

CROSS WALK CULMINATES IN CANBERRA



Wed 3 April 2013

Participants described the colourful and moving culmination of the 150th anniversary Cross walk as a “huge joy” and “an amazing experience”, as hundreds of people attended both the Good Friday service in Goulburn and the Easter Sunday service in Canberra.

The Bishop of Canberra & Goulburn, Stuart Robinson described the Good Friday event in Goulburn’s Belmore Park as “the most unexpectedly pleasing event” of his entire Cross Walk.

“People joined in the procession from the Cathedral from across the district and from all denominations – the crowd kept on swelling. In the park the numbers grew to many hundreds including Goulburn Mayor, Geoff Kettle and NSW Minister, Pru Goward. A very significant group of people came forward to give their lives to Christ.”

Shirley Andrews came from Campbelltown to attend the Goulburn service.

“It was a huge joy and privilege to share in that great day in the park in Goulburn”, she said.

“I must confess I was almost in tears as I saw people respond to the Bishop’s simple, clear message. And 40 minutes after the service was over people were standing around having prayer.”

Over 100 walk in Canberra

Participants in Canberra were equally moved by the pre-dawn walk on Easter Sunday. The walk from the ACT Legislative Assembly began with about 50 people -several carrying colourful flags symbolizing spiritual virtues – building to over 100 by the time the group reached Capital Hill.



“As we walked more people joined us until there were so many, it was amazing ... probably up to 150 people by the end”, One Canberran participant, Claire Lloyd-Jones reported. “Everything ran smoothly [with] groups of people singing Amazing Grace and other hymns. It was a lovely atmosphere.”



The walk culminated under the large ACCC cross in Barton with over 200 people attending the dawn Easter Sunday service.

“The Canberra event was also really well attended in my view”, Bishop Stuart said. “The highlight was 25 denominational leaders carrying the cross at different sections of the 7.5 km walk.”

Earlier, Bishop Stuart Robinson and Roman Catholic Bishop Pat Power walked the cross from Bishop Stuart’s residence in Campbell via the War Memorial to St John’s Canberra receiving waves and greetings from the public along the way. They were joined by about 30 parishioner of St John’s Canberra – many dressed in historically appropriate clothing - for the procession through the lychgate and short liturgy and picnic on the lawns.

A highlight for Canberra was the media coverage which included the front page story in the Sunday Canberra Times and a story on ABC TV News. Bishop Stuart pointed out this continued the significant media support experienced in Goulburn, Braidwood and on the South Coast.

Reflections on Cross Walk 2013 and future plans

Bishop Stuart said he “was deeply moved” from the very start of the walk.

“We began the pilgrimage in Eden via the harbor-masters pilot boat – accompanied by a troop of local Sea Scouts. These boys and girls also helped carry the cross. It was a wonderful ecumenical gathering on the wharf and Pastor Ossie Cruse gave a welcome to country, played ‘When I Survey’ on the gum leaf – and urged me to preach nothing other than Christ crucified!”

Given the success of the Cross walk this year, Bishop Stuart plans to repeat the exercise starting from the North-West in 2014 and the South-West in 2015. The current suggestion is to again finish in Canberra.

“The Cross Walk has given myself and all the parishes involved unique opportunities to proclaim the good news about Jesus Christ,” he said. “The strength of the exercise is in the willingness of local communities to embrace the opportunity with courage and creativity. I am quite confident that this will be the case in the ensuing season.”

Asked how the Cross Walk honoured Christ in each of the towns it visited, Bishop Stuart said prayer was the key.

“It began with prayer. Local teams and a group of dedicated intercessors - who accompanied me for the whole journey - unceasingly brought the entire journey before the Throne of Grace. I am quite convinced that this was the key.

“I also think Christ was honoured in the training of 50 people in prayer and evangelism. I did this myself and it also give me the opportunity to work closely with locals. Local churches and communities really got behind the event in creative and very public ways. At almost every meeting, people were invited to turn to Christ – and in total, hundreds did.”