



ORDER OF ST AUGUSTINE

ABN 29 525 834 783

Office of the Provincial, Australia

Thursday, August 24, 2023

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE LEADERSHIP OF THE AUGUSTINIANS IN AUSTRALIA

REFERENDUM ON THE VOICE

The forthcoming referendum on constitutional recognition of the First Peoples of Australia through a Voice to Parliament is a moment of great significance for the Australian nation.

The referendum is a democratic process in which citizens have the right to vote freely without coercion.

There is awareness of a diversity of views in relation to the referendum question within the community which is Australia including within indigenous communities and faith communities.

The leadership of the Augustinians in Australia strongly encourages members of the Australian community to conscientiously consider the significance of the good that a positive support of the referendum would bring.

Constitutional recognition of the First Peoples of Australia seeks to be an act of substance and symbol in terms of respect for the unique place of the First Peoples in our nation and the practical implications of such respect for First Peoples. The respect for the unique place of the First Peoples in this nation is consistent with the respect for and dignity of all peoples of this nation.

Constitutional recognition of a Voice would provide enduring assurance that the First Peoples of our nation have a secure and appropriate path to communicate with Parliament and Executive Government on important matters pertaining directly to their well-being.

With full respect for the integrity of conscience in this democratic process, we, the leadership of the Augustinians in Australia, humbly commend to those associated with Augustinian communities, ministries and associations in Australia as well as the Australian community more broadly, an earnest consideration of the potential for good a positive support for the referendum questions could have for our nation.

Fr Peter Jones OSA
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