



# GATHERING

ST MARY'S

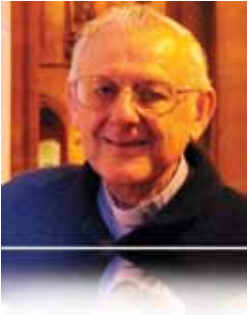
OUR CATHEDRAL

OUR FAMILY

MARCH 2011







## FROM THE DEAN'S PEN

A popular devotion unique to and loved by all Catholics is the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Some would not realise that this devotion grew out of attacks against the mystery of the Incarnation.

Heresies have arisen from time to time denying the true humanity of Christ, and in a subtle and insidious way posits a dualism where spirit is good but material things are regarded as evil. As a consequence, the goodness of the material world created by God is denied together with the true humanity of Christ. St. Dominic, who was commissioned by Pope Innocent III to preach against these heresies of the Cathars and Albigenses, gave the Church the Rosary which proclaims the true message of the Gospel, in the life, death and resurrection of the Lord, and in the suffering and glorification of the Church as represented by the Blessed Virgin Mary. This was a prayer for the ordinary unsophisticated people of the time where they could focus on the orthodoxy of faith without being misled by novel and dangerous doctrines.

Stained-glass windows in Cathedrals have often been called the picture-books of the bible. The Gospel stories and the truths they proclaim come alive in the minds and hearts of all who take time to reflect and meditate. The windows of St. Mary's Cathedral are particularly beautiful works of art that speak eloquently about our faith.

The Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary are beautifully depicted in the stained-glass windows of the Cathedral. Many times I have wandered around the Cathedral saying the Rosary and meditating on the windows of each of the mysteries. Often it is said that we come to Jesus through His Blessed Mother and a strong devotion to her will always keep us united in the true faith. The Rosary is a perfect example of this. In the mysteries of the Rosary and in the depictions in the windows, we see ordinary people caught up in the humanity of Jesus, who is the Sacrament of our Salvation, and in His suffering, death and resurrection. The great East Window (geographically the northern end of the Cathedral above the High Altar) shows the fall and triumph of humanity in the crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, surrounded by the saints (including St. Dominic) who followed faithfully in the footsteps of Christ.

A particularly favorite of mine is the Visitation window. In this window Mary is seen greeting her cousin Elizabeth, whilst St. Joseph, in a homely and courteous fashion, doffs his hat. A lower panel in the same window depicts the Blessed Virgin with her hands raised to heaven, singing her (and the Church's) great hymn in praise of God's grace and mercy, the Magnificat.

There are many details in all the windows of the Cathedral which give much food for thought and prayerful meditation, raising up the mind, heart and soul to the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. As the light of the sun's rays shine through the glass of the windows to reveal their message, so the Light of Christ enlightens us with His truth.

Like all great Cathedrals of the world, St. Mary's Cathedral proclaims the Mystery of the Incarnation in the Church's liturgy, in its heritage, its art, and in all the people who pray and worship here. ✚

Fr Paul Hilder

FRONT COVER: 2010 Christmas Lights at St. Mary's Cathedral. By Catholic Communications.

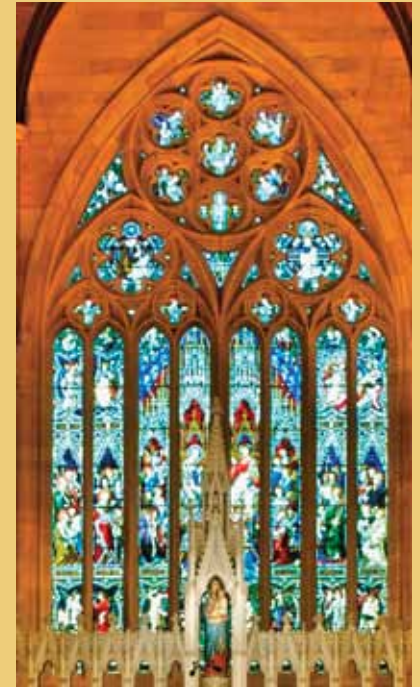
## BEQUEST BENEFACTORS

We pray for those benefactors who have remembered St. Mary's Cathedral in their will, meeting the need of its conservation, and ensuring a great Cathedral for future generations.

