Inspired by the words of JP II “You are part of Australia and Australia is part of you. And the Church herself in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others” we bring these 7 Message of ACM on Message Sticks to the community. When we carry out purposes and work, when we visit and work with Aboriginal Community members, the wider Church in our Parishes, Homes, Hospitals, Community Events, Ministries and Programs we are committed to bringing the following messages:

- Growing in Culture- To work with the community to express the living word of Jesus in ways that speak to Aboriginal minds and hearts.
- Reconciliation- To advance the movement towards Reconciliation within the Catholic and wider community.
- Growing in Gospel Faith- To share and make known Jesus within the Aboriginal Community through the Catholic Church.
- Leadership and Gifts- To work with community to recognise and nurture the God given gifts of the Aboriginal Community and for these to be shared in their families, church and wider community.
- Living the Mercy and Justice of God- To work with the Church to put into action the Mercy and Justice of God through pastoral care, spiritual care and service to the Aboriginal community.
- Healing- To support the journey of healing within the Aboriginal community.
- Our Story, Our Community- To tell, share and be inspired by the story of the Aboriginal Catholic Community.

Reconciliation	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
We are all created in the image of God and therefore all have the capacity to breathe life into each other. The Aboriginal Catholic community has a lot to share with the wider community. It's about building relationships and stripping away the barriers and obstacles to reconciliation. It's about all our Church's being places of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.	"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. II Corinthians 5: 18-20 "The Kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come." Mark 4 26-29 'In a spirit of sorrow and forgiveness, we, the Catholic Bishops of Australia wish to record our commitment to continue the healing process for the benefit of victims of the unjust policies of the past, to support the just needs of indigenous people today and to contribute to the quest for national reconciliation. It is our prayerful hope that this commitment will help our nation grow in unity and live as one people with dignity and in peace. ' Bishops Commission for Relations with Aboriginals(1988)

RECONCILIATION

What is the story/message of this message stick?
The story of this message stick focuses on the Journey of both indigenous and non-indigenous Australians and how we must walk the path together as one.
What do the symbols mean?
The flowers on the message stick include the purple desert rose a symbol of the stolen generation as it is strong and enduring and the red poppy which in our Australian context reminds us to never forget those who have died. Together they represent our shared history. The two hands making the Australian Aboriginal flag represents the strength that our nation has when working together. The footsteps represent the journey of reconciliation begins with one step.

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Growing in Gospel Faith	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
Interpreting the message of Jesus for our lives and our Community. Helping us follow and personally know Jesus in the messiness of life. Growing in faith, in community (Church), through our connectedness and knowing we don't have to do it alone. We don't have the be perfect just come as we are. Participating in wider Catholic community Places for community to grow in faith that is not just about coming to "Church" on the weekend. About building their relationship with Jesus, their personal relationship with God, each other and God's creation. There is a need to have programs that connect to different people at different times of their lives	"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20 Pope Francis spoke powerfully on mission: '*The Church, the holy People of God, treads the dust-laden paths of history, so often traversed by conflict, injustice and violence, in order to encounter her children, our brothers and sisters. The holy and faithful People of God are not afraid of losing their way; they are afraid of becoming self-enclosed, frozen into élites, clinging to their own security. They know that self-enclosure, in all the many forms it takes, is the cause of so much apathy. So let us go out, let us go forth to offer everyone the life of Jesus Christ* (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 49). '*The People of God can embrace everyone because we are the disciples of the One who knelt before his own to wash their feet.*' Pope Francis homily on 23 September 2015.

GROWING IN GOSPEL FAITH

What is the story/message of this message stick?
This message stick reminds us that our Ministries should also be about sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, to be standing strong as Catholic Aboriginal people.
What do the symbols mean?

The symbols in the middle are of three persons in one, that is the Trinity. Jesus shows us how to live our lives, like our Elders providing wisdom and guidance.

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Growing in Culture	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
The link between faith and culture Bringing Aboriginal culture to life in the Church The message of Jesus in the Aboriginal community Telling Aboriginal stories (past present and future) within the Gospel. Standing strong in cultural and faith Being who Jesus made us to be, people of culture.	*"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability" Acts 2:4* Pope John Paul II in Australia: *'The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ speaks all languages. It esteems and embraces all cultures. It supports them in everything human and, when necessary, it purifies them. Always and everywhere the Gospel uplifts and enriches cultures and the revealed message of a loving and merciful God.'* *'The old ways can draw new life and strength from the Gospel. The message of Jesus Christ can lift up your lives to new heights, reinforce all your positive values and add many others, which only the Gospel in its originality proposes. Take this Gospel into your own language and way of speaking; let its spirit penetrate your communities and determine your behaviour towards each other, let it bring new strength to your stories and your ceremonies. Let the Gospel come into your hearts and renew your personal lives. The Church invites you to express the living word of Jesus in ways that speak to your Aboriginal minds and hearts. '*

GROWING IN CULTURE

What is the story/message of this message stick?

This message stick is about the importance of brining our culture to our faith community and being strengthened as Aboriginal Catholics.

What do the symbols mean?

The Three Crosses are of Calvary and show the people gathering around the cross.
There are people meeting at the feet of Jesus, gathering to receive the world. Below this two elder
Aboriginal men sit and look over our Aboriginal people. There is a track leading to a water hole ar
Track leading to Aboriginal people sitting around the camp fore. The Bible is shown as it was the
to Aboriginal people, The red foot prints show people leading to and from country (land/connect
Our mission goes out from Jesus but we bring who we are to Jesus.
The symbols show us bringing our culture to our Catholic faith.

