

Topic – State Government Funding Announced for new Catholic College Mackay

The Queensland State Government has announced funding support for the proposed new Catholic Secondary school in South Mackay allowing planned development to proceed.

The Hon Grace Grace, Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations was in Mackay to make the announcement during a recent visit to the proposed site for the new Catholic school at the former Sugar Research Institute on Nebo Road.

Catholic Education – Diocese of Rockhampton was very appreciative of the funding support towards this new and exciting project, according to Diocesan Director Leesa Jeffcoat.

“We very much welcome this announcement and with the support of the State Government, Catholic Education is delighted to move forward with plans for this new Catholic school which will provide modern educational facilities and opportunities for local families while preserving the history and significance of the building for Mackay and the surrounding region,” Miss Jeffcoat said.

Miss Jeffcoat said the site, purchased in 2016 by Catholic Education, was known for many years as a place of learning and scientific research, and the new college would continue this proud tradition by educating future generations of students in Mackay.

The sugar industry paved the way for development and progress in the Mackay region echoing historic links with Catholic Education.

A great patron of the Catholic Church in Mackay, Irish sugar planter, T.H. Fitzgerald, and pioneering Catholic priest, Fr Pierre Marie Bucas worked together to establish the town’s first Catholic school in 1869, with the Sisters of St Joseph arriving to take charge in 1872, followed by the Sisters of Mercy in 1880.

Catholic Bishop of Rockhampton, Most Rev Michael McCarthy said that, “It is very appropriate and fitting that such a milestone is taking place in the city of Mackay where the community has been supporting Catholic education for almost 150 years thanks to the pioneering efforts of Fr Bucas and the local Catholic community.”

Site preparation was underway ready for Stage 1 development to commence with the first cohort of Year 7 students expected to be welcomed in 2022.

Miss Jeffcoat said Catholic Education - Diocese of Rockhampton was delighted to be able to provide a new Catholic school for the Mackay community and she looked forward to providing ongoing updates about the project through the steering committee.

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