

MEDIA RELEASE

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Catholic Social Services Victoria supports National Walk for Truth

Catholic Social Services Victoria (CSSV) supports a national truth-telling process and the stated aims of [the National Walk for Truth](#).

We believe that truth-telling is fundamental to reconciliation and justice broadly, and links well with the ongoing work of our member organisations and what has been said by Church leadership at the national level — the [Plenary Council decrees](#), the Australian Bishops' 2023-2024 statement [Listen, Learn, Love](#), and [NATSICC's endorsement](#) of the Uluru Statement From the Heart. The Australian Bishops, in their 2023-2024 statement, particularly acknowledged the need for injustices to be recognised, and for deep listening and change to occur, urging 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be welcomed from the margins into the centre so that they can lead the discussions about change and implementation of actions to bring about healing and justice'.

After discussion with the CSSV Reconciliation Working Group, the Victorian member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) and the Fire Carrier program workers from Sandhurst Catholic Education and the Open the Doors Foundation, we decided to encourage broader Catholic community support and participation in the National Walk for Truth.

The Walk starts from the Victorian Parliament in Melbourne on 19th April, and continues all the way to Parliament House in Canberra on 27th May, travelling through the Archdiocese of Melbourne, the Diocese of Sandhurst, the Diocese of Wagga Wagga and the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. The invitation is to the broad community and Catholic schools, parishes, organisations and individuals, all of which can join various public sections of the walk, detailed [here](#).

The Victorian Yoorrook Justice Commission's work, from many accounts, has meant a good deal to Aboriginal people. Aunty Colleen Harney is a proud Taribelang Bunda, Goreng Goreng adopted Monero Ngarigo woman and over four years was employed by the Yoorrook Justice Commission as a [Truth Receiver](#) for the State. Colleen is actively connected with NATSICC and spoke on a [panel about reconciliation](#) at the Catholic Social Services Conference in 2024 and again at a CSSV/ACU's '[Truth Be Told](#)' event in late 2025, sharing how this role has allowed her to sit with people, hearing their truths and seeing the significant impact that being heard has had for them. She believes that truth-telling is core to healing and justice into the future.

Off the back of the Yoorrook Justice Commission in Victoria, CSSV Executive Director, Josh Lourensz urges that "a national truth-telling process could further this work and draw the country together into a profound spirit of reconciliation and healing."

“Many Australians learnt about Australian history during our school years, often focussed on events such as the arrival of Captain Cook, Federation and the sacrifice of the ANZACs. But in these lessons, there was too often silence on the people who had already been living in Australia for thousands of years, and their experiences of the arrival of British and European settlers. While this is beginning to change — in education curriculum and understandings, there remains a gap in our listening and national knowledge.”

“We encourage the Catholic community to join the National Walk for Truth to demonstrate support for a national truth-telling process — in solidarity for a healed and reconciled country.”

For enquiries and further comment please contact:

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