care has to be taken that those actions do not replicate (even symbolically) the conditions of power which contributed to the grievance in the first place. Paying people off, recontextualising restitution to make it about the compensators, even celebrating the apology can inadvertently place power back in the hands of the apologisers and hold up the mechanisms for change. Sometimes there are centuries of hostility to be addressed, indeed Acts and Paul's letters exercise the question of whether and how Christian faith can reconcile the deep divisions between Jews and Gentiles and create one family of human beings under God. There is also a potential problem in that by blaming the past for the ills of the world, we could end up feeling more holy and fail to work for not only a better future but an eschatological end: 'the healing of the nations' (see below). Rudd's argument was that the felt wrong could not have been said to be addressed completely until Aboriginal people and other Australians achieved equality of opportunity, growth and flourishing. Saying sorry then, is not enough. Repentance requires penitence before God which may require giving something up or away or, and perhaps more importantly, doing something *more* to bring human communities more nearly conformed to God's intention for human beings.[10]

However, the reconciliatory space is enabled more efficiently if there is a structure in place for the apology to be received and acted upon. For example, the Aboriginal people had been asking for such an apology. They have a strong sense of community and are strong in parliament. This created a reference point for an apology to be issued, then received by people who embody the community. There is a marked difference then between this kind of group and the adopted orphans who did not have that kind of representation because they are fragmented throughout the community. So it is important to recognize that apology means different things to different people groups. The Aboriginal people were partying in the Canberra streets: they had been considered nobodies and so an apology gave them status and make significant connections to them. It also allowed them to express their strong sense of continuity with the past, and to celebrate connections with their forebears which non-Aboriginal peoples overlook because they do not have the same cultural and religious experiences. Receiving an apology in living memory of those wronged, as observed above, can make a difference, so for the Aboriginal people, the living connections with the past were 'liberated' by Rudd's apology. For those forcibly adopted, many of those links were and are missing.

The issue of *negotiation* between the powerful and the powerless is also nonetheless important. The transfer of power back to those who experience the felt wrong cannot then allow victims to demand

[10] The corporate prayer of confession in the Eucharist is a good example of the Christian desire to both say sorry and repent, a sequence which leads to service of Christ 'in newness of life'. (p169 CW) An alternative prayer of corporate confession asks God to forgive what we have been, amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, clearly encouraging a change of heart in response to what has been done 'wrong' against God and neighbour.

whatever they want. The issue of ownership of responsibility for the felt wrong is here coupled with a need to circumscribe the issue in a meaningful way. It is here that the split between secular society and the Christian worldview becomes more evident. In the secular world, limits may be imposed by legal restraints on compensation or material offering in recompense. The matter is 'settled' when compensation has taken place. In the Christian setting, reconciliation in terms of overcoming barriers, creating a new kind of society, needs to be the outcome for both parties. This may involve recompense but the issue is what kind of future can now be achieved by means of repentance and receiving forgiveness. And for Christians, this process of moving forward has to take place under God, following Jesus and seeking to be conformed to God's will.

Blame and Judgement

There has been some confusion about whether this kind apology, or reconciliatory action, involves blame and judgement and whether it presupposes a particular view of sin and usurps God's role as the judge of what is in human hearts. A question about the place of wrongdoing within, or as part of, the divine order raises issues of exactly how things then get put right and what such 'restitution' should entail. Again, for Christians, repentance, renewal, salvation and forgiveness in and through Christ provide a theological language for dealing with these questions, but getting what this means to us across to others is an urgent missiological matter. Consequently, this kind of apology should not used for the purpose of laying blame at the door of people who cannot speak for themselves. It is not possible, even with the best kind of historical record, to know exactly what motives or understanding prompted people to act or behave in particular ways towards others, but it is perfectly possible to see cultural effects working themselves among different groups, effects which could not necessarily have been foreseen. For example, while adoption in the 'best material interests' of children may have been a motivation, the spiritual and psychological effects on those children leading to a sense of loss and powerlessness may not have been imagined. [11]The essential question here is not about righting a past wrong, but: what is going to *change*. For example reviewing the sense that adopting children into acceptable middle class homes makes everything 'all right', also calls into question issues today about how we treat people who are surplus to requirement, need something to be 'done' about them or who are otherwise 'beyond the pale', - such as how today we view and treat the children of drug addicts or those with mental illness. Merely trying to alter the past by means of apology is not reconciliation and leads to situations where particular groups of Unreconciled continue to exist. [12]

