CATHOLIC DIOCESE
OF **CAIRNS**

PICTURE STORY

Cairns lights up in solidarity for religious freedom



Members of Cairns' Catholic clergy (centre, l-r Fr Jerrin Chandy, Fr Mathew Kochuveettil & Deacon Mark Cavicchiolo) and Nigerian community, students and fellow worshippers gather outside St Monica's Cathedral after Wednesday's Red November Mass, with the building illuminated in solidarity with Christians persecuted for their faith. Photo ***by Toby Stanley.***

St Monica's Cathedral glowed red against the Cairns night sky on Wednesday as around 150 people gathered in solidarity with Christians who face persecution because of their faith.

The Red November Mass brought together Cairns' Nigerian Catholic community, people of different faiths and Christian traditions, and local school communities, with a strong representation and participation from St Mary's Catholic College.

Live music from diocesan musicians and young people serving in ministries throughout the Mass added to the evening, while guest speaker Chigozie Okie shared reflections from the Nigerian community.

Catholic Diocese of Cairns Executive Leader of Mission and Ministry Andrea Obeyesekere said the gathering showed the power of community solidarity.

"It was a beautiful, unifying evening, with people from across our wider community coming together to stand alongside those who suffer for their faith," Ms Obeyesekere said.

"Our wonderful musicians and the involvement of our young people in the Mass made it especially moving. Seeing the cathedral illuminated in red was a striking reminder that everyone should be able to live peacefully and practise their faith freely."

The gathering marked Aid to the Church in Need's (ACN) global Red November campaign, founded upon Red Wednesday, when churches and landmarks are illuminated in red.

Media Assets: Clergy and congregation gather outside the red-lit St Monica's Cathedral after the Red November Mass on Wednesday 18 November. Click here. Photographs by Toby Stanley.

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About the Catholic Diocese of Cairns
The Catholic Diocese of Cairns shares the Gospel, celebrates the Catholic faith and supports communities across Far North Queensland. The Diocese extends from Cardwell in the south to Cape York and the Torres Strait Islands in the north, and west across the Tablelands to the Northern Territory border. It serves 23 parishes and parish clusters and 27 schools and colleges across three deaneries. For further information, visit: cairns.catholic.org.au