



## Media Release

Tuesday April 26, 2022

The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer or the Redemptorists as they are more commonly known are celebrating 140 years in Australia this week.

On April 27, 1882, six professed men arrived in Sydney from London on the Orient liner 'Sorata'. Four were Irish; two were English. Four were priests and two were coadjutor brothers. Their names were Edmund Vaughan, Thomas O'Farrell, James Hegarty, Henry Halson, Daniel Gleeson and Laurence Watters.

The bishop of Maitland, James Murray, gave them four choices to begin a foundation – Tamworth, Maitland, Singleton or Morpeth. They chose Singleton.

Michael Gilbert CSsR said Singleton at that time was a small rural city of about 1800 people. "Their first duty was to install the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour in the Church. They had brought it with them from London. They begged her intercession for the success of their venture," said Fr Gilbert.

"The people of Singleton received them warmly and supported them generously. One practical indication was that an outstanding debt of 1700 pounds – a considerable sum of money in those days – was soon discharged.

"The six Redemptorists set up in the presbytery. Living conditions were uncomfortable but tolerable. What became less tolerable was a gnawing feeling of discontent. It did not originate from feeling dissatisfied with the parish because they enjoyed working with the people. It was a spiritual dissatisfaction.

"They felt they were not fully exercising the charism of the Redemptorists. God called them to be evangelists – proclaimers of the Gospel – and not pastors – carers of a parish community."

The Redemptorists soon travelled to New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and in more recent years to China, Samoa and Sri Lanka.

"We remember the Singleton Six and the hundreds of Redemptorists who followed them and exercised the ministry of the Word of God over the past 140 years," Fr Gilbert said.

"We recall with gratitude the faithful people who welcomed them, supported them and encouraged this great enterprise. We gather with the hope that this recollection of the past will renew and refresh our present mission, bring the blessing of Providence on us all," Fr Gilbert added.

The Redemptorists were founded in Italy by Alphonsus Liguori in 1749.

Further details are available at [www.majellan.media](http://www.majellan.media)