



OLSH

Hearts for Others



This second issue of "OLSH Hearts for Others," a series that is designed for information sharing for personal and community reflection and discussion emerging from the 2021 Province Assembly, continues with the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (UNDRIP) 13 September, 2007.

This Declaration will provide the background for future reflection and discussion on the Uluru Statement from the Heart and its call for a First Nations' Voice to Parliament and a Makarrata (conflict resolution, peace-making and justice) Commission.

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

In the preamble to the Declaration, the General Assembly reaffirmed "that Indigenous peoples, in the exercise of their rights, should be free from discrimination of any kind...(and) have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, among other things, their colonisation and dispossession of their lands and resources, thus preventing them from exercising, in particular, their right to development in accordance with their own needs and interests."

It recognised "the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of Indigenous

peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies...(and) the urgent need for the rights of Indigenous peoples to be affirmed in treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements with States."

Article 2 of the Declaration recognises that *Indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination...in particular that based on their Indigenous origin or identity.*

Article 15 of the Declaration states: *States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned...to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.*

And Article 18 states: *Indigenous peoples have a right to participate in decision-making matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves. (Article 19): States shall consult in good faith with the Indigenous peoples themselves...in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them. (Article 23): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development.*



Questions for personal reflection and community discussion:

1. What are the types of Indigenous rights you can identify? What Indigenous rights do you feel need most attention right now?
2. What do you understand by the following terms that are commonly used when speaking about Indigenous peoples' rights: *colonisation, self-determination, treaty*?
3. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is a non-binding declaration of the General Assembly, or "soft" international law. In what ways does it reflect Gospel teachings and values, Heart spirituality and the charism of Fr Chevalier?



Uniting my voice to that of Saint John Paul II, I encourage you in his words: "Your culture, which shows the lasting genius and dignity of your race, must not be allowed to disappear. Do not think that your gifts are worth so little that you should no longer bother to maintain them. Share them with each other and teach them to your children. Your songs, your stories, your paintings, your dances, your languages, must never be lost."

For when you share the noble traditions of your community, you also witness to the power of the Gospel to perfect and purify every society, and in this way God's holy will is accomplished...I pray that your love for Christ and for one another (offers) a convincing and tangible sign that we are 'no longer strangers and sojourners, but...fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God'."

Pope Francis' message to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, November 2016.

Heart spirituality sees through and beyond external characteristics to the sister/brother in the other, where **"no one is a stranger, no one a foreigner; but all are brothers (and sisters) in the heart of Christ."** Jules Chevalier, 1855.

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the (people) of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts."

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

