



Pacific Conference of Churches

Serving the Pasifika Household of God

www.pcc.org.fj

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To PCC Member Churches,
To PCC Member National Councils of Churches
To Ecumenical Partners

CALL FOR SUNDAY 14 JULY TO BE OBSERVED AS FREEDOM SUNDAY FOR KANAKY AND MA'OHU NUI

Dear sisters, brothers and friends of the Pasifika Household of God,

Warm Pacific Greetings from the PCC Secretariat!!

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for our sisters and brothers in Kanaky

Next Sunday, the 14th of July is the National Day of France. The date commemorates the storming of the Bastille, a medieval armoury, fortress and political prison, on 14 July 1789. The Bastille then represented royal authority in the centre of Paris and was seen by the revolutionaries as a symbol of the monarchy's abuse of power. Its fall was the flashpoint of the French Revolution.

At a time when our sisters and brothers in Kanaky continue to suffer from the colonial political and socio-economic colonisation by France, which has led to outbreaks of violence, particularly by youth who are deeply frustrated by the French government's duplicitous approach to Kanaky's decolonisation, and poverty, lack of equitable development and repression of the dignity of Kanaks; and at a time when our family in Ma'ohi Nui also continues to struggle for the decolonisation process in their islands, as well as justice for 50 years of nuclear devastation on their fenua and people – this national day is a mockery of the phrase **"Liberty, Equality and Fraternity"** proclaimed during the French Revolution, inscribed in the French 1958 constitution and today an integral part of French national heritage.

At a time when the cry of self-determination echoes from many communities within our Pasifika Household of God, and the commemoration of national days and other events by colonisers are being challenged. We are reminded by our commitments made at the 12th General Assembly that:

- We affirm that Kanaky has always been and must remain Pasifika.
- We stand ready to support Kanaky's pursuit of independence from France through a referendum promised by the French republic.

- We commit to supporting efforts to improve the wellbeing of the Kanak people.
- We will voyage together for the holistic Self-Determination of Kanaky, Maohi, West Papua, Bouganville, the Land now called Australia, Aotearoa and other territories who seek liberation and justice.

With these commitments in mind, we humbly ask that all PCC members mark Sunday 14th July, 2024 as **Kanaky and Ma'ohi Nui Freedom Sunday** (noting West Papua has a special day on 1 December that we already commemorate).

The revised common lectionary texts for Sunday 14th July are significant for reflecting on the struggle for truth, justice and freedom and a God who loves and liberates:

- Psalm 24 (The Earth is the Lord's),
- 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19 (David dances before the Ark of the Covenant),
- Ephesians 1:3-14 (God predestined the world for love and this love is for all humanity), and
- Mark 6:14-29 (Herod's execution of John the Baptist)

We ask that intercessory prayers please include Kanaky, Ma'ohi Nui and other communities struggling for decolonisation, self-determination and the flourishing of indigenous and vulnerable communities.

Attached to this letter are our most recent PCC documents on Kanaky. We hope to share messages from our communities in Kanaky and Ma'ohi Nui in the days leading up to 14 July.

It is our deep hope that our prayers for Kanaky and Ma'ohi Nui this Sunday will be heard as a cry of the Pasifika Household of God on earth as in heaven.

My sincere appreciation for your kind consideration of this humble request.

I remain your servant for Christ and the Peace of the Pasifika Household of God,



James Shri Bhagwan (Rev.)
General Secretary – Pacific Conference of Churches

