

The Right Reverend William James Ray
Diocese of North Queensland



Diocese of North
Queensland



Anglican Church
of Australia

BELLS OF ST JAMES TO RING AGAIN

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This week marks the first steps toward restoring the landmark St James' Cathedral in Townsville when scaffolding is erected around the iconic bell tower.

The \$1.5 million reconstruction of the bell tower will enable the Cathedral bells to again chime after more than five years of silence.

Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of North Queensland, The Right Reverend Bill Ray said timing of the project commencement was strongly symbolic, as the start of work to return the Cathedral to its full glory coincides with the celebration of Easter and the resurrection of Jesus.

At least a further \$4.5 million will be required to allow for the complete restoration of the landmark, including an upgrade to the drainage system, removal of asbestos and repairs to stained glass windows.

"The project aims to restore St James' Cathedral as the centre of our community," said Bishop Ray.

The bell tower is slated for completion this year with the Cathedral bells in full swing to celebrate the Christmas season.

Dominating the Denham Street landscape, the first bricks of St James' Cathedral were laid in 1887, with later expansion including the bell tower and adjoining Warrior and Lady Chapels taking place in 1959.

Bishop Ray said the Anglican Diocese of North Queensland's focus has been and would always remain upon building the ministry and giving back to the community. Although this has resulted in only minimal improvements and building repairs being undertaken on the Cathedral over its 121 years as the focus of the Anglican faith in North Queensland.

"More than a century of worship, weddings, funerals and other significant community events have taken a toll on this grand old building; and many in the community now believe a facelift is well deserved to help preserve the Cathedral."

"The Cathedral is significant to Townsville and the region as a whole on many levels and its restoration is certain to prove positive for the community, as it is not only a spiritual centre, but also an architectural and historical landmark," said Bishop Ray.

The overall project will be financed through a partnership with the Anglican Diocese of North Queensland and the community, with the appeal soon to be ramped up.

The St James' Cathedral Restoration Project will ensure current and future generations of Townsville residents will continue to celebrate, worship and seek solace in this historically significant, heritage-listed building.