



*We proclaim a crucified Christ*

1Cor1.23

30 April 2025

*Letter to Clergy, Religious, and Laity of the  
Archdiocese of Melbourne*

### **St Patrick's Cathedral Light into the City**

Dear Friends in the Risen Christ,

For many years now, I have spoken of our beloved mother Church, St Patrick's Cathedral, as a place that must always be a source of light for the wider community — a beacon along the path of communion, formation, and mission, that brings the Gospel to life in all its fullness.

Since its earliest days as a sanctuary and home for the faithful, St Patrick's has stood at the heart of Melbourne's story. Its stones hold not only a deep spiritual and cultural history but also a history of faith, hope, and resilience — a living testimony that has shone brightly through both joyful and challenging times.

Each week, more than 10,000 people walk through the doors of this sacred space. In seasons of great celebration, that number swells to over 3,000 gathered together at any one time — with many thousands more joining through liturgical broadcasts.

After 127 years, this grand matriarch continues to welcome and serve an ever-growing community of faithful and visitors alike, and does so with grace and beauty.

Yet, as with all things that endure, care and stewardship are needed. It is no secret that after more than a century, St Patrick's now requires significant restoration and renewal. But this is about more than simply repairing stonework or mending tiles. It is about ensuring that this living Church — this light in the heart of our city — remains strong, vibrant, and ready to serve future generations.

In the dynamic, cosmopolitan city that Melbourne has become, we hold the responsibility of keeping this light shining brightly — not only for ourselves but for all who seek hope, beauty, and a spiritual home here.

Monday's announcement from the Prime Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, and the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Tony Burke MP, of a \$60 million commitment to begin the restoration and revitalisation of St Patrick's Cathedral and its precinct; and Tuesday's announcement from the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Shadow Minister for Immigration and Citizenship,

and the Hon Michael Sukkar MP, Shadow Minister for Social Services, the NDIS, Housing and Homelessness, offering similar support of the Liberal-National Coalition for this important project should they form government after the upcoming election, marks the beginning of a new chapter.

It is a bold and generous investment in the future — a sign of confidence that this place of faith, history, and community will continue to shine at the heart of Melbourne for many years to come.

There is much work ahead in this significant undertaking for our Archdiocese. Firstly, there is some urgency for remedial and restoration works on the historic structures of the site to make them safe and enduring. Flowing from that, the Cathedral precinct's current form cannot adequately support the growing expressions of faith, culture and community that it is being called to. Public amenities (such as accessible toilets), parish and community gathering spaces, and dedicated locations for outreach, healing, and faith formation need to be addressed for our responsible stewardship of this spiritual treasure.

St Patrick's was, and remains, a work of love and hope. It is also an investment not only in bricks and mortar but in the life and heart of our people, and their place in the story of this city. This is a life-giving project that will involve us all.

I look forward to providing regular channels of communication that will share how our Light into the City vision unfolds, and how you might be a part of it.

As we journey through this Easter season, I ask for your prayers for this work in the days and months ahead – that the hope and promise of the risen Christ will continually nourish the renewal of our faith and inspire us to sow seeds of life, light, and faith within ourselves and into the world around us.

St Patrick — shepherd, missionary, visionary, and teacher, pray for us.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'P' followed by 'A Comensoli' in a cursive script. A small cross is visible to the left of the signature.

**Most Rev Peter A Comensoli**  
**Archbishop of Melbourne**