

St Paul's, Sale Cathedral Walk



The walk begins

As we make our tour of this Cathedral, opened in 1884, we should do so in the spirit of reverent pilgrimage and thanksgiving. Its building was made possible through the faith and vision of the early settlers, benefactors and members of this and other parishes, scattered throughout Gippsland, up to this present day, and we acknowledge the original custodians of this region, the Gunai-Kurnai people.

When you entered the Cathedral, you did so through what is traditionally called the West Door (although in fact it faces south and this needs to be remembered when talking about the traditional directions for parts of the Cathedral). First step forward about ten paces to the cross aisle and look around you slowly so as to take in the features of the building.

The first impression is that of uncluttered openness. While St Paul's is not a Cathedral on the grand scale of her Australian and English cousins, the result is nevertheless pleasing to the eye.

Notice first, how the Gothic arch of the chancel conveys the impression of space. The term Gothic applies to that style of architecture characterised by the pointed arch. The feature is taken up by the East Window above the High Altar and is echoed in the timber buttresses supporting both the nave and chancel ceilings. The nave is the body of the church where the seating is located and the chancel is the area alongside the organ.

Take particular note of the stone tracery of the East Window. The beautiful decorative branches become the supports for the stained glass panels. This tracery is repeated, but in a more subdued style, on all the windows of the North and South walls. It is believed that the two left panels were recovered from the original St Paul's in Raymond Street and incorporated into the Cathedral when it was built.

Now walk down to the chancel step. Turn and look up towards the ceiling and admire the fine workmanship of the timber roof.

Note the beautiful Oregon buttresses, how they 'catch up' and repeat the Gothic theme of the building.

As our eyes follow the lines of the nave ceiling they will naturally come to rest on the Great West Window with its lovely portrayal of The Sermon on the Mount. This was designed and installed by Philip Handel of Sydney in 1957 and features one of the best examples of Gothic tracery. This was the first of twelve windows designed and installed by the artist. It was also his first major contract.

As we stand on the chancel step we are able to note the comparisons and contrasts between the various designs of the stained glass windows. Note how the older windows reflect the more traditional style, particularly the East Windows and the two windows either side of the pulpit. In these we find darker colours and finer detail. In the more recent additions there is less emphasis on detail, but more attention to warm, glowing colours which take advantage of our clear Australian light.

We now turn to explore the chancel and sanctuary. The sanctuary is the end of the Cathedral where the altar is located. The first things to notice are the changes made in the reorganisation of the chancel in 2008. The pulpit was moved back against the wall into its 1929 position, while the choir stalls were removed to open up the chancel area. Included in this work was the provision of a chancel altar table and removable communion rails.

On our right hand side is the pipe organ, restored in 1981 and one of the oldest pipe organs still in use in Australia. Built by George Fincham in 1882 for music teacher Dr J S Summers, it was purchased from him for St Paul's in 1884 at a cost of £290. Originally it was installed in an area through the arch in the chancel where the older Lady Chapel was located, which also included a vestry. This area was rebuilt as part of the extensions in 2007 to the Lady Chapel.

The Bishop's Throne on our left would do justice to any English Cathedral. Beautifully carved, it was presented in 1902 to mark the enthronement of the first Bishop of Gippsland, the Right Reverend Arthur Wellesley Pain. It was donated by Mrs Lyon of Somerton Park in memory of her husband James.

There are two Bishop's staves. The modern one is usually with the throne, whilst the older, ornate one, presented in 1902, is in the Lady Chapel and is inscribed with the names of the former Bishops of Gippsland. The staff is placed alongside the throne to signify that the Bishop's residence is in the See City of Sale.

From where you now stand, look up towards the roof. The sanctuary lamp hanging there is always alight, and symbolises the continual watchfulness of the Church on earth, as God's presence here. It was presented in 1957 and commemorates two former parishioners, Richard and Eliza Cherry.

As we move forward towards the communion rails of the sanctuary, the tapestry kneelers here and throughout the Cathedral remind us that the Cathedral is the Mother Church for the many parishes in the Diocese of Gippsland. Each kneeler is inscribed with the name of a parish or church centre in fine needlepoint work. These were made by people from across the Diocese in a project led by parishioner Elizabeth Mackenzie to mark the 75th anniversary of the Diocese, commemorated in 1977. On the left hand side the windows contain scenes related to St Paul's life.

