

# **New Building On Cathedral Site Blessed And Opened**

## **Diocesan Education Edifice As Memorial To Fennescey Family**

**ON** Sunday last, Easter Sunday, His Grace the Archbishop of Adelaide, the Most Rev. Matthew Beovich, D.D., Ph.D., blessed and declared open the new Diocesan Education Building erected at the eastern end of the Cathedral grounds to make provision for Catholic teachers' conferences, and to provide a Chapter Room for conferences of the clergy and offices for Catholic Action works in the Archdiocese.

**THE** new building, erected in the perpendicular Gothic style to form a handsome addition to the Cathedral buildings, was dedicated as a memorial to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. John Fennescey, of Glenelg, who gave to the Archdiocese the sites adjacent to the Cathedral and on the corner of Victoria Square and Wakefield Street.

**ARCHBISHOP** Beovich, in his address on the occasion, referred to circumstances attending the arrival in South Australia of the Father and Founder of the Church in this State—Bishop Murphy—and those attending his own arrival and consecration on the anniversary of the celebration of the first Mass in Adelaide: the happy coincidence to which His Grace referred brought together the names of William Leigh, donor of the Cathedral site, and John and Mary Fennescey, whose gift of the Victoria Square-Wakefield Street properties completed Bishop Murphy's acquisition of the Cathedral block.

**CULTRY** weather and holiday vaca-

**S**ULTRY weather and holiday vacation did not prevent a large number of people from attending the ceremony of the blessing of the new building. His Grace Archbishop Beovich was attended by the Administrator of St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral, the V. Rev. Fr. C. J. Thompson, and in the presence of members of the city and suburban clergy and the Marist and Christian Brothers, the building was blessed. Following the ceremony, a meeting was held in St. Francis Xavier's Hall, which was crowded. Seated on the platform with the Archbishop were Rt. Rev. Mgr. Hourigan, V.G., V. Rev. Fr. C. J. Thompson, Adm., Mr. and Mrs. John Fennescey, Mr. A. F. Sutton, K.S.S., Mr. A. Uffindell, legal representative of the Fennescey family.

#### **Generous Donors.**

Father Thompson opened the meeting by extending a welcome to all present. He said it was very pleasing to see such a large gathering of the Catholic people on the occasion. Being Easter Sunday, most people were feeling somewhat fatigued after the Holy Week ceremonies in the churches, and such a large attendance was therefore a great compliment not only to His Grace, but also to Mr. and Mrs. John Fennescey, two notable benefactors to the Archdiocese.

The generosity of the Fennescey family was well known throughout South Australia. On numerous occasions they had been most generous in their contributions to works connected with the Church in Adelaide, and the Catholic people had come in large and representative numbers to show their appreciation.

"The new building will be a worthy, notable addition to the Cathedral buildings," said Fr. Thompson. "It is handsome in design, harmonising beautifully with the architecture of

beautifully with the architecture of the Cathedral. The whole work reflects great credit on the architect, Mr. Jory, and the contractors, Messrs. F. Fricker, Ltd. The building was made possible through the property on the west side of the Cathedral, facing Victoria Square being secured for the Church by Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey. The securing of that property adjacent to the Cathedral removed a grave anxiety from the shoulders of the late Archbishop, Dr. Killian. It was felt that while the ownership remained outside the Church, the property might in some future time prove a menace to the Cathedral. However, Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey, in their splendid generosity, saw to it, and the late Archbishop had the happiness of seeing the danger removed before his death.

"It is fitting that the generosity of the Fennescey family should be com-



View of the New Education Building erected at eastern end of Cathedral

memorated in some tangible way, and the proposal of the Archbishop to erect a bronze tablet in the new building, recording their princely generosity, would meet with the universal approval of the whole Catholic body," concluded Fr. Thompson.

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#### Archbishop Killian's Concern.

Rt. Rev. Mgr. Hourigan, V.G., said that he knew something of the great anxiety of the late Archbishop Killian, who wanted to secure the properties

who wanted to secure the properties adjoining the Cathedral on the Victoria Square frontage. Archbishop Killian was most concerned in the matter, but he could not see how he could make available the £30,000 required for the purchase. There were many other calls upon diocesan funds—many of them, such, for instance, as those that had reference to the erection of schools in country districts and provision of facilities to enable the people to assist at Mass, were of greater urgency and importance. As Archbishop of the diocese, went on Mgr. Hourigan, Dr. Killian had to take the whole diocese into consideration. Then, when the late Archbishop had been confined to hospital, he met Mr. John Fennescey, who was also a patient at Calvary Hospital. He, Monsignor Hourigan, had the pleasure of introducing the Archbishop and Mr. Fennescey, and when some time later he happened to visit His Grace he learned that Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey had given a cheque for £20,000 for the purchase of the property.

"Archbishop Killian," said Mgr. Hourigan, "was delighted and so was I. I thought then that this magnificent donation to the Archdiocese would add twelve months to his valuable life, but the providence of God took him from us within a few days, and we have as his successor a notable Archbishop. It was a happy thought of Archbishop Beovich to commemorate the generosity of John and Mary Fennescey in such a notable way. The late Archbishop wanted to erect some memorial to the Fennescey family, and the memorial which has been erected is a graceful and fitting monument to the extraordinary generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey.

"I have known the Fennescey family for 40 years," continued Mgr. Hourigan. "John Fennescey, like all the members of his family, was always a splendid Catholic layman, and he was still a better man when he married Mary Hanrahan. I had the pleasure

of uniting them in the bonds of matrimony. Both belonged to respected

mony. Both belonged to respected families in the district of Arthurton, where I spent some years and their example of fidelity to the Faith was most impressive. I can recall that often the Fennesceys yoked their draught horses to the buggy to bring them sixteen miles through slush and mud to assist a Mass."

