

Good morning everyone.

In terms of Sorry Day I am perhaps the least qualified person to talk to you about my experiences on Sorry Day. It was only last year that I learnt that Sorry Day was a thing. It was only three days ago that I was told that I would have to make a speech to the Castlemaine Community on Sorry Day. This is somewhat as during my primary school days I learnt about cultures from all over the world, from Indonesia to France I was educated on what people from those countries believed in, and what they have had to endure. But I was never ever taught about the hardships of people who share a country, state and town with me, and I was never told their stories.

However, during this period of three days I have educated myself on so much. I have discovered so much about myself and those around me in those three days. And you know what? I'm sorry.

I'm sorry that indigenous people went through such horrific trauma due to British Colonisation. I am sorry that indigenous people are still being traumatised today. I am sorry that there are still people in Australia, in Victoria, In Castlemaine that are still unable to accept someone because of the amount of melanin in their skin. I am sorry that people on this Earth still cannot get along because their cultures are not identical. Most of all, I am sorry that a message that has been preached for hundreds of years in that we should all love and forgive one another, has fallen on deaf ears.

In order to move forward as a united people of Australia, we have to learn to understand that not everyone is the same. That all people are unique, but all people want to feel safe. And welcome. And happy. By not preaching racism, by accepting each other for who we are, and our backgrounds, and our cultures, we shall move forward. For we are not fortunate enough to be able to pretend we are living in the past.

To combat current national and global issues, which ultimately will affect every single one of us, we need to learn to work together. We need to learn how to come together. As a nation. So that when we do fight the battle that is climate change, or any other issue that will inevitably rear its head, it is not white people and black people in Australia. It is Australians working together in Australia. Because if there is one thing that each of share, living on this land. It is that we are Australian.