Directly in front is the High Altar. It is a fine example of good craftsmanship and is typical of many wooden altars found in Gippsland churches, though this one is executed on a grander scale. The altar lights (candlesticks) on each side are usually a brass or timber pair. A silver set, in memory of Caroline and John Woodhouse, are usually stored away. The sanctuary timber panelling on either side was given by William Webster in memory of his wife Hilda and was dedicated by the Most Reverend Cyril Garbett, Lord Archbishop of York, on 20th November 1951. The original reredos was removed and used behind the Lady Chapel altar, and in 2008, the plain panelling that had replaced it, was itself replaced by new panelling to match the original side sections. This new panelling was a gift from the Friends of the Cathedral.

The sedilia (clergy stalls) on the left side of the sanctuary commemorate Archdeacon Allen E Adeney and his wife Frances. Those on the right are in memory of Archdeacon John H Blundell, Canon-in-Residence, 1935-43. The credence table was dedicated in 1951 and commemorates Ruby Anne Christie who died in 1951.

A brass plaque set in the floor of the sanctuary on the left of the altar marks the final resting place of the ashes of Bishop George Harvard Cranswick and Mrs Olive Carr Cranswick. Bishop Cranswick was the second Bishop of Gippsland in an Episcopate lasting from 1917 to 1942.

As you leave the sanctuary area there is a Gothic arch on the right. The cross above the arch commemorates the work of the Deaconesses in the Diocese. Through the arch was the original location for the organ and later the Lady Chapel which was moved to the rear of the Cathedral and back again in the 1980s. This area was rebuilt in the 2007 extension work and a new, larger Lady Chapel incorporated into the area. The reredos and altar were restored at this time and reinstalled into the new chapel. The work was a gift from Canon Caroline Nancarrow. The reredos, which was originally behind the High Altar, was dedicated in 1929 in memory of Theo and Ada Little. The altar was the gift of Bishop and Mrs Cranswick and was a thank offering for a long and happy life in this place. The silver cross and altar lights were dedicated to the memory of Harry and Alice Andrew in 1962, but are usually in storage and a brass or timber set will usually be here.

Also located in the wall of the Lady Chapel are two of the original stained glass windows from the old chapel, depicting the Nativity and Presentation of Jesus. They were a gift in memory of Dean Clarence and Mrs Dorothy Alexander, both of whom are well remembered by older members of our congregation. Another window recovered at the same time can be seen in the entrance doorway that leads out to the car park at the rear of the Cathedral. This window depicts Mary praying. On the wall of the chapel are some paintings donated by local artist and parishioner Julie Mielke.

Directly below the arch are the Canons' stalls which were dedicated in 1956 in memory of Robert and Eliza Cobain and are used by the Canons on formal Diocesan occasions. These are named to remember three saints associated with St Paul; Luke, Timothy and Priscilla.

We now leave the sanctuary and move back into the chancel. We pass the beautifully executed brass eagle which reminds us how the Christian Gospel has spread to the furthest corners of the world. The lectern Bible commemorates the life and work of Dora Ellen Beadle, who was involved with the St Anne's Grammar

School and was the first female Chapter Clerk at St Paul's, in fact in Victoria. It was dedicated by Bishop Arthur Jones in 1999.

Step back a few paces from the eagle lectern and look above the organ pipes. There you will see a small delicate tracery window, designed by Philip Handel. It was given by Mrs Nancy Darley, Cathedral organist for twenty years. The design includes musical instruments and the music score is Handel's Water Music!

Move on down the South (on the right hand side of the Cathedral) Aisle and take time to study the stained glass windows. You will also note the stones set into the wall. The first was taken from the fabric of Canterbury Cathedral, and is carved with a Canterbury Cross and bears a Latin inscription, which is translated in the panel underneath. Three other stones remind us of the Suffering Church and were removed from the bomb-damaged reredos of St Paul's Cathedral, London.

Above the South Door there is a memorial board bearing the names of those men and women from this parish who served in the First World War, and includes the names of those who made the supreme sacrifice. The pews in this area were rearranged to provide a cross walkway connecting the Cathedral with Delbridge Hall as part of the 2008 refurbishment. This also provided a more central location for the font which was moved from the rear of the Cathedral to this aisle. At the rear of the Cathedral is a Second World War board serving a similar function to the First World War board.

