

# Order of Perpetual Indulgence



A Joyful Guide to a Guilt  
Free Vocation



May the great Dingo bless your curious Spirit,  
Fill your heart & Soul with Joyful mischief  
and guide you on your Journey.

**O.P.I**

# Welcome to the Order



We, the Sisters and Brothers of the Order of Perpetual Indulgence Sydney, strive always to uphold our vows: to **promulgate universal joy** and to **expiate stigmatic guilt**. We pledge our loyalty to public service, social activism, and spiritual enlightenment, we do this through **Public Manifestation through Habitual Perpetration** and **The Granting of Perpetual Indulgences** these are our tenet that guide us.

We are an order of Sydney-based gay male nuns and lesbian clergy drawn from the LGBTQIA+ and wider communities, united in the belief that every person has a natural right to live and love whomever they wish, in whatever way is true to them. Since our first manifestation at Long Nun Point on the 14th of November 1981, this has remained our calling, our reason for being.

We chose to become gay nuns for a reason. Much of that choice lies in hierarchy. In the traditional Church, nuns have little to no voice in how the institution is run; they exist at the very bottom of its ladder. We claimed that image deliberately, a parody born of truth. For much of history, gay men too have been placed on the lowest rung of society's ladder, denied rights, protection, and dignity, rarely permitted to hold power or authority in the mainstream world. By embracing the symbol of the nun, we reclaim that position of supposed weakness and turn it into one of strength, visibility, and defiance.

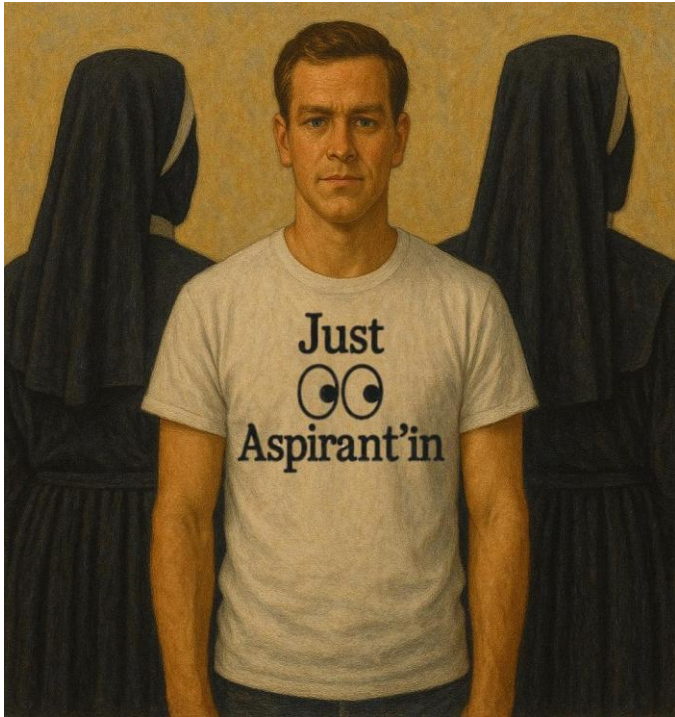
We exist because bigotry and hatred still find homes in those taught to fear difference rather than celebrate diversity. The slur from a passing car, the opportunity denied through prejudice, the violence born of ignorance, and the laws that punish love, these are the reasons we were born, and what keep us here.

It is hate, fear, and ignorance that sustain our mission. Some believe we despise Christians or religion itself, not so. We simply oppose any system of values that denies natural justice and breeds prejudice. When such injustice ends, our work will be complete.

As you begin your journey, you will discover where your gifts, humour, and spirit belong within the Order. Some find their calling in service, others in art, protest, ritual, or simple presence. Wherever your path leads, you are welcome, celebrated, and supported.

And if ever you find this is not your calling, know that you may depart without guilt or shame, for a vocation and a life free of guilt and full of joy is, after all, our sacred way.





# ...Aspirancy

Indulging your curiosity

By reading this holy script, congratulations, the Great Dingo has already recognized your aspirations and therefore welcomes you as an Aspirant Sister or Brother.

This stage begins when you first make contact through our website or by reaching out to a member of the Order, and when you attend your very first Nuncheon, our monthly gathering where we discuss the business of the day, share updates on recent and upcoming manifestations, and of course meet our newest Aspirants in person.



This is a wonderful blessing, as it gives you the chance to suss out the Order see if our values and intentions align with yours and allows the Order to get to know and find out the same about you. This mutual discernment is very important.

The main task of an Aspirant is discernment, deciding if this path truly feels right for you before making any formal vows or commitments.

During this time, you'll learn and familiarize yourself with the Four Tenets and the culture of the Order, as these guide all that we do. Reflect on whether they align with your own beliefs and way of life.

This is an unofficial role within the Order, a time of learning and discovery before taking the next step toward becoming a Postulant.



But before we go further, what are **the Four Tenets**?

# The Four Tenets

## **The First Tenet:**

The Granting of Perpetual  
Indulgences

## **The Second Tenet:**

The Expiation of Stigmatic Guilt

## **The Third Tenet:**

The Promulgation of Universal Joy

## **The Fourth Tenet:**

Public Manifestation through  
Habitual Perpetration

## The First Tenet

### The Granting of Perpetual Indulgences

The first tenet celebrates the act of granting others the freedom to live joyfully and without shame. While the concept began in the early Church to reduce one's time in purgatory, the Order reclaims it as a blessing, to indulge perpetually in one's own truth, identity, and pleasures without guilt or restraint. To offer a perpetual indulgence is to affirm that each person is already worthy of joy, love, and belonging in this life, not just the next.



