



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

## **NATSICC recognises community service leaders**

**Media Release**

**July 5, 2019**

In the lead up to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday (July 7), the peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander body in the Catholic Church, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC), has announced the winners of its 2019 Service to Community Awards.

The awards are presented to winners in the following categories: Adult, Young Adult (18-25), Non-Indigenous and Elders.

For the first time, seven inspirational Elders have received the Deacon Boniface Award for Elders, which has been renamed this year in tribute to the greatly-respected elder, Deacon Boniface Perdjert, Australia's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Deacon.

Deacon Boniface, who passed away earlier this year, was also an Aboriginal Elder of the Kardu Diminin clan and the Traditional Custodian of the land on which the Northern Territory town of Wadeye (Port Keats) is built.

The award for Elders is shared by:

- Brenda Lester (SA)
- Deacon Ralph Madigan (Qld)
- Dolly Hankin (Qld)
- Elaine Walley (WA)
- Ivan Wellington (Minto – NSW),
- Vicki Clark (Vic)
- Elsie Heiss (NSW).

Other section winners are:

- Adult: Cecilia Kelly, from Mt Magnet in Western Australia
- Young Adult: Josh Sly, an Aboriginal Education Worker at Jarara Indigenous Education Unit, Diocese of Parramatta
- Non-Indigenous: Catherine Jones, also from Mt Magnet, WA.

Created to recognise those who are working tirelessly and quietly within their communities, the 2019 Award winners embody the spirit of reconciliation and unity in Christ.

For more information on the category award winners, follow the #natsiccardwards tag on social media for photos and stories or visit the awards homepage at <http://www.natsicc.org.au/2019-award-winners.html>

The theme for the 2019 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday Resources is “Peace to this house and all who dwell within”.

Further resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday are available here: <http://www.natsicc.org.au/2019-aboriginal-and-islander-sunday.html>.

NATSICC provides a strong voice for First Nations Catholics and works in partnership with the Australian Catholic Bishops to address the issues facing their people.

This year’s video message from the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkmyZawfk3U#action=share>