Allan HILL

Libuse Frantiska PANIK

May eternal light shine upon them and may they rest in peace. Amen.



## MASS TIMES

### ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL

SATURDAY VIGIL 6pm

SUNDAY 7am, 9am, 10.30am (*Solemn Sung Mass*), 6pm

MONDAY to FRIDAY 6.45am, 1.10pm & 5.30pm

SATURDAY 9am and 12noon

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 12noon

### ST COLUMBKILLE'S

SUNDAY 9am

## ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL

St. Mary's Road  
Sydney NSW 2000

☎ (02) 9220 0401 📠 (02) 9223 5208

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[www.StMarysCathedral.org.au](http://www.StMarysCathedral.org.au)

# CATHEDRAL LIGHTS UP

To celebrate Christmas 2010 and to mark last year's tribute to Governor Macquarie, St. Mary's Cathedral was illuminated with magnificent multicoloured projections. But lighting inside the Cathedral is just as important and for more than half a century has been in the experienced hands of two generations of the Spies family.

Responsible for lighting the vast interior of St. Mary's as well as designing lights to show off its wonderful artworks including the newly-installed marble sculptures of Mary Magdalene and the Resurrected Christ, this family of electricians also carry out weekly maintenance checks at the Cathedral.

The patriarch and founder of the family business, Michael Spies died in 1996 and his six electrician sons now run the firm and handle all the electrical work at the Cathedral.

"I can vividly remember when Dad first began working at the Cathedral back in 1959," says Michael Spies, the second eldest of the six Spies' brothers who carries his father's name and runs the family business. "I was 13 and in those days Cardinal Gilroy was the man in charge. Funds were tight and little was spent on the Cathedral. As a result the lighting was pretty bad. The roof was even worse and full of leaks."

Michael recalls an ordination of priests being celebrated in the midst of a heavy Sydney storm. "The roof leaked so badly there were more people with umbrellas up inside the Cathedral than there were outside. The water wasn't just sprinkling down it was pouring down, like out of a tap!"

Michael, along with his five brothers and five sisters, loved helping out at the Cathedral during school holidays. "Two or three of us would be allowed to join Dad. The boys were given jobs like sweeping up leaves or polishing the Cathedral's brass while the girls helped out at the Presbytery next door where Cardinal Gilroy and five priests lived. My sisters would help make the beds and sort the linen."

The highlight for the Spies' children was morning tea when the presbytery cook would make them fresh scones and jam. "The priests living in the Presbytery had their own room for morning tea but usually they'd join us instead and that was always great fun," says Michael.



**MICHAEL SPIES (RIGHT) WITH BROTHERS MATTHEW (LEFT) AND DANIEL (CENTRE) REGULARLY CHECK THE LIGHTS AND ELECTRICS AT ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL.**

One of Michael's favourites was Irish-born Fr David Cremin who was Dean of the Cathedral at this time. "He was the most amazing man. Later he would become Bishop Cremin but what I remember most is his warmth and the fantastic stories he'd tell that always had us laughing."

Michael, Joseph, Christopher, Bernard, Matthew and Daniel all did apprenticeships and became electricians, joining their dad in what became Michael Spies & Sons Pty Ltd.

Then in 1968 came the news Pope Paul VI would make the first ever Papal visit to Australia in late 1970. Suddenly work on the Cathedral took precedence and not only were roofers employed to fix the leaks, but Michael, his father and his brothers were asked to rewire St. Mary's and improve the lighting as well as provide lighting for the exterior walls.

"Pope Paul VI would bless people crowded along College Street from a walkway outside the Cathedral and Cardinal Gilroy wanted this lit," he says.

Rewiring the Cathedral was a huge job and long overdue. For years the leaking roof had soaked the conduits carrying the rubberised cables causing what lights there were to blow. The other problem was the lights themselves which hung under the archways. Of the type mostly used on tennis courts, the 500 watt bulbs were short-lived and every couple of weeks had to be changed.

Replacing rubberised cables with plastic insulated cables the Cathedral was extensively rewired enabling the family of electricians not only to light St. Mary's from above but to highlight its many artworks and treasures.

