



OPENING HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL, WANAKA

OCTOBER 29th, 2006

- Bishop Colin Campbell
- Bishop Len Boyle
- Yeverley McCarthy and Trustees
- Barbara Perry & Staff
- Father Michael Hishon and Priests of the region
- Members of Parliament
- Distinguished Guests
- Parishioners and local supporters
- Parents, friends and students

Good afternoon Everyone

Naumai Haere Mai, Tena Koutou Katoa

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today as you open your new school. This day is a wonderfully historic day for Wanaka and for the Diocese of Dunedin.

Holy Family School is the newest of our nation's 240 Catholic schools. Catholic schools are increasingly important to the mission of the New Zealand Church. This was recognised by the late Pope John Paul, II when he said in September 2004, "I wish to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of your Catholic schools. Their growth has enriched the faith of the Christian community and contributed to the promotion of excellence in the nation".

In the last ten years we have opened twelve new schools around the country which is a great act of faith and confidence in the future by our Bishops and the Catholic people of New Zealand. It is something we can all be proud of.

I offer my congratulations and that of the New Zealand Catholic School system to former Bishop Len Boyle, to Bishop Colin Campbell, to Yeverley McCarthy and her team, to Barbara Perry and team, to Father Michael Hishon and parishioners of the Wanaka region and to Tony Hanning, Bill Haydon and his team. All of these people have had a significant part to play in the establishment of the school. Thank you for your leadership and helpful collaboration.

I wish, also, to recognise the wonderful partnership the Catholic Education system has with the Ministry of Education and with the Government. This has been very significant in the establishment of Holy Family School and is very much appreciated.

As the world grapples with various conflicts and terrorism of one kind or another, our schools have a vital role in promoting the importance of the spiritual dimension in a young person's education. Virtues, values, ethnics, and spirituality education are all taking centre stage as we each come to recognise that we all need one another and we will only make progress by supporting one another and help one another.

Catholic schools are building their reputation and brand as schools that make a difference for good in the world. They are increasingly being regarded as education standard setters, as well as providing young people with the inspiration to better themselves for the service of others.

Catholic schools are not solely in existence to serve the Catholic community's requirements. They are also committed to encouraging and enabling their students to become active citizens who contribute to the common good of society, where a 'fair go' and dignity are part of people's lives. At the same time, Catholic schools are called on to be magnanimous in their attitudes, because peace emerges through a generosity of spirit.

People today are crying out for new ideas, particularly those which are inspirational and which touch their lives. As the late Chinese Premier Deng Xiaoping once said, "It doesn't matter whether the cat is black or white, providing it catches mice". Being effective and making things happen is what they also want. Leadership qualities are part of most human beings. Without leadership from someone, nothing positive happens in our world. Leaders are people who deal in hope, encouraging others to see that tomorrow can be better than today.

All of us, including our young people, are not only citizens of New Zealand; we are also citizens of the world – global citizens in fact. This means that we are people of hope; people of action and people who are committed to getting along side those who need a hand up.

Thank you for the contribution each of you are making to the life of Holy Family School, whether as the principal, staff member, a trustee, a student, a parent, a parishioner, a school community member or a civic leader. Working together makes us strong, since one of us is never as strong as all of us.

Again, congratulations on today's historic celebration – you can be justifiably proud of all of our Catholic schools throughout New Zealand, and in Holy Family School, in particular. I wish you well and offer my active support.

Pat Lynch
29.10.06.