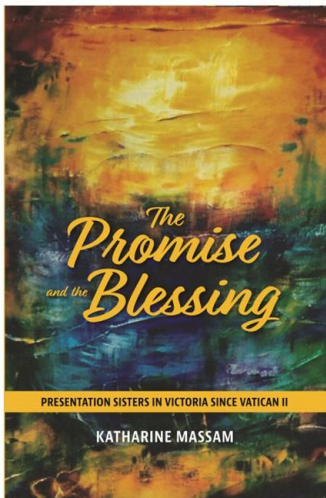




Presentation Sisters Victoria launch *The Promise and the Blessing: Presentation Sisters in Victoria since Vatican II*

15 April 2026

Recently, Presentation Sisters Victoria launched their history, *The Promise and the Blessing – Presentation Sisters in Victoria since Vatican II* written by Katharine Massam. Family, friends, colleagues and staff – some 140 guests - joined the Sisters in celebrating the account of these rich, varied and often challenging 60 years.



The Promise and the Blessing contributes to the vibrant conversation on the significance of the history of women religious for understanding the wider Church and the surrounding context. With a close focus on the language of Presentation conversations it shows how, in the six decades since the Council, Presentation Sisters have negotiated change in their way of life, their understanding of who God is, and how God calls them to be.

Respected members of other congregations are among the early readers to commend the telling of this history. “What a treasure this book is going to be,” Sandra Schneiders IHM writes, “for the future history of the life-form, not only ‘down-under’ but worldwide”.

Patty Fawkner sgs found a story of “visionary realists” and names the account as “a Paschal Mystery story of living, dying and legacy-making – all in the service of God’s mission of ‘fullness of life for all’. Those who would question women’s leadership in the Church, please take note – and have no fear.”

Memorable characters to emerge in the story include Presentation Sisters Mary Eymard Temby, Shirley Macdonald, and Ann Halpin but even more than any individual, the narrative shows the community’s leadership in education, in parish and community outreach and the foundational significance of the community’s shared theological reflection.

Speaking on behalf of the Presentation Sisters Victoria at the launch, Helen Carboon also welcomed the focus on the spirit of the congregation:

“This history, beautifully written and thoroughly researched by Katharine Massam, has had a long period of gestation – with even Covid thrown in to interrupt the process! But it’s been worth the wait!

Katharine’s thoughtful and considered reflection make “*The Promise and the Blessing*” much more than a history book. It is a teasing out of the meaning and depth of our Presentation calling and commitment – through this book you meet “us” rather than only learn of all that we have done – though there’s plenty of ‘doing’ in there too.”

The launch was a memorable occasion, enjoyed by all. To use the words of Josephine Hoare pbvm, from whose poem *Te Deum* the book takes its name:

*Taste the energetic hours, relish the sweetness
of completion; replete with wonder, make thanksgiving; the
promise and the blessing.*

The Promise and the Blessing is available for purchase from [Garratt Publishing](#).

**To arrange a talk by the author Professor
Katharine Massam please contact Mary Horvath
on 9534 7044 or boardadmin@presassoc.org.au**