

President Foundation Day Address

President Susan McLaughlin 2012 Welcome everyone as we come together to celebrate our 73rd. Foundation Day andÂ Pilgrimage under the tree.

The purpose of our gathering here today is simple: it's to honour, to reflect and to remember our fathers, our brothers, uncles, our friends and fellow Australians who went to war to fight for us and who made the supreme sacrifice with their lives for us. For some it was an adventure, a sense of duty, from pride of country, out of protection for those they loved. A sacrifice made by many that we cannot ever repay.

But we can strive to honour their sacrifice by our efforts to make our Australia, our Melbourne, our community a better place to be, a better place to live, so that their sacrifice never pales to insignificance.

Our world is in turmoil with western civilization increasingly deteriorating with greed, materialism, wealth and self centeredness. There is still war and fighting in our world. It saddens me that this is not the Australia our soldiers sacrificed themselves for.

We must get back to the basics, to those core Australian values that our soldiers, yesterday and today displayed and continue to display in their duties as a soldier, in their duties to their country. They have led the way with their courage, with putting others before themselves, with being concerned for others welfare before their own, with looking out for and standing up for their mates, with giving up their comforts for our wellbeing and safety, and most of all, with their self sacrifice given without question and without hesitation so we could have a better life free from dictators and destruction.

No we cannot repay our fallen heroes in full but we can reach out and sacrifice some of our own needs to assist and to protect others, to stand up for the marginalized and disadvantaged members of our community, our Melbourne, our Australia and our world. As our soldiers fought and still fight for us, we must stand up and fight for those who cannot fight for themselves.

It was their legacy to us and it is now our responsibility not only to honour that legacy but to live that legacy!

I thank God for their sacrifice and for the life we now have, a privileged life - a life filled with opportunities and choices.

And it is up to each of us and the choices we make - let us all reflect for a moment - what comforts can you sacrifice, what is their sacrifice worth to you?

Lest we forget!