

Order of Malta Australia marks 900th anniversary of the death of founder Blessed Fra' Gerard with Archbishop Fisher celebrating Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney

On 3 September 2020, knights and dames of the Order of Malta attended a mass to mark the 900th anniversary of the death of the Order's founder Blessed Fra' Gerard at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. The mass was celebrated by Archbishop Fisher, who is also one of the Order of Malta's honorary conventual chaplains.

Whilst attendance at the Cathedral was limited due to Covid-19 social distancing precautions, hundreds of Order of Malta members, volunteers and supporters worldwide were able to join the mass via [livestream](#).

Blessed Fra' Gerard died in Jerusalem on 3 September 1120. He was the founder and first Grand Master of the Order of Malta one of the oldest religious orders of the Catholic Church.

His hospital for pilgrims to the Holy Land accepted everyone, regardless of origin or religion. For nine centuries members and volunteers of the Order of Malta have put his ideals of faith and charity into practice.

This mission is today more relevant than ever as testified by medical, social and humanitarian commitments the Order has in 120 countries.

A poignant example of our work is that being performed now by our Lebanese branch and Malteser International, our international relief service, in Beirut. The effects of the terrible explosion there - so close to our origins in Jerusalem and our modern maternity hospital in Bethlehem - are contemporary examples of the misery of the world that we as Fra' Gerard's followers seek to reduce.

In Australia and New Zealand, our 300 members together with enthusiastic volunteers provide personal service to the homeless, the dying, the poor and those who continue their struggle rebuilding their lives after the bushfires that started in late 2019. Our work continues in spite of restrictions from Covid 19.

To serve the sick and the poor is the gift that Fra' Gerard left us and for which we remember him on this important 900th anniversary of his death.

The Order also wishes to thank Archbishop Fisher for celebrating the Mass and making St Mary's Cathedral available for the occasion. He is one of our honorary conventual chaplains, both supportive of and interested in our work and history, something we appreciate greatly.

The Hon James Douglas KHD

President

Australian Association

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