



Resource encourages prayer and conversation ahead of Voice vote

With a vote on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament due this year, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council has prepared a guide to encourage prayer and discussion about the referendum.

The [Kitchen Table Conversation](#) document is being launched to coincide with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday, which is being marked on July 2 this year.

“As the people of this land prepare to vote on enshrining an Indigenous Voice to Parliament, we are encouraging people to share their voices in local groups to discuss this pivotal moment in our history,” said NATSICC chair John Lochowiak.

“The Kitchen Table Conversations will, we hope, allow some of the important discussions our country needs to take place in the context of a shared faith and shared desire to seek the common good.”

NATSICC developed [the resource](#) with Jesuit Social Services, which has backed a Yes vote in the referendum, saying the Voice “will make a contribution towards shaping a society in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians can join hands together, acknowledging the past and looking to the future”.

Jesuit Social Services Acting CEO Sally Parnell said she hoped the Kitchen Table Conversations format would appeal to Catholics across the country.

“This resource was designed to create the atmosphere for respectful conversations around a topic that is generating a lot of heat, but not much light, in many parts of our country,” she said.

“We were excited to work with NATSICC on the guide and hope that it can help to inform understanding about the Referendum and allow members of the Catholic community to make informed decisions about the Voice to Parliament.”

It is recommended that parishes, schools or other Catholic settings would nominate a time and venue for the event, such as after a Sunday Mass. Groups might consider working with a nearby school and parish to host a gathering and could even nominate a Voice “champion” to lead the planning and presentation of the Kitchen Table Conversations.

The format, which outlines how the 75-minute session could unfold, allows time for personal reflection, time to introduce and understand some of the key issues and time to consider if things need to change, what should they be.

The gathering concludes with a prayer composed especially for the Voice and the referendum.

Mr Lochowiak said: “People can have a yarn, possibly share some food and share their love of God in this unique way and with this unique opportunity that stands before us.”

The [Kitchen Table Conversation](#) was produced for the [One Journey Together](#) project, a collaboration by NATSICC, Caritas Australia and Catholic Social Services Victoria that aims to provide all Catholics with an opportunity to come together as a community and draw upon our faith and moral grounding to make an informed decision at the upcoming referendum.

Download the Kitchen Table Conversation Guide here: <https://bit.ly/KitchenTableConversation>

Access more *One Journey Together* resources by visiting: <https://indigenousvoice.church/activities/>