

Parish Pastoral Council 25 March, 2020

Report on Ecumenism

On 4 March Sarah Johnston, Patricia and I met Aunty Pam Bell at Galutzi Café for a discussion of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and how we could work in the Parish to bring about its aims in our congregations. The main points which Aunty Pam made were

- That the members of the Aboriginal community in the ACT and local regional area were mostly Catholic.
- That we need to have an Aboriginal committee in the Parish. She believes that there is a community committee at Narrabundah.
- That the Aboriginal population in Canberra lives mainly in the older areas of the city.
- That we should have a copy of the Uluru Statement in St Augustine's Church.
- That we should hold an Aboriginal Mass, with readings linked to sections of the Uluru Statement, and that the permission of the Elders in the local community may be needed for the use of some specific sections.
- That there are various days that are important to the Aboriginal community, involving themes relating to children and reconciliation.
- That there were various activities in NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) Week in September, which we could consider.
- That there were various members of the Aboriginal community in Yass and beyond whom we should involve in our further discussions.
- That we should make contact with Sally Fitzgerald in Canberra and arrange to meet her.

Sarah spoke about her contact with NATSICC, (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council) and passed on to me a statement from NATSICC and the plaque which she had obtained from it. There was unanimous support for the idea that the plaque should be displayed in St Augustine's Church and some discussion about where that might be.

Attachment 1 - The Uluru Statement from the Heart, with related commentary

Attachment 2 - Statement from NATSICC

Attachment 3 - The plaque

On 11 March Sarah, Patricia and I, Aunty Pam and Sally Fitzgerald held a second meeting at Galutzi in which Sally outlined her work in order to involve Aboriginal members of the Catholic Church in the specific life of the parishes in the Canberra region. The main points were

- That the ACM (Aboriginal Catholic Ministry), had started to introduce Masses to the parishes.
- That Aboriginal women in particular were angry about being told what to do, as they had a deeply located sense of spirituality in their own culture.
- That there were specific ways in which things should be done, involving such things as having
 - a smoking ceremony outside as well as a Welcome to Country
 - a water ceremony if there were a ban on fires
 - an Elder walking ahead of the priest into Mass
 - two readers, one Aboriginal and one from the Parish
 - a ritual for the Gospel involving a message stick
 - both children and parents doing the Offertory

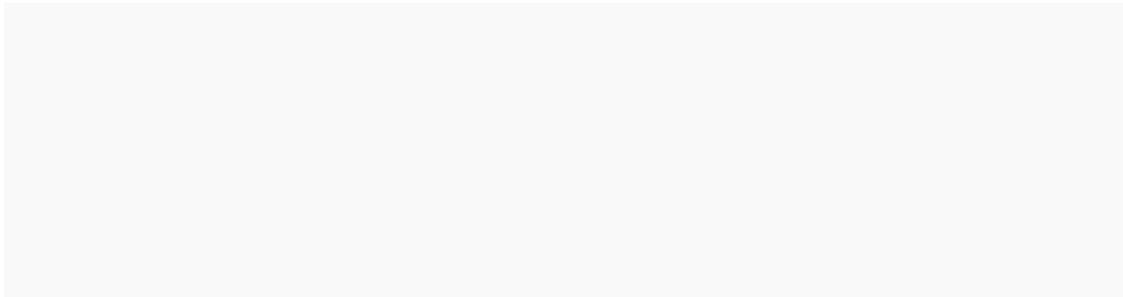
- the involvement of both the didgeridoo and clapsticks at specific points
- a microphone on the floor for the didgeridoo
- clapsticks instead of bells at the Consecration
- no handshaking
- at least one Aboriginal Eucharistic Minister
- a clap beat at the Absolution and Our Father.

Attachment 4 - Aboriginal Catholic Ministry (ACM) - Parish Guidelines for shared masses

Sally concluded by discussing the forthcoming NATSICC Spirituality & Formation Retreat at St Clement's Retreat Centre, Galong on 20-23 April, 2020. She had been successful in getting it to come to Galong for the first time. It has now been deferred to a later date, tentatively 5-8 October.

Attachment 5 - The poster for the Retreat

Bryan Coleborne
22 March, 2020



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 alienated 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.



More than 250 Indigenous delegates met near Uluru in May to talk about changes to Australia's constitution.

At 12 regional talks around the country before the Uluru meeting delegates discussed five possible changes: to acknowledge Indigenous peoples in the constitution, to give them a voice to parliament, to change the 'race power' so governments can't use it to cause harm, to ban racial discrimination, and treaty.

At Uluru, the delegates agreed on three priorities - a voice to parliament, treaty and truth-telling. They also considered a roadmap to get to these goals.

WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?

Voice to Parliament - including in the constitution a new Indigenous body advising the Australian Parliament. It would force politicians to listen to Indigenous peoples before they make laws that affect them. Being in the constitution means this body could not be abolished without a referendum. Indigenous peoples from across Australia would elect representatives for this new body.

