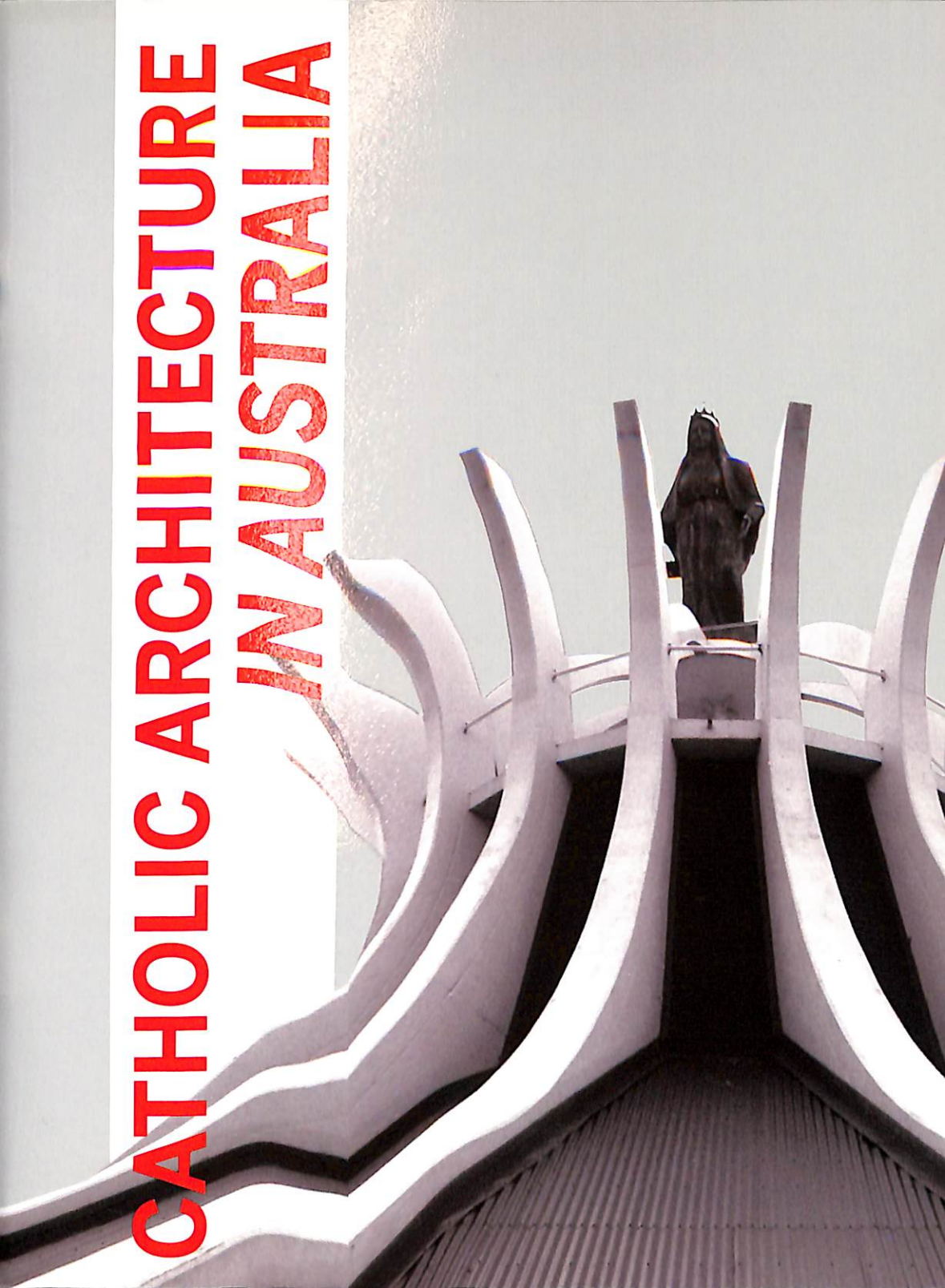


CATHOLIC ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA



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JOHN JOHNSON

Foreword by John O'Brien
Edited by Dr Zeny Edwards

*The Conservation Press
National Trust of Australia (NSW)*

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Cover: Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Harris Park

Frontispiece: Detail, Holy Cross Catholic Church, South Kincumber NSW (1842)



CONTENTS

The National Trust Celebrates World Youth Day 2008 *Dr Zeny Edwards* 4

Foreword *John O'Brien* 5

Acknowledgements 5

Catholic Architecture in Australia: Colonial Sydney to Present Day Sydney *John Johnson* 7-12

Group 1

St John's Catholic Chapel, Campbelltown NSW (1824-1841) 15

St Brigid's Catholic Church, Kent Street, The Rocks, Sydney NSW
(ground floor 1834-1835) 16

St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong NSW (1840-1849) 17

St Matthew's Catholic Church, Windsor NSW (1840) 18

Holy Cross Catholic Church, South Kincumber NSW (1842) 19

St Bede's Roman Catholic Church, Appin NSW (1837-1841) 20

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Church Hill, Sydney NSW (1840-1848) 21

St Mary's Towers, Douglas Park NSW (1842-1845) 22

St Bernard's Catholic Church, Hartley NSW (1842-1848) 23

Group 2

St Francis Xavier's Catholic Church, Berrima NSW (1849-1851) 25

St Patrick's Catholic Church, Parramatta NSW (1853-1883, 1936, 1996 destroyed by
fire, restored 2003) 26-27

St John's College, Sydney University NSW (1859-1863) 28

St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney NSW (1868-1882, 1900-1928, 1998-2000 spires
completed) 29

St Patrick's Seminary, Manly NSW (1885-1889) 30

Saints Peter and Paul's Old Cathedral, Goulburn NSW (1871-1890) 31

St Canice's Catholic Church, Elizabeth Bay NSW (1887-1889) 32

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church and Ventnor, Randwick NSW (1887-1921) and
Ventnor (ca. 1870) 33

Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington NSW (1895-1897) 34

Galong Cemetery, Harden, Central Tablelands NSW 35

Group 3

Convent of the Sacred Heart, Rose Bay NSW (Kincoppal) (1884-1889, Chapel 1897-
1900) 37

Dwyer Monument, Waverley Cemetery NSW (1898) 38

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Erskineville NSW (1912) 39

St Brigid's Catholic Church, Coogee NSW (1921) 40

St Brigid's Catholic Church, Marrickville NSW (1918-1921, 1950s Bell tower and
facade) 41

St Joseph's Church, Enfield NSW (1931) 42

St Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Arncliffe NSW (1931-1933) 43

St Anne's Shrine, North Bondi NSW (1934) 44-45

Mary Immaculate Church, North Sydney NSW (1937-1938) 46-47

Group 4

Our Lady of Lebanon Church, Harris Park NSW (1970-1978) 49

St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta NSW (2003) 26-27

THE NATIONAL TRUST CELEBRATES WORLD YOUTH DAY 2008

The National Trust of Australia (NSW) is an active participant in the celebration of World Youth Day in Sydney with exciting events acknowledging the significance of Catholicism in Australia. *Catholic Architecture in Australia* is an exhibition held from 5-25 July 2008 at the National Trust Centre's Annie Wyatt Room and Board Room at historic Observatory Hill, Sydney. The exhibition and this accompanying catalogue illustrates the history of ecclesiastical architecture in the Sydney region, with particular emphasis on the changing architectural styles and decorative features of Catholic churches from colonial times to the present day.

Accompanying the exhibition are talks by Paul Walsh, Architect and Lecturer at University of NSW in Sacred Architecture on 'Sacred Architecture' on 7 July 2008; Fr Don Richardson, Parish Priest of Dulwich Hill, Acting Director of the Office of Liturgy in the Archdiocese of Sydney and Master of Ceremonies for the Archdiocese of Sydney, will talk on 'Liturgy and Ecclesiastical Architecture' on 21 July 2008.

A guided tour of ecclesiastical buildings will be conducted by architect, John O'Brien, on 23 July 2008 visiting Nairana Boys Centre, Pennant Hills; Stanhope Gardens, Rouse Hill; St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta; Our Lady of Lebanon, Harris Park and culminating in a tour and lunch at the historic National Trust property, Old Government House, Parramatta.

A unique event is the special 'TOUCH OF BELLS', *Pope Benedict XVI Surprise Major*, which will ring for the first time in Australia on 11 July 2008 at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. *Pope Benedict XVI Surprise Major* was first rung on church bells at the Catholic Cathedral Church of St Francis Xavier in Liverpool, England on 23 June 2005 to mark the election of Pope Benedict. This special 'TOUCH OF BELLS' will be rung to celebrate the visit of His Holiness Pope Benedict to Sydney. *Pope Benedict XVI Surprise Major* will be performed by members of The St Mary's Basilica Society of Change Ringers and will be conducted by John Fryer, the Society's Ringing Master. An exclusive tour of the bell tower by internationally renowned campanologist, Dr Jim Woolford, will be offered to fifty lucky persons who will be able to witness the actual ringing of the bells in the tower. Proceeds will help the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and the St Mary's Basilica Society of Change Ringers Conservation Appeals.

