



ST MARY'S  
CATHEDRAL



■ Our restoration team retiling the North East Roof of St Mary's Cathedral

**It's been a jam-packed year at St Mary's Cathedral. Representing the centre of the Catholic faith in Sydney it would be no surprise that our Cathedral was filled on so many occasions, fled to in times of crisis, busy during times of hopelessness and lit up during times of celebration. Let us share with you some of these remarkable events and occasions that took place this year at St Mary's Cathedral.**

## Seven New Gifts for All of Us

Our Cathedral was overflowing with over 2000 people present as Archbishop Fisher ordained seven men to the priesthood. Four from the Seminary of the Good Shepherd in Homebush, two from the Archdiocesan Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Chester Hill and the seventh member of the Dominican Order, of which Archbishop Fisher is also a member. This was one of the largest ordinations seen in years.

"My sons, brothers and soon fathers, Miguel, Will, John, Br William, Ronnie, Joe and Moises: what an extraordinary privilege it is to be a voice for the Gospel! To express the eternal Word dwelling with the Father in the words of men." said Archbishop Fisher.

Concluding the Mass he confessed that for days he had been like a child counting down the sleeps to Christmas; with the seven new priests he felt as if he had received seven "grand Christmas presents" at once.

"But that's the child in me." He continued. "The father in me knows that these presents are for you. They are for the people of God in Sydney and beyond and that is a great gift to all of us."

As the newly-ordained priests processed out with fellow clergy before giving their first blessings, wild cheers broke out echoing throughout the Cathedral.

It's wonderful to see the Cathedral as a place for celebration and the place where our Faith is passed on to the next generation of Priests.



■ Seven newly ordained priests with Archbishop Anthony Fisher. [Photo: Alphonsus Fok]

## We're Almost There!

**Thanks to your generous support, we've been able to restore our Cathedral both in and out!**

Here is an update on our current restoration projects.

### Our Roof

Starting in 2015, the Archdiocese began much-needed roof repairs to keep our Cathedral intact. This time last year we reached the halfway point of the project with the west-facing roof being completely re-tiled. Repairs have

now begun on the east-side. These tiles are imported from Bangor, Wales and are a very special tile, designed especially to weather our vastly hot and cool temperatures. They are a "Heather Blue" and a new Cwt Y Bugail "Grey" colour which provides an attractive shine to our Cathedral's roof. This complements the diamond pattern resulting from the tile's layout, connecting to the original roof's design from the 1800s.

Thanks to your generosity, we have been able to successfully complete the first two phases of this project, and commence phase three of this major and historic restoration.

This Christmas, please consider donating to Our Mother Cathedral in restoring her beauty and shine.



North East Roof of St Mary's Cathedral prior to restoration



Damaged tiles from the 1800s removed



Retiled roof showing diamond pattern



North East Roof of St Mary's Cathedral during restoration

## Our Stations of the Cross

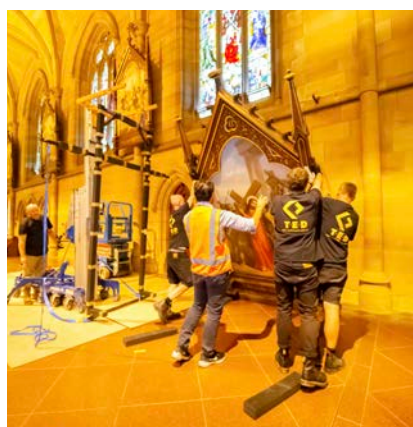
Over the past year there has been significant progress made on bringing these stations back to life. It's a labourious process but through your support the conservation team, based in Alexandria, have carefully and masterfully started works in restoring these Stations of the Cross back to life.

The journey of the first six Stations of the Cross have gone through special stages - each stage requiring unique tools and skills

- The deployment of a scissor lift and a specially designed crane, suitably sized for indoor environments to carry large and heavy items, was needed to gently bring down each station
- Once safely grounded, the team carefully dismantled the historic paintings from the deteriorated oak frames (which in itself requires preservation), to then

be carried away and loaded for delivery to the studio in Alexandria.