Treaty - a long-standing demand of Indigenous peoples. A 'Makarrata Commission' would guide agreement-making between them and governments.

Truth-telling - the 'Makarrata Commission' would also make sure that the true history of colonisation is finally told: the massacres, the wars and the ongoing injustices and discrimination.

PRIORITIES FROM THE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN MEETING AT ROSS RIVER

The delegation from Central Australia supports the Uluru Statement, however it is worried that some important Territory issues have been forgotten.

The Territory is ruled by the NT Self-Government Act and Australian laws. The constitution's 'territories power' allows the Australian Government to make laws for the NT. This means it has a lot of power to make laws that apply only to the Territory.

Delegates at Ross River supported a constitutional guarantee to protect treaties and joining the race power with the voice to Parliament. They also strongly supported a ban on racial discrimination to prevent racist laws across Australia.



WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

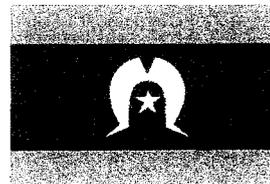
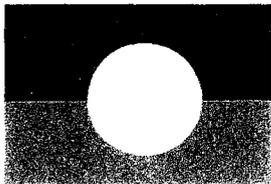
At Uluru, each region elected two people to a national working group. Barb Shaw and Vince Forrester (pictured right and with NT delegates and supporters below) represent Central Australia. The working group will implement a roadmap for the Uluru Statement. The Referendum Council will provide a report to the parliament on 30 June. Constitutional reform will also be discussed at the Garma Festival in east Arnhem Land in August.



FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL THE CLC ON

(08) 8951 6202





The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council

The plaque accompanying this letter had been designed by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) to embody the healing and mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Non-Indigenous peoples within the Catholic Church in Australia.

The main logo on the plaque was designed by the Murri Ministry (Brisbane, Queensland) to depict black and white coming together and growing in faith and respect for one another.

The practice of inclusion forms an important part of rebuilding the relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non Indigenous Australians. The erection of a plaque or sign at the Church is a symbol of welcome for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and an acknowledgment that there is an understanding of Australia's past.

An Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians must be seen in the context in which 'Country' is understood by Australia's first people. Professor Mick Dodson explains this relationship -

"For us, Country is a word for all the values, places, resources, stories and cultural obligations associated with that area and its features. It describes the entirety of our ancestral domains."

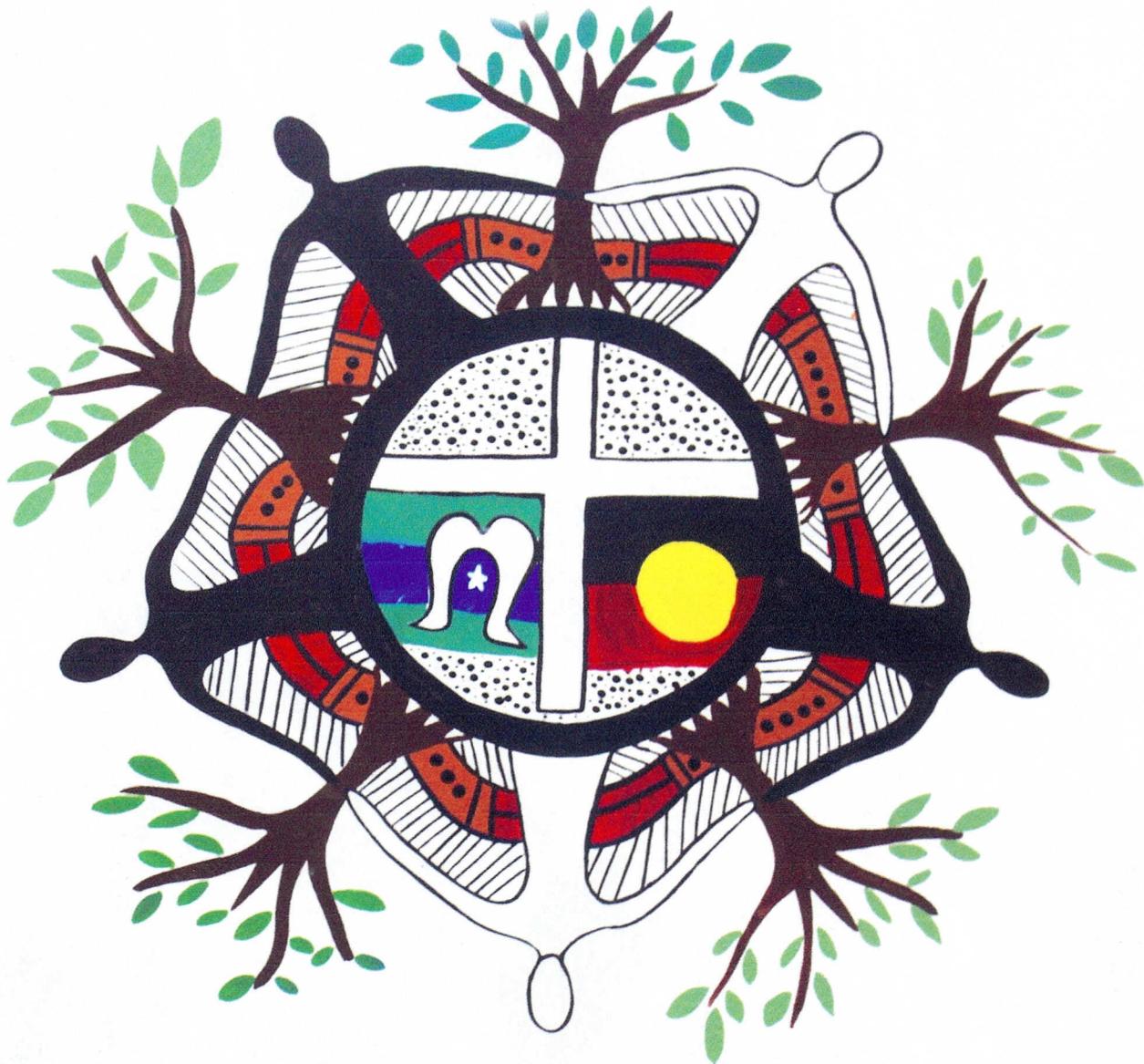
Displaying the plaque proudly in a prominent position in your Parish, School or Organisation is a physical sign of welcome and understanding for all Australians. It also provides the opportunity to educate the wider community of the need for continual progress on the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

