



# Australian Catholic Historical Society

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## MEDIA RELEASE

29 Apr 2022

### **Catholic History Award to South Australian writer: A story of survival**

The Australian Catholic Historical Society has awarded its \$1000 MacGinley award to Adelaide historian Jo Vandeppeer. Her winning essay, 'The atelier of St Dominic's Priory', tells the story of nineteenth century Dominican nuns who arrived in Adelaide expecting to work in a hospital. When that proved impossible, they were thrown on their own resources and developed high-quality ecclesiastical needlework to survive.

The James MacGinley award, established by the family of the historian Sr Rosa MacGinley pbvm, is for an original, as yet unpublished, biographical, social, cultural, institutional, or political study of Australian Catholic history.

The essay will be published in the *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, whose annual issue, published each February, contains a wide range of articles and book reviews on the story of the Catholic community in Australia. The *Journal's* editor, James Franklin, said "Jo Vandeppeer's article is perfect to expand our knowledge of the often little-known art- and craft-work that has adorned the sacred spaces of Australian churches, and the dedicated and talented communities of workers, often nuns, who produced them."

Ms Vandeppeer hopes that her paper and the award will help spread the word about the most spectacular production of the atelier, St. Dominic's Cope, and that a donor for its restoration will be found.

ACHS President Dr John Carmody welcomed the award: "We welcome new developments in the understanding of our story and for the distribution of that story. The MacGinley award will enthuse a new and younger generation about the value and pleasure of our history. We are what our history has made us: we cannot understand any aspect of ourselves without understanding our history and that understanding is important for us all."

Entries for the 2023 MacGinley award are now open. Conditions are available on the ACHS website.

Founded in 1940, the ACHS has a long tradition of talks, Journal and newsletter. When its program of talks was suspended during the COVID pandemic, the Society greatly expanded its online offerings of

Resources pages, podcasts and videos, which are now freely available. Its most popular pages are those of the Timeline, which follows the events of Australian Catholic history year by year, with links to fuller stories on each event.

To view the resources, visit: <https://australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/history-resources/>

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St Carthage's former Catholic Church, Silverton NSW (photo: Tim Nichols)