



The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart

Australia Province

VOICE OF THE HEART

- We, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of the Australian Province, gathered in Chapter [April 2023], have reflected on our privileged journey with First Nations Peoples for more than a century. We continue to be challenged by Pope John Paul II's words, addressing First Nations people in Alice Springs in 1986: 'And the Church herself in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others'.
- These words are especially relevant as we prepare for the coming Constitutional Referendum. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is the basis of the present referendum with its call for the establishment of a First Nations' Voice enshrined in the Constitution: 'We seek Constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country'.
- We Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus welcome the opportunity to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and the desire of First Nations Peoples to have a Voice that will be acknowledged and listened to, enshrined in the Australian Constitution.