After Cardinal Gilroy's retirement in 1971, Michael and the Spies family continued working at the Cathedral under the direction of Cardinal Freeman, then for Cardinal Clancy and now for Cardinal George Pell.

The family of electricians take care of all electrical work in the Cathedral and next door at Cathedral House, and in the 1970s Michael's father often stepped in to help out in other areas if the sacristan was sick or on holiday. At these times, he would drive to the Cathedral in the early hours to unlock it and then in the evening he'd travel from the firm's (original) base at Paddington and lock up.

"On 17 April 1973, Dad was getting ready to head for the Cathedral to lock up and get rid of any drunks who might be trying to sleep there, when he got an urgent call telling him to get to the Cathedral as fast as possible. A man the press dubbed the 'Mad Bomber' had entered the Cathedral during 6 pm Mass and set off a stick of gelignite," Michael recalls. "The confessional on the western side of the Cathedral was completely destroyed. All the original red cedar was splintered and ruined and every one of the stained glass windows on the Western side was blown out. It was heartbreaking and it was one of the only times I ever saw my father cry."

The stained glass windows were sent back to England to be repaired or replaced and two years later were back in position. The Confessional was also replaced.

Now 65, Michael looks back over the 52 years the family firm of electricians has been involved with the Cathedral. "We have wonderful memories and each week when we arrive there to do our regular maintenance, we feel very honoured and very privileged to be able to play a role in the life of the Church in Australia and to be able to contribute work to our magnificent Cathedral." ✚



## A FRAGMENT OF HISTORY

This beautifully-carved sandstone ornament was once one of the ornaments that stood proudly on one of the cables at the edge of the northern section of St. Mary's Cathedral.

More than a century old, this historic fragment with its uneven base and carved ornamental foliage would have been created by one of the original stonemasons who worked on construction of the Cathedral in 1875 and over the following decade.

Called a crocket, which is the word given to Gothic architecture's ornaments of stone that decorate the spires and gables of churches and cathedrals, it was probably removed from St. Mary's sometime during the 1980s after a crack was noticed at its base.

"If a crack appears in any of the sandstone ornaments that decorate the Cathedral's exterior gables or spires, it's a warning that they have deteriorated due to weathering and age, and is a sign they need replacing," says Dieter Koch, Property Manager for the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Replicas of the original are then commissioned and a new crocket or ornament is put in place, he says.

This is part of the ongoing conservation of the Cathedral and one of the areas that while intricate and requiring great skill, is not noticed by the public or those who donate to the Cathedral's conservation fund. But it is an essential part of the Cathedral's conservation and the vast roof of St. Mary's is constantly monitored for

any needed repairs, so too are the gables, spires and decorative stone for any areas that may need replacing.

Part of the conservation and restoration efforts also include adding significant sacred works of art to the Cathedral with last year's installation of the beautiful sculpture of St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop on the steps of the Western transept and the arrival of the outstanding marble statues of the Risen Christ and Mary Magdalene for the Main Altar triggering great excitement.

The completion of the almary to hold the oleo sacra, a gift from Sydney's Chinese community was also received with great fanfare and delight by members of the Archdiocese.

But while lovers of the Cathedral, which is not only a place of worship but one of Sydney's iconic buildings, remark on the wonderful colour of the sandstone now that the Western and Northern walls have been restored and cleaned, ongoing works such as the replacement of a crocket high up on a Cathedral gable are seldom noticed.

"This year our main conservation focus at the Cathedral will be on restoration of the dormer window ventilators on the roof," says Dieter Koch, pointing out that with more than 50 dormers involved this is a major undertaking. But like replacements of the sandstone ornaments, it will be work that is largely out of view of the public.

Other conservation works set down for the Cathedral this year include further restoration of the exterior facade on the Southern side, a new Crypt audio system, the replacement of roof slating, lead capping and flashings and the restoration of the 14 paintings of the Stations of the Cross. ✚

A superb exhibition of historic sacred liturgical vestments dating back to 1830 enthralled Sydneysiders when they went on display in The Crypt as part of the Australia Day celebrations on 26 January.

These fragile, precious sacred garments are normally kept in special temperature controlled storage but for three days they were on exhibition to the public who were enthralled as much by the beauty of the garments as the history associated with them.

