

AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC COALITION for CHURCH REFORM
(<http://accr.com.au>)
STATEMENT on THE VOICE REFERENDUM

We, the leaders and members of 16 Catholic organisations advocating for a just Catholic Church and just Australian and New Zealand nations, have meditated on the Uluru Statement from the Heart in the spirit of Aboriginal *dadirri* (inner deep listening and contemplative awareness). The Statement seeks “a movement of the Australian people for a better future.”

This referendum seeks to:

- formally acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia; and
- establish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice, the mechanics of which will be legislated by our elected representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament.

The Voice will give our Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples a means of engaging directly with our Parliament and Executive government.

This referendum is a critical moment in the life of our Australian nation. We must redress the near destruction of our First People’s ancient spirituality and culture that we, the colonisers, have brought about over two centuries, often deliberately but also by neglect and periodic uninformed interventions. The future of relations between the dispossessed and the colonialising peoples and their descendants is at stake.

As an Australasian organisation, we acknowledge Aotearoa New Zealand with its Treaty of Waitangi.

We join with the Australian Catholic Bishops and the 2022 Plenary Council in endorsing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in the spirit of reconciliation and walking together. In the words of Bishop Vincent Long, “A more civilised and gracious response to a history littered with violence is hard to imagine. What a remarkable opportunity Australians have been given to forge greater unity in our nation.”

We give our full support to the aspirations of our First Peoples, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sisters and brothers, for Constitutional recognition and enshrining a Voice to Parliament and the Commonwealth Government of the day.

It is time for all to say YES.

“Be the Change ’New Zealand

Cyber Christian Community

Cardijn Community

For the Innocents

Catholics Moving Forward Shoalhaven

Rainbow Catholics Interagency

Communities of the Way

SA Catholics for an Evolving Church

Concerned Catholics Canberra-Goulburn

Voices of Australian Catholic Laity

Concerned Catholics Tasmania

WATAC Inc - Women and the Australian Church

Concerned Catholics Wagga Wagga

Welcoming Christian Community

Concerned Catholics Wollongong

WWITCH - Women’s Wisdom in the Church