Similarly, apology is not synonymous with passing judgement on the historical record for the wisdom of hindsight may blur and muddle the issues at hand. Rather, we need to be able to critique the past with the

[11] One of our current MTAG members was also adopted as a child and was able to speak of the particular issues arising from the experience of adoption.

[12] In our forthcoming publication we use the concept of the Unreconciled with a capital letter to draw attention to those groups of people who are left untouched by Christian peace and reconciliation processes. We also use it to indicate that we are all in some way Unreconciled.

best tools at our disposal in order not to become trapped by it. But this presupposes that our own actions and behaviour in our own time must themselves be critiqued, including our acts of apology. The Christian context would want to raise issues of sinfulness and the desire expressed by Jesus that all should be reconciled to God and who makes it possible, as Herbert puts it, by bearing the blame. Here we would prefer to talk about repentance rather than just 'apology'. In this sense, Christian apology carries an acknowledgement that *everyone* gets things wrong and that we commit ourselves to doing the best we can to discern God's will and live in obedience to it.[13] There is a value in public recognition of past evil since it places a marker in social consciousness through which we may hope to learn more about ourselves, how we seek to do God's will and do better in the future.[14]

Mode of Apology

Another issue concerns the mode of Christian apology. One of the interesting things about Kevin Rudd's speeches of apology is that they read like a prayer of contrition:

> For the pain, suffering and hurt of these stolen generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.
>
> To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.
>
> And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

Piet Meiring has noted with reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that despite an insistence that religion be left out of the proceedings, Archbishop Tutu felt unable to proceed with the hearings until the event had been commended to God. [15]Christian repentance then, needs to take place in a space which both includes and acknowledges God as witness, receiver, healer and judge.[16] Thus Christian repentance is made in the understanding that it is not a substitute or standing-in for God, but that it is offered in God's presence for an outcome that is in accordance with God's will: the future of people's living together and flourishing equally. In this sense, such apology is prayerful and uttered in the consciousness of the need for God's forgiveness and mercy. To this end, Christian repentance for felt wrongs has a powerful eschatological orientation and intention, undertaken for the 'healing of the nations' actually echoed by Rudd in his speech of apology to the Aboriginal people.

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[13] Cf Psalm 143.2; 1 John 1.8-10

[14] So, for example, the final part of the order of service for Remembrance Sunday from the Joint Liturgical Group and the Royal British Legion there is a commitment to work for future peace, healing and reconciliation. See http://www.ctbi.org.uk/233 and also those campaigns working to ensure atrocities are never repeated, such as www.never-again.com

[15] In conversation with MTAG and included in *Unreconciled?*

[16] See, for example, 1 Samuel 24.15 and Saul's subsequent apology and actions towards David.

> We the parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation (Kevin Rudd: 2008)

This echoes the vision in Revelation 22.2-3 for the Christian community to take responsibility for healing and reconciliation:

> On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him

One of the particular problems we have, is getting across what this means to non-Christians, for whom 'apology' may only signify a reference to the past.