I hope you can join us in all of these very special events to celebrate World Youth Day in Sydney. Please contact Natalie Gross, Events Manager, on ngross@nsw.nationaltrust.org.au or on 9258 0181 for bookings and more information.

Dr Zeny Edwards
President
National Trust of Australia (NSW)

FOREWORD

In 1788 when Captain Arthur Phillip arrived in Port Jackson on the First Fleet, he brought with him men and women, as seamen, government officials or 'convicts'. Amongst these arrivals were members of the Catholic faith.

A number of years were to pass before the Catholic Church was able to gain a solid foundation in the new colony.

From humble beginnings one can trace the development of the faith through its churches and religious buildings. As the colony grew and prospered, so did the grandeur of its ecclesiastical buildings.

This booklet seeks to illustrate this development, with examples from early colonial days in Sydney, through emerging nationhood and then to the present day in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Whilst pondering over each illustration, try to enter into the lives of the individual congregations, and share their joys and sorrows, their prayers and hopes as they baptised their young, married their loved ones, farewelled their dearly departed and participated in the mass and sacramental services. Try also to imagine what their motivation must have been, and still is, for the financial commitment they shouldered to ensure that their churches were indeed beautiful and worth of the Creator and substantial enough to pass on to future generations.

John O'Brien ARAIA
Architect and Convenor of The Architects' Association

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Ian Edwards

*“There is no doubt that a temple
that delights the mind wonderfully,
captivates it with grace and admiration
and will greatly encourage piety.*

*This is why I would wish the temple so beautiful
that nothing more decorous could ever be devised;
I would deck it out in every part so that anyone
who entered it would start with awe for his admiration
at all the noble things, and could scarcely restrain
himself from exclaiming that what he saw was a place
undoubtedly worthy of God.”*

— Leon Battista Alberti

CATHOLIC ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA: Colonial Sydney to Present Day Sydney

When the First Fleet dropped anchor in Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788 it was estimated that about a tenth of the 780 convicts on board were Catholics. They were mostly Irish convicts, together with a few marines. About half of these were born in Ireland, while a good proportion of the others were English-born but of Irish extraction. Most of the rest were English or Scottish. The British government had sent Reverend Richard Johnson, a Church of England minister with the convicts, and no other religion was represented. On 3 February 1788 Johnson conducted the first Christian service in Australia under a gum tree. It would take fifteen years before Catholics were officially allowed the same privilege. Johnson took as his text, Psalm 116:12: ‘How can I repay the Lord for all His goodness to me?’ It is unlikely that too many of the convicts would have been impressed with the divine goodness of being whilst dumped in the wilderness halfway round the world from their homes and friends.

By 1792 there were about 350 Catholic convicts and about fifty Catholic free settlers. The numbers of Catholics swelled in the wake of the 1798 Irish uprising and included three priests unjustly transported on a charge of complicity in the uprising: Fathers James Harold, James Dixon, and Peter O’Neil. They were at first strictly forbidden from administering any of the Sacraments. By 1803 a total of 2086 Irish convicts, nearly all Catholics, had been transported to Sydney and in that year Governor King granted conditional emancipation to Father James Dixon and he was given permission to say Mass for the Catholics of Sydney, Liverpool and Parramatta on successive Sundays, a practice that continued from 1803 until March 1804. Unfortunately the Castle Hill rebellion (also known as the Battle of Vinegar Hill), in which many Irish convicts took part, so alarmed Governor King that he withdrew Dixon’s privileges. Dixon soon after returned to Ireland, and Mass was not legally celebrated again in the colony until 1820.

Estimates are that about four-fifths of Irish convicts were ordinary criminals and most of the remainder ‘social rebels’ who were convicted of crimes of violence against property and landlords. Only a very small number could be regarded as genuine political rebels. Perhaps the most notable of these were the surviving leaders of the 1798 Wicklow uprising, General Joseph Holt, who was transported in 1800, and the ‘Tellicherry Five’: Michael Dwyer, Hugh Byrne, Martin Burke, Arthur Devlin and John Mernagh, and their wives and families, who arrived on the Tellicherry in 1806.

In 1817, following many entreaties from Catholics in the convict colony, Father Jeremiah O’Flynn, an Irish Cistercian priest, sailed for Australia. He had been unable to secure official permission and attempted to bluff the Governor of New South Wales, Lachlan Macquarie. O’Flynn agreed not to officiate as a priest until London notified its assent but did not honour the agreement. When Macquarie discovered that O’Flynn had broken his word, he was deported in 1818. The publicity surrounding O’Flynn’s treatment spurred London to act. Macquarie was notified that two Irish Catholic priests, Fathers John Joseph Therry and Philip Connolly had been appointed as chaplains to the colony. They sailed from Cork in 1819 and their arrival in Sydney in May 1820 may be regarded as the formal establishment of the Catholic Church in Australia. The chaplains were strictly forbidden to receive converts from any Protestant denominations and where and when they could celebrate Mass was under tight control. Connolly left for Tasmania in April 1821, leaving Therry as the sole priest in NSW.

The building of a church in Sydney, planned from the first days of the chaplaincy, was one of Therry's main preoccupations. On 29 October 1821 Governor Macquarie laid the foundation stone of St Mary's Church on a site he had assigned at the edge of Hyde Park, near the Hyde Park Barracks. Noted emancipist architect Francis Greenway made himself available for consultation as the architect for the project. Construction proceeded in fits and starts and the first stage was not completed until 1834.

Although many Irish convicts were merely nominal Catholics – in fact, many were quite irreligious – many others diligently and courageously kept their faith alive despite the fact that, for most of the next thirty years or so, priests were only sporadically available to administer to them the sacraments. According to the 1828 Census, out of a total Catholic population of about 11,000, there were 374 adults who had been born in Australia and raised in a totally lay environment, the Catholic faith passing on to them despite the absence of priests.

Therry performed prodigious feats as he laboured alone in NSW, ministering to the thousands of Catholics. According to a contemporary report, 'neither time, nor distance, nor danger – and his duties were often performed at the real peril of life – ever impeded or obstructed him in the zealous performance of the sacred duties of his mission'.

As well as St Mary's, other churches were begun, including St John's at Campbelltown in 1824, which Therry designed himself. Not completed until 1841, St John's was not universally admired, a letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald* described it as having 'a plain square look about it that does not give much idea of a church and does not resemble the style usually adopted by Roman Catholics, who generally contrive to give a distinctive character to even the most humble building they occupy'.

Therry had worked well with Governor Macquarie and Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane, but he was removed from his official situation as chaplain and his salary was withdrawn soon after the arrival of Governor Darling in late 1825. This was not a complete disaster, as in 1826 Ireland sent Fathers Daniel Power and Roger Murphy as chaplains, but Therry remained in Sydney. Murphy was sent to Parramatta after his arrival in 1827 and immediately commenced building St Patrick's Parramatta which was finished about 1836, and is possibly the first Catholic church to be completed in Australia. The strong Irish influence in the early years of Australian Catholicism is reflected in the number of churches named for Irish saints like Patrick and Brigid.

Governor Darling attempted to create an establishment for the Anglican Church in Australia by creating a Church and Schools Corporation in 1826. The Corporation was to receive one seventh of all land alienated in NSW, but the attempt to make the Anglican Church the establishment church of NSW failed. Governor Darling had been extremely conservative and suspicious of Catholics. In 1831 he was replaced by Richard Bourke, an Anglican Irishman who was far more sympathetic to the Catholic Church. In 1829 the Catholic Relief Act had been passed by the British Parliament, removing many of the remaining substantial restrictions on Catholics in the United Kingdom. The tide of religious oppression had obviously turned throughout the Empire.

In 1832 Dr William Ullathorne, an English Benedictine priest, was appointed as vicar-general in New South Wales with British government approval, and arrived in February 1833. Ullathorne was a convert from Anglicanism and was the first non-Irish priest in the colony. Although only 26-years-old, he took the sometimes-quarrelsome Therry under his control. By July the Legislative Council made grants for the appointment of four new chaplains, the completion of three unfinished churches, and £800 a year for schools and schoolteachers.

St Brigid's, Kent Street, Sydney, was one result of this largesse. Half of the floor area was a church; the other half was a school. Designed by Ambrose Hallen in consultation with Ullathorne, St Brigid's was completed in 1834. Still used for church services, it is believed to be the oldest surviving continuously-used Catholic church in Australia; a second storey was added in the 1930s.

St Mary's Church, yet incomplete, was ready for use by Christmas 1833. It had been a prodigious work, accomplished in the main by the efforts of Father Therry. Though much remained to be done (the interior was still unfinished in 1848) it was a monumental achievement in many senses. With the appointment of John Bede Polding as Australia's first Bishop in 1835, St Mary's was consecrated as a cathedral.

Bishop Polding had taught Dr Ullathorne and like him was an English Benedictine priest. He was not a convert, having been brought up by his uncle, Father Bede Brewer, president-general of the English Benedictine Congregation. Polding officiated over a church that was largely Irish and convict in origin, followed by well-connected Irish Catholics, such as Roger Therry (who practiced law) and John Hubert Plunkett (Solicitor General of NSW), who began to arrive in the late 1820s. Father John McEncroe accompanied Plunkett as an official chaplain, highly recommended by Archbishop James Murray of Dublin.

