



We proclaim a crucified Christ

1Cor1.23

**PETER ANDREW COMENSOLI
ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE**

**DECREE OF ESTABLISHMENT
MELBOURNE ORATORY PROJECT of ST PHILIP NERI**

PREAMBLE

Having prayerfully discerned, over several years, the proposal presented by Rev Michael Gallacher, Priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, together with Mr Anthony Wright and Mr Patrick Harris, seminarians of the same Archdiocese;

having received the favourable consultation of the appropriate diocesan offices and the support of the Procurator-General of the Confederation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri in Rome;

and desiring to encourage within our presbyterate a renewed witness of priestly fraternity, pastoral zeal, and joy in the spirit of St Philip Neri,

I now issue this Decree in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, for the establishment of an Oratory Project within the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

ARTICLE I – ESTABLISHMENT

§1. By this decree, I hereby establish the Melbourne Oratory Project of St Philip Neri (**The Melbourne Oratory Project**) within the territory of the family of parishes of *Malvern, Malvern East, and Glen Iris* as of 16 November 2025.

§2. **The Melbourne Oratory Project** is erected *ad experimentum* as the first stage in the canonical process that may, in time and with due discernment, lead to the erection of an Oratory-in-Formation and, *Deo volente*, a Congregation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri according to the norms of the Statutes of the Confederation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri.

ARTICLE II – NATURE AND PURPOSE

§1. The Melbourne Oratory Project is a community of secular priests and seminarians living together under the bond of charity and fraternity, without the profession of religious vows, in imitation of the life and spirit of St Philip Neri.

§2. The purpose of The Melbourne Oratory Project is:

- to cultivate priestly holiness through common life, prayer, and mutual support;
- to serve the pastoral mission of the Archdiocese, particularly within the family of parishes entrusted to its care;
- to offer a joyful and humble witness of evangelical charity in the local Church;
- to discern the call to the eventual foundation of an Oratory proper.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

§1. The initial members of The Melbourne Oratory Project are:

- Rev Michael Gallacher PP, Priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne;
- Mr Anthony Wright, Seminarian of the Archdiocese of Melbourne;
- Mr Patrick Harris, Seminarian of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

§2. Rev Michael Gallacher is hereby appointed Moderator of the Oratory Project, responsible for the internal life and community order, under my authority as Archbishop.

§3. Very Rev Andzrej Madry EV is appointed Mentor to The Melbourne Oratory Project, to assist the Moderator and to maintain liaison with the Archdiocese.

ARTICLE IV – CANONICAL STATUS

§1. The Melbourne Oratory Project does not constitute a public juridic person in the Church; its members remain individually incardinated in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, with their rights and obligations as clerics and seminarians intact (cf. can. 265 ff.).

§2. All sacramental, pastoral, and administrative responsibilities within the Parishes of Malvern, Malvern East, and Glen Iris remain governed by the existing canonical appointments of the Priests concerned.

ARTICLE V – RESIDENCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

§1. The community of **The Melbourne Oratory Project** shall initially reside at St Roch's Presbytery, Glen Iris, until such time as the St Joseph's Presbytery, Malvern, is suitably renovated for their permanent dwelling.

§2. The pastoral and liturgical life of the Parishes shall continue without interruption; collaboration between all clergy and parish staff is to be fostered in a spirit of fraternity and co-responsibility.

ARTICLE VI – REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

§1. The Melbourne Oratory Project shall be reviewed after three years, or sooner if circumstances require, in dialogue with the Procurator-General of the Confederation of the Oratory.

§2. Should the community demonstrate stability, spiritual fruitfulness, promising growth in vocations and its apostolate, to the satisfaction of the Confederation of the Oratory and the Archbishop, the establishment of an Oratory-in-Formation will be considered.

CONCLUSION

Invoking the intercession of St Philip Neri, the Apostle of Joy, I commend this new **Melbourne Oratory Project** to the maternal care of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, and entrust it to the prayers of the clergy and faithful of the Archdiocese.

Issued at St Patrick's Centre, East Melbourne, on this **Seventh Day of November 2025.**

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

Notary CHANCELLOR

