



DIOCESE of
PARRAMATTA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Western Sydney's Catholic Diocese Marks 40 Years of Growth, Diversity and Community Service

Almost a thousand people packed out St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta on Sunday 31 May to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Diocese of Parramatta, marking four decades of growth across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.

The celebration brought together Church leaders, elected representatives, educators, community organisations, and parishioners young and old from across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains – many in brightly coloured traditional national costume, reflecting the Diocese's contribution to one of Australia's most diverse and rapidly expanding regions.

Among those attending was His Excellency Archbishop Charles Balvo, Apostolic Nuncio to Australia, in his final public appearance before retiring; Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, Bishop of Parramatta, clergy and religious from across the Diocese and government leaders including the Hon Chris Bowen MP, the Hon Damien Tudehope MP, Donna Davies MP, Julia Finn MP and Parramatta Councillors.

Established on 8 April 1986 by Pope St John Paul II, the Diocese of Parramatta was created to serve Western Sydney's rapidly growing population. Forty years later, the Diocese spans seven local government areas, serves more than 322,000 Catholics and supports communities through 45 parishes, more than 80 schools, childcare centres, aged care services, chaplaincies, migrant support programs, outreach and welfare initiatives.

Bishop Vincent Long said the anniversary was an opportunity to celebrate not only the Church's history but also the people and communities that have shaped Western Sydney.

"Long before the Diocese was created, Parramatta was known as the Cradle of Catholicism in Australia. From our earliest colonial history, our faith took root and was nurtured by humble generations of Catholics.

"It is with pride that we can say Parramatta has set the tone for an inclusive, welcoming and courageous Australia. Waves upon waves of refugees and migrants who have made their home here since the first settlement continue to attest to the best that this country can be. As you can see, we are the Church of new Australians, beginning with the sitting bishop himself."

Today, the Diocese is Australia's youngest and most multicultural Catholic diocese, representing more than 40 cultural communities and reflecting the extraordinary diversity of modern Western Sydney.

As Western Sydney continues to experience significant population growth and infrastructure investment, the Diocese remains focused on supporting families, young people, migrants, refugees and vulnerable communities throughout the region.

Read more in the [Catholic Outlook](#). All [images are found here](#). A [special anniversary video is here](#).

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About the Diocese of Parramatta

The Diocese of Parramatta is the Catholic Church in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains and is home to over 322,000 Catholics with 45 parishes and churches. The Diocese educates more than 43,000 students across its 80 schools, employs more than 5,500 people and cares for thousands of people in need through its social services arm, Catholic Care.

Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv was appointed the fourth Bishop of Parramatta in 2016. He is Australia's first Asian-born Bishop, and the first Vietnamese-born Bishop to lead a Catholic Diocese outside of Vietnam. You can read more about [him here](#).