Spanning more than 170 years, the 40 sacred vestments on display included Cardinal Gilroy's Cappa Magna and Galero, as well as the handsome red chasuble – the outer garment worn by priests and bishops – donated by Pope John Paul II during his 1995 visit to Australia. The exquisite gold chasuble given to the Cathedral by Pope Benedict XVI during World Youth Day in 2008 was also displayed together with the Papal mitre donated by Pope Paul VI, who made the first Papal visit to Australia in 1970.

A favourite with those who visited the exhibition was the beautiful, intricately worked 19th century silk chasuble embroidered by Queen Isabella of Spain. Depicting a scene from the Crucifixion,



CAPPA MAGNA AND GALERO OF CARDINAL GILROY



SANDSTONE CROCKET CIRCA 1875

# EXHIBITION OF HISTORIC VESTMENTS



SOME OF THE FEW EXAMPLES OF VESTMENTS ON DISPLAY



ORNATE HAND EMBROIDERED DETAILS ON THE SACRED VESTMENTS

the chasuble featured gold thread embroidery sewn with gold sequins.

The exhibition was curated and organised by Sacristan Chris Backhouse and he hopes this marks the first of other such exhibitions in the future. "I would love to mount an exhibition of the Cathedral's metalware, its silver, gold, brass and pewter which chart the history of the Church in Australia with some dating back to the days when Sydney was still a colony," he says.

Chris is also keen to one day display the collection of books that predate Vatican II and are both rare and extremely valuable.

The history of Sydney parallels that of the Australian Catholic Church with many wonderful artefacts, treasures and mementoes part of the Cathedral's unique collection.

Joining the Australia Day celebrations was a first for the Cathedral and was marked by the wonderful exhibition in the The Crypt as well as opera recitals, performances by internationally acclaimed organist, Thomas Wilson who is also Director of Music for the Cathedral, bell ringing sessions by the Cathedral's ringers and interactive drama and poetry sessions for children.

But while this was a first, it is by no means the last time the Cathedral will open its doors for concerts, special tours and exhibitions of its historic collections.

"St. Mary's Cathedral belongs to all of Sydney," the Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal George Pell insists and reveals it has long been his ambition to open the Cathedral and its treasures to the public, not only on Australia Day but during other important national occasions. ✝



## MY GIFT TO ENSURE THE CONSERVATION OF ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL

Donations ☎ 02 9390 5942 📠 02 9390 5973 ✉ appeals@stmaryscathedral.org.au St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Mary's Road, Sydney NSW 2000

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- Please send me a tax-deductible receipt.
- Please send me information on including St. Mary's Cathedral in my Will.
- I have already made a bequest. Please contact me about Cardinal Gilroy Society.
- Please send me a free subscription to **Gathering**, St. Mary's newsletter.
- I do not wish to receive further correspondence from St. Mary's Cathedral.

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**THANK YOU**



# MUSIC NEWS

Thomas Wilson  
Director of Music

**2011** has seen a number of new beginnings for the Music Department of the Cathedral. While we remain focussed on providing music for the now six choral services and four non-choral services every week, we are working to make this experience richer for both the worshipping community and our young singers.

I am very pleased to announce that Mr Michael Fletcher has been appointed Acting Assistant Director of Music. Michael comes to us from Wellington, New Zealand where he has been actively involved in church music and music education. Michael will play the organ for Cathedral services, accompany the choirs and assist with

the training of the choristers. Michael will also be responsible for the musical direction of the St. Mary's Singers.

Also joining the team of Cathedral musicians is James Goldrick who has been appointed the Cathedral's first post-graduate Organ Scholar. James Goldrick has just completed a Bachelor of Music degree at the Newcastle Conservatorium of Music majoring in Organ Performance and having previously been Organ Scholar of Christ Church Cathedral in Newcastle. The purpose of the Organ Scholarship is to give a young musician the experience of working in the Cathedral environment, with the choirs and being involved in the day-to-day running of the department as well as playing the organ and working with the other Cathedral musicians.

