

Mercy Partners Annual Indigenous Encounter Day

Over 70 Catholics from ministries across Townsville joined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and religious leaders to participate in a day of listening, connection and reconciliation at the 3rd Annual Indigenous Encounter Day at Saint Teresa's Church Garbutt in Townsville.

On Friday 19 May the day began under the trees outside St Teresa's with a cultural dance performed by 12 students from Carinity Education Shalom, led by their teacher Andy Bollom.

Dr Caroline Thompson, Director of Formation at Mercy Partners, welcomed everyone and outlined the theme of this year's encounter day: Raising Indigenous Voices.

The first session of the day gave voice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders from Carinity Education Shalom, Aboriginal Men's Healing Group and Cowboy's House.

The second session was a time for listening in yarning circles led by Elders Aunty Dulcie Isaro and her sister Aunty Dallas, Dianne Jardin from Community Gro, Zacarias Nogar and Carl Lymburner from Aboriginal Men's Healing Group and Chaplain Joshua Lane from Cowboy's House.

In the final session, participants considered and reflected on Fr Frank Brennan's Ten Steps for Approaching the Voice Referendum (based on Catholic Social Teaching) and discussed the importance of the upcoming Voice Referendum for Australia's reconciliation journey.

The participants included Mercy Partners Townsville ministries' board members and leaders from St Patrick's College Townsville, Mater Hospital, Mercy Community and local Sisters of Mercy.

Bishop Tim Harris and many diocesan clergy also attended throughout the day, as well as representatives from St Vincent de Paul, Caritas, Catholic Mission, Holy Spirit Sisters and Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH Sisters) and local parishioners.

It was a deeply reflective day of prayer, listening to stories, yarning and connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in the local and surrounding areas.

Fr Dave Lancini, Trudy Clarke and the Garbutt community and Mercy Partners are committed to working together to support this important annual event.

Mercy Partners is a Public Juridic Person (PJP) in the Catholic Church, sponsoring ministries entrusted to its care by its founding religious congregations.

Picture attached taken by Libby Blom

Front row (L-R) seated Aunty Dulcie Isaro, Bishop Timothy Harris, Dr Caroline Thompson

Mid section: Year 12 Senior Leaders from St Patrick's College Townsville and the dance troupe from Carinity Education Shalom

Back row: Carl Lymburner, Andy Bollom and Zacarias Nogar

Further details

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