



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND

Media release 20.11.2025

Red Wednesday: Cathedrals light red in global campaign for persecuted Christians

15 Cathedrals and churches across Australia and New Zealand were illuminated in red last night as part of Red Wednesday, a global initiative to remember and pray for persecuted Christians.

Red Wednesday (19 November) is the focal point of Red November, a global movement led by Catholic charity *Aid to the Church in Need* (ACN) to shine a spotlight on Christian persecution and advocate for religious freedom. The colour red, symbolising the blood of martyrs, serves as a visual reminder of the suffering endured by millions for their faith.

Our local Cathedrals joined more than 600 churches, embassies, and monuments lit in red in over 20 countries worldwide, including in Rome, London, Paris, Mexico City, Toronto, and Dublin, in a unified stand for religious freedom. Major sites include St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica (Canada), Regensburg Cathedral (Germany), Paris' Obelisk of Concorde and Pont Neuf, and the Shrine of Christ the King in Lisbon.

Across Australia and New Zealand, **a record 30 dioceses and eparchies** are commemorating Red November. More than 55 parishes, schools and diocesan groups are holding events throughout the month, from Masses and liturgies to Rosaries, school assemblies, pilgrimages and candle-lit processions.

Participation in Australia and New Zealand has more than doubled in the past two years, showing a growing awareness and concern for the plight of persecuted believers.

“Red Wednesday is a powerful reminder that millions of Christians today still suffer violence, discrimination and oppression because of their faith in Jesus Christ,” said Bernard Toutounji, National Director of ACN Australia and New Zealand.

“I am deeply moved by the commitment of the Church in Australia and New Zealand and the grassroots efforts of her faithful. Lighting our cathedrals in red is a powerful public statement. But what truly makes a difference is when everyday people take action – when they stop to pray, when they give to practically support the suffering Church, when they commit sharing the stories of persecuted Christians with others,” said Mr Toutounji.

Globally, an estimated 10,000 people are directly participating in public Red Wednesday and Red November events, prayer services and advocacy initiatives, and more than **500,000 participants in total**, including media outreach and online platforms.



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ACN's latest [Religious Freedom in the World Report](#) found that 413 million Christians today live in countries where religious freedom is severely violated, with 220 million of these facing direct persecution.

ACN is urging all Australians and New Zealanders to [watch the official Red November video](#) and share it with family, friends, parish groups and online. "The mainstream media may ignore the plight of Christians, but together we are breaking the silence on their persecution. We will make sure they are not forgotten," Mr Toutounji said.

To watch and share the video, visit the Red November website at www.rednovember.org.

Illuminated Churches and Cathedrals (Australia & New Zealand):

- Cathedral of St Michael & St John – Bathurst
- Sacred Heart Cathedral – Bendigo (Sandhurst)
- Cathedral of St Stephen – Brisbane
- Our Lady of Dolours Church – Chatswood (Broken Bay)
- St Francis Xavier Cathedral – Geraldton
- St John the Beloved Melkite Church – Greenacre
- Sacred Heart Cathedral – Hamilton (Newcastle)
- Our Lady of Lebanon Co-Cathedral – Harris Park (Maronite)
- St Mary's Cathedral – Hobart
- St Patrick's Cathedral – Melbourne
- Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral – North Melbourne (Ukrainian)
- St Mary's Cathedral – Perth
- St Mary's Cathedral – Sydney
- St Patrick's Cathedral – Toowoomba
- St Michael's Cathedral – Wagga Wagga

A full list of public events held in each diocese can be viewed on the official Red November website at www.rednovember.org/home/#events

View the photo gallery:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YN9OEYkgll0gHEIPK_uYkDH9W7S0lv8z?usp=sharing

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About Aid to the Church in Need

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) is the only international Catholic charity dedicated to the service of suffering Christians wherever they are persecuted, oppressed or in pastoral need. Founded in 1947, ACN is a pontifical foundation and provides vital aid for pastoral projects, religious education, and emergency relief in areas affected by conflict and poverty. It seeks to keep the flame of faith alive in places it is most in danger of being extinguished. ACN operates solely on benefactor donations, with no funding from Church or State.

www.aidtochurch.org