By purchasing and displaying our acknowledgement plaque you are sharing the vision of The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council - that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be included in the prayers and thoughts of all Australian Catholics.

All Parishes, Schools and Organisations that display this plaque, or any other form of Acknowledgment will become a **Partner in Faith** with NATSICC and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics. Our Partners in Faith will be listed at www.natsicc.org.au and is our way of saying thankyou for supporting our people.

To become a Partner in Faith, please email a photo of the plaque displayed in your facility to craig@natsicc.org.au.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council, on behalf of all First Nations Catholics, thankyou for purchasing an Acknowledgment Plaque and walking alongside us on our journey of faith.



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years.

We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.



Resources

Microphone

SETTING UP OF THE CHURCH

The ACM will decorate the altar with Aboriginal cloth; artefacts and flags as well as Offertory table.

A microphone is to be provided for the didgeridoo.

Before mass begins parishioners to congregate outside for:

- Welcome to Country
- Smoking Ceremony

After the Welcome and the Smoking, the congregation returns to the church while the didgeridoo is being played.

When the priest processes in, the parish will sign the entrance hymn with the didgeridoo accompaniment.

READINGS

The ACM will provide one reader and the parish will provide the other reader.

GOSPEL

An ACM representative will carry the Message Stick with a parishioner carrying the Gospel book up to the altar. The didgeridoo will be played as the Message Stick and the Gospel process to the altar.

The Message Stick holder will hold the Message Stick up while the priest reads the Gospel.

The Message Stick will be replaced to the holder at the altar at the end of the Gospel.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

ACM will write 4 of the prayers which will have a focus on reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander themes. The parish will do the remainder of the prayers.

OFFERTORY PROCESSION

An ACM representative will take the gifts to the altar. This will include the ACM coolamon which has been previously blessed.

CONSECRATION

Clap sticks will be sounded during the elevation instead of the bells.

OUR FATHER

The Aboriginal *Our Father* will be sung by the congregation, accompanied by clapping.

Music and words will be provided to the Music Ministry several weeks prior to the Mass to enable their practice.

The didgeridoo will be played during the singing of the Aboriginal *Our Father*.

LAMB OF GOD – TIWI ISLAND VERSION

The Music Ministry will have the music provided and members of the ACM will stand at the front of the altar to model the actions for the congregation to follow.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY

ACM will provide one Eucharistic Minister and the parish will provide the other Ministers.

SHARED MORNING TEA

ACM and the parishioners will provide morning tea to be shared with the wider parish community.

If you have any questions about this running sheet, please refer to Sally FitzGerald on salfitz50@live.com or 0422 066 080

"I am the Vine, you are the branches"

John 15:5



NATSICC Spirituality & Formation Retreat

20 - 23 April 2020

St Clement's Retreat Centre
Galong, NSW

The 2020 Gathering will provide you with the opportunity to expand your knowledge of Catholic Faith and liturgy and experience the ways in which Traditional Culture and Catholic Traditions can come together.

For bookings and more information - www.natsicc.org.au/2020retreat
or call Sally FitzGerald on 0422 066 080