



# AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

## New document highlights Catholics, Jews ‘walking together’

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference today launched a new document to highlight Christianity’s unique relationship with Judaism and to celebrate the positive relationship the two faiths enjoy in Australia.

*Walking Together: Catholics and Jews in the Australian Context* comes 30 years after the Bishops Conference published a set of guidelines and recommendations to enhance Catholic-Jewish relations.

That document had built on the foundations of *Nostra Aetate*, the Second Vatican Council’s Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions.

Bishop Michael McKenna, chair of the Bishops Commission for Christian Unity and Inter-Religious Dialogue, said *Walking Together* “aims to help Catholics understand more deeply the uniqueness of our relationship with Judaism, our elder sisters and brothers in faith”.

Jillian Segal, president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, said *Walking Together* “bears eloquent testimony to the intimacy of the connection between Judaism and Christianity”.

She said it affirms “the essential Jewishness of Jesus and the fact that he prayed and worshipped as a Jew; the ongoing, irrevocable nature of the covenant between G-d and the Jewish people; and the fact that Jesus and the Pharisees were in alignment, not in opposition, to one another”.

Bishop McKenna said the document’s launch, followed by a kosher lunch, allowed for a deepening of the Catholic-Jewish relationship, which he says has “a long and good history”.

“Since Vatican II, which renewed and clarified the Catholic understanding of our relationship, our friendship and mutual help has grown,” he said.

Jeremy Jones, co-chair and foundation member of the Annual Conversations between the Bishops Commission and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, underlined that friendship in a vote of thanks at the launch event.

“It is not often that we witness seismic changes in relations between two communities, but it is no exaggeration to describe the present era of Catholic-Jewish relations as a Golden Age, after a history of too many Dark Ages,” Mr Jones said.

“The positive, meaningful contact and mutual respect is unprecedented.”

Mr Jones called *Walking Together* “a cry from the heart and a call for action”.

The document acknowledges some of the challenges in Catholic-Jewish relations in the past, but also proposes ways to continue to heal the wounds that were created.

Download *Walking Together* at this link: <https://bit.ly/ACBCWalkingTogether>