Polding, like Therry and Ullathorne before him, dabbled in architecture. In 1837 he is thought to have designed St Bede's, Appin, a rather primitive Picturesque Gothic church, dedicated to Polding's name saint. With the passing of the Church Act in 1836, support from public funds to the major denominations became proportional to the numbers of their congregations. This ensured a flow of funds that enabled the use of professional designers and architects.

Influenced by Dr William Ullathorne, Irish priest Father Patrick Murphy obtained permission to go to Australia for five years and arrived in Sydney in July 1838. Almost immediately, because of the impending departure of Bishop Polding for Britain, he was appointed vicar-general with jurisdiction over the whole of Australia. His credentials were impressive, having spent ten years at St Patrick's Church in Liverpool, ministering to the expatriate Irish Catholic community there.

Soon after arrival Murphy began a new church, St Patrick's, Church Hill, Sydney. He had brought plans modelled on St Anthony's Church, Liverpool, by Liverpool architect John Broadbent. The plans were modified by Sydney architect John Frederick Hilly, who supervised the construction. Murphy became the first Bishop of Adelaide and by the time he left in September 1844 Hilly had resigned from supervising the construction of the church, which still had no windows or interior. Polding, who had become Archbishop in 1843, and with the assistance of a draughtsman called Bell, supervised the finishing of the church. The Decorated Gothic windows are at odds with the Early English style of the remainder, but Joseph Fowles, writing in 1848 stated: '...the windows are all filled with mouldings of great elegance and beauty, and most of them richly adorned with painted glass. The corbels, of fanciful design are in good keeping with the rest of the building ... which is of great architectural merit, and well worthy of the communion to which it belongs'.

Whilst in Britain, Polding met A.W.N. (Augustus Welby Northmore) Pugin and was present when St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham and St Giles' Church, Cheadle (designed by Pugin) were officially opened. Pugin was a Catholic convert and a renowned expert on Gothic architecture. Polding persuaded Pugin to design a series of churches in the new colony for him. Most significant were plans for an extension to St Mary's Cathedral. Work commenced on the Pugin-designed extensions in 1851 and proceeded fitfully due to lack of funds.

Polding also ordered a peal of bells, one of the first in Australia, which were erected in a temporary bell tower at the cathedral in 1843.

Other churches in New South Wales which were built to Pugin designs included: St Charles Borromeo's in Ryde, St Patrick's in Parramatta, St Benedict's in Broadway, St Augustine Hippo's in Balmain and St Francis Xavier in Berrima. Remnants of all these churches survive, including the tower at St Patrick's in Parramatta, although subsumed by a later church. In a miraculous fashion, St Francis Xavier's, Berrima, is almost entirely intact and picturesquely located amongst gum trees on a small hill. It has been referred to as 'a near perfect exemplar of Pugin's concept for the revival of a small medieval country church'.

The gold rushes of the 1850s transformed Australia. Victoria had the richest goldfields and Melbourne became a boom town. One of those attracted was successful church architect called William Wilkinson Wardell. As a young man Wardell had studied under architecture under A.W.N. Pugin, who became his friend and mentor. Inspired by Pugin, Wardell converted to Catholicism in 1843. He arrived in Melbourne in 1858 and was immediately engaged in the design and construction of St Patrick's Cathedral.

In February 1859 Wardell was appointed architect for St John's College, the Catholic college at Australia's first university, University of Sydney. Working from Melbourne, he drew up the plans and sent them to Sydney in May 1859. Due to disagreements with the building committee he resigned as architect in June 1860 and Edmund Blacket took over supervision of the building work. Before resigning Wardell wrote to the committee that, '...you are about to build not only for this generation only, not for the next, but for those who will exist in centuries yet far removed from us' St John's College is considered to be one of the crowning glories of Australian Gothic architecture.

It might have been assumed that Irish Catholic arrivals in NSW would halt entirely when convict transportation to NSW ended in 1840. However, the opposite was the case; the Great Irish Famine (from 1845) and the Australian gold rushes (from 1851) lead to a steady stream of Irish immigrants into the country. The Australian Catholic Church continued to draw most of its priests from Ireland, despite the efforts of Polding and others to recruit in Britain. Father William Lanigan was typical of the Irish clergy who served as the backbone of the Australian church. A native of Tipperary, Lanigan arrived in Sydney in 1859 and was soon serving at St Francis Xavier's Church, Berrima. In 1867 he was made Bishop of Goulburn, while Polding was overseas. He opposed Polding's attempt to reduce the Irish character of the Australian church and introduced to the Goulburn Diocese a number of teaching orders, including the Christian Brothers, Patrician Brothers, Presentation Sisters, Brigidines, and Passionist Fathers. He also sponsored many of his relatives to emigrate from Ireland to Australia (including some of the author's ancestors). The former Goulburn Cathedral, built entirely during his term as bishop, is a fine reminder of this energetic Irishman.

St Mary's Cathedral, its Pugin-designed building program still only partially completed, burned to the ground on 29 June 1865. Perhaps it was fortunate that Therry, who had worked so hard to have it built, did not witness the conflagration having died the previous year. The birthplace of Australian Catholicism had been destroyed, but Archbishop Polding knew what he had to do to resurrect the building. Less than six months later he wrote offering the commission to William Wardell: 'Any plan, any style, anything that is beautiful and grand, to the extent of our power'. Wardell accepted, although neither he nor Polding would live to see the building completed.

Polding's replacement, Roger William Bede Vaughan, was another English Benedictine priest, born and raised in a Catholic family. With Polding's health declining, Vaughan arrived

in late 1873 and was made Archbishop on Polding's death in 1877. He raised £30,000 for the building of St Mary's Cathedral. Vaughan was able to dedicate the partially completed cathedral in September 1882, but his health was also deteriorating and he died on a visit to Britain in 1883.

Australia's Irish clergy could celebrate when Vaughan's replacement was announced. Archbishop (later Cardinal) Patrick Moran was Irish born, although he was educated in Rome with his uncle Father (later Cardinal) Paul Cullen. When he arrived in 1884 Moran set about reforming the Catholic education system, which was under competition from the new universal secular state education system with the setting up of the Public Instruction Act of 1880. Moran also embarked on a substantial building program. The architectural firm, Sheerin and Hennessy, was a beneficiary of the work that resulted through Moran recommendations; Joseph Sheerin and John Hennessy, being both devout Catholics, proved providential in winning commissions from the Catholic church.

Moran had been taken on a tour of Catholic Church properties upon his arrival in Sydney. He had been shown (possibly as a test) a wild, inaccessible block of land high above the seaside resort of Manly. Despite the difficulty of the site, Moran decided to build a seminary and he commissioned Sheerin and Hennessy to design it (for which they won a gold medal at the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London) and superintend the construction. Opened in 1889, it was intended that St Patrick's Seminary would train priests to 'meet the wants of all Australian dioceses'. This did not happen and Australia continued to rely on Irish priests until well into the 1950s. Sheerin and Hennessy designed an enormous number of buildings for the Catholic Church until Sheerin left the partnership in 1912; nothing however quite matched the grandeur of St Patrick's Seminary.

While the Irish remained the dominant Order, the Australian church was embracing other Orders. Mother Febronie Vercruysse brought the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart to Australia in 1881 and built a convent and school at Rose Bay. The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) first came to Sydney from France in 1885, in order to establish a supply base for their new missions in New Guinea. A Lebanese Maronite mission was set up in 1893, with a new church being blessed by Cardinal Moran in 1897. Nonetheless, the Irish connection remained strong. The Rose Bay school and convent were financed by John Hughes, a wealthy Irish immigrant, while John Ryan, son of Irish convict Ned Ryan, bequeathed his enormous property 'Galong' in the Central Tablelands to the Catholic Church in 1887.

The construction of Central Railway necessitated the removal of an old cemetery in Devonshire Street, Sydney. One of the graves to be relocated was that of Michael Dwyer, the 'Wicklow Chief' and his wife, Mary. With the centenary of the 1798 Irish uprising approaching, it was decided to remove their remains to Waverley Cemetery to be interred in a monument commemorating the uprising. Designed by Sheerin and Hennessy, it was exquisitely carved in Carrara marble and crammed with Celtic symbols. Cardinal Moran virulently opposed the commemoration, describing it as 'a blunder and a crime'. Nonetheless, a crowd of 10,000 accompanied the funeral and saw the remains interred.

As the new century dawned, the Gothic style began to wane. Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Erskineville, was built in a strongly Art Nouveau influenced Gothic style. St Mary's Cathedral was the last pure Gothic building completed in Sydney. Hennessy and Hennessy (John Hennessy had been joined by his son, Jack) supervised the final stages, which followed Wardell's plans quite closely. When it was finished in 1928, part English, part French, part Pugin and wholly Australian St Mary's Cathedral was the biggest, and perhaps the finest, Gothic building in the country. The addition of the spires on the western front in 2000 completed Wardell's design.

