

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

AUSTRALIA INC



47th BIENNIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

“Listen with the Heart”

Tuesday 22nd September --- Thursday 24th September 2015
NOVOTEL HOTEL, PARRAMATTA

Catholic History of Parramatta

The Catholic Women's League are incredibly blessed to be able to hold their Biennial conference in an area with such deep roots of Catholic faith. It was at Old Government House in Parramatta Park that the 1803 Proclamation requiring all Catholics to register for the first official Masses in the colony was read. Rev James Dixon celebrated the second and third official Masses in Australia in Parramatta and the Hawkesbury respectively in May 1803.

Furthermore the first religious profession in Australia took place in St Patrick's Parramatta, in 1835 when Sr Xavier took her first vows in the Sisters of Charity. Now members of more than 50 religious Congregations live and work in the Diocese.

Saint Patricks Cathedral Parramatta

Just a short walk from the location of the Novotel Hotel is Parramatta's great Cathedral. The Foundation Stone for the first St Patrick's Church was laid on St Patrick's Day 1836 and was consecrated on May 28th 1837.

In 1936 a new church was built on the site to meet the needs of a growing congregation.

In 1986 St Patrick's became the Cathedral Church in the new diocese of Parramatta. On 19th February 1996 this beautiful though small cathedral was destroyed by fire - only the stonewalls remained. The Bishop at the time, Very Rev Bede Heather, said then 'a new St, Patrick's will rise from these ashes' and it has.

On November 29th 2003 the new St Patrick's

Cathedral was dedicated. The old St Patrick's Cathedral is now a Blessed Sacrament Chapel and adjoining it is a large contemporary Cathedral.



History of Parramatta

Although Parramatta is a large city and booming business area now, It was not always so. The Darug people who lived in the area before European settlement called the area Burrumatta ('Parramatta') which means "the place where the eels lie down". Parramatta was founded in 1788, the same year as Sydney. As such, Parramatta is the second oldest city in Australia, being only 10 months younger than Sydney. Governor Arthur Phillip chose the area to settle in order to produce viable agriculture and a free-convict, James Ruse, was the first person to grow grain on Australian soil, an industry that is now iconically Australian.

