

Blessing and Dedication of Memorial to Missionary Sisters of Service Bruny Island

I regret that I am now unable to be with you on this significant occasion of acknowledging the moment of inspiration that led to the foundation of the Missionary Sisters of Service. From the time I was informed of this event I was keen to participate as a small way of acknowledging this gift given to the church here in Tasmania: the foundation of a new religious community.

Fr John Wallis was moved by the appeal of Kit Hawkins. It was no doubt a graced conversation that led Fr Wallis to foster the vision of a religious community dedicated to nourish the faith of children in remote and isolated parts of Tasmania.

Tasmania may be at "the ends of the earth"; it may be in its own way remote and isolated, yet it has a rich Catholic history and it has been blessed with wonderful and providential works like the foundation of the Missionary Sisters of Service. The vision of Fr Wallis inspired many young Tasmanian Catholic women to consecrate their lives to God and endure the hardships of being on the road to take the Catholic faith to families cut off from normal Church life.

I hope today will be a time of joy as the memorial is blessed. It will be a permanent reminder that on Bruny Island something wonderful for God was born. I hope that the day will be a joy especially for members of the Missionary Sisters of Service who recall their foundation and give thanks for the blessings that have flowed as a result of a simple conversation between a devout Catholic and a holy priest.

Wishing you all Grace and Peace,

Archbishop Julian Porteous