## The Second Tenet

### The Expiation of Stigmatic Guilt



This tenet calls for the release of guilt and shame that religion and society have unjustly placed upon people, especially around sexuality and identity. By wearing the traditional out-dated habits that nuns no longer wear of the old Church, the Sisters symbolically bear those burdens and offer healing in return. Through visible compassion and satire, they say “we are sorry for making you feel guilty” and replace condemnation with acceptance, laughter, and love.

## The Third Tenet

### The Promulgation of Universal Joy

Here at the Order, joy is not a privilege, it is a right. This tenet is the joyful proclamation that happiness belongs to everyone, no matter who they are or where they come from. The Order reminds the world that joy can be revolutionary, that laughter can heal, and that living with lightness is a sacred act. To promulgate universal joy is to announce, loudly and proudly, that delight is divine and contagious.



## The Fourth Tenet

### Public Manifestation through Habitual Perpetration



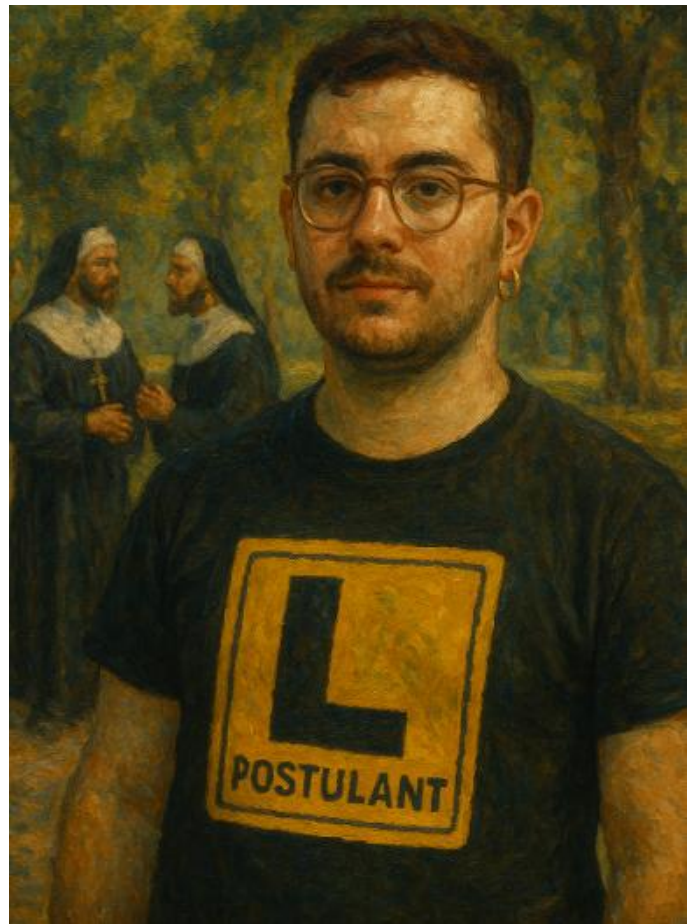
The final tenet is the call to action, to be visible, vocal, and present in the world. It is not enough to preach compassion in private; one must live it openly. Whether blessing a crowd, marching in protest, or simply standing in full regalia at a community event, the act of being seen is itself a form of ministry.

Through public manifestation, the Order transforms the streets into sacred spaces where awareness, inclusion, and joy are habitually performed.

# Postulant

Do you hear her? The Great Bitch Dingo, does she call to you? do you align and accept the four tenets? looking for a good vocation? well if you are and When you are ready, at the next Nuncheon make it known. Once you have asked, the fully professed (black veil) Sisters & Brothers will gather and decide whether to officially welcome you, dear Brother or Sister, into the Collective as a postulant. These are your first steps as one of the OPI..

The Postulant is one who has been formally recognized by the Order, the moment when true training begins like getting your L plates. During this time, you will Attend Nuncheons and accompany manifesting Sisters and Brothers to events, assisting them in their sacred duties It is not yet time to don the sacred habit, but it is time to craft it, and choose one's name. Through this time you will be assigned a mentor though many members may be called upon to assist you through your elevation as it takes a village to raise a nun. This will help you gain a deeper understanding of what it means to live a life in joyful service to the Great Dingo.



Let's start with choosing a name...

# “Whats in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet ”

- William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet



Choosing a name within the Order of Perpetual Indulgence is often one of the most challenging and creative steps in a Sister's journey. Names are more than titles; they are living expressions of humour, activism, identity, and joy. Some Sisters spend weeks balancing wit with meaning, while others find their name by accident or divine comedy. There are no fixed rules; you may change your name at any time or even go by multiple names if that feels true to your calling. The only real guideline is respect: we avoid intentionally taking names that impose stigmatic guilt upon others or cause others to not feel universal joy or names already used by past Sisters unless we do so in homage. For example, **Sister Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation II (CPRII)** chose his title to honour an early member of the Order while nodding to his nursing background, the "II" serving both as continuation and a cheeky allusion to "the Second Coming." Likewise, **Sister Rowena Keeper of the Holy Doyley** discovered his name through camp coincidence, after being told at his mother's house, surrounded by lace, that he was a "fucking doyley queen," and having earlier been compared to actress Rowena Wallace. Sister Rowena also has a lets say more lady of the night alter ego **Sister Rowena The Rotten Roadside Root**. And as for **Sister Ophelia Ring** he toyed with names like *Sister Ann Thrax* and *Sister Abby Normal*. But in the end, *Sister Ophelia CockRing* stole his heart. Of course, he had to trimmed it down; turns out "CockRing" was a bit of a mouthful especially for our beloved late **Mother Inferior** who also could never utter names like **Sister Mary Arse Licked and Old Lace**.

What name speaks to you?

