

## **The Diocese of Parramatta mourns the death of Bishop Emeritus Kevin Manning**

Kevin Manning, the second Bishop of Parramatta died peacefully this morning Monday 15 July 2024, in Bathurst NSW at the age of 90.

Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, the Bishop of Parramatta was with Bishop Manning today when he passed.

“Bishop Kevin Manning was a loving servant of Christ. He dedicated his life to serving others and the church. He was a man of deep faith and prayer, and he leaves a strong legacy in Parramatta and the Australian Catholic Church, said Bishop Vincent.

“I give thanks for his life, for his vision and leadership for our local church and his legacy,” he said.

Born on 2 November 1933 in Coolah, NSW to Kevin and Edith Manning, he was the second eldest in a family of five boys and two girls.

He attended Sacred Heart Primary School in Coolah before going on to St Columba's College, Springwood where he later began his studies for the priesthood. He was selected to complete his studies at the Propaganda Fide College in Rome, where he was ordained to the priesthood on 21 December 1961.

From 1962 to 1978, he served as a priest of the Diocese of Bathurst. In 1978, he was appointed Assistant Secretary to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in Canberra for five years, and then as Secretary from 1983 to 1991.

In 1991, Bishop Manning was appointed the eighth Bishop of Armidale, NSW, where he served until his appointment as Bishop of Parramatta.

Bishop Manning was appointed as the second Bishop of Parramatta on 10 July 1997, and was installed at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta, on 21 August 1997. He served as Bishop for over 12 years until his retirement on 4 March 2010. During this time, he led the youngest diocese during a period of rapid growth as more migrants and people chose to live in the western suburbs and Blue Mountains. This is evidenced by the fact that Parramatta now is bigger than most Australian archdioceses.

Bishop Manning is well-known and well-loved by many in the diocese and across Australia. During his time as Bishop of Parramatta, he raised the new St Patrick's Cathedral after the disastrous fire of 1996 and was renowned for his outreach to the marginalised and the poor. He worked tirelessly campaigning and advocating for justice for workers, First Nations people, migrants and refugees, women and children and the growing youth population in the diocese.

He was the first bishop to reach out to the Muslim community in Western Sydney, building relationships based on mutual respect, and continued this interfaith and ecumenical work with other Christian communities and faiths.

He loved listening to and dialoguing with many people. He was a communicator at heart, and in 1998 launched *Catholic Outlook*, then a monthly newspaper. Writing in the first issue, he said: "It gives me great joy to write my first letter to you in *Catholic Outlook*, an initiative which is close to my heart, for it gives me the opportunity to correspond regularly with you."

His legacy and work continued after his retirement. He was appointed the Apostolic Administrator of the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese in 2010 until 2012. A special Bishop Manning Lecture Series was hosted by Catholic Commission for Employment Relations in 2016, and Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese continues the Bishop Manning Support Fund that assists struggling families who desire a Catholic education for their children but cannot afford it.

Bishop Manning was the epitome of a Good Shepherd. He was a dutiful and humble servant full of compassion, humour and a love for the Church. The Diocese of Parramatta owes much to his leadership and vision, and we pray for the repose of his soul and give thanks to God for his earthly life.

The details for Bishop Kevin Manning's funeral at St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta will be announced in the coming days.