Forgiveness

The address of the felt wrong within the reconciliatory space indicates that for reconciliation to take place both parties must change. The felt wrong needs to be transmuted into through the process into a process for forgiveness that is acknowledged and received by the apologiser. Again it is typical of secular culture and reporting that a process for forgiveness is not necessarily part of the picture. This process may happen quickly or it may take considerable time in response to restitution, or it may not happen at all. Apology then, is only one facet of the whole process. Forgiveness and reconciliation point towards the creation of something new for the future, not merely a dealing with the ills of the past. The creation of the new situation may involve an acknowledgement of *shame*, a restoration of broken relationships through forgiveness and some measure of closure on which the new relationships may be built, as lessons are learned and a commitment to an improved future undertaken. Consequently Rudd's apologies focus on what is going to happen in Australia in its future on the basis of new understanding rather than burying grievances. In *Unreconciled?* we see this process as a new birth brought about by Jesus. In the issue under consideration, the offer of apology has to be the midwife and the difficulty for a Christian Prime Minister is in making it clear what role God has to play in the affair. For religious authorities, it is possible to be more explicit. For example, the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales' statement on child abuse placed an emphasis on the need to receive pardon from those abused *and* pardon from God:

> We express our heartfelt apology and deep sorrow to those who have suffered abuse, those who have felt ignored, disbelieved or betrayed. We ask their pardon, and the pardon of God for these terrible deeds done in our midst.[17]

[17] Statement by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales 22/04/2010

But is apology *ever* enough?

After the Vatican apology in 1998 for not speaking out against the Holocaust it was reported that American Jews were not impressed by the statement, because of a sense that it did not go far enough or cover enough of the felt wrong.[18] The difficulty then is that an apology can be felt to be the end of the matter, making it more difficult for residual differences and issues to be addressed. Similarly, John Moriarty, of the Aboriginal people, argued that Kevin Rudd's apology did not get at deeper issues of an intended 'cultural genocide' by white Australians and that the act of apology distracted from dealing with a more serious cultural sin: not that Aboriginal children were 'better off' in white families, but that their culture and traditions should be 'bred out' by their absorption into white culture.

> I'm questioning the cultural genocide aspect. I think it's an appeasement in the sense that it's saying sorry, but it doesn't get down to the real crux of the issue, in my view, that people like me were taken away from their full-blooded mothers to breed out the culture. It doesn't come to that. It doesn't hit home with me.[19]

This shows that there are both opportunities and pitfalls contained in human acts of apology which demonstrate that the act of apology can only be part of the process towards reconciliation. Apology does not 'finish' events in history, but if it occurs in the context of genuine repentance with change of hearts and minds, the transformation of whole persons and communities, it can create a space for a new kind of Christ-like living in the future. In this sense, Christian apology struggles to bring something of the theological force of repentance and forgiveness into cultures which do not have a good grasp of these concepts. What we need is theological tools for appropriate engagement with these cultures through which human beings can dedicate themselves to seeking God's will and committing themselves to the future which God intends for them.

Some further reading

Balia D., and Kim, K., *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*, Volume 2, (Oxford: Regnum Books)

Castle, B., (2008) *Reconciling One and All: God's Gift to the World* (London: SPCK)

Evans, A., (2004) *Healing Liturgies for the Seasons of Life* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press)

Rudd, K., (2008) apology to the 'stolen generations' online at http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/full-transcript-of-pms-speech/story-e6frg6nf-1111115543192

[18] See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/65889.stm

[19] See http://www.news.com.au/national/pm-moves-to-heal-the-nation/story-e6frfkw9-1111115539560

Rudd, K., (2009) apology to the 'forgotten Australians' online at
http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/transcript-of-kevin-rudds-apology-to-forgotten-australians/story-e6frf7l6-1225798255277
Vizenor, G., (ed) (1998) *Survivance, Narratives of Native Presence* (University of Nebraska Press)

Further resources on reconciliation issues are available from eg http://stethelburgas.org among others

Some questions for reflection (based on Balia and Kim 2010 as above)

- What calls us into repentance and reconciliation?
- How could living out confession/apology (accepted or not) shape the way the church does mission?
- What might 'reconciliation' mean in the Australian example?
- What does repentance 'look like' practically and theologically in such contexts?
- What will sustain journeys of repentance and reconciliation?