

St Joseph's Church, Charlton was packed with people and excitement as the school, parish and wider community gathered to celebrate Mass with Bishop Paul Bird, Fr Paul Mercovich, Fr Eugene McKinnon and Fr Peter Jose. Bishop Paul led us in a beautiful celebration of the opening of the school's administration area. Concluding Mass, everyone followed the children singing, in true Pied Piper style, to the school's multi-purpose facility for the unveiling of the plaque. While Bishop Paul and Fr Paul blessed the new building, Principal Frank McGrath spoke of the one hundred and twenty one years of Catholic Education in Charlton and the wonderful legacy left by the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions and Sisters of Mercy. In the last forty years, lay people have tried to maintain the wonderful example set by those orders of hard working religious who had gone before us.



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Mr McGrath thanked Fr Paul, the School Advisory Board, Brad Carr from the Catholic Education Office Ballarat, Brent McKnight Drafting Services, Searle Bros Builders, the Supplementary Capital Fund, the Ballarat Diocesan Finance Council and the school who provided savings. Mr McGrath also spoke of the need to upgrade facilities so the school was meeting its requirements with Occupational Health and Safety. Finally, Mr McGrath said after one hundred and twenty one years the school finally has a front entrance. The school is situated behind the convent on one side, the Parish Hall on one side and the presbytery on the other. This new building will help to springboard Catholic Education into a stronger position into the future. The evening progressed well with beautiful food supplied by the school auxiliary, refreshments of all kinds were available and enjoyed by those attending and just like the good old days - a good time was had by all.

*Frank McGrath – Principal*

