

MEDIA RELEASE

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## Australian Catholic Religious mourn the death of Francis, the pastoral Pope

Catholic Religious Australia (CRA), the peak representative body for almost 4500 sisters, brothers and priests who belong to religious orders, expresses deep sorrow on the passing of Pope Francis.

“We share in the mourning of the Catholic community and of so many other people all over the world upon hearing the news of the death of Pope Francis”, said Br Gerard Brady, President of CRA.

“Pope Francis’ leadership was committed to the poor and the marginalised of this world. In his exhortations he challenged the current global economic and social structures that impacted on them specifically. He exuded a pastor’s patience and compassion amidst the everyday ‘chaos’ that so often characterises human living. He often led by way of concrete, practical gestures and was not afraid to depart from ecclesiastical protocol and to make extensive use of pastoral language to reach people’s hearts,” he said.

“CRA acknowledges the inspiration that the life and message of Pope Francis has been to the work of Religious women and men”, said Anne Walker, National Executive Director of CRA. “He was a man of deep faith and love for all God’s creation, who challenged the faithful to transform their Church and the world in so many ways: to welcome migrants, to protect our endangered planet, to work for peace, to dialogue with people of all faiths and to be a more inclusive, welcoming Church.”

Pope Francis lived humbly and joyfully and was widely recognised as a man of hope and a man of God. He was deeply loved by many and his earthly absence will be greatly felt. Members of CRA join with the whole Catholic community in Australia to offer prayers for the repose of his soul. May the Lord grant him his eternal reward and may he rest in peace.

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