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Warrane College Celebrates 50 Years

Here is a video made for the 50th anniversary of this university residence for young men in Australia, which has produced abundant fruit, both human and spiritual, over the years.

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Warrane College was a dream of Saint Josemaria's, and like many of his dreams, it became a reality before his death.

2021 marked 50 years since the university residence for young men opened its doors on the campus of the University of New South Wales.

In 1963, members of Opus Dei travelled from the United States and Spain to begin working in Australia. Cardinal Gilroy, the first Australian cardinal, met Saint Josemaria in Rome and asked if Opus Dei could help start a Catholic residence in Sydney for more than 200 students.

It was an ambitious job. The early 1970s was a difficult time to establish such a residence and promote family values. Riots and protests against the Vietnam War were common, and the crowd found another cause to rail against in the attempt by Opus Dei to establish a Catholic university residence.

But Warrane's first Master, Joe Martins, a graduate of Harvard and MIT, and those assisting him began

working with great faith. They were encouraged by Saint Josemaria's concern, who assured them from Rome that he was praying for the future fruits of this dream.

On 13 July 1971 the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Roden Cutler, officially opened the college. And on 12 June 2021, the current Governor of NSW, Margaret Beazley, stood in front of 400 guests at a celebratory gala dinner to say that Warrane's ambitious dream had become a reality – with many fruits to show for it. “What has served Warrane especially well has been blending the traditions of college life and academic excellence with a spiritual heart,” she said.

“Embedding social responsibility as part of everyday life, creating internal and external social hubs, not cocooning its students in a monoculture, but maintaining an

openness to the world around it, allowing those of faith, of no faith and of different faiths to live with each, to understand each other and to learn from each other.”

In the past 50 years, many residents of Warrane have formed strong friendships during their college years and found their way to the faith. The video above contains personal testimonies from some of them, along with stories about the difficulties Warrane faced in its first years and how these were overcome thanks to a lot of prayer and hard work.

Alex Perrottet

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