# Start of a New Habit

Every Sister of Perpetual Indulgence begins by making their own habit by attending habit forming sessions these are events put on a few times throughout the year, not simply buying one, although assistance from people in the making is fine as long as you choose the fabric and get it made



uniquely for you. It's a long-held tradition that predates the age of "Add to Cart" and overnight deliveries. Before a cheap polyester costume could rocket to your door within 24 hours, Sisters sat down with fabric, thread, pins, and patience and a lot of alcohol. They cut, stitched, cursed, laughed, and created something uniquely their own.

That process remains sacred. The crafting of a habit is an act of devotion, care, and creativity, shared across generations of nuns, queers, and drag artists. It's not just sewing, it's storytelling. Every hem and stitch carries intention, humour, and love. And in that shared frustration and joy, you bond with your fellow Sisters and Brothers, those beautiful souls who will hand you pins, pour you wine, and tell you your wimple's on backwards.

Creating your own habit gives you something that isn't just owned, it's cherished. Many Sisters keep full wardrobes, each outfit marking a chapter in their spiritual and silly evolution: the first habit, the Mardi Gras habit, the "what was I thinking" habit, and the one you swore you'd never wear again (until next year).

But a habit is more than an outfit. Once you put it on, it changes you. You become the Sister. You stand taller, bolder, braver. The fabric becomes a shield, one woven from courage, laughter, and a little bit of glitter glue. It gives you strength to speak, bless, and love openly.

Yet that same visibility invites attention, not always kind. The habit draws eyes, and sometimes criticism. It can be a lot to carry. And yes, under the Australian sun, bloody Dingo, it can be hot. But every drop of sweat, every stitch, every sidelong stare is part of what makes it real.

To craft and wear the habit is to accept both the joy and the weight of the Order. It's not mass produced, it's personal, powerful, ridiculous, and divine. It's a living reminder that we are sacred clowns, using humour, compassion, and fabulous attire to turn guilt into joy and silence into pride you just want to scream from the rooftops...

## So let's get to know the elements that make up the habit itself

### The Tunic

A sister's tunic is the main garment forming the foundation of a nun's habit, essentially a long, robe-like dress.



### The Cincture

A sister's cincture is a cord or belt worn around the waist over the tunic, it's both symbolic and functional. It functions as a belt that gathers the tunic, but spiritually, it represents the joy and public manifestation of one's vocation.



### The Scapula

A sister's scapula (or scapular) is a long, rectangular piece of fabric worn over the shoulders, hanging down both front and back over the tunic.

In the Order of Perpetual Indulgence, the scapula carries that sacred symbolism while embracing our joyful, theatrical spirit.

Many fully professed Sisters have multiple scapulars, in different colours, patterns, and rainbows, worn for

various events and manifestations. These variations bring colour, playfulness, and personality to the habit, reflecting the Order's commitment to universal joy and the celebration of individuality.



However, we seldom wear the Sacred Red Scapula. The red scapula represents martyrdom, those who have bled for the Order, who have been attacked, beaten, or harmed while expiating stigmatic guilt and spreading universal joy.

It is a horrible price to pay for such rights, and it reminds us of the dangers that still exist for those who live and love openly. Those who wear the red scapula do so with solemn honour, and they have our eternal love, respect, and gratitude. The scapula, in all its forms, remains both a mantle of devotion and a banner of joy, a symbol of humility and of pride, worn with courage, colour, and compassion.

## The Wimple

A sister's wimple is the white cloth that wraps around the head, neck and chin, leaving only the face visible.

Traditionally, it served to cover the hair and symbolize modesty, humility, and purity. Within the Order of Perpetual Indulgence, the wimple retains that symbolism but is also a visual act of transformation, turning the ordinary into the extraordinary, the secular into the sacredly camp. It completes the framing of the face and gives the sister her unmistakable silhouette.



## The Guimpe

A Sister's guimpe is the high-necked cloth worn under the wimple and veil, covering the chest and shoulders.

In the OPI, it's less about modesty and more about framing the heart, it's a perfect place for pins, badges, and ribbons, little flashes of colour and pride that tell each Sister's story.

Many also wear an OPI name badge with their Sister name, a mark of identity, joy, and belonging. Our beloved Sister Rowena, Keeper of the Holy Doyley, often adorns her guimpe with a doily-style lace trim around the edge, a gentle, joyful nod to her name and her Mother.



## The Bandeau

A sister's bandeau is the firm band of fabric that sits across the forehead, anchoring the wimple and veil in place. It's the crown that holds everything together, simple, strong, and unmistakably Sisterly in shape also works as a great sweatband.



## The Veil

A Sister's veil is the final and most visible piece of the habit, the flowing fabric that frames the face and crowns the calling. It moves with every step, catching light, air, and attention wherever a Sister goes.

Novices wear white veils, symbolizing new beginnings openness, and the light of discovery. It marks the start of their journey and the learning of their vocation.



Fully professed Sisters are professed with black veils, representing wisdom, experience, and the strength of vocation. Yet once professed, a Sister may wear colourful or creative veils for different events, rainbows, lace, sequins, tulle, or wild sculptural designs, each one a reflection of joy, identity, and service.

The veil ties it all together: tradition and rebellion, solemnity and sparkle — a visible celebration of who we are and why we manifest.

## The Coronet

A sister's coronet is the decorative headpiece or frame sometimes worn above or around the veil. In many United States houses, the coronet is used as a mark of identity, each house has its own style, shape, or colour scheme, allowing Sisters to be instantly recognized by where they hail from. Some are simple fabric bands, others elaborate wire or beaded structures that turn the veil into a small work of art.

In Australia, we rarely wear coronets as part of the standard habit, but they're often playfully added for special events such as Mardi Gras parades, community marches, or themed manifestations. A coronet can be as understated or outrageous as a Sister chooses, a halo of humour, pride, and personality.

