

## Rosemeadow ready for its new spiritual home

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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It's been over 25 years in the making, but when you see it, there can be no denying that it has been worth the wait for the enduring Catholic community of the Rosemeadow parish. They have been busily making their final preparations this week for the dedication of their new parish church that will be blessed this Friday evening by Bishop Brian Mascord and long-serving parish priest, Fr Christopher Sarkis.

An exhausted Fr Sarkis said, "It's been a long road, but we could never have done it without the grace of God being poured into the hearts of the hundreds of parishioners, architects, builders, artists and prayer warriors who have dedicated the past couple of years of their lives to support this project. Their hard work, encouragement, prayers and loyalty have been overwhelming."

The new Romanesque church—that can comfortably accommodate over 500 parishioners—has been designed in a cruciform shape, following a centuries-long and venerable tradition of church design and architecture. When Fr Sarkis was asked about the motivation behind building a church on such a grand scale in this post-Christian age, he said, "Now is the perfect time! The beauty of a church building should make one feel that they have glimpsed heaven on earth—drawing us from the secular to the sacred; from the earthly to the heavenly; from the human to the divine. Secondly, by walking through it and prayerfully reflecting on its art and architecture, a church building should help us come to an understanding of our Christian faith in the Catholic Tradition. So, it's not just a church building. It's a physical teaching tool that is meant to point us to the beauty and greatness of God."

And, it's not just the grand scale that achieves this. It's also in the small details, including the beautiful artwork that adorns the church—paid for by donations from parishioners and the wider community. There are 48 stained glass windows, designed and manufactured in Italy using traditional craftsmanship and imagery. There are also two bell towers containing nine bells, all cast in England. Famous Australian iconographer, Michael Galovic, was commissioned to produce four icons, and renowned local sculptor, Engelbert Piccolruaz, carved the Cross and Corpus, as well as the gilded timber angels of adoration for the Tabernacle.

Fr Sarkis said, "There is nothing in the church that is there for purely artistic reasons alone. Rather, the use of the beauty and craftsmanship of art and architecture is there to help raise the mind, heart and soul to God. The objective underpinning the design and art of the church was to visually give a simple spiritual synthesis of what we believe as Catholic Christians."

When asked what his hope is for anyone who enters the new church, Fr Sarkis said, "It is my humble and sincere prayer that—in this House of God—those that enter find their spiritual home. May they receive comfort and consolation in times of troubles and sorrows; peace and rest in times of happiness and joys; and may they be strengthened in faith, hope and charity, to go out into the world to be missionaries of God's love."

Fr Sarkis also saved special praise for DTA Architects, who designed the church, and FAL Construction Group for their craftsmanship in building the church: "The architects and builders have been meticulous! I am so grateful for the way they put their heart and soul into this project. I have spent countless hours with them over the past two years of construction, and I can tell you that every brick in that building has been laid with love."

The solemn dedication of Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Church on Demetrius Road in Rosemeadow will be celebrated at 7:30pm on Friday 8 March 2019. All are welcome.

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**Attached:** Photograph of the outside of the new church as well as some stained glass windows and statue that adorn the church.

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