



To begin the celebration, the Sisters and special guests were welcomed to country by Ben Taylor and companions.

# 170<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY



24th Sept

On Saturday 24 September 2016, St Mary's Cathedral welcomed representatives and special guests of The Sisters of Mercy Australia and New Zealand, to celebrate the 170th anniversary of the first Sister of Mercy arriving in Australia on Friday, January 9, 1846.

Ursula Frayne and her six companions sailed up the Swan River from Fremantle to the young, struggling township which, in time, would become the modern, vibrant, multi-cultural city of Perth.

Recounting this day in her letter to the Sisters back in Dublin, Ursula wrote: *"We had a most delightful sail .... The weather was glorious; a strong breeze tempered the heat of the burning sun, and filling our sails, propelled us along so smoothly that we hardly felt the motion.....The scenery was charming, the river broad and winding. Nature here had an undivided empire; human industry had literally done nothing. At length we came to the landing place, a veritable jetty, upon which were assembled a crowd of sightseers.... Among them were two or three aboriginal natives, who in their short cloaks of kangaroo skin looked really majestic"*.

More than 500 guests attended this special Mass celebrated by Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, joined by Bishop Christopher Saunders from Broome, Bishop Gerard Holohan from Bunbury, Fr Peter Whitley, Vicar General of Perth, Monsignor Michael Keating, Dean, St Mary's Cathedral and a number of priests.

**The Sisters of Mercy are recognised for their commitment and service to Education, Healthcare and compassionate support for the poor and refugees, not only here in WA but nationally and internationally.**



Sisters of Mercy across Australia and representatives from other Religious Orders in Perth with family and friends, contributed to the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving for the gift of the Sisters of Mercy we were remembering and each other.



The Sisters of Mercy have worked in many dioceses across Australia. As a reflection of the unique partnership with these dioceses, several Bishops from Western Australia celebrated with the Sisters. Archbishop Costelloe SDB from Perth, Bishop Saunders from Broome, Bishop Holohan from Bunbury, Fr Peter Whitley-Vicar General of Perth, Monsignor Michael Keating, Dean of St Mary's Cathedral and a number of priests.



Mercedes College combined with Santa Maria College to lead the singing. Nina O'Rourke from Mercedes College lead the Responsorial Psalm and Alleluia Verse.



## OUR SYMBOL

Our Mercy Cross challenges us to a deeper awareness of the mystery of death and resurrection in God's plan of redemption. It constantly says to us how infinitely great is God's mercy [Eph 2:8].

The original Mercy Cross was ebony with the ivory insert. Our contemporary emblem preserves this symbol of our identification with Christ, both crucified and risen.

It reminds us that *Without the Cross the real Crown cannot come.*

It urges us to offer the gift of ourselves. He has written us in His hands.

*Shall not we then write His wounds on our minds and hearts.*

### Editor's Note:

Special thanks to Sr Kerry Willison RSM, Director of Liturgy for the Archdiocese of Perth, who provided these words for our newsletter...thanks Sr Kerry!

We congratulate the Sisters of Mercy on this special anniversary, and extend our heartfelt thanks to all the Sisters for their continuing service in this Archdiocese.