

MEDIA RELEASE



Polding Centre
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INAUGURAL STREET FEAST A GREAT SUCCESS

The Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP has joined with volunteers from charities across Sydney in serving meals for over 300 homeless people to mark the inaugural Sydney Street Feast.

The event, held at St Mary's Cathedral's forecourt comes in response to Pope Francis' call to celebrate the World Day of the Poor by holding a meal for the poor.

Pope Francis last year called on all Catholics to celebrate a World Day of the Poor on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time each year. The Second World Day of the Poor will be celebrated on Sunday, November 18.

About 10 Catholic charities who feed, shelter and clothe thousands of Sydney's poor and marginalised across the city each and every day joined with other religious agencies to host the inaugural Street Feast lunch, including the Salvation Army and Wesley Mission.

The Sydney Street Choir also performed on the day. Fr Peter Smith, from the Archdiocese of Sydney's Justice and Peace office, said the Sydney Street Feast is aimed at recognizing the human dignity of all people.

"With the help of sponsorship from PAYCE Foundation, St Merkorious Charity and Paynter Dixon, we celebrated a meal, serving hundreds of the poor and marginalised of our city," he said.

"We sent invitations out through the many Church and other organisations who regularly care for the most vulnerable of our city - those sleeping rough, those in boarding houses and all who access the various services."

Archbishop Fisher said the event was an important practical demonstration of the strong contribution charities make to serving the disadvantaged,

“We hope to assist both poor and well off to recognise the face of Christ in all people and to see that it is incumbent on us not just to feed and clothe and house the poor, but to identify with them as our sisters and brothers. To share stories, to listen, and be attentive to the voice of Christ present in all - and to have some fun together along the way,” Fr Smith said.

Charities attending the event included the St Canice’s Kitchen in Elizabeth Bay which serves about 50,000 meals to the homeless each year and Vinnies Night Patrol, part of the St Vincent De Paul Society that distributes 84,000 light meals each year.

Volunteers from the Matthew Talbot hostel were also present, which supports more than 35,000 men each year.

Special guests at the event included Christian Democrat MLC, The Hon Paul Greene, Liberal MP, the Hon John Sidoti, the Mayor of the Inner West Council, Mr Darcy Byrne and Sydney City Councillor, Christine Forster.

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