The period between the First and Second World Wars saw a striking group of Catholic churches built in Sydney's suburbs. Varied in style, they were all superbly built, despite the fact that several were erected during the depths of the Great Depression. Prominent architects included Clement Glancy and the firm of Fowell and McConnell. Fowell and McConnell won the Sulman Prize (NSW's premier architectural award) for St Anne's Shrine, North Bondi. A common factor for many of these churches was the builder R.M. Bowcock. Taken together, these churches represent a high water mark for stylism and quality in church architecture in Australia.

Building virtually ceased during the Second World War and the austerity period that followed produced little high-quality architecture. Post-War migration led to an influx of Catholics from Eastern and Southern Europe. Many settled in Sydney's established suburbs, but few new churches were being built in these areas. A startling exception is Our Lady of Lebanon, Harris Park. Built as a centre for a growing Lebanese Maronite community, this imposing concrete structure is built within sight of some of Australia's oldest buildings, on the same street as Elizabeth Farm, which dates to the 1790s.

The new St Patrick's Cathedral at Parramatta represents an exciting direction for Catholic architecture to progress with the times. It has little of the overt architectural symbolism of the Gothic or Interwar churches. Instead, its symbolism is embodied in its extensive program of contemporary art. Large and rather austere, it has much in common with old St John's Church at Campbelltown, Father Thery's simple church of 'pointed opes'.

John Johnson

Librarian
Curator, *Catholic Architecture in Australia* Exhibition

¹Hogan, James Francis, *The Irish in Australia*, London, Ward & Downey, 1887.

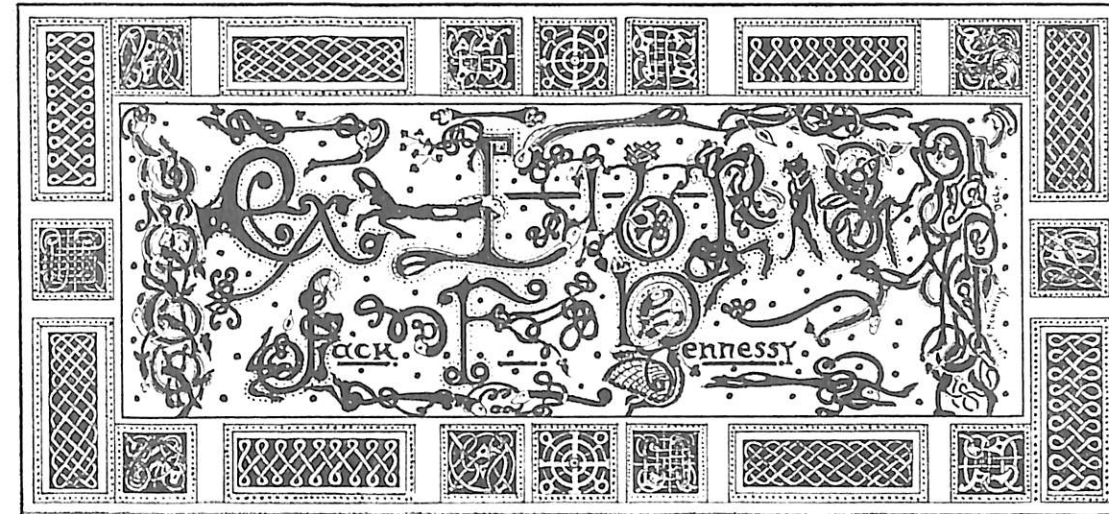
²Letter to the editor, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 May 1844, p. 2.

³Fowles, Joseph, *Sydney in 1848: Principal Streets, Public Buildings, Churches, Chapels, Etc.*, Sydney, 1848, (Facsimile edition, Sydney, Ure Smith, 1966).

⁴Andrews, Brian, *Australian Gothic*, Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2001, p. 73.

⁵Letter, Archbishop Polding to William Wardell, 10 October, 1865.

⁶*Catholic Weekly*, 8 February 2004, p. 16.



Jack Hennessy's Celtic bookplate. The bookplate, which Hennessy designed himself, comes from a copy of the *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVe siècle*, by Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. The book was presented to Jack Hennessy's father, John F. Hennessy, when he won the Ashpittel Prize for architectural students in 1875.

'Though in morals the good is absolute and independent of circumstances, it is not the same with building. What is good here is bad elsewhere, on account of climate, habits, nature of materials, and the way they are affected by local circumstances.'

Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc

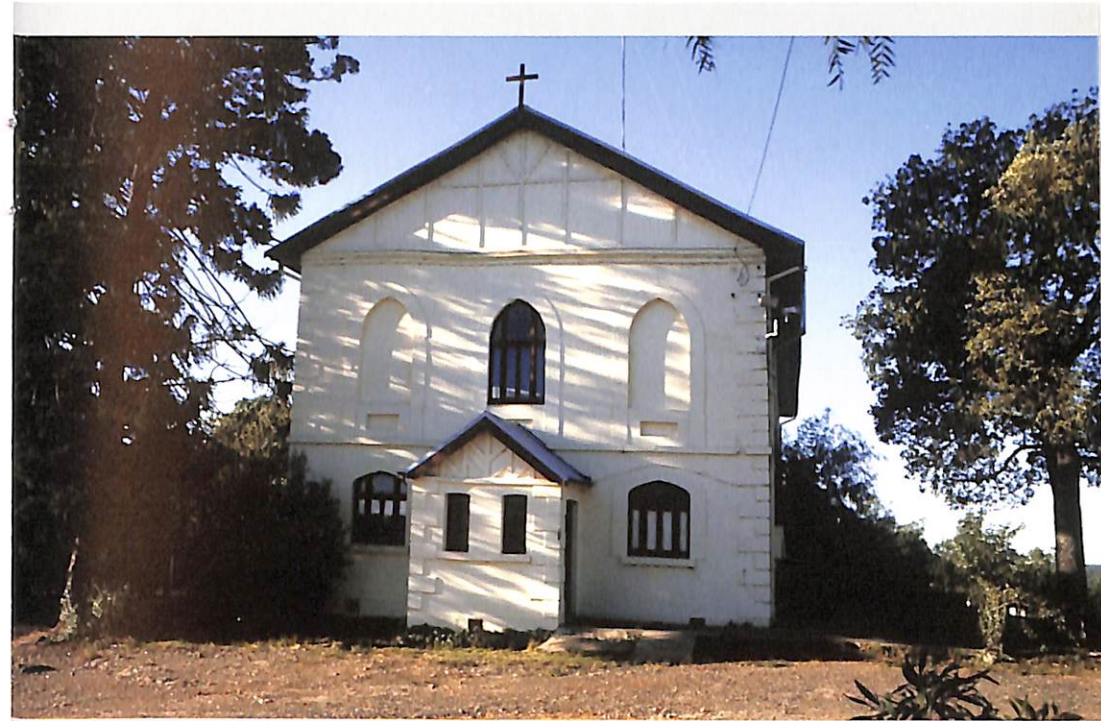
Group 1

'Where are the footprints, where are the foundation stones?'

Many years were to pass after the arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson before there were permanent traces of the Catholic Church in Australia. There are a variety of reasons for this:

- The persecution of the Church in the colony by the authorities
- The apprehension of the authorities towards the Irish convicts, fearful of the rebellion
- The secular nature of society
- The advance of Napoleon on Rome and the Vatican, distracting the Church and its far flung responsibilities
- The clash of personalities within the Church itself
- The lack of funding

When services were allowed, they were carried out in the living rooms of private residences. Eventually, Catholic churches were constructed, usually in a simple 'Gothic revival' style, with minimal decoration, as typified by St John's Catholic Chapel in Campbelltown NSW. At the end of this period, under the guidance of established orders such as the Marist fathers, we see the emergence of churches with wider spans and grander decoration, as wonderfully exemplified by St Patrick's Church at Church Hill, Sydney.



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHAPEL Campbelltown NSW (1824-1841)

This is the oldest surviving Catholic church in Australia, although it is no longer used for services. Father Therry "had such a passion for windows, which he called 'opes', that on the church at Campbell Town, exposed on a lofty hill, though it was but 80' long, he contrived to fit it with 80 windows, most of which had afterwards to be blocked up. He put two rows around, and then filled up the gables with windows."

