



DIOCESE of  
PARRAMATTA



## MEDIA RELEASE

21 November 2025

### **‘A celebration of humanity’: Parramatta Street Feast for those facing poverty, hardship or homelessness draws record attendance**

Nearly 400 people – almost double the usual crowd – came together at St Patrick’s Cathedral Hall in Parramatta on 19 November for the fifth annual Parramatta Street Feast. Bringing together refugees, people experiencing hardship and local families, the day-long event highlighted the human face of poverty and homelessness.

Under this year’s theme, ‘A Festival of Welcome’, the Street Feast featured its most expansive program yet, with workshops and activities including friendship bracelet making, face painting and creative arts, alongside the traditional community lunch and live performances. The Catholic Diocese of Parramatta convened the event, bringing together more community and faith-based groups and volunteers than ever to support people experiencing homelessness and hardship.

The Parramatta Street Feast was inspired by Pope Francis’ World Day of the Poor, created to honour those experiencing hardship and to foster connection and understanding within the community. It also coincided with the global Jubilee of Hope, a year encouraging people to reach out to others.

Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, Bishop of Parramatta, a Franciscan priest, boat person, and former refugee, said he feels a deep connection with people on the margins.

“This is a celebration of humanity,” Bishop Vincent said.

“In encountering each other, we encounter the Creator God.”

Dominic Sullivan, Director of the PAYCE Foundation said this year’s Street Feast highlighted the growing impact of poverty and homelessness in Western Sydney, showing that hardship isn’t always visible.

“These rising numbers remind us of the deep challenges poverty and homelessness bring to our community,” Dominic said.

“Many people struggle quietly, often unseen, and each one deserves our care, attention and compassion.”

The Diocese of Parramatta convened this year’s Street Feast with 14 partner organisations, including 10 new groups, and received support from the PAYCE Foundation, Paynter Dixon and Anbaalayam Australia. Musical performances featured the Sydney Street Choir and students from Cerdon College High School, Merrylands, adding energy and celebration to the community event.

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**Media enquiries, additional photos and interviews:**

- **Belinda Gadd**, Communications Manager, Diocese of Parramatta: 0456 290 969
- **Mark Sutton** for PAYCE Foundation: 0407 918 836