- Upon arrival, the team of conservators examine the stations individually using a suite of innovative techniques and special UV lighting tools to identify extensive damages - such as water damage, torn canvas material, paint discolouration and more.
- After identifying these damages, the team started to apply a unique blend of chemicals to first remove the thin layer of discoloured paint in preparation for more vibrant paints to be applied. In addition, tools for art restoration were used to remove dust embedded in the canvas fibres, and around the Station's edges. Mending tools also repaired torn edges.
- Once completed, the art is carefully placed back into the restored frame and, with the scissor lift and crane, are installed back to the Cathedral walls - gracing parishioners and visitors.



### Station Sponsors to be Acknowledged in St Mary's Cathedral

To assist in the restorational works of the Stations of the Cross, benefactors are invited to consider sponsoring a Station, perhaps in their family name or in honour of a loved one. Gifts will be acknowledged with benefactors recognised on a special plaque to be installed later next year. We are fortunate to have three generous donors who have confirmed their intention to sponsor a station.

If you would like more information, please contact [michael.mendieta@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:michael.mendieta@sydneycatholic.org) or call 9307 8441

## St Mary's Cathedral Embraces all in Times of Crisis

This year we have seen unfortunate tragedies both close to home and abroad. The shootings in New Zealand and bombings in Sri Lanka have been among the few that have shaken up the international community.



■ Faith leaders gathering in prayer in remembrance of victims of the Christchurch Shootings.

Despite these difficult times, our Cathedral is offered to embrace people of all faiths and backgrounds, to join us in prayer and to gather in peace and solidarity.

"To stand in solidarity is to stand on something solid, that something solid is our insistence on our common humanity," said Archbishop Fisher.

## Following the Shootings in New Zealand

The Archbishop welcomed Australia's Grand Mufti Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed and Prime Minister Scott Morrison to the remembrance ceremony for those who lost their lives and to pray for the injured in the Christchurch shootings.

The Grand Mufti thanked the Archbishop and all the attendees for supporting the Muslim community in New Zealand and Australia at a "most difficult time" and to help foster healing from "torrents of pain".

Faith leaders gathering in prayer in remembrance of victims of the Christchurch Shootings.

"Whether you are Muslim or Christian or Jewish or any other faith group, as long as you live in Australia, as long as you are part of this family, nothing will divide us," he said.

Also in attendance were Jewish, Hindu, Baha'i, Melkite, Coptic Orthodox and Anglican leaders plus civic leaders including Premier of NSW Gladys Berejiklian, Governor of NSW David Hurley, former NSW Opposition Leader Michael Daley, and the Consul General for New Zealand Bill Dobbie.

## Following the Bombings in Sri Lanka

Sydney's Sri Lankan community, as well as members of different faith communities including Buddhists, Hindus and representatives from the Ba'hai and Islamic communities, thousands gathered together on Friday 26 April to pray for the victims of the Sri Lankan Church Bombings.

NSW Sri Lankan chaplain Fr Chaminda Wanigasena said that this gathering at the Cathedral was a "very sombre occasion" after a "moment of crisis".

## Praying for Life at St Mary's Cathedral

During the political campaign, to rush one of the most extreme abortion laws ever seen in Australia through the State Parliament, Archbishop Fisher opened our Cathedral for prayer including a 65-hour vigil in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The Archbishop urged people to pray, fast and campaign against the proposed abortion bill which would allow abortion as late as full-term.

People of all ages continued to flow in and out of our Cathedral. Peak times were before work, after work and many gave up their lunch breaks to make time for prayer. Some even braved times throughout the early mornings between 11 pm and 7 am. With our Cathedral being so close to NSW Parliament House, it often served as a place of rest and restoration for those rallying for life especially in heavy rain. Although the bill passed, it passed with a number of key amendments. But these amendments do not make women or their unborn babies any safer, protect the conscience rights of medical professionals, provide distressed women with any support or alternatives to abortion.

Despite this, our Cathedral will continue to be a place of prayerful support. During the annual Mass for pregnant mothers, Bishop Randazzo extended his blessings to all expecting parents and the new life they hold.

"May mothers and fathers know the importance of their vocation and the difference they make in our world," he said.



■ Bishop Anthony Randazzo blessing mothers and their unborn children during the Mass for Mothers.