

Jubilee of Choirs – a Diocesan festival of song

Musicians, choristers and parishioners from around Sydney celebrated the Jubilee of Choirs with a combined festival of song on the Solemnity of Christ the King.

The liturgical ministry and sacred music have a particular inspiring and uplifting role in faithful celebration.

Fostering unity and spiritual enrichment through the universal language of music, the Music Director of the Diocese of Broken Bay Cathedral, Josh Willard, invited choirs from the Diocese and broader Sydney to be part of a Festival of Song to celebrate the Jubilee.

The concert included the Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral Choir, the Waitara Filipino Choir, St Patrick's Children Choir, Holy Name Women's Vocal Ensemble and a magnificent performance by Tonus Australis, a vocal ensemble led by international composer and conductor Antony Pitts.

The programme also spoke of the history of Sacred Choral Music from ancient Hebrew liturgical traditions to Gregorian Chant, the Medieval and Renaissance periods through to the Reformation, Baroque and Classical periods and Vatican II and the Modern Era.

A surprise inclusion on the night was a hymn written by Most Rev Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay called "Together on the Way". Set to music by Josh Willard the hymn is inspired by the Emmaus story when two disciples were walking to Emmaus after Jesus' crucifixion.

During the journey Jesus joins them, though they do not initially recognize him. He explains the scriptures to them, and when they invite him to stay for a meal, their eyes are opened as he blesses and breaks bread, and they recognize him before he disappears. Their sadness turns to joy, and they immediately return to Jerusalem to share the news.

"I am both humbled and grateful to Josh for providing a wonderful composition to my words," Bishop Anthony said.

"This has been a truly uplifting night that has shown how liturgical music is not only a service of faith and love but synodality within our Church."