



# DIOCESE *of* PARRAMATTA

05 August, 2016

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Relics of Mother Teresa and Mary MacKillop to travel around Western Sydney and Blue Mountains

**When: Starts Monday 8 August 2016 from 10am till noon**

**Where: St Patrick's Cathedral and Prince Alfred Square, Parramatta**

Pope Francis has called for a more merciful and inclusive church in "which we are all called to give consolation to each man and each woman of our time." In response, the relics of St Mary MacKillop and Blessed Mother Teresa of Kolkata accompanied by a 3.7m high wooden Mercy Cross will commence a three-month journey through Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains starting Monday 8 August.

The Bishop of Parramatta, Most Rev Vincent Long OFM Conv, will launch the **Way of Mercy** during a Mass in St Patrick's Cathedral at 10am on Monday 8 August.

After the Mass, Sr Monica Barlow RSJ will give a short talk in the Cathedral forecourt on 'Mary MacKillop and Mercy'. The cross and relics will then be carried in procession into Prince Alfred Square opposite the Cathedral.

In the procession will be representatives from 47 Catholic parishes across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. There will also be 500 students from five Catholic schools: St Patrick's Primary, Parramatta; Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta; Parramatta Marist College, Westmead; Patrician Brothers' College, Blacktown; and St Pauls Catholic College, Greystanes.

Participants will sing as they walk around Prince Alfred Square, stopping for prayer and reflection on creation, peace and mercy. The procession will return to the forecourt of St Patrick's Cathedral at noon where the program will conclude with a short testimony by a student from Patrician Brothers' College.

In coming months, the Mercy Cross and relics will journey to parishes and schools, hospitals, migrant communities, aged care homes and social justice centres in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. The Way of Mercy will conclude at St Patrick's Cathedral on 13 November.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop is the patron of the Diocese of Parramatta. Following Mary's canonisation in 2010, the Sisters of St Joseph gave the Diocese a relic that is a strand of Mary's hair.

The relics of Blessed Teresa of Kolkata (Mother Teresa) are a card and letter she wrote in 1986 to the students of Gilroy Catholic College in Castle Hill. Mother Teresa will be canonised on Sunday 4 September this year in the Vatican.

A gallery of press quality images of Monday's Mass and procession will be available for download on Flickr after the event: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/parracatholic/albums> (Please credit the Diocese of Parramatta).



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For more information about the **Way of Mercy** visit:

<http://www.mercyhasaface.org.au/#!wayofmercy/mix4s>

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## **About the Diocese of Parramatta**

The Diocese of Parramatta is the Catholic Church in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

It spans one of the fastest-growing areas of Australia, incorporating the greater Western Sydney area from Parramatta to Blackheath and from Richmond to Warragamba. It is home to 330,000 Catholics in an area of 1,050,000 people.

The Diocese hosts 47 parishes and churches, educates more than 45,000 students across its 83 schools, employs more than 5,000 staff and cares for thousands of people in need through its social services arm, CatholicCare Social Services.

The Diocese of Parramatta is the fifth-largest Catholic Diocese in Australia.