

# CATHEDRAL Restoration Appeal



St Francis Xavier's  
CATHEDRAL

*Living Catholic*



# A symbol of faith and hope

St Francis Xavier's Cathedral in Victoria Square is the physical symbol of our Catholic faith and plays a major role in the lives of many South Australians.

Since the 1850s people have come to the Cathedral to pray together in times of rejoicing, of sadness, of anxiety and of hope. The building's past is inextricably linked to the history of the State and today it continues to be a vital and dynamic element of the city's cultural life.

Strategically located in the heart of the CBD, adjacent to the Mary MacKillop plaza and the striking SA Water building, it is a critical feature of the recently upgraded Victoria Square and a popular tourist attraction.

For hundreds of thousands of South Australians the Cathedral has been – and continues to be – the place where they were baptised, married and mourned. On any given day, the Cathedral is a melting pot of cultures as our newest citizens pass through its doors to express their deep faith.

The Cathedral's role as a venue for major civic events and music recitals will be enhanced through the installation of a unique 1927 Casavant Frères pipe organ from St Jean de la Croix, Montreal, Canada. There are also plans for significant restoration works, in addition to ongoing maintenance of this heritage listed building.



Our Cathedral, through the lives it touches, is the soul of our city and we owe it to the pioneering Catholics who built it to ensure their legacy is preserved for future generations.



# More than a building

St Francis Xavier's Cathedral stands tall and proud as a visible inspiration to our commitment to *Living Catholic* – a way of life and an identity that underpins who we are as Christians.

The *Living Catholic* identity gives support and encouragement to the wide variety of activities and good works of the Catholic community encompassing:

- » **Catholic Charities, Caritas and Catholic Mission:** reaching out to those in need and delivering programs for human development and self-reliance.
- » **Our schools:** providing a rich educational experience and a nurturing, faith-filled environment which prepares students to contribute to society in a meaningful way.
- » **Centacare Catholic Family Services:** delivering responsive, flexible and effective services to the South Australian community in the areas of disability; employment, education and training; families, youth and children; health and wellbeing; homelessness and domestic violence.
- » **Parishes:** the lifeblood of the Church, focused on family-centred, caring communities inspired by the presence of the Eucharist in their lives.
- » **Health and aged care facilities:** including world-class palliative care services.
- » **Catholic-inspired agencies:** such as St Vincent de Paul Society, Hutt St Centre and Catherine House, which serve the most marginalised in our community.

## Our heritage

In the mid-1800s the building of the Cathedral was made possible through the efforts of Bishop Francis Murphy, and a small group of committed Catholics.

The foundation stone was laid on St Patrick's Day in 1856 and the Cathedral was blessed and opened just two years later – an astonishing achievement for the times.

Bishop Murphy is buried in the Cathedral's sanctuary – a mark of his respect in the wider community as the only other person permitted to be buried within the city mile was Colonel William Light. The Cathedral is dedicated to Bishop Murphy's own patron saint, the great sixteenth century Spanish Jesuit missionary St Francis Xavier who is the patron saint of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Built progressively over three major stages, the Cathedral is considered a major Australian work of the Gothic Revival style. In the course of 150 years, a number of eminent designers and builders have been involved with its construction and the building itself strongly reflects the economic and social conditions of South Australia's community over this period.

## 1840 - 1858

Bishop Murphy's principal benefactor, William Leigh, donated land and funds and arranged for English architect Charles Hansom to design the building. The plans were deemed too grand so Bishop Murphy held a competition for a new design and local architect, Richard Lambeth, won first prize.

The foundations were laid in 1851 but building did not proceed due to a mass exodus of Catholics to the Victorian Goldfields. Bishop Murphy had to dispatch Fr Michael Ryan on a begging mission around the goldfields, and sell his own book collection to a Hindley St bookseller, to help finance the diocese.

The situation had improved by 1854 and Bishop Murphy sent the more modest Lambeth foundation plans to Charles Hansom in England to make a new design to fit them. Building recommenced in March 1856 using Dry Creek stone under the supervision of George Kingston.

Sadly, Bishop Murphy died on April 27, just a few months before the Cathedral was officially opened and blessed on July 11 1858.

