



Reflection on the Migrant Jubilee Cross Australia

As we celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025, “Pilgrimage of Hope”, the Migrant Jubilee Cross stands before us as a sacred and deeply moving sign of God’s love for all people, especially those who journey in search of safety, belonging, and peace. Created from Australian timber and set upon a boat-shaped base, the Cross speaks to the heart of the migrant experience and the call of the Church to be a refuge and a home for all.

The Migrant Jubilee Cross is crowned with profound spiritual and cultural meaning. Emblazoned on the Cross is the constellation of the Southern Cross, a symbol that has long guided travellers and dreamers across the southern skies. For those who arrive on these shores, often after long and perilous journeys, the Southern Cross is a sign of new beginnings and a light in the darkness. It also reminds us that Christ is our true guiding star (as well as our intercessor, Mary, Star of the Sea), leading us through the night towards God’s house.

Embedded within the Cross are two holy relics that deepen its meaning: one of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and one of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Australia’s first canonised saint. The Holy Family, forced to flee to Egypt, shared the experience of displacement and danger that so many migrants and refugees live today. Their presence in this Cross calls us to see the face of Christ in every person forced to leave their homeland. Saint Mary MacKillop, herself a woman of courage and compassion, lived out a radical hospitality, especially for the poor and excluded. Her relic on the Cross anchors the mission of the Australian Church to welcome all with open arms and hearts.

The boat that carries the Cross is a symbol rich in meaning. It represents the many boats in which people have fled violence and poverty, risking everything for a better future. But it also evokes the Church, the Barque of Peter, which sails through the storms of history, carrying us all as pilgrims on the journey of faith. The Church is called to be a safe harbour, a home, and a companion on the journey, especially for the vulnerable and the displaced.

As the Cross travels from Canberra to every state, diocese, eparchy, and parish in Australia, it becomes a living sign of encounter. It invites us to reflect deeply on the stories of migrants and refugees, their griefs and hopes, and their sufferings and gifts. It invites us to see not strangers, but brothers and sisters; not burdens, but blessings. Migrants and refugees bring with them their rich cultures and traditions and their deep faith. They are messengers of the Gospel and fellow builders of the Church in this land.

This Cross is not only a religious object; it is a spiritual companion on the road. It speaks to our minds but also stirs our hearts. It challenges us to listen, to welcome, and to act. It draws us into the mystery of a God who walks with His people, who suffers with them, and who leads them and us home.

May the Migrant Jubilee Cross be a source of grace, healing, and unity – a sign of the Church’s mission to be a home for all and a light of hope in a world still longing for peace.

Fr Paul Anthony
Director, Ministry to Migrants and Refugees
Diocese of Armidale



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www.acmro.catholic.org.au



info@acmro.catholic.org.au



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