

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- 180 Years of St Francis' Choir
- Welcome to our new Choral Scholars
- Vale Fergus Ryan
- Liturgies at St Francis'
- Giving to the Foundation

Foundation News

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Maintaining a Living Tradition

St Francis' Church and St Francis' Choir have been part of Melbourne's history almost from the very beginning of European settlement.

In 2025 the choir celebrated 180 years with much splendid music, including an anniversary Mass on the feast of St Francis, featuring the Gounod Mass with which it has long been associated. (see p.2)

2026 has already seen much glorious music making, especially singing to the large crowds that flocked to the church during Holy Week, as well as a marvellous performance of Haydn's large-scale *Harmoniemesse* for the solemnity of Corpus Christi.



St Francis' Choir
in performance

The music program for the rest of this year has will soon be available on our website.

In this issue we also celebrate our six choral scholars proudly supported by the Foundation.

We also mourn the death of Mr Fergus Ryan AO, one of the Foundation's inaugural Trustees.

(see p. 3)

As we approach the end of another financial year, we invite you to consider supporting the Foundation with a tax-deductible donation, so that we can continue to nurture fine young talent and maintain our treasured tradition of orchestral Masses.

Should you be interested in remembering the Foundation in your will, further information is available to you or your legal representative by contacting the Music Office. (see p. 4)

Meanwhile the Trustees thank you sincerely for your ongoing support of the Foundation.

Forthcoming Events

Feast of St Francis
Sunday, 4 October at 11.00am
With Symphonia of Melbourne
Please join us for this special celebration in the Jubilee Year of St Francis.

All Saints' Day
Annual Commemoration
of Deceased Members &
Benefactors
Sunday, 1 November at
11.00am

Annual Festival of Readings
and Carols
Friday, 18 December at
7.00pm
All welcome

Focus on our Choral Scholars



One of the most important things about the music at St Francis' is that it is a living tradition. Part of that tradition, stretching back to Dame Nellie Melba, has been the encouragement of talented, young singers.

We are delighted that the choir now has six choral scholars. In addition to our two soprano scholars, Marianna Paradowski (pictured) and Shelby Holland, we are pleased to welcome altos Caitlin Monique Wans and Monica Ruggiero, tenor Ben Hjorth and bass Ian Damman.

We extend a very warm welcome to our talented new choral scholars and wish them a very happy and fulfilling time with St Francis' Choir. All the choral scholarships are proudly supported by the Foundation.



Celebrating 180 Years

The 180th anniversary of the opening of St Francis' Church and the founding of St Francis' Choir was celebrated with a special orchestral on 5 October last year.

Present and former choristers joined the Symphonia of Melbourne and soloists to perform Gounod's *Saint Cecilia Mass*, Christopher Willcock's *Prayer of St Francis* and Haydn's *Te Deum*. This music celebrated the choir's colonial origins as well as its long history of promoting fine Australian liturgical music.

The Foundation supports the significant costs associated with orchestral Masses such as these, a vital part of the choir's ongoing and distinctive tradition.



Vale Fergus Ryan



'We will miss

*his generosity
and wisdom.'*

Fergus Ryan AO was a trustee of the St Francis' Choir Foundation from its inception in 2005 until his death earlier this year.

He had a deep love of fine liturgical music and this motivated his long association with the choir.

Bringing a lifetime of experience in the financial world, Fergus was a thoughtful and visionary trustee who

was truly dedicated to ensuring that the choir maintained adequate financial resources to ensure it could both fulfil and expand its ministry.

He died after a short but courageous battle with illness.

We will miss his friendship, generosity and wisdom but we give thanks for his extraordinary contribution to both St Francis' Choir and St Francis' Church.

We extend our deep sympathy to his wife, Judy, all the Ryan family and his many friends and associates across diverse walks of life.

May the choirs of angels come to welcome him into the heavenly Jerusalem and may he rest in peace.

Singing into the Future

The shifting sands of the global economy have an impact on all of us, regardless of our circumstances. Over the 180 years of the St Francis' Choir's history there have been many financial crises, but the choir has survived due to the energy, vi-

sion and generosity of its supporters.

One effective means of contributing to the choir's future is to consider leaving the choir a gift in your will. This will assist future generations of singers, instrumen-

talists and organists to give glory to God and uplift countless worshippers.

If you or your legal representative require further information, please 'phone the Music Office on (03) 9639 4560 or send us an email.



St Francis' Choir Foundation

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The St Francis' Choir Foundation was established in 2005 to commemorate the choir's 160th anniversary. Primarily established as a capital fund, the Foundation aims to support the ongoing work of the choir through the investment of a considerable capital sum.

Trustees of the Foundation

Rev. Ben Ho, SSS

Ms Siobhan Lenihan

Mr Reg Marron

Singing into the future

Giving to the Foundation

☐ Yes, I wish to support the Foundation but would welcome further information.

☐ Yes, I wish to support the Foundation by making a bequest.

☐ Yes, I wish to support the Foundation with an immediate gift.

Should you wish to make a gift, the bank transfer details for St Francis' Choir Foundation are:
BSB 033068 Account 235931

Please include your name in the subject line. We would ask that you advise us of your gift by emailing stfmusic@blessedsacrament.com.au so we can issue a receipt. Thank you.

☐ Yes, I wish to make a gift using my credit card to the value of:

☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$5,000 Other _____

☐ Yes, I wish to support the Foundation by pledging a gift on a regular basis.

Please debit my credit card the amount of \$_____ every ☐ months for a total of ☐ transactions.
Donor Information

Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other _____ Given Name _____ Surname _____

Address _____

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