Whether traditional or purely theatrical, the coronet reminds us that manifestation is celebration, and every Sister's look can carry both meaning and mischief.



Now you know how the habit is all put together it's time to study the history of the Order, who we are, where we came from, knowledge is power on the path of the dingo

and our path forward begins by taking it back,

**all the way back.....**

# In the Beginning...



The first House began in San Francisco in 1979, on Easter weekend, during the era of the Castro Clone. Bored with the conformity of the time, three men decided to take to the streets and challenge the world: Ken Bunch (Sister Vicious PHB), Fred Brungard (Sister Missionary Position), and Baruch Golden. Dressed in full traditional habits, they wandered through the city and down to the nude beach. One even carried a machine gun for protection. Their appearance caused shock and amazement but immediately captured everyone's attention





Their next outing was at a softball game where their pompom routine nearly stole the show. Later that year, Sister Hysterectoria (Edmund Garron) and Reverend Mother (Bill Graham) attended the first International Faerie Gathering where they met others who shared their calling.

Soon after, the four founders, Sister Vicious PHB, Reverend Mother, Missionary Position, and Hysterectoria Agnes, gathered their friends, chose the name The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, and composed their mission statement to promulgate

universal joy and expiate stigmatic guilt. Tenets we still follow to this day

In 1980 the movement quickly spread.

While visiting San Francisco, a young Sydneysider who would later be known as Sister Mae Call of the Wild, Sister Mae Call of the Wild West, and Sister Medusa, met and manifested with the original San Francisco Sisters. Upon returning home, he joined forces with Fabian, later known as Mother Inferior, Mother Abyss, Monsignor Porkamadonna, Sister Venus de Lilo, and Sister Volupta, to establish the Sydney House.



The Sydney House was founded in 1981, followed by other houses around the world including in the United States, Australia, Colombia, England, France, Germany, New Zealand, Scotland, and Uruguay. Over the years, hundreds of Sisters past and present have carried the veil in joyful service. Their Sydney sisters first public manifestation took place on Saturday 14 November 1981 at Long Nose Point in Birchgrove, now Yurulbin Park, affectionately renamed Long Nun Point by the OPI.

While each house around the world adapts to the needs of its local community, all share a common goal to make the world a better place, one filled with equality, respect, patience, and tolerance. In desperate times, the Sisters' methods may be bold or confronting, but always in service of compassion, joy, and liberation.

# The Holy Dingo

**One must be curious by now... Why a Holy Dingo?**



Very early in the history of the Order of Perpetual Indulgence Australia there was an extremely significant event that made news all around the world being the death of an infant named Azaria Chamberlain at Uluru known as Ayers Rock at the time on the 17th August 1980. There was much suspicion at the time that the mother (Lindy) was responsible for the infant's death, but she declared her innocence while blaming a dingo for the tragedy that had struck the family. She was jailed for the infant's murder and then later released exonerated and a royal commission did find many years later that her claims of the infant's death at the jaws and paws of a dingo was in fact credible.

During this period, because of the scapegoating, stigmatization, vilification and generally bad press that the Dingo had endured in its trial by media for doing no more than living true to its nature, in much the same way that members of the LGBTQI+ community living as their true selves and nature find themselves at times being scapegoat, stigmatized and vilified by some members of the wider community, the decision was made that the Holy Dingo should be embraced by the Order as a spiritual icon and sacred totem.

Drawing upon these parallels the Great Bitch Holy Dingo has become a cornerstone and fundamental part of the OPI Australia Sydney House and as such as a sacred totem is an entirely unique entity that is not seen in any other House within the world wide movement that is the Order of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

We praise her wild spirit and are forever indebted for the blessings that she grants us!  
May the miracles continue unbounded.

- Sister Rowena Keeper of the Holy Doyley



# An honour, most holy Saints of the order...



The ultimate accolade of goodness the Sisters can bestow upon someone is **canonization**, the sacred elevation to sainthood. To be blessed into sainthood is one of the highest honours within any Order, recognition of those whose lives and deeds embody compassion, courage, and the joyful spirit of service.

In September 1990, during the vibrant demonstration of unity and outrage at the Outrage! “Kiss in” in Piccadilly Circus, the Australian missionary nun Mother Ethel Dreads a Flashback (also known as Sister Mary Anna Lingus) encountered a spirited band of activists, people who rejected stigma and embraced radical love. By year’s end, these gathered faithful had transformed into the UK’s first chapter of the Order of Perpetual Indulgence.

Among their earliest acts of faith and protest was the canonization of filmmaker Derek Jarman (pictured above), a bold ritual of recognition for his courage, art, and defiance during the height of the AIDS crisis. The saint-making ceremony took place in 1991, when

the queer nuns, dressed in habits of sequins and veils, anointed Jarman as Saint Derek of Dungeness. It was part protest, part performance, and entirely sacred in its message that holiness could exist in those the church had condemned. As incense mingled with laughter, Sister Mary Anna Lingus joined the blessing, declaring his life a beacon of creativity and compassion. For the Order, and for queer people everywhere, this moment redefined what sainthood could mean, a celebration of those who lived truthfully, loved fearlessly, and brought light to a world that had too long tried to dim theirs.

Today our saints are the heroes, mentors, and champions who have inspired us through their dedication to humanity, their fierce love, and their unwavering belief in equality and joy for all. The tradition began with the first saints like Derek Jarman, individuals whose light and kindness shone brightly within their communities. From those humble beginnings, canonization grew into more than just a ceremony, it became a cherished act of love and gratitude, a way for the Order to honour those who uplift others through word, deed, and presence.