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Living the Mercy and Justice of God	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
Looking after the Mob. Building the Spirit of our community not just physical needs, Pastoral care and listening. Humans need to be loved. Bringing hope to our community. Helping community experience their God given worth, value and dignity, Teaching us forgiveness, showing people they are loved. Also not ignoring physical needs.	"For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" Matthew 11: 30 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" Matthew 4:4 '...for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Matthew 25: 35-36 "..to act do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" Micah 6:8 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.' (Jn 15.9-12) 'Here I would also like to mention the situation of families living in dire poverty and great limitations. The problems faced by poor households are often all the more trying. For example, if a single mother has to raise a child by herself and needs to leave the child alone at home while she goes to work, the child can grow up exposed to all kind of risks and obstacles to personal growth. In such difcult situations of need, the Church must be particularly concerned to offer understanding, comfort and acceptance, rather than imposing straightaway a set of rules that only lead people to feel judged and abandoned by the very Mother called to show them God's mercy.' Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia 49

JUSTICE & MERCY OF GOD

What is the story/message of this message stick?
We believe it is vital for us as Church to live God's Mercy & Justice among Aboriginal people.
What do the symbols mean?
The Ear is the listening ear of God. We need to be pastoral & listen to the reality & experiences of community.
Hands of Love- We use our hand to show that Gods mercy is about love and that is must also be practical.
The Aboriginal Australia in barbed wire with the hands pulling down the wire show us that our faith must be about justice and it involves taking action and taking away barriers and chains/wires that might be holding people back from flourishing.
Scales are also a symbol of justice.
That ladder represents that our work must be about enabling people to lift themselves up to reach their full potential, not just doing things for them.

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Our Story, Our Community	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
Our Aboriginal Catholic Communities ongoing story Honouring our ancestors. Building upon the life, stories and faith of those who have become before us to help shine a path for our future. Recognising the diversity of faith stories of Aboriginal Catholics. Sharing our story with the wider Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Community Being open to the Holy Spirit inspiring a new story to unfold for ACM today	"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" Matthew 5:17 'For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's* will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled* you* to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.' (Col. 1.9-12) Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.' (Eph. 3.20-21)

OUR COMMUNITY, OUR STORY

What is the story/message of this message stick?

That we Aboriginal Catholics from all different places (nations) but have come to live here on Noongar Country. We share stories, unity and connection to our Church and Culture and have a story that we must keep alive and that is ongoing.

What do the symbols mean?

Rosary beads are there to protect our dreaming and our Catholic faith and prayer. The tree of life I sour provider for all mankind and Gods creation.
The red black yellow swan on the Derbal Yerrigan River represent that we mainly connect on Noongar Country and with Noongar people. The stars above the swan represent the Southern Cross and the Swan River. The grass tree represents strong Aboriginal culture for Noongar people. The seven stars above the grass tree represent the story of the seven sisters. The symbols of the black and white people together represent the unity and reconciliation that can exist within our holy catholic community. On the sides of the stick are songlines, representing the travel of Noongar people to our Holy Catholic Church, our spiritual journeys together and our special catholic meeting places, connecting with our culture and our spirituality. The earthy colours represent the cultural colours of ochre, representing nature and the land.

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Healing	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
The power of our stories to heal Providing places for these stories to be expressed. The power of God's love to heal. Our pastoral work Our cooperation with others on the healing journey. Need for Cultural healing and connection with the Culture, story, land, kinships etc.	'Past hurts cannot be healed by violence, nor are present injustices removed by resentment…. What can now be done to remedy the deeds of yesterday must not be put off till tomorrow.' JPII 1986 "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Matthew 6:12 "Now there was a woman who had been suffering from haemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians,* no one could cure her. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her haemorrhage stopped. Then Jesus asked, 'Who touched me?' When all denied it, Peter* said, 'Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you.' But Jesus said, 'Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me.' When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.'" Luke 8.43-48)

HEALING

What is the story/message of this message stick?

To improve healing within Aboriginal community/individuals as well as healing between Aboriginal people and the church.

What do the symbols mean?

People gathering around campfire for yarn to tell stories and heal. There is a flowing river, as water heals, land and connection to country can heal.

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Leadership and other gifts	
Our Aboriginal Identity	**Our Catholic Faith**
Recognising our God given gifts and using them in our family, church and wider community. Bringing an Aboriginal perspective and being involved in knowledge sharing with the community Eldership in community. Nurturing our leaders Leadership in Church and outside of Church Building our youth, mentoring, empowering and allowing them to grow. Nothing about us without us	"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received" 1 Peter 4:10: Catholic Social Teaching- This principle holds that human affairs are best handled at the lowest possible level, closest to the affected persons 'Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. ' (1 Cor. 12.4-11)

LEADERSHIP & GIFTS

What is the story/message of this message stick?

To ensure the gifts, talents and leadership of Aboriginal people is being developed and recognised in our Church community.

What do the symbols mean?
The word ELDER is written to show how important Elders are in the Leadership of Aboriginal communities. Leadership is about sharing gifts and that is why people are gathering together to share them in the image. The inclusion of the Boomerang and spear are to show how we can use our Aboriginal talents and knowledge, skills to enrich the Church and our community.

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