

Voice. Treaty. Truth.

Under the theme – Voice. Treaty. Truth. Let’s work together for a shared future - NAIDOC Week 2019 will be held nationally from Sunday 7 July and continue through to Sunday 14 July.

Voice. Treaty. Truth. These were three key sequential elements to the reforms set out in the Uluru Statement from the Heart released in May 2017 by delegates to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Referendum Convention.

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

Makarrata (treaty) 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.

...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.

Unfortunately, despite widespread support for the Statement, it was rejected by both the Turnbull and Morrison governments. This reaction is another barrier to working collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards truth and reconciliation.

In NAIDOC week it is important for us all to stop and consider the importance of reconciliation, of walking together and honouring the voice and experience of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

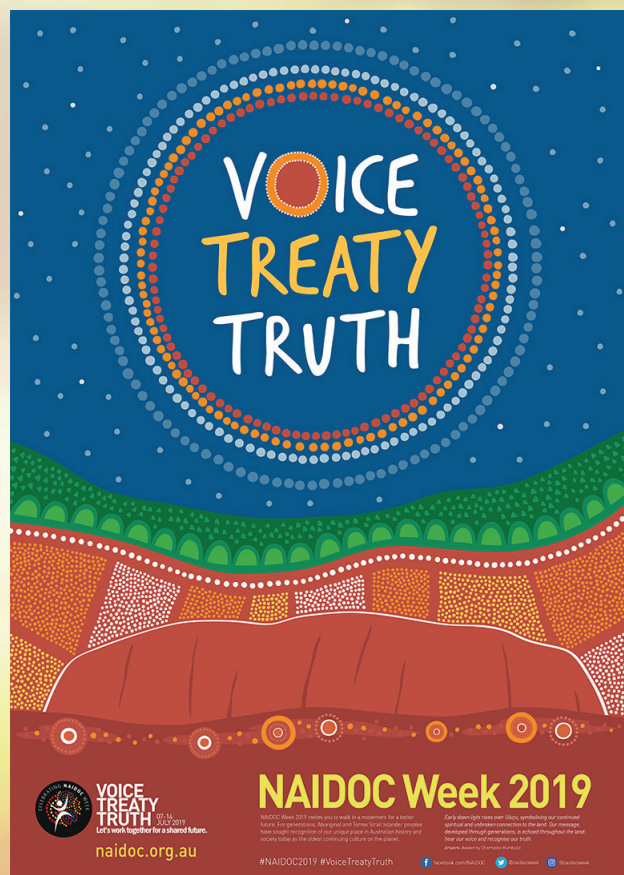
In 1986, Pope John Paul II heard the voice of

Aboriginal people and recognised the wisdom of their spiritual life. He saw in the Aboriginal and Torres Islander people a heart for their children, for their culture and for their land:

The silence of the bush taught you a quietness of soul that put you in touch with another world, the world of God’s Spirit. Your careful attention to the details of kinship spoke of your reverence for birth, life and human generation. You knew that children need to be loved, to be full of joy. They need a time to grow in laughter and to play, secure in the knowledge that they belong to their people.

JPII, Alice Spring (Australia), 29 November 1986

Today Prime Minister Morrison who credited his election victory to the “quiet Australians” has an opportunity to break the “silence of the bush” and allow the voice of the quietest and most voiceless Australians to be heard.



REFLECTION

- > NAIDOC invite us to walk with them in a movement of the Australian people for a better future - where will your heart lead you?

References: [Ivoiceuluru.org/the-statement](http://voiceuluru.org/the-statement), naidoc.org.au/get-involved/2019-theme, smh.com.au/national/what-is-the-ulu-statement-from-the-heart-20190523-p51qlj.html, smh.com.au/national/my-friend-fears-for-the-ulu-statement-under-morrison-but-i-don-t-20190524-p51qst.html, w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1986/november/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19861129_aborigeni-alice-springs-australia.html

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