2011 is the 400th anniversary of the death of the Spanish renaissance composer, Tomás Luis de Victoria whose music makes up a large and important part of the repertoire of the

Cathedral Choir. In collaboration with St. James' Church, King St, we are presenting a series of concerts in celebration of Victoria, his music and his contemporaries. Do visit the website [www.sydneyvictoriafestival.com](http://www.sydneyvictoriafestival.com) for more details.

Although we are lucky to hear the Cathedral's organs playing glorious music Sunday by Sunday, we rarely have the opportunity to hear them in recital. Starting in February there will be a free organ recital in the Cathedral at 4pm on the third Sunday of every month. These short recitals are open to all and will be given by Cathedral musicians as well as visiting organists from around Sydney and further afield. The organ can be such a varied and surprising instrument – do come and hear for yourself.

For further information about special events as well as details of music to be sung at the Cathedral, visit [www.stmaryscathedral.org.au/music](http://www.stmaryscathedral.org.au/music).

# JOIN THE FRIENDS

The Friends of St. Mary's Cathedral have the specific opportunity of assisting the Dean of St. Mary's to continue the Cathedral's pastoral, historical, musical and arts tradition. Its aims are:

- to take initiatives in the presentation of the cultural tradition of St. Mary's Cathedral to the City of Sydney.
- to promote the pastoral, cultural and historical programs proposed by the

Archbishop and the Dean

- to assist in recruiting new ministers of hospitality
- to arrange and conduct occasional social gatherings for the members of the Association
- to provide support to Cathedral events.

Over the past year, the Friends engaged in many activities including the St. Patrick's Day Luncheon



PETER SINCLAIR

at Cathedral House– a fun day with music, singing and prizes and the Spring luncheon in the Chapter Hall which was carried out with the assistance from the Embrace Youth Group. Most recently, the Friends organised a very successful Sacred Vestment Display in The Crypt over three days, including Australia day. The exhibition also featured a tasteful display of flowers in memory of many loved ones including an arrangement for the flood victims in Queensland and another for the many homeless people of Sydney.

This year also saw the retirement of our Treasurer of 17 years, Mr. Peter Sinclair. Peter joined the Friends in 1987 and was made an Honorary Life Member in 2009. He served with great distinction and the Friends expressed their appreciation and thanks for his efforts on his retirement.

The committee would like to extend an invitation to you to join this worthwhile group.

- Ordinary Members \$20.00 p.a.
- Joint Membership (Husband and Wife) \$25.00 p.a.
- Life Member \$1000.00

Please post cheques payable to  
*The Friends of St. Mary's Cathedral*.

**The Friends of St. Mary's Cathedral**  
**St. Mary's Cathedral,**  
**St. Mary's Road,**  
**Sydney NSW 2000**

For enquiries, phone (02) 9390 0414.



ST. PATRICK'S DAY LUNCHEON AT CATHEDRAL HOUSE

# HSC RESULTS 2010

**St.** Mary's Cathedral College's Class of 2010 had one final surprise for their departing Principal, Br David Standen: Higher School Certificate results that exceeded even the most optimistic expectations.

With average scores above the State mean in thirty of thirty-one courses, the College placed first in the Archdiocese and among the top non-selective schools in the state. Students at the College scored a total of 123 Band 6 (scores above 90%) results, spread among fifty-eight students. There were forty-one Band 6 results in Mathematics alone. Twelve students achieved ATAR scores above 95. The College was listed among the 100 best schools in the State by the number of students in the Premier's Merit List for the second successive year.

Among a host of outstanding individual achievements, James Edwards, College Dux, appeared on the Premier's Merit List, having scored Band 6 results in six subjects, including marks of 97% in Mathematics and 95% in Physics.

Michael Day also appeared on the Premier's Merit List with six Band 6s, and scored 97% in Society and Culture. Taylor Gramoski achieved four Band 6

results; and Luke Margelis, in addition to four Band 6s, was placed third in NSW in Legal Studies with a mark of 98%.

Danny Papadimatos scored 50/50 in his Extension II English major work (as well as three other Band 6 results), placing him sixth in NSW, the third year in succession that a Cathedral student has made the top ten in this testing course. Jack Huggett continued the College's impressive results in Industrial Technology and Construction, finishing tenth in the state.

