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Susan Chen
Concerned Catholics Tasmania
By email: susanc286@gmail.com

Dear Susan,

Thank you for your letter regarding the forthcoming referendum in which I note that you assert that Concerned Catholics Tasmania have taken the position that the referendum question represents a moral decision.

At the recent May meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference there was a discussion among the bishops on our response to the referendum question. Many bishops expressed misgivings about issuing a formal endorsement of the "Yes" campaign.

In a published statement the bishops noted that people "may, in good faith, have differing concerns and perspectives." We also acknowledged that the proposed Voice to Parliament was "not the only possible way of recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in our Constitution" even if it did form part of the Uluru Statement.

Given the sensibilities of the debate, especially among indigenous Australians, the bishops issued what I believe is a carefully nuanced statement which references the principles that might best inform voters' choices. Please see the attached bishops' statement.

In the light of this I do not intend to offer public comment, rather I will allow the statement by the bishops to express my personal position.

Yours sincerely,

Julian Porteous DD
Archbishop of Hobart