## 1860 - 1926

In November 1860 the chancel, side chapels, sacristy and southern-most five bays of the nave and aisles were completed and sanctified. In 1869 the first pipe organ was installed and in 1881 Archbishop Christopher Reynolds decided to enlarge the Cathedral and chose London architect Peter Paul Pugin to draw up plans.

These included a very wide east aisle, enlarged sacristies and a completely new design for the Wakefield street façade featuring a splendid tower at the north-west corner. Due to financial constraints only the wide aisle and large sacristy were constructed.

In 1922 Woods, Bagot, Jory and Laybourne-Smith prepared drawings for the present building design. Work commenced in October 1923 and major extensions were opened in 1926 comprising two additional bays to the nave, the enlargement of the western aisle, the completion of the façade and a 19m tower as a temporary belltower.



## 1986 - 2008

In March 1985 Archbishop James Gleeson announced that the Cathedral tower would be completed to Pugin's original design. Support was received from the South Australian State Heritage Branch and the National Trust of Australia (SA).

A limestone quarry on the banks of the River Murray, used to source stone for the 1920s extensions, was reopened. The project stalled due to lack of funds until 1994 when Emanuel Construction began work on the tower, which was completed by Carica Construction. Four thousand blocks of stone were cut by Italian craftsman who worked off the original drawings.

Eight peel bells were donated by Miss Lena Lewis, seven from St Mary's Cathedral Sydney dating from 1881 and one specially cast in London. The bells were blessed on St Patrick's Day 1996 and the completed Cathedral was dedicated by Archbishop Leonard Faulkner on July 11 1996, 145 years after the first sod was turned.

In 2004 work began to repair the sinking eastern wall of the Cathedral and in 2007-08 a new sacristy was constructed in keeping with the existing architecture of the Cathedral.



The National Trust of South Australia is proud to continue our partnership with the Catholic community to support conservation and restoration work on the iconic St Francis Xavier's Cathedral.

Professor Norman Etherington AM  
President, National Trust of South Australia







# What needs to be done?

Maintenance work on the exterior of the Cathedral, including cleaning of stonework and upgrading of Mary MacKillop plaza, has been undertaken in recent years. However, restoration of the western exterior is still to be completed and there is an urgent need to refurbish and enhance the building's interior.

A vital part of the restoration work involves making provision for the installation of a unique 1927 Casavant Frères Pipe organ from St Jean de la Croix, Montreal, Canada.

In 1994, the JW Walker & Sons pipe organ was dismantled to make way for the bell ringing room and the Cathedral has not had a pipe organ, despite this being a requirement under canon law, since this time. It is exciting to think that the Cathedral can once again be filled with the glorious sound of organ music when the instrument, fully refurbished by Wakeley Pipe Organs in Melbourne, is installed in the choir loft during 2015.

The new organ will enrich worship at the Cathedral as well as provide a marvellous asset for the wider Catholic community and music lovers in general.

Planning is under way for stage two of the multi-million dollar capital works project, involving enhancements to the sanctuary, improved lighting and sound, and other modifications.

## Archbishop's message

The St Francis Xavier's Cathedral Restoration Appeal is a priority for the Adelaide Archdiocese over the next three years.

The installation of the unique Casavant Frères pipe organ will be a wonderful addition to this magnificent heritage-listed building which has been, and continues to be, so important to the lives of South Australians. Restoration work and ongoing maintenance is also greatly needed.

The Cathedral is one of the most significant demonstrations of our faith - from the small group of Irish and English immigrants who had the courage and foresight to build a cathedral, to St Mary of the Cross MacKillop whose deep love for God enabled her to achieve extraordinary things right here in our midst.

Today the Cathedral is a symbol of the presence of Jesus in our lives, the source of all the good works of the Church in our own community and throughout the world.

Please join me in giving to the Cathedral Appeal; it is our duty and responsibility to ensure the future of our faith for generations of Catholics to come. Thank you for your support.

+ *Philip Wilson.*





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## The Rose Window

The rose window is part of the great west window which dominates the front façade of the Cathedral. The theme of the rose window is adoration, with a blazing sun representing Christ at its centre, and an inner circle of four seraphim surrounded by eight angels. The six lancets in the lower part of the window portray saints Patrick, Thomas, Aquinas, Joseph, Catherine of Siena and Francis Xavier, the Cathedral's patron. Designed in 1925 by the renowned London firm of C.E. Kempe and Co, the window was given by Count O'Loughlin in memory of his wife Kitty.





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