Today, sainthood within the Order stands as a living tribute, a celebration of the extraordinary among us, and a reminder that holiness is found not in perfection, but in the courage to serve, to love openly, and to bring joy wherever one walks.



Unfortunately, much of the information regarding the earliest saints of the Order has been lost to time. What remains, however, tells of extraordinary individuals whose compassion, courage, and service embodied the true spirit of perpetual indulgence. To be canonized within the Order is to be recognized not for perfection, but for the way one uplifts others, with laughter, love, and an unyielding commitment to joy.

**Below are the names of some of those whose lives and deeds have been celebrated in sainthood by the Sydney order...**

### **Saint Stella Eulalia**

The first practice canonization within the Order, marking the beginning of this sacred and joyful tradition.

### **Saint Fred of Bligh**

A pioneer in the acceptance of gay men within the Australian Labor Party and a former Member for Bligh. Saint Fred was canonized for his crucial role in establishing and serving as the first Police Gay Liaison Officer in Sydney. He passed into the arms of the Great Dingo on the 4th of May, 1992.

### **Saint David of the Bar**

A tireless worker and ideologue for gay rights, Saint David devoted his life to legal advocacy and social justice within the community.

### **Saint Roberta and Her Holy Companions, Patron Saint of Transubstantiation**

Honoured as a collective for their transformation and unity, they stand as symbols of change, resilience, and spiritual evolution.

### **Saint Scarlet and the Holy Quilting Companions**

A collective sainthood recognising the warmth, creativity, and fellowship woven through their acts of love and community service.

### **Saint Toye of the North**

Remembered for steadfast devotion and radiant presence, a shining example of faith lived through action and humour.

### **Saint Louise Pratt**

A prominent figure in the Labor Party and Member of the Western Australian Parliament, Saint Louise was one of the driving forces behind significant law reforms advancing LGBTQIA+ rights and equality.

### **Saint Kendell the Constant**

Known for unwavering dedication and strength of spirit, Saint Kendell served faithfully within the community until his passing on the 21st of October, 2020. His constancy remains a beacon to all.

## Saint Julia, Keeper of the Red Thread

Julie Bates AO is a pioneering Sydney-based sex-worker rights advocate who helped lead the movement that made NSW the first place in the world to decriminalise sex work. A former sex worker herself, she became a powerful voice for harm reduction, HIV/AIDS awareness, and the dignity and safety of all workers through decades of activism and community leadership.



## Saint Don the Dauntless (Don Carter)

Known also as Dodge Traffic, Saint Don the Dauntless was a fearless fighter and early champion for those living with HIV and AIDS. He was instrumental in the establishment of ACT UP Sydney and dedicated his life to activism and compassion. Through his labours of love, bold spirit, and tireless charity, Don embodied the very heart of holy devotion. Canonised in recognition of his courage and conviction, his legacy continues to inspire those who fight for justice and health equality. Don passed away on the 31st of October 1995.



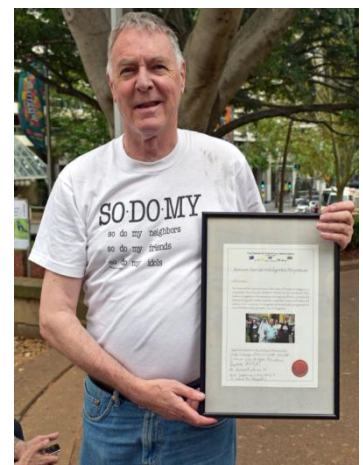
## Saint Wonder the Webdog (St WD 4.0)

Canonised on the 5th of March 2009. In recognition of his many years of quiet, tireless support for the Sydney Sisters, Saint Wonder worked faithfully behind the scenes to maintain the Order's digital presence. Through his dedication to the Sisters' website and social media platforms, he ensured that their message of joy and inclusivity could reach hearts across the world.



## Saint Robert of the Rainbow Chronicles

Canonised on the 23rd of February 2020. A devoted supporter of the Sydney Sisters, Saint Robert is celebrated for leading the annual History Walks and for his lifelong work as a historian and author. His efforts to preserve and share the rich tapestry of Sydney's gay and lesbian history, and his mentorship of younger generations, ensure that no story of love, struggle, or triumph is ever forgotten.



# Great Dingo show us the way...



So, you know the Tenets that guide our decisions, and you know the Great Dingo who gives us strength and shows us the way. You've learned some of our rich and incredible history, but what comes next? Where do *you* fit in all of this? What paths lie ahead for you?

You may already be wondering if there's more to the Order than just Sisters and Brothers, and you'd be right. The foundations of our Order were built not only by those who wear the habit, but also by the brave and devoted who stand beside us. Among them are our **Guards** and **Knights**, steadfast souls who help light the way and protect the spirit of the Order from a less frontline roll.

Not every lid is the right fit for every pot, and there is no guilt or shame in that. A habited life is not for the faint of heart, but neither is the calling of guardianship or knighthood any lesser. The Order would not be what it is today without those who serve in these roles with love, loyalty, and laughter.

But if the habited life *is* calling you, make it known. Announce your calling at the next Nuncheon. The Fully Professed will consider your candidacy when they deem you ready and this may take time, and if and when successful vocation is a marathon not a sprint, you'll soon find yourself on the path to starting a very good habit indeed.

# The Novitiate



The Novice has been officially accepted by the Professed members, their vocation recognized as strong enough to begin formal training in the ways of manifesting. Wearing the habit is a public declaration of that calling and devotion.

