

RECONCILIATION GARDEN

THE SCULPTURE



NATIONAL SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

This sculpture was designed by Vicki Couzens, a Keerray Woorroong Gunditjmara woman from the Western Districts of Victoria.

This sculpture references a possum skin cloak. Possum skin cloaks were worn by Aboriginal people of South Eastern Australia and in particular by the tribes of Victoria.

Possum skin cloaks were worn for warmth; to sleep in, mothers carried their babies and young children wrapped in their cloaks; people were buried in their cloaks; cloaks were significant trade items. Cloaks were marked with designs depicting stories and knowledge of the wearer's clan and Country.

The Cloak was chosen as a symbol to represent the parish community. Cloaks characterize the qualities of warmth, sharing, caring, community, nourishment and nurturing. The gathering of community in the sharing of our faith.

The symbols reference traditional styles of Victorian Aboriginal art designed to relate to the Boon Wurrong Country, the site the church is built on and the surrounding environment. The spiral design represents the eternal cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth into eternal life.

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