(Leslie, S., 'From cabin boy to Archbishop, the autobiography of W.B. Ullathorne published from the original draft', London, 1941, p. 163)



ST BRIGID'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

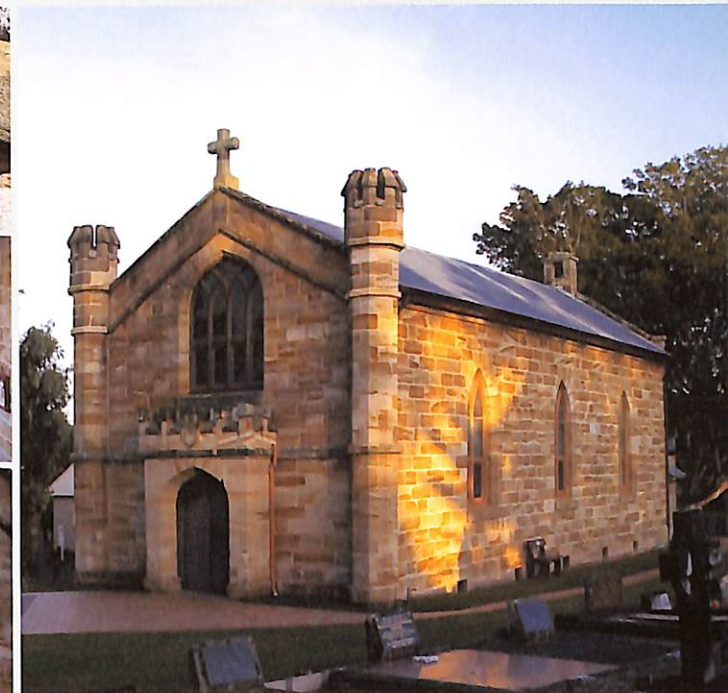
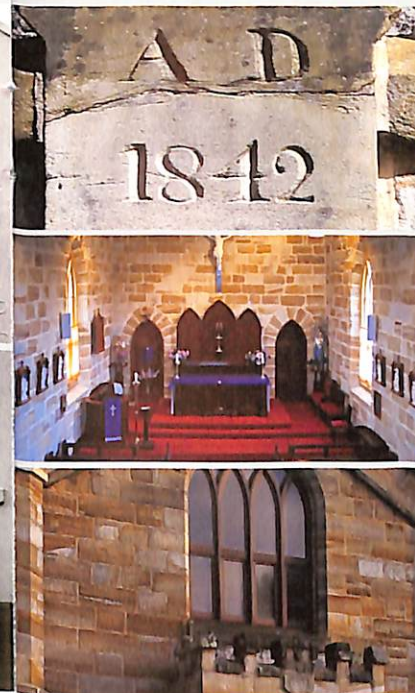
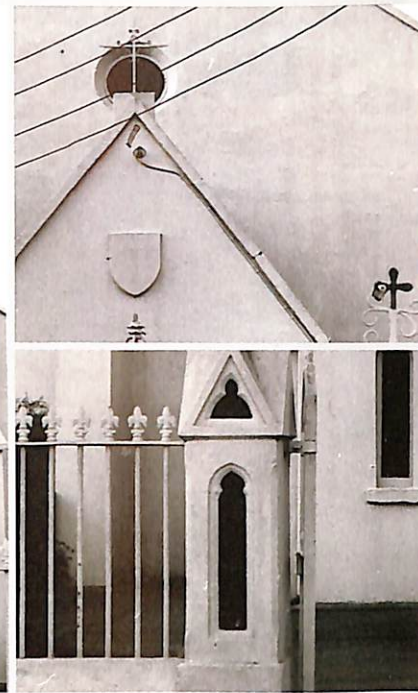
Kent Street, The Rocks, Sydney NSW (ground floor 1834-1835)
Designed by Ambrose Hallen in consultation with Bishop Ullathorne

St Brigid's originally functioned as a church and school. This is the oldest building in Australia which has been in continuous use for religious services for the Catholic Church. The ground floor sandstone section, which still functions as a church, has been in use since 1835.

ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL

Wollongong NSW (1840-1849)

In 1841 the Australian Catholic Directory announced, 'The church of St Francis Xavier will be a handsome stone building in the pure Gothic style, sustained with much ornament and will be sufficiently large to contain 1,500 persons. Its estimated expense is £2,000'. Additions were made in 1878, 1906, 1922, 1933, 1960, 1970s and 1985. St Francis Xavier's was made a cathedral in 1951. The physical fabric reflects the needs of a growing population and though hardly 'pure Gothic' in style anymore, it remains as an attractive architectural feature of the region.



ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
Windsor NSW (1840)

There are two St Matthew's churches in Windsor, one Anglican and one Catholic. Bishop Polding opened the Catholic church in 1840. Since its consecration, St Matthew's continues to be used for Mass and church activities. The interior of the church features a cedar-panelled ceiling. The McQuade Family donated the pipe organ which is located in the choir loft at the rear of the church.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH
South Kincumber NSW (1842)

Thomas Humphreys donated a portion of land to Archbishop Polding in 1838. The church was constructed by free labour and with the assistance of funds from the local Catholic community and the NSW Government (one of the few Catholic churches built with government assistance). It commenced service in 1842 and was completed the following year.

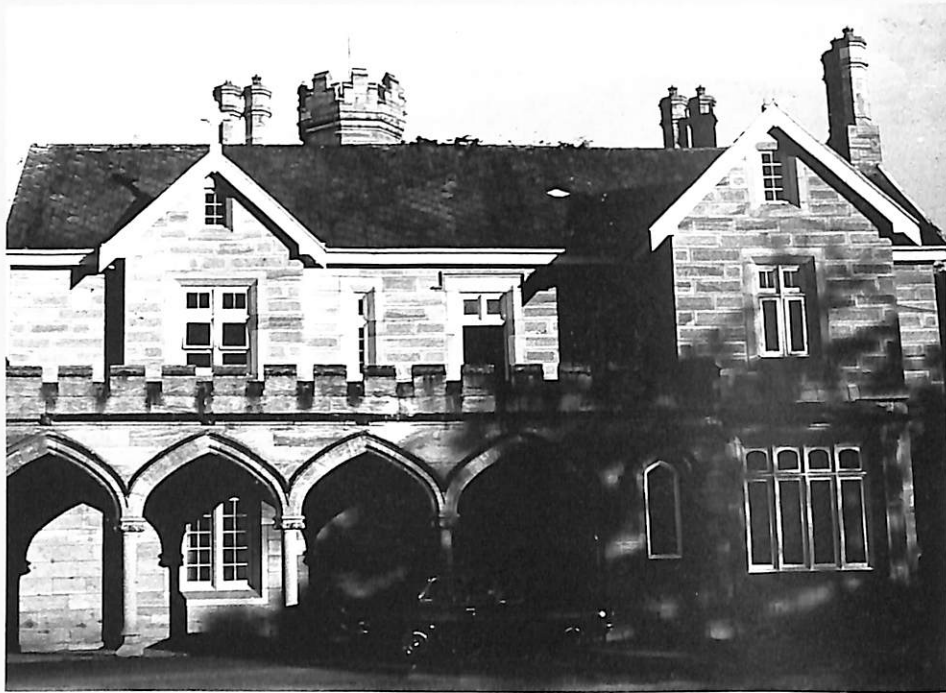


ST BEDE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
Appin NSW (1837-1841)

A largely unaltered Regency Gothic style church. Built by masons, William Murphy, Michael O'Shea, Hugh Murphy, Danniell Connors and William O'Brien. Possibly designed by Bishop Polding, it was named after Polding's name saint.

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
Church Hill, Sydney NSW (1840-1848)

Joseph Fowles, writing in 1848 stated, 'the windows are all filled with mouldings of great elegance and beauty, and most of them richly adorned with painted glass. The corbels, of fanciful design are in good keeping with the rest of the building ... which is of great architectural merit, and well worthy of the communion to which it belongs'.



ST MARY'S TOWERS

Douglas Park NSW (1842-1845)

Originally known as Parkhall, this house was built as a country retreat for Sir Thomas Mitchell (Surveyor-General for the Colony of NSW 1828-1855). In 1860 it was purchased by a prominent Anglican, Dr Richard Jenkins, who added the cloister and chapel. In 1904 the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart purchased the property, which became a novitiate for the province, a role it still fulfills. A school also operated from the site until the 1960s and it has been used as a retreat since the 1970s.



ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Hartley NSW (1842-1848)

Designed by local builder Alexander Binning (a Presbyterian), this church began construction only a few years after a road was built across the Blue Mountains. The Hartley district had an unusually strong Irish Catholic community. The finely carved sandstone altar, was designed by Bell and carved by Binning. Although all the early priests were Irish, the Stations of the Cross are French, the wooden Gothic confession-box is said to be in a French style and the harmonium bears a label from the great Paris Exhibition of 1854. Regular services ceased in 1965 and in 1974 the church was sold to the State government and is managed as part of the Hartley Historic Site by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The church is still consecrated and is used for occasional services, weddings and baptisms.

