

30 April 2021

Dear Co-Design Body

Submission to Co-design process

The Justice and Peace Office promotes Social Justice across the Sydney Archdiocese and beyond. We work with parishes and schools in the Catholic network, as well as with wider community agencies and groups of locals. We are members of the Sydney Alliance with whom we support the USFTH, so this is an independent submission to reinforce our support.

Why do you think the Uluru Statement from the Heart is important?

It is essential that First Nations people in Australia receive Recognition and Acknowledgement of their ownership of this land and never having ceded sovereignty. A Voice to Parliament, and hopefully a Treaty are sorely needed to heal the wound in Australia's soul, and to right the wrongs of 250 years of injustice. This must be accompanied by a thorough Truth Telling and Makarata process.

Why do you think a Voice to Parliament is important?

Because governments of all levels (Local, State and Federal) need to take account of First People's views on all our social, political and legal processes.

Why do you think Indigenous people should have a Voice to Parliament?

Because they are the Stewards of this Land.

Why do you think it's important to enshrine the Voice to Parliament in the Constitution, rather than include it only in legislation?

So that it can not be tampered with by subsequent regimes who may wish to dismantle this foundational process

We wish to support all moves to strengthen the movement for Aboriginal Development across all fields, and particularly in Justice, Health and Education. Raise the Age, Close the Gap and Hand Back Crown Lands to Traditional Owners are just a few of the priority topics we want to see higher on the national agenda.

Sincerely,

Fr. Peter Smith
Justice and Peace Promoter
Justice and Peace Office
Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney

Justice, Peace, Ecology, Development