

MEDIA RELEASE

15 JUNE 2009

Recently Professor Roman Vasylyk , accompanied by his interpreter Bohdan Mykytiuk, visited Broome at the invitation of Bishop Christopher Saunders to paint an icon for the new Cathedral.

Professor Vasylyk comes from the Ukraine and is a well known master of Iconography: the painting, or “writing” of religious icons. Bishop Saunders invited him to come to Broome as part of his teaching and working around Australia to “write” an Icon of Our Lady Queen of Peace for the new Cathedral in Broome.



While in Broome, the Professor shared his talents with St Mary’s College and the University of Notre Dame by conducting lessons of Iconography in the textile room at St Mary’s for a group of eight students from the Parish. He assisted them to paint an icon. The Professor also gave a public lecture on this fascinating art

form, in the course of which he reflected on his life in Ukraine, where his brother, who is a Bishop, and his father were both imprisoned by the Communists for their faith. Roman was nineteen years of age when he first met his brother and father upon their release from prison.

Roman's icons are characterized by their architectural style, refinement and spirituality. The preparation needed to write an icon is involved. It includes fasting, prayer and meditation. The iconographer simply doesn't sit down and begin to paint; he prepares himself spiritually. Then, he begins to "write" the Gospel in colour. Professor Vasylyk met extensively with parishioners and local people to discuss and gather inspiration for the icon. Elements of Aboriginal traditional art are incorporated in its design. The Icon is a real spiritual treasure for the Diocese. It is a reflection of the Kimberley and the Catholic Church as one.

On Sunday 7 June the icon was unveiled by Bishop Saunders following Mass at the Broome Cathedral. It will be on display to the public at the library gallery of the University of Notre Dame until Friday 26 June, between 9am and 4pm.

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