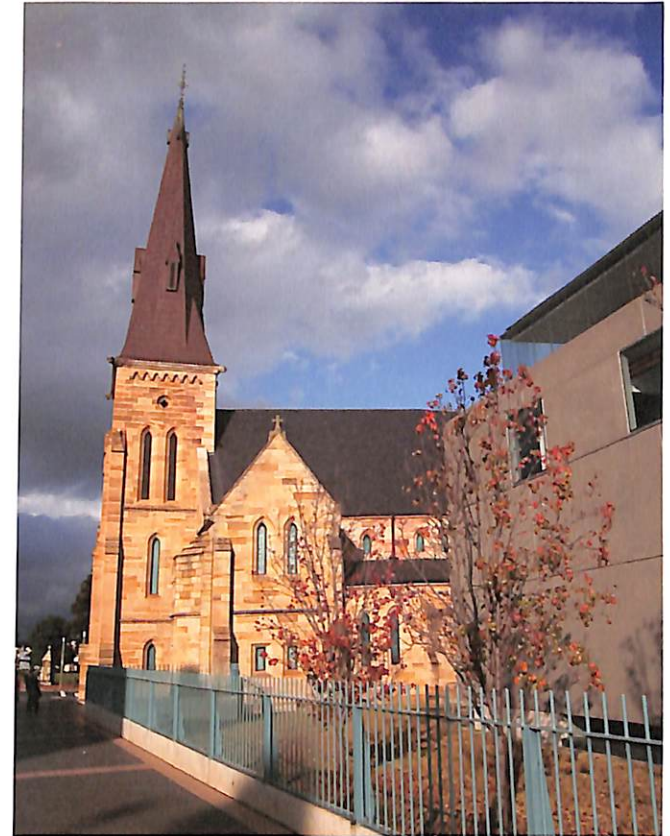
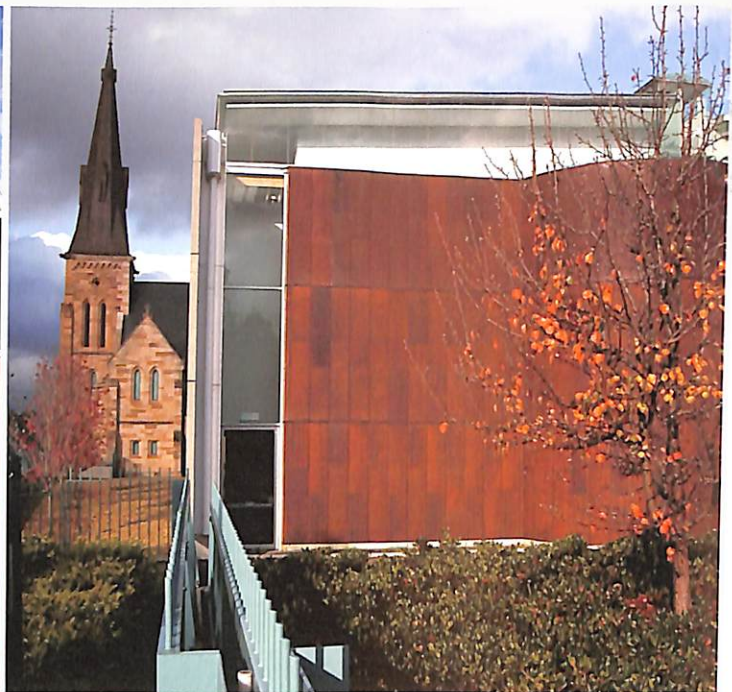
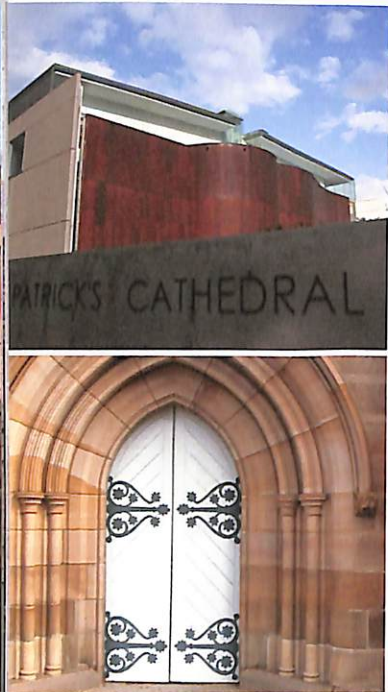


Group 2

With increasing wealth in the colony and growing influence of the Church in Australian society, significant ecclesiastical buildings emerged in the skyline. Talented, committed Catholic architects such as William Wardell made great use of the beautiful 'Sydney sandstone' to create in the Gothic revival style, symphonies in stone: St Mary's Cathedral and St John's College. Wardell has been favourably compared to his friend in England, Augustus Pugin. It is interesting to note that both buildings were designed from Melbourne, whilst Wardell was working on St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne.

ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH Berrima NSW (1849-1851)

St Francis Xavier's is one of Australia's first 'archaeologically correct' Gothic Revival buildings. Built to a design by A.W.N Pugin, this is the only largely unaltered Pugin design surviving in NSW. Brian Andrews describes it as 'a near perfect exemplar of Pugin's concept for the revival of a small medieval country church'. The church is built on the former site of an 1830s convict road gang stockade. Its foundation stone was laid by Archbishop Polding in 1849 and the building was completed in 1851.



ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Parramatta NSW (1853-1883, 1936, 1996 destroyed by fire, restored 2003)

A church has stood on this site since 1836. James Houison (a prominent Parramatta builder/mason/architect, also a Presbyterian) supervised the construction of an AWN Pugin design from 1853 onwards. This church, with the exception of the tower and spire, was demolished in 1935. Much of the old stonework was re-used in the 1936 church, which closely resembled the earlier building. In 1986 it became Parramatta Cathedral. All but the stone walls were destroyed by fire in 1996. Now reconstructed, this much-loved Parramatta monument is a Blessed Sacrament Chapel, adjacent to the new Parramatta Cathedral.





ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

Sydney University NSW (1859-1863)

Designed by architect William Wardell, St John's College is one of Australia's finest Gothic Revival buildings, and is part of Australia's first university, Sydney University. Architect Edmund Blacket supervised the construction after Wardell resigned over disagreements with the building committee. Before he resigned he wrote to the committee that: 'you are about to build not only for this generation only, not for the next, but for those who will exist in centuries yet far removed from us'.



ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL

Sydney (1868-1882, 1900-1928, 1998-2000 Spires completed)

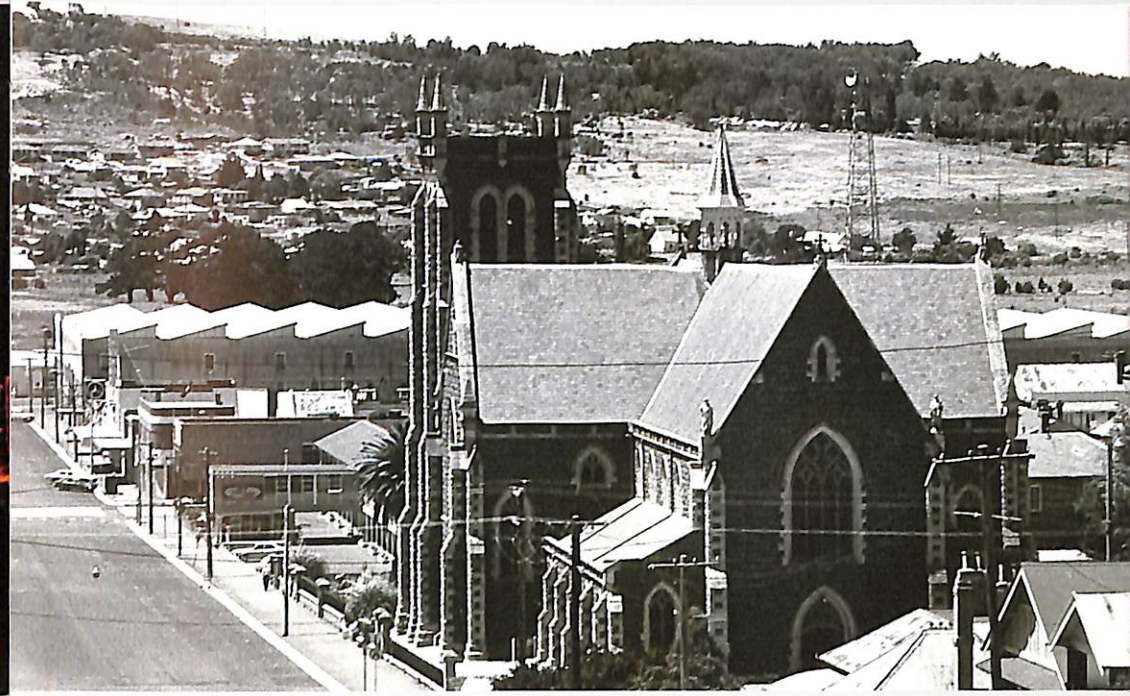
The first cathedral on this site (begun in 1821) was destroyed by fire in 1865. Archbishop Polding commissioned William Wardell to design a replacement cathedral, giving Wardell a free hand: 'Any plan, any style, anything that is beautiful and grand, to the extent of our power'. Wardell worked on the cathedral until his death in 1899, when supervision was taken over by Hennessy and Hennessy. Decorated Gothic in style, the liturgical east front (which faces north) is modelled on Lincoln Cathedral, while the west front (south) is based on Notre Dame de Paris. Beautifully sited adjacent to Hyde Park, St Mary's is Australia's largest cathedral.



