



Josephites stand with Vinnies in support of The Voice

The release of the St Vincent de Paul Society reflections, explainers and education kits on the **Uluru Statement from the Heart** remind us of how hugely significant this issue is, and how important it is that we speak with honesty truth and hope, as we counter the misinformation and distortions that are being circulated at this time.

“What Vinnies has done is a pure gift to us as Australians,” said Sr Jan Barnett, coordinator of the Josephite Justice Network. “Their reputation for integrity, for a fair deal for all, and their consistent stance for over 100 years, standing with those who have been pushed to the margins, give factual and authentic credibility to their advocacy. We strongly support their stance in arguing for the Yes vote in the upcoming referendum.

The [Statement from the Heart](#) was released in 2017. This modest request from First Nations Peoples to all Australians, and the resultant upcoming referendum on the Voice is simply about two things:

1. Recognising that Indigenous Australians are the original peoples of this land;
2. Ensuring that the very people who will be affected – First Nations people – can provide Parliament with advice (no more and no less) about laws and policies that directly affect their communities and their lives.

“We will be relaying this message strongly to the young people who are attending the RAD (Risk and Dare) conference on the 24-25 August,” added Emilia Nicholas, one of the young organisers of the Conference. “All of us, whether we are eligible to vote or not, have a responsibility to hear the call of First Nations peoples and respond positively. This is a critical moment in Australia’s history, and how we take action will define us for many years to come. We cannot allow racism and inequality to dominate who we say we are. Let’s give courage and new hope a voice.”

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