While these wonderful results are a tribute to the work of the students and teachers, the contribution of the Class of 2010 extends beyond their academic success. Their esprit de corps, their positive and mature relationships with their teachers, involvement in the cultural and sporting life of the College, and their contribution to the spirit of the school, while intangible, will be long remembered by their younger peers and teachers alike. ✚

**HSC HIGH ACHIEVERS (L-R): DANNY PAPADIMATOS, BR DAVID STANDEN, JACK HUGGETT, MICHAEL DAY, JAMES EDWARDS, LUKE MARGELIS, TAYLOR GRAMOSKI.**



## EMBRACE YOUTH GROUP

TOWARDS the end of last year, Embrace, St. Mary's Cathedral Youth attended a retreat at St. Benedict's monastery in Arcadia. The young people were astonished to discover the chapel at the monastery houses stained glass windows that were once part of St. Mary's Cathedral. The windows by John Hardman of Birmingham, depicting St. Henry and St. Gertrude, survived the fire that destroyed the original cathedral building in 1865.



The realised relationship between the cathedral and monastery enriched the reflections of the church as one body consisting of individual members with their own unique functions. In the last months, the young people have carried out their role generously.

On the first Sunday of Advent, Embrace greeted parishioners and visitors of the cathedral with a Latino BBQ Fiesta. The youth prepared delicious Latino food and entertained families with salsa dancing, piñatas and face painting. Despite the erratic weather, the Fiesta was a joyful occasion for all.

Embrace spent the remaining weeks of Advent on pastoral activities. They presented their annual Christmas concert to the elderly residents at Little Sisters of the Poor retirement village, including their own rendition of Dickens' A Christmas Carol.

They also worked alongside the Vietnamese Catholic Youth to assist the Missionaries of Charity with Christmas celebrations for the people who attend the soup kitchen.

This year, Embrace continues to provide support for young people in their faith in a setting that is welcoming and informative. It encourages its members to continue learning about Christianity and to live their faith in society.

Embrace also hopes to develop more events in 2011 to further promote parish life at the cathedral, a work in progress with the Friends of St. Mary's Cathedral.

For more information, contact [mail@embrace-stmarys.org](mailto:mail@embrace-stmarys.org). ✚

### UPCOMING EMBRACE EVENT

**Way of the Cross at Hyde Park,  
Good Friday 22 April 2011, 5.00 pm.**



# AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AUSTRALIAN NATIVE FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS DECORATE THE CATHEDRAL; CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN INTERACTIVE POETRY; VISITORS UPSTANDING AND SINGING THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM; HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS BEING BRIEFED ON THE BIG DAY AHEAD.**

## YOUR WILL

Join those who support the conservation of this great Cathedral and ensure that St. Mary's, the Mother Church of Australian Catholics, continues into the future as a building of great beauty and significance.

To obtain a free copy of our Wills and Bequest Guide, or for more information, contact our Bequest Manager on **(02) 9390 5947** or [bequests@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:bequests@sydneycatholic.org).



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## 2011 EASTER SERVICES

### Palm Sunday – 17 April

- 7.00am Mass
- 9.00am Mass
- 10.15am Blessing of the Palms and Procession followed by the Solemn High Mass at 10.30am
- 6.00pm Youth Mass

### Holy Thursday – 21 April

- 10.30am Chrism Mass and Consecration of Oils
- 6.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper
- 9.00pm Night Prayer (Compline)

### Good Friday – 22 April

- 10.00am Stations of the Cross with the Cathedral Choir
- 3.00pm Commemoration of the Lord's Passion
- 5.00pm The Way of the Cross at Hyde Park with Embrace

### Easter Vigil – 23 April

- 7.00pm Service of Light and Easter Vigil

### Easter Sunday – 24 April

- 7.00am Mass
- 9.00am Mass
- 10.30am Solemn High Mass
- 6.00pm Youth Mass and ANZAC Commemoration

## RECONCILIATION

### Monday to Wednesday – 18 – 20 April

11.30am – 1.00pm; 4.30pm – 5.30pm

### Holy Thursday – 21 April

4.30pm – 5.30pm

### Good Friday – 22 April

After the 10.00am Stations of the Cross

After the 3.00pm Commemoration of the Lord's Passion

### Holy Saturday – 23 April

11.30am – 12.30pm; 4.30pm – 5.30pm

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