Moving across the West Door, we note two more boards, one listing the Bishops of Gippsland, and a second the incumbents of Sale. This was where the Lady Chapel and font were located some time earlier.

Walking back up the North Aisle (on the left hand side), we find some interesting icons mounted on the wall and a framed document recognising a Covenant of Companionship between the Diocese of Gippsland and the Diocese of Gahini in Rwanda. This was established in 2003 as a sign of the supportive relationship that we have with Rwanda.

The first icon shows St Paul holding his Epistles. This was a gift from the Cathedral Chapter in 2003 and was crafted by Anne Connelly of Gippsland. Alongside it is an embroidered panel of St Francis made by Sue Watts. The second icon depicts 'Jesus-Lord of all' and was arranged by the late Bishop Graham Delbridge through his friend, the Bishop of Helsinki and was painted by a Finnish artist. It was a gift from St Anne's and Gippsland Grammar School confirmation candidates in 1979. The third, painted by an artist in Macedonia, also shows St. Paul holding his Epistles and was a thank offering gift of Mr and Mrs Iliopoulos for the use of the Cathedral for the funeral service of their two children who were tragically burnt to death.

The stone set into the North Wall between the icons reminds us of the global nature of our Anglican Communion. It once formed part of the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity at Norwich, England. It was presented by the Lord Bishop of Norwich, the Right Reverend Maurice Wood, when he visited the Diocese in February 1977, and was dedicated at a service marking the Diocesan 75th Anniversary by Bishop Delbridge on 10th July 1977. The stone is carved with an ancient Christian symbol, the Ipswich Cross. It reminds us of our historic link with Norwich Cathedral, for it was there that Arthur Pain, our First Bishop of Gippsland, was ordained.

Alongside us is the stone font, dating from 1860, that links us with the first church building in Sale. It was presented by Captain John William Jones of Fulham. Appropriately, the first child to be baptised at this font was Ernest William, his son, on 10th March 1860.

We conclude our walk at the marble pulpit with its brass railings, installed in 1929 closer to the centre of the cathedral. The marble was quarried at Buchan in Gippsland. The pulpit incorporates a Memorial Stone commemorating the Right Reverend A W Pain, DD, the First Bishop of Gippsland.

We can now trace our way back to the West Door, and perhaps pause in one of the pews for some silent prayer and reflection. We can give thanks for the faith and vision of ordinary men and women for the gift of the rich heritage that we have in our Cathedral of St Paul, and remember that though we may leave this place, we shall never leave God's presence in our lives. He is the same God – yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Delbridge Hall. The new hall, opened in 2007, is linked from the side door of the Cathedral. If it is open, please go in and look around. On the left corner is a window recovered from the old Lady Chapel that was a gift from the Old Scholars of the Grammar Schools and was donated in 1981. On the right hand side, just past the main doorway, is a large, round window depicting the Diocesan Coat of Arms and the Gippsland landscape and was a gift from the Catholic Diocese of Sale. It was commissioned from local Gippsland stained glass artist, Bruce Hutton, in 2007. If we move into the courtyard area alongside the Cathedral, we can sit quietly here. The water feature was installed in 2009 in memory of Noel Tatchell, long time parishioner and Lay Canon.



The Pipe Organ

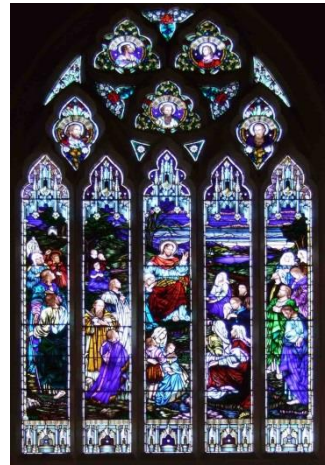
Cathedral Interior



Cathedral Interior

The East Window

The Lady Chapel Reredos and Altar



Diocesan window in Delbridge Hall

The West Window

Acknowledgements:

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Revised by Rev'd Stuart Lawson, November 2010

Photographs by Christine Morris.

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