ST PATRICK'S SEMINARY

Manly NSW (1885-1889)

Commissioned in 1884 by Archbishop (Cardinal from 1885) Patrick Moran, to train priests to 'meet the wants of all Australian dioceses'. Reputedly the largest seminary built in the Southern Hemisphere, this superbly sited building towers over the seaside resort of Manly. Architects Sheerin and Hennessy won a gold medal at the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London for the design. Although Gothic in detail, the overall form is symmetrically Classical.



SAINTS PETER AND PAUL'S OLD CATHEDRAL

Goulburn NSW (1871-1890)

Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral replaced an 1843 church. The cathedral was designed by architect Andrea Stombuco (best known for his later Brisbane work) with Charles Spadacini supervising the latter parts of the construction. The building may be seen as a monument to William Lanigan who was bishop throughout the entire 20-year building program. This church is no longer a cathedral, as the seat of the diocese has been moved to Canberra.



ST CANICE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Elizabeth Bay NSW (1887-1889)

Built to a design by John Bede Barlow, the land and a substantial amount of the construction cost was donated by the family of John Hughes, an Irish immigrant of the 1840s who prospered and lived at nearby 'Kincoppal'. Since 1990 the church has been run by the Jesuits. Canice's Kitchen (which provides meals for the homeless) is run from the church basement as well as the Jesuit Refugee Service. Homeless people are often found sleeping on the church porch on beddings provided by the church.

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART CHURCH AND VENTNOR

Randwick NSW (1887-1921) Ventnor (ca.1870)

Designed by the prolific Catholic architects Sheerin and Hennessy, this church was probably based on a published illustration of St Mary's Church, Whitechapel, London. Like the Whitechapel church, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart shows a strong French influence in its design. Additionally, the stained glass and other church furnishings came from France. Ventnor is a mid-Victorian house constructed of Sydney sandstone. Both Ventnor and the church have extensive views to the Pacific Ocean.



SACRED HEART MONASTERY

Kensington NSW (1895-1897)

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) first came to Sydney from France in 1885, in order to establish a supply base for their new missions in New Guinea. Within a few years the congregation began to accept local Australian vocations and a mission seminary was needed. Designed by Sheerin and Hennessy and built of Pyrmont sandstone by Dugald McIntyre, there is a distinctive French influence to the tower, in a building that otherwise resembles a miniature version of St Patrick's Seminary in Manly.



GALONG CEMETERY

Harden, Central Tablelands NSW

Emancipated convict Edward 'Ned' Ryan set aside just under two acres of land as a burial ground, possibly as early as the 1820s. Initially used for burials of those who lived and died on Ryan's vast holdings, it became the final resting place for the predominantly Irish Catholic population of the area. In time it became the general cemetery for Galong. Twin monuments for Ned Ryan's niece, Anastasia (*d.* 1914) and nephew, Lawrence Barry Ryan (*d.* 1910) who was the last of the Ryan family, were crafted by Frank Rusconi (1874-1964) of Gundagai. Rusconi is best remembered for Gundagai's 'Dog on the Tuckerbox' and 'Marble Masterpiece' sculptures. Ned Ryan's mansion, 'Ryan's Castle', was left to the Redemptorist Fathers by Ned Ryan's son, John Ryan, and is now St Clement's Retreat.

Group 3

Structural steel, maturity in architectural design and the manufacture of local quality clay bricks gave rise to distinctive styles in the period between the wars.

Sandstone could now be cut and polished by machines rather than by hand, with very distinctive results, as is exemplified at St Mary's at North Sydney. Reinforced concrete helped to create column free spaces and manufactured windows opened up the walls to the outdoors and the 'Australian light'. Electricity also enabled the interval spaces to be artificially lit and sound equipment to be introduced and thereby, augmenting internal natural acoustics.



CONVENT OF THE SACRED HEART (KINCOPPAL)

Rose Bay NSW (1884-1889, Chapel 1897-1900)

Magnificently sited on a hill and overlooking Sydney Harbour, this is the masterwork of John Horbury Hunt, an eccentric American architect who arrived in Sydney in the 1860s. Mother Febronie Vercruysse, who established the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart to Australia in 1881, had been instructed to build a convent and school. Assisted financially by John Hughes, who also funded the construction of St Canice's, Mother Vercruysse recognised Hunt's qualities and together they wrought an enduring monument. The chapel was not finished until after Mother Vercruysse's death, while Hunt himself only lived till 1904. The school is now known as Kincoppal, named after John Hughes' house.



DWYER MONUMENT

Waverley Cemetery NSW (1898)

'An elegant edifice of a scale which permitted the designers, Sheerin and Hennessy, to incorporate almost every symbol and scene an Irish heart could wish for. What made the monument sing, however, was the immaculate execution by the contractors, Ross and Bowman.' (James Kerr). Believed to be the world's largest monument to the 1798 Irish Rebellion, it contains the remains of Michael Dwyer (the 'Wicklow Chieftan') and his wife, Mary.



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR

Erskineville NSW (1912)

The Catholic parish of Erskineville was established in 1872. At the time this was an impoverished area of Sydney and the church was conceived as a mission. The present church was built in 1912 to the design of architect, J. McCarthy, displaying a strong Art Nouveau character.



ST BRIGID'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Coogee NSW (1921)

St Brigid's in Coogee is beautifully sited, on the crest of a ridge overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Built to a design by E. A. Bates, it is strongly reminiscent of London's Romanesque-style Westminster Cathedral (1895-1903), but on a reduced scale. The Romanesque style became popular for Inter-War Sydney Catholic architecture and St Brigid's is one of the best examples of this period.



ST BRIGID'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Marrickville NSW (1918-1921) Bell tower and façade (1950s)

Passionists from the English and Irish Province arrived in Australia in 1887 at the invitation of Cardinal Moran and commenced their work at Marrickville. This site was acquired by the Passionist Fathers in 1915. The foundation stone of the church was laid in 1918 and the building opened in 1921, shortly after completion of the monastery. A boys' school was opened on the adjoining site in 1932. The landmark Spanish Mission-style façade and bell tower were not added to the church until the 1950s.



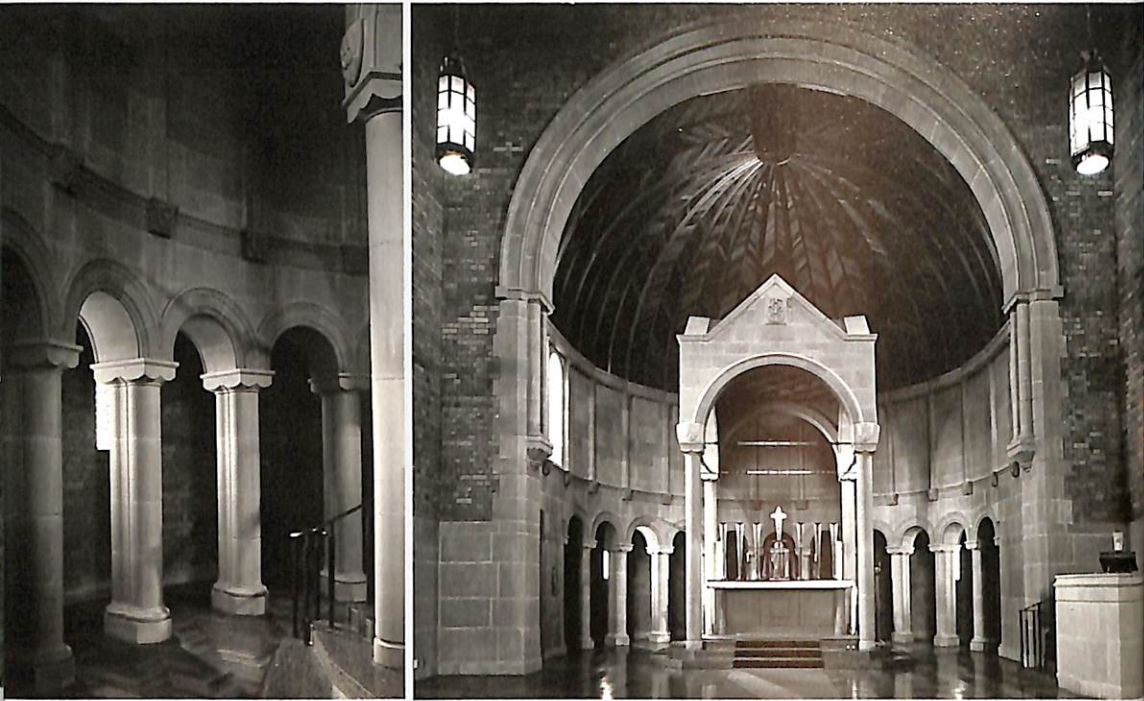
ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH
Enfield NSW (1931)

The dominating feature of St Joseph's is its giant-order Corinthian tetrastyle portico, which is thought to have been inspired by the Madeleine Church in Paris. The sculpture in the tympanum shows Saint Joseph holding the baby Jesus and the Adoration of the Magi. St Joseph's was designed by Clement Glancy, who designed many Inter-War Catholic churches, while the decorative work is carried out in Wunderlich Architectural Terracotta, a type of glazed faience produced in Sydney.



ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC CHURCH
Arncliffe NSW (1931-1933)

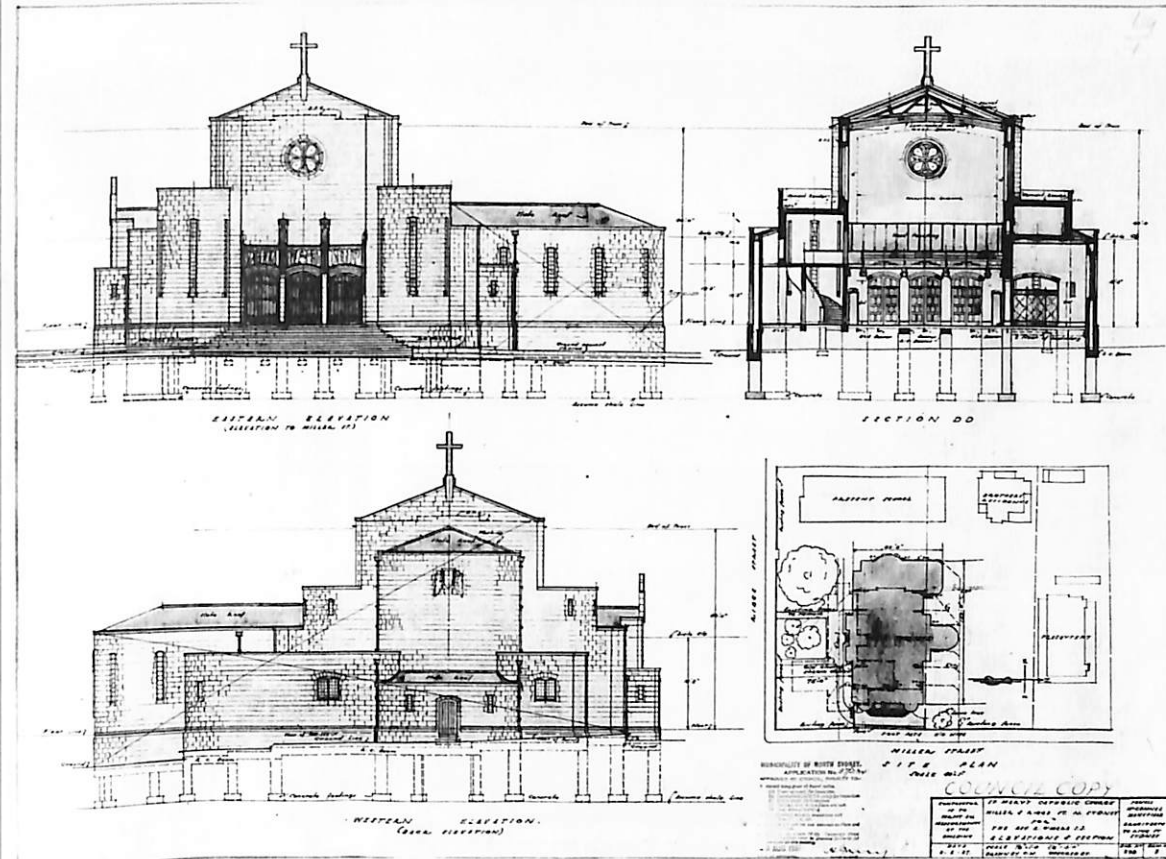
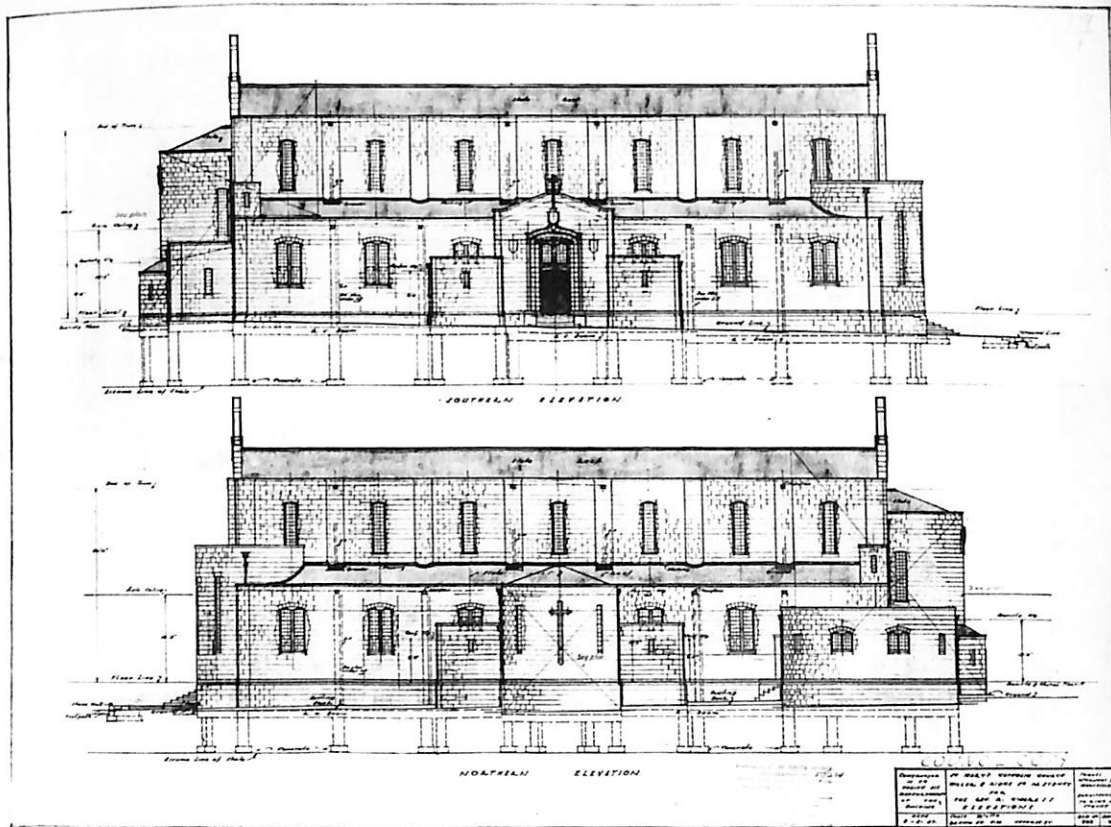
Designed by architect Clement Glancy and built by R.M. Bowcock, this church was erected during the depths of the Great Depression. Father Rafferty personally supervised every stage of the building's construction and the result is a church of exemplary quality. The most distinctive feature is the round tower, which harks back to the Celtic round towers of Ireland. St Francis Xavier's has been described as 'the finest ecclesiastical building in southern Sydney'.



ST ANNE'S SHRINE

North Bondi NSW (1934, completed 1964)

The only Catholic building to win the Sulman Prize (NSW's highest architectural award), St Anne's is the work of Fowell, McConnell & Mansfield and was built by R.M. Bowcock. Historian, Andrew Metcalfe, has described St Anne's as 'a tour de force of brickwork construction with highlights of sandstone trim', and 'perhaps the highlight of ecclesiastical architecture in interwar Sydney'.



MARY IMMACULATE CHURCH
North Sydney NSW (1937-1938)

This is the fourth church to stand on this site and replaced Gothic-style Saint Mary Star of the Sea, which had been built in 1896. The new church was designed by Fowell, McConnell & Mansfield and built by R.M. Bowcock at a cost of £16,000. This beautifully-finished, austere church is simplified Romanesque in style.

Group 4

Each age has to find a common ground to reconcile the tensions between the needs for preserving the faith and the need to make it relevant to contemporary society. There is no Catholic style of architecture.

– Steven J Schloeder, in the introduction to his book *Architecture in Communion*

In other words, church design, whilst relating closely to the liturgy and the traditions of the Church, must also emerge out of the society and era of which it plays an integral part. Gothic architecture in its day was regarded as 'high tech', but it is not part of contemporary society.

During this period, there is also great confusion with the interpretation (or misinterpretation) of the directions from the second Vatican Council.

Significant migration, particularly from Europe and Middle Eastern countries bordering on the Mediterranean, gave rise to 'interesting' ethnic ecclesiastical design and decoration. The artisan skills that the migrants brought with them were put to good use.

The Easter rites churches are of particular interest, with their use of icons and the complete absence of sculptural items. A good example of this is St Michael's Melkite Church in Waterloo NSW.

References:
The Catholic Church and Community in Australia by Patrick O'Farrell
Architecture in Communion by Steven J. Schloeder



OUR LADY OF LEBANON CHURCH Harris Park NSW (1970-1978)

Designed by architect Bruce Smith, this distinctive church is a local landmark and was built for the large Maronite community in the area. The five-metre statue of Our Lady was sculpted in bronze in Italy, and her crown echoes the crown shape of the church building. Our Lady of Lebanon is a visual reminder of the wonderful variety in Catholic parishes, which have grown in number in the wake of Post-WWII migration.

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CATHOLIC ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA

John Johnson

The catalogue, to accompany the exhibition, traces the history of ecclesiastical architecture in the Sydney region, with particular emphasis on the changing styles and decorative features of Catholic structures from colonial times to the present day.



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