

MEDIA RELEASE

19 August 2024



ACU to host 30th conference of Catholic universities

Australian Catholic University (ACU) will welcome over 200 Catholic higher education leaders and students from institutions across Asia and Australia for the 30th ASEACCU Conference this week at ACU's North Sydney Campus.

The conference will reflect on the identity and purpose of a Catholic university, including the social impact of Catholic higher education in secular societies, and the value of service-learning in university curriculum.

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Zlatko Skrbis, stated that ACU remains a vibrant testament to the mission of Catholic universities, continually reflecting on and celebrating its core purpose. This commitment is evident in the way ACU fosters a dynamic community of scholars, researchers, and educators who champion the integration of faith and reason and focus on developing the whole person.

“ACU North Sydney is an ideal venue to reflect on the mission of Catholic universities, as the campus is situated at the site where Australia's first saint, Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, spent her final years,” Professor Skrbis said.

“ACU takes inspiration from our first Australian saint, and patron of our university, and we are delighted to share this history with our distinguished guests from ASEACCU.

“Like Mary MacKillop, ACU makes a significant contribution to global dialogue on education, specifically Catholic higher education, and the pursuit of the ideas of Catholic institutions as expressed in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

“I look forward to welcoming all our international guests to ACU.”

During the ASEACCU Conference, ACU will also bestow an honorary doctorate on Vincentian priest and former President of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Fr Dennis Holtschneider CM. The award is recognition of Fr Holtschneider's outstanding contributions to Catholic higher education, both in Australia and globally.

ASEACCU, or the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Colleges and Universities, is a regional association of higher education institutions from Australia,

Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Macao, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

Formed in 1991, ASEACCU is a forum for Catholic universities in East and Southeast Asia and Australia to engage in open dialogue, collaboration, and reflection on the distinctiveness of Catholic institutions. With 87 members institutions across nine countries, the Association is also affiliated with the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) which is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year.

The 30th ASEACCU Conference will be held at ACU North Sydney from 21 – 23 August.

Media Contact: Emilie Ng, 0475 963 606, emilie.ng@acu.edu.au