

LORETO SISTERS LEARN FROM MOTHER TERESA

When Sr Margaret Sculley met Mother Teresa in the 1960s she knew there was something special about her. "I thought 'this is a holy person', Mother Teresa struck you with a degree of awe," Sr Margaret said. There was a sense of pride among the nine members of the Ballarat Loreto Community when Mother Teresa was canonised on Monday, September 5 in Rome. Mother Teresa, was born Agnese Gonxha Bojaxhiu in 1910 to ethnic Albanian parents. She grew up in what is now the Macedonian capital, Skopje.

She joined the Irish order of Loreto in 1929 and was sent to India. She taught at a Darjeeling school under the name Therese. Mother Teresa moved to Kolkata in 1946 to help destitute people. After a decade she established a hospice and home for abandoned children. In 1950 she founded the Missionaries of Charity, which now has 4,500 sisters across the world.

Arguably one of the most well-known people of the 20th century, Mother Teresa never forgot her Loreto connections. Ballarat Loreto Community Sr Caroline Deutscher met Mother Teresa when she stayed at Loreto in Toorak. She had come to Australia to establish a missionary in Burke. Sr Caroline's aunt had worked alongside Mother Teresa in India. "My aunt worked in the same community in Calcutta in 1928," Sr Caroline said.

Sr Margaret met Mother Teresa when she stayed with the Loreto sisters in Kirribilli. "To meet her was a great privilege," Sr Margaret said. "It was very special (even though she founded her own order) her visit was equally significant for us at Loreto – she worked with us, she didn't ever forget us. She had an incredibly deep faith."

To celebrate Mother Teresa's canonisation the Sisters have been reflecting on her life story. "Our community has been reflecting on her life in prayer time," Sr Margaret said. "I was very lucky to be able to meet her."



Ballarat Loreto Community sisters Roberta Hakendorf, Caroline Deutscher and Margaret Sculley acknowledge Mother Teresa's connection to Loreto

The canonisation is a highlight of the Jubilee year that Pope Francis had proclaimed to celebrate the theme of mercy. Of Mother Teresa's canonisation Pope Francis said, "She deserves it".

Mother Teresa has long been considered a saint by many people around the world. This will formalise that thought. The Sisters held a special lunch on Sunday, September 4 to remember Mother Teresa.