

## **AUSTRALIA DAY, 2021-some insights!**

October 31 2017 marked the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the now worldwide Lutheran church. To mark this significant event for many Christian people there were a number of Catholic-Lutheran dialogues. One of these dialogues was in the Chapter Hall of Saint Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.

I well remember one of the Lutheran bishops saying these words; *"I think it is best that we commemorate rather than celebrate this occasion as amidst the progress made for us all in better understanding Christianity much hurt and loss also needs to be acknowledged."*

I thought recently that this same principle could be used in thinking about *Australia Day* as it's definitely not a day worthy of celebration for many of our aboriginal people. Yet we should not also ignore the many good things that British colonization has brought to this island continent in the South Seas. So perhaps it's best that this day be *commemorated*.

A thought from *left field* I saw in the letters section in the Sydney Morning Herald on January 26 that came from Jennifer Katauskas of Wahroonga who wrote; *"In 1803 Matthew Flinders accompanied by the aboriginal elder Bungaree circumnavigated and mapped the then Great South Land and he named it Australia. This journey took a whole year so any date in the year could be chosen to celebrate this event and it be called Australia Day."* I think that this is definitely something to think about! *Fr Martin R Maunsell*