

## *Walking Into Mercy: Pilgrimage to St Patrick's Cathedral Sunday 13 December 2015, from 2.30pm*

### OPENING THE DOOR OF MERCY IN MELBOURNE

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To mark the opening of the Jubilee here in Melbourne, a special holy door of mercy will be opened by Archbishop Denis Hart at St Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 2.30pm. Individuals and groups from around the archdiocese are invited to make a special pilgrimage to the Cathedral, as an outward sign of solidarity with those most in need of God's endless mercy and compassion. Following the opening of the door of mercy, Archbishop Hart will lead a prayer service and commissioning. Each pilgrim is invited to carry a photo of someone who has been merciful to them, or someone they wish to pray for during this Jubilee, and place it on a 'wall of mercy' upon arrival at the Cathedral.

Full details of the program will be made available closer to the date on the AOFE website:  
[www.cam.org.au/evangelisation](http://www.cam.org.au/evangelisation)

### TIPS FOR PLANNING YOUR PILGRIMAGE

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#### Be Realistic & Plan Ahead

For most parishes, the distance from the parish to St Patrick's Cathedral would be a long walk. So, consider a mixture of public transport and walking to make the journey more manageable and comfortable. This could mean meeting at the closest railway station to your parish/school at a set time, journeying by train to Southern Cross, Richmond/North Richmond or Jolimont Stations, and then walking together to the Cathedral.

#### Dream big!

Perhaps you or a few in your group are after a *real* challenge – so you might plan a more “substantial” pilgrimage walk from your parish/school to St Patrick's Cathedral. You might even stop at other places along the way to pick up additional 'pilgrims'. This would require some additional

planning. You could also plan to have a lunch stop at a location with easy parking/public transport, so people could join you just for the second half of the pilgrimage if the entire distance is too difficult.

#### Reach out...

...to parishes/schools nearby and consider 'teaming up' to pilgrimage into the Cathedral! This could be an excellent way of 'meeting the neighbours' and sharing the workload in preparations. Your parish or school might only have a handful of people willing to join the pilgrimage, and the parish one suburb over might also have the same small group of people – but together it would make a good-sized pilgrimage group.

#### Get ready

Use the weeks leading up to the pilgrimage to 'get ready' and have small preparation walks around the parish area after weekend Mass.

#### Be prepared

Make sure pilgrims are prepared physically (and not just fitness-wise) to carry water, sunscreen, comfortable shoes, and rain-protection if needed (we do live in Melbourne after all!). There might also be support that could be provided on the day such as a first-aider to accompany the group (most parishes would have a nurse or other medical staff in the congregation who could be approached).

#### Being 'on pilgrimage'

Think about ways to make the pilgrimage a *spiritual*, as well as a *physical* journey. Consider planning songs to sing as a group (simple songs that everyone can easily join in without the words in front of them), prayers to stop and pray at various points on the journey, or a led reflection at particular times or locations. Ask your Parish Priest if the group could be blessed at a morning Mass prior to beginning their pilgrimage. ☸