*St. Theresa’s Parish Community Newsletter*



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 Principal: Assunta Iacovino

*“Do Small Things Well”*

27th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Year A 7 & 8 OCTOBER 2023

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| MASSES THIS WEEK ST THERESA’SDrummartin St, Albion 9.00am Friday10.30am SundayMOTHER OF GODBlanche St, Ardeer10.00am Wednesday(Pol) 9.00am Thurs 6.00pm Friday (Polish) 5.30pm Saturday10.15am Sunday (Polish)QUEEN OF HEAVENHolt St, Ardeer  8.00am Wednesday 9.00am SundayRECONCILIATION (Individual confession)Saturday 21st October, at St Theresa’s 10.00am or at other times or places by request |  | FUNERAL MASS for Tess Bigeni on Tuesday 10th Oct 10.30am at Queen of Heaven. Rosary 6.30pm MondayTHANK YOU to all who responded to the questionnaire about our Parish**PARISH FOOD BANK**We are low in food at the moment particularly in Pasta Sauce and or stir fry sauce, please donate in the Church baskets.COLLECTIONS RECEIVEDThanksgiving $617 Loose Money $308 Presbytery $585COUNTERS 15th October  Team 2: J, Meilak, Pauline PaceREADINGS *Today Next Week*Isaiah 5.1-7 Isaiah 25.6-10aPs 80.8+11,12-13,14-15,18-19(R5.7) Ps 23.1-3a,3b-4,5,6, (R6cd)Philippians 4.6-9 Philippians 4.10-14,19-20++Matthew 21.33-43 Matthew 22.1-14 |

WHAT’S ON AT ST JOSPEHS BY THE SEA

Sustainability & Energy Saving Event - Tuesday 10 Oct 2023 -7:30pm
St Josephs by The Sea, 16 Esplanade Williamstown. Presented by: Anthony Verhoef a Senior Engineer and Climate Reality Leader.

*Learn how to save energy, reduce your power bills, and help the environment.*

POSITIONS VACANT

Applications are invited from suitably qualified and experienced people for the positions of:

* Parish Secretary-Our Lady of Southern Cross Parish, Clifton Hill
* Administration Assistant, Richmond
* Parish Secretary, Niddrie
* Parish Secretary, Williamstown

Further details of the above positions can be found on the Archdiocese website at: <https://melbournecatholic.org/job-vacancies>

*St Theresa’s Parish is* committed *to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults*

ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from ‘time immemorial’, and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is *a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty*. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years? With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia’s nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are aliened from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take *a rightful place* in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle*. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

TOWARDS THE REFERENDUM

A Statement from Australia’s Catholic Bishops

In 1842, Australia’s first Catholic bishop, John Bede Polding, criticised the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: “The life of an (Aboriginal) human being is valued no more than the life of a kangaroo, and far less …than that of a bullock”. In 1849, he wrote to the people of Sydney in his Lenten message, “The wretched unfortunate Aborigines of the country – the first occupants of the lands over which your flocks and herds now roam – have a very strong claim upon you”.

There emerged in time a policy of assimilating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into mainstream Australian culture. However well-intentioned it may have seemed, the policy led to the dissolution of Indigenous culture. Within our nation’s history, the Church was regrettably part of that policy’s implementation.

We are now familiar with the concept of terra nullius (the view that before European settlement the land belonged to no one), the tragedy of the Stolen Generation and the fact that the prior habitation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was not recognised in the Australian Constitution.

We need to see the truth of what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have suffered and the disadvantage many experience to this day. Justice demands that we seek to rectify this disadvantage.

Australians are now being asked to consider a constitutionally enshrined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice as one way to address this disadvantage. This was asked for in the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The hope of those who prepared the Uluru Statement is that this will not only offer constitutional recognition, but also assist progress towards a more just and equitable Australia, helping to tackle not just the symptoms but the causes of chronic disadvantage.

Pope Francis wrote recently of the Indigenous people of the Amazon, and how best to engage with them on issues particular to them: “They are our principal dialogue partners, those from whom we have the most to learn… Their words, their hopes and their fears should be the most authoritative voice at the table… Otherwise, the result would be, once again, ‘a plan drawn up by the few for the few’.” The same could be said of the Indigenous peoples of Australia.

In 1986 at Alice Springs, Pope St John Paul II said to the Aboriginal people: “You are part of Australia and Australia is part of you. And the Church herself in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received.”

Pope Francis and Pope John Paul ask us to listen to the Indigenous peoples and to receive joyfully what they have to offer the whole nation and the world.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference’s statement on the Voice in May urged that the debate be conducted civilly and respectfully; there are some who strongly support the Voice and others who have concerns, including whether the Voice would benefit those most in need or could stifle good governance.

However differently they are viewed, the issues surrounding the Voice are not just political; they are moral and ethical. Therefore all Australians need to educate themselves One way we might do this is by a careful reading of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and this year’s Social Justice Statement, Listen, Learn, Love: A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

We urge all Australians to listen to the hopes and fears of each other. We urge people to act in a way that commits to redressing the disadvantage suffered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and will allow them to reach their potential, thus promoting reconciliation for the good not just of some but of the whole nation.

May the Holy Spirit who opens locked doors give us light and strength to keep working for a better and more equitable Australia. Let us walk together

### *May a careful, thoughtful and prayerfully reflective reading of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Statement help us to decide what is the most just and loving way to answer the question on the ballot paper this coming Saturday.*

### REFERENDUM QUESTION

On referendum day, voters will be asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' on a single question. The question on the ballot paper will be:

“A Proposed Law: to alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

Do you approve this proposed alteration?”