

## An essential Ekka tradition: Blessing of the Plough



At the official opening of the Royal Queensland Show (Ekka) every second year, Archbishop Phillip is asked to bless the plough, which has become a tradition for our Archbishop. Catholic Archbishop Mark Coleridge blesses the plough every other year. Archbishop Phillip is pictured here blessing the plough at the Ekka in August 2019

Local Queenslanders are celebrating the resumption of the annual Royal National Agricultural (RNA) Show Day, or the “Ekka” as it is affectionately known, after two years due to COVID-19.

The Ekka, [which dates back to 1876](#), is run by the [Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland](#). This association is a not-for profit, whose mission is to celebrate and champion the essential role agriculture plays in the everyday lives of Queenslanders.

The Ekka, short for “exhibition”, plays an important role in bringing city and county folk together. The Ekka also brings delight to the many thousands of visitors who come through the gates, as well as to all the exhibitors, staff and volunteers who do an excellent job managing the show. Exhibitors will no doubt be glad to display their produce, livestock and arts and crafts after a two-year absence.

One of the traditions observed each year at the Ekka is the Blessing of the Plough. In maintaining this tradition, we give thanks to God for the goodness of creation and pray for our proper care of natural resources:

“Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation:  
for in your abundant care you have given us fertile land,  
rich soil, the seasons in their courses.  
You provide seed for sowing, water, light and warmth  
to bring forth the miracle of growth.  
You give us skill to work the land,  
to prepare and nourish it, that it may be fruitful.  
By your blessing,  
let this plough be a sign of all that you promise to us.  
Prosper the work of our hands,  
and provide abundant crops for your people to share.  
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

God speed the plough.

**God speed the plough.”**

It is spiritually important to remind ourselves about where our daily food comes from and about the work of the people who help produce it. With an abundance of produce and other foodstuffs in our supermarkets, as well as fast food, take-aways and home deliveries, we can easily forget the gift of fertile soil, the sowing of seed, the raising of livestock, the seasons and the necessity of rain, the harvest, and the transfer of produce to market, all so that we can eat and drink.

In these stressful economic times, we also do well to remember families who find it increasingly difficult to put food on the table due to the ever-increasing costs of living.

During Ekka Show Week between 6 and 14 August this year, let us pause to give thanks to God for the wonder of creation and for daily food, homes, families and friends:

“The eyes of all wait upon you, O Lord,  
and you give them their food in due season.  
You open wide your hand  
and satisfy the needs of every living creature.  
For this food  
and for every gift which comes from you, O God,  
we bless your holy name  
through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.”

The Most Rev'd Dr Phillip Aspinall AC  
Archbishop of Brisbane