In conclusion, Mgr. Hourigan expressed the gratitude of the Priests and his own gratitude to the Archbishop for dedicating such a fine memorial to John and Mary Fennescey. In doing so he was not forgetful of the generosity of the less well-to-do Catholic people of the Archdiocese upon whom they had mainly depended and would still mainly depend for support of the Catholic schools, churches and orphanages of the Archdiocese.

#### Education and Religion.

Mr. A. Uffindell, who spoke on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey, said that he had been delighted to hear the address of his old friend, Mgr. Hourigan, who seemed to have the secret of perpetual youth. He thanked Mgr. Hourigan for his very cordial appreciation of the Fennescey family. Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey were particularly thankful that their name would be associated with the development of education, and not only with education but with religion, on which that education was based: they had too many evidences of the futility of education divorced from religion.

"My knowledge of the Fennescey family," went on Mr. Uffindell, "goes back over 50 years. Half a century ago they settled, the father, mother, sister and five brothers, on the land on Yorke Peninsula. The land was virgin country, which had to be broken up and there were in those days no facilities such as now obtain. The Fennesceys settled down, and with pluck, endurance and a splendid spirit of unity, they succeeded. One by one they have passed away, and to-day John is the only survivor. It is the hope of Mr. John and Mrs. Fennescey and of us all that they will be spared for many years to see the fruition of their work."

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#### The Archbishop's Address.

His Grace Archbishop Beovich expressed genuine pleasure that after the strenuous days of Holy Week and their attendance at Masses on that morning, such a large number of people had come to attend the opening of the new building. He associated himself with every word that Mgr. Hourigan and Father Thompson had said in appreciation of Mr. and Mrs. Fennescey's benefactions, and he congratulated Mr. Uffindell on his beautiful reply on their behalf. Since



His Grace, Archbishop Beovich, with V. Rev. Fr. G. J. Thompson, Adm., proceeding to the Blessing of the new building.

coming to Adelaide he had met Mr. Uffindell many times and he was much indebted to him. He was glad, too, that Archbishop Killian had been associated in such an intimate way with the ceremony, and the mention of Archbishop Killian's name would serve to remind them that they should not forget him in their prayers.

"It is opportune to recall," continued His Grace, "that 1940 was the first centenary of the first Mass in South Australia, which was celebrated

South Australia, which was celebrated by Dr. Ullathorne, the Vicar General of Bishop Polding—the first Catholic Bishop in Australia. Because of the war, we had no great celebrations in honor of the event, unless the consecration of the present Archbishop and the presence in Adelaide of twelve members of the Australian Hierarchy, with the Apostolic Delegate, who did honor to South Australia on that occasion, might be considered a milestone to mark the progress of a hundred years. South Australia has not

dred years. South Australia has not grown as rapidly as most of the other States of the Commonwealth, but it is worth recalling that while in 1840 there were but a handful of Catholics and no resident Priest in this State, to-day there are three Bishops within the Province (including Darwin), and in the Diocese of Adelaide and Port Augusta there are 124 Priests, 627 Nuns, 52 Religious Brothers, 88 Catholic schools, and 63,000 Catholics.

#### Interesting Coincidence.

"Possibly later we may have an opportunity to celebrate the first centenary of the arrival of the first Bishop and permanent Priest in Adelaide. The Most Rev. Francis Murphy was consecrated Bishop of Adelaide on September 8, 1844, in St. Patrick's Church, Sydney, by Bishop Polding. Two days later the first Australian Provincial Synod opened its sessions. At that first historic synod of the Church in Australia there were only three Bishops—Dr. Polding, of Sydney; Dr. Willson, of Hobart; and Dr. Murphy, of Adelaide. The new Bishop arrived in Adelaide in the beginning of November, 1844. There was neither church nor school, nor Priest's house in South Australia. Scattered over the huge State were 1,273 Catholics (out of a total population of 19,137), and to care for them had now come the new Bishop and one Priest, Father Michael Ryan, whom he appointed his Vicar General.

"I recall these early days because I wish to draw your attention to an interesting coincidence. Shortly after Bishop Murphy's arrival he found, to his joy, that a Mr. Leigh, an Englishman who became a Catholic, had sent word from England that he wished to provide a site for a Catholic Cathedral in Adelaide as well as to give a handsome donation of £2,000 and 500 acres of land in the country.

"Shortly after my arrival I was informed by the legal advisers of Mr. John and Mrs. Mary Fennessey that they had given the sum of £10,000, completing their munificent donation to the late revered Archbishop Kilian and to the Archdiocese of £30,000 for the purpose of purchasing the land and property facing Victoria Square

and property facing Victoria Square and adjacent to the Cathedral. The generous donors have thus made possible a magnificent and worthy position for the Cathedral in the years to come.

#### Purpose of the New Building.

"While it may be many years before advantage is taken of the increased amount of land," said the Archbishop, "I was desirous that the gift of John and Mary Fennessey would not be forgotten by future generations, and so it was decided to record their generosity by a beautiful and necessary building. That building has been blessed and opened to-day. (Applause.)

"The building will be a centre of Catholic Education, and fittingly there is engraved on its facade the emblem of the great Catholic Education Congress which took place in Adelaide in 1936—the hundredth anniversary of the foundation of this State.

"Within the building there will be provision for the teachers of our Catholic schools to meet and have conferences on matters concerning their school work.

#### Tribute to Catholic Teachers.

"I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the splendid self-sacrificing work of our Nuns and Brothers. You know the value of their work in the cause of