As a Novice, you have already convinced the Mistress of Postulants and Aspirants that your desire to become a Nun is sincere and not simply for show. You have gone with sisters to public manifestations taken part in nuncheons, crafted your very first white veil habit and now begin your apprenticeship, guided by the Mistress of Novices. the novice mistress will be your mentor and guide and train you in the ways of the dingo...0

This is where the real public facing training begins. of course, you already know a fair bit about the order our history. but creating your habit is one thing; wearing it is another. As a Novice, you may only manifest in habit when accompanied by a Fully Professed, black-veiled Sister. You will guided and helped trained by your mentor and other black veiled nuns but you will also be overseen by the mistress of the novices who will help guide your vocation and provide you with a structured training program, teaching you how to act when faced with aggression, how to stay safe, and how to present yourself with grace and confidence before the gathered faithful.



You must learn to move safely and with purpose in your habit. Walk with dignity. Avoid tripping on your tunic. If driving, remember the veil limits side vision, so take extra care. In the early days, stick to familiar and friendly spaces and travel with experienced Sisters.

The habit can inspire respect and a touch of awe, but it also draws attention - not all of it kind - so confidence, awareness, and composure are your best protections.

Take time to learn the habit itself. Practice putting it on quickly and neatly, punctuality is not always our strongest virtue. The pins that hold the veil and bandeau are sharp enough to draw blood, which rarely enhances a Novice's look and unfortunately doesn't count for red scapular status within the order. A well-fitted veil, however, leaves a lasting impression of grace and pride.

By now You should have learned enough about the Order to answer questions from those you meet. This includes understanding our history, philosophy, and theology as they apply to our mission. Have a look at some of our FAQ for some responses also to test your growing knowledge of the order.

During your novitiate, you must attend Nuncheons and manifestations unless a reasonable cause for guilt-free absence has been accepted. You will complete the official Novice Training Program and assist in the life of the Order through blessings, habit care, and public service.

A Novice must never manifest alone. A Professed Sister must always accompany you until your training is complete. This period is one of discovery, devotion, and joy, a time to learn, to serve, and to grow into the shining reflection of the Great Dingo's spirit that already lives within you.

And once you have completed all the necessary training provided by the Mistress of Novices and proved that you are ready to bear the burden of the black veil, she will, without your prior knowledge, present you to the fully professed Sisters. They will then take a secret vote to decide whether you are ready for your profession, to receive the black veil, and to become a fully professed member of the O.P.I. Collective.



# Some FAQ that you should know the answers to...

FAQs are a great way to test your knowledge at this stage and prepare for interactions with the gathered faithful. Here are just a few of the common questions our Sisters and Brothers receive.

## **Why are you dressed as a nun / cleric?**

I am a member of the Order of perpetual indulgence.

## **What is the Order of perpetual indulgence?**

We are an order of queer nuns devoted to community service, activism, and the spreading of joy.



## **Why did we choose to be gay nuns?**

Because hierarchy matters. In the traditional Church, nuns have no real say and sit at the bottom of its ladder. Gay men, too, have long been placed on society's lowest rung, denied rights and respect. By choosing the image of the nun, we reclaim that place of weakness and turn it into strength, pride, and defiance.

## **What is your purpose?**

The expiation of stigmatic guilt and the promulgation of universal joy through perpetual perpetration and habitual manifestation.

## **What is "stigmatic guilt"?**

Any guilt or shame imposed from outside, based on the natural state or identity of the person receiving it.

## **What is "perpetual indulgence"?**

Just as the old Roman Church sold limited indulgences to reduce time in purgatory, we freely grant a perpetual indulgence for all stigmatic guilt, no payment, only love.

## **Why do you mock nuns by wearing their dress?**

We don't mock them.

Nuns no longer wear this style of habit. We choose the pre-Vatican II form of dress to highlight the out-dated attitudes still held by some parts of the so-called modern Church.

## **Are you Christian?**

Some of us are. Our members include Christians, atheists, pagans, and people of many faiths. We do not oppose religion, only hypocrisy and intolerance within institutions.

### **What is your name?**

Each Sister chooses a name that reflects their spirit, humour, or calling within the Order.

### **Why did you choose that name?**

Answer in your own words, speaking from the heart or the joke, both are sacred.

### **How long have you been a nun?**

Answer honestly; there's no shame in being new. Every Sister once wore the white veil.

### **What is the significance of the white veil and red scapula?**

The white veil marks a Novice, new to the Order and still in formation. The red scapula symbolises martyrdom, the willingness to shed blood, metaphorically or otherwise, in the service of the Order's work.

### **What are the names of other nuns?**

You may share the names of current or former Sisters if they are public members of the Order. Respect those who manifest privately.

### **Where did the Order originate?**

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence began in San Francisco in 1979. The Order was brought to Australia by one of our Ancients, who met the San Francisco Sisters while visiting. Upon returning home, he joined with others in Sydney to found the first Australian House in 1981.

### **Why a Dingo?**

The Dingo represents stigmatic guilt, an innocent creature blamed for countless wrongs simply for being what it is. It is our sacred reminder that no one should bear guilt for their nature or existence.



# Safety in Habit



Before we can bring joy to others, we must first protect ourselves. Manifesting in public while wearing the habit is a powerful act, visible, political, and often emotional for those who witness it. The habit draws attention, both welcome and otherwise. It can inspire laughter, love, curiosity, or anger, sometimes all within the same moment. For that reason, safety is not just practical; it is sacred. Caring for yourself and your Sisters allows the work of the Order to continue joyfully and without fear.

## **Always be alert**

Keep an eye out for hot spots and continually scan the people and environment around you. It is impossible to be inconspicuous in habit. You will attract comment, both positive and negative, every time you manifest. Reactions vary between individuals and groups. Remember that by wearing the habit you are making a political statement by virtue of your presence.

Know your habit is decorative but can be dangerous:

**Veil** - can cause whiplash if pulled from behind and reduces peripheral vision, especially when worn in the “ice-cream bucket” style.

**Scapula** - can choke or throw you off balance if grabbed from behind or the front.

**Wimple** - reduces peripheral vision and hearing.

**Tunic** - bulky fabric can trip you and slow you if you need to move quickly.

**High heels** - awkward to run in and increase risk of sprain or fall.

Keep quiet, stay calm

## **Speak only when directed by your professed...**

A demure nod is usually enough to acknowledge the gathered faithful. If you must respond, keep it short and neutral, “Thank you” will often diffuse verbal attacks and create time for an exit. Direct questions and confrontations to your professed; you are there to learn.

## **Positioning and accompaniment & Never manifest alone...**

Always walk one pace behind your professed. This is a sign of respect, keeps you from being confronted first, and lets you observe methods of deflection. Aim to manifest in

groups of three or more when possible. Groups are a strong visual deterrent and provide greater safety if a problem arises.

### **Avoid danger where possible...**

Choose safe, public environments and avoid corners, dead ends, and walls with no exit. Know where the exits are and keep an escape route in mind.

### **Do not court danger...**

If a situation looks like it may escalate, leave before it does.  
Stay visible and in public

### **Remain where others can see you...**

Darkness can hide danger. The general public and other Sisters will usually rally to help if anything happens, so remain in well-lit, populated areas whenever possible.

### **The Power of three...**

No Novice may manifest alone under any circumstances. Always habit up with your professed present, either beforehand or at the venue. Manifesting in a group of three or more increases presence and safety.

### **Whistle while you work...**

Always carry a whistle and use it only for emergencies  
Have a whistle on you while in habit as an audible alarm. Use it only to signal for help, not as a performance accessory.

### **Stay sober and stay sharp...**

Alcohol reduces reaction time. An intoxicated antagonist may still be talked down long enough for you to exit, but your own sobriety is essential to staying safe.

### **If you are attacked...**

Keep your wits. If possible, run to safety. Blow your whistle to attract attention. Alert everyone nearby and get your professed between you and the threat. Call police or security as soon as it is safe to do so. Collect identifying details where possible: descriptions of faces, clothing, height, accent, distinguishing marks, time and place. Do not play the martyr, your life and safety matter first.

**Remember, confidence, awareness, and calm are your best protections.**



# Leading An Event:



## Be in Command

There is no need to apologies for doing your job. Your task is to guide people through the activity with confidence and presence. The gathered faithful will expect direction — they are ready to follow, but you must show them the way.

Use your voice to its greatest effect. Speak from your diaphragm rather than your throat. Maintain strong posture; visual presence is just as important as vocal projection. Stand tall, and imagine yourself twice your normal height — it changes how others see you and how you carry yourself.



## Attitude

Respect yourself.

Respect the gathered faithful.

To command the audience, they must see that you know what you are doing. The gathered faithful have entrusted you with this moment - they want to trust you, so lead with calm assurance.

## Prepare for the Event

Know why you are there and what you wish to achieve. Prepare your material well in advance. Write a script for yourself at least a week beforehand and rehearse it in front of a mirror. Have written notes - do not rely on memory alone. Preparation is the foundation of every successful manifestation. Scripts can be refined, even at the last moment, but always start from structure.

Understand the history behind the person, place, or event you are manifesting for, especially if there have been prior manifestations there. Context strengthens connection.



## Play to Your Audience

Before you begin, take a moment to scan the crowd. Continue to read the gathered faithful throughout the activity. Keep what you say and do relevant to them - this keeps energy alive and engagement strong. Be flexible and ready to shift tone or focus if the atmosphere changes.



# Life's little Blessings...



Fear not, for you shall succeed. Do your homework. Blessing writing may sound daunting, but there are simple techniques that make it easy. You don't have to perform the blessing yourself; you can also write one for another Sister or Brother to deliver if arranged beforehand.

## **What can be blessed?**

Homes, shops, people, pets, events, the opening of a bag of chips it makes no difference. The basics are mostly the same, though each will have its own story and circumstances.



## **Who requests the blessing?**

Always find out who has made the request and have one clear point of contact who will be responsible for the details. The Order may be asked to construct and perform the blessing, but the inclusion or exclusion of specific elements should be decided by your contact. Your role is to give them every opportunity to make those choices.

## **Why the blessing is requested?**

Ask why an OPI blessing is being sought. Reasons vary greatly, but understanding the motivation will help you decide the best tone, content, and approach.

## **When to Schedule**

Never agree to a blessing with less than two weeks' notice. Short notice often leads to rushed work, shows poor consideration, and gives other OPI members little time to adjust their schedules.

## **The Power of Three**

It's not just a good rule for safety always aim to have at least three OPI members at a blessing. Fewer can make it seem like the Order doesn't care, while three or more looks strong and commanding. Extra hands are invaluable, voices carry better in groups, and each person can add something small to enhance the colour and movement of the occasion.

## **The environment**

Large spaces can be lively but difficult to manage. People will talk, and you won't stop them, so don't try. Keep the dialogue short and animated. Use big gestures, incense, or a procession to draw attention.

Large spaces with a microphone allow for personal dialogue, but mix in chanting and movement to hold the audience.

Large spaces without a microphone should be avoided if possible. Keep the words simple, add a chant or song, and use a procession to keep focus.

Small spaces are easier to handle, though you'll need to think about corners and alcoves when writing the script.

In small spaces with a microphone, you can speak at length and even hand out copies of the blessing so others can join in.

In small spaces without a microphone, use a procession to capture attention and keep your script short and lively so the words carry through the room. Make sure everyone can see what's happening.



## **Contact the people involved**

Speak with everyone taking part, not just your main contact. Each person should have some personal involvement, even if it's a small gesture or favourite phrase. This inclusion gives the moment unity and meaning.

## **Structure of a Blessing**

Every blessing should have three parts: the start, the bit in the middle, and the end.

The start sets the tone and lets everyone know something special is happening. It should include a welcome, introductions, thanks to those who invited you, and a brief outline of what will happen and why.

The bit in the middle is the heart of the blessing, focused entirely on the reason you are there. It may include rituals, invocations, and dedicated blessings for people, objects, or events.

The end ties everything together and allows the group to move on naturally. Include a short recap, general blessings or prayers, thanks to everyone for attending, and a farewell from the OPI.

## **Elements of a Blessing**

Some parts are essential, others optional.

The celebrant leads the blessing, directing the flow and maintaining the gathered faithful's attention. They must stay aware of mood and pacing throughout.

Assistants support the celebrant and handle tasks like carrying incense, holding items, or assisting with presentation. They add visual strength and balance to the ceremony.

The focus is the reason you're there, the person, place, or event being blessed. Make sure the focus is present before you begin.

Optional elements can enhance the blessing. A processional makes a dramatic entrance and gathers attention. A recessional provides a graceful ending and clear closure.

Music is an excellent opener and instantly calms or excites a crowd. It can be sung, played, or recorded, but always confirm details with your contact beforehand.

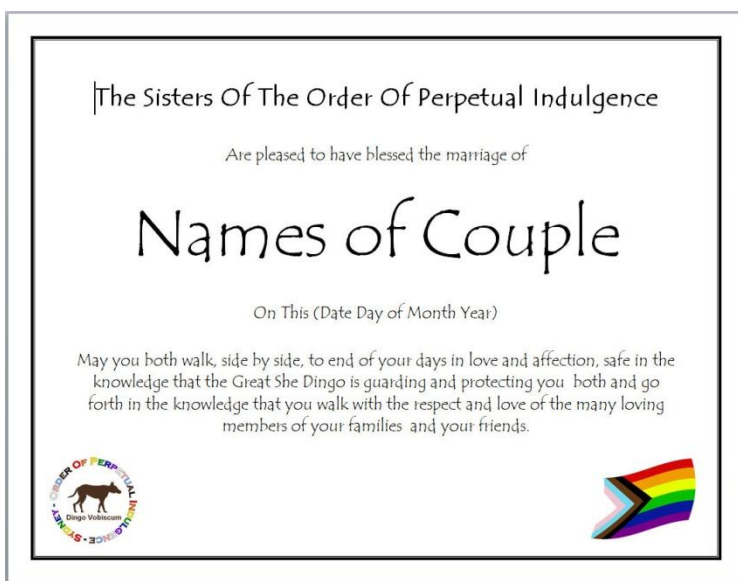
A thurible adds drama and presence, but needs space and care. Be aware of asthma sufferers, smoke alarms, and swinging room. Start it early so it reaches full smoke at the right time.



An aspergillum adds energy and movement, perfect for accenting key moments or blessing the gathered faithful.



Certificates make good keepsakes for people or venues, and an order of service gives attendees a reminder of what took place. Keeping a copy for your own records helps when similar events arise in future.



Blessing is both performance and prayer - a balance of preparation, presence, and play. Every detail, from incense to laughter, serves the same sacred goal: to share joy, lift guilt, and leave the world a little lighter than before.

# The Art of Manifestation:



By the time you reach the end of your novitiate, you will have learned much more than how to wear a veil or pin a scapula without injury. You will have begun to understand the heart of what it means to manifest, to step into the world as a living symbol of joy, acceptance, and fearless love.

Manifestation is both ceremony and celebration. It is the moment where faith, humour, and purpose meet. Whether you are blessing a pet shop, marching in a parade, comforting someone in pain, or simply standing proudly in public, you are performing a sacred act. The habit you wear, the words you speak, and even the laughter you share all become part of the ritual.



Every manifestation, no matter how small, holds importance. It shows the world that kindness still exists, that guilt can be lifted, and that joy is not a luxury but a right. The fun and playfulness of our work is never in opposition to its depth, it is the method through which we reach hearts that might otherwise remain closed. A wink, a blessing, or a burst of laughter can change more than sermons ever could.

But with that joy comes responsibility. Each time you step out in habit, you carry the legacy of those who came before and the promise of those yet to come. You manifest not for yourself alone, but for the community, for the Great Dingo, and for every soul still learning to love themselves without shame.





Always remember to record what you do. After every manifestation, take a photo and make a note of where and when it took place, who was present, and what it involved. Each blessing, protest, or public act adds to the living memory of the Order, a growing testament to our shared purpose and history. These records form the Great Dingo Archive, preserving our work so future generations may learn, laugh, and continue the mission with pride.

Manifestation is not just wearing the habit, it is embodying the spirit of perpetual indulgence, the courage to love loudly, bless freely, and walk through the world with universal joy as your calling card free of stigmatic guilt.



May the Great Dingo walk beside you on every road you take, keeping your steps sure and your spirit safe.

May the Four Tenets guide your way, granting perpetual indulgence to live freely, expiating guilt so you carry no shame, promulgating joy so laughter flows wherever you go, and reminding you to manifest your truth boldly and without fear.

May your days be long, your heart light, and your vocation a joyful one filled with wonder, compassion, and glittering purpose.

May you always find comfort among your Sisters and Brothers, for you are not merely part of an Order but of a family, bound not by duty but by love, humour, and the shared call of service.

Go forth with a guilt free heart and a joyful soul.

Be safe in your travels, radiant in your mission, and fearless in your indulgence.

And when the day's work is done, may you rest knowing that you are blessed, beloved, and forever part of the Great Dingo's story.

Go in joy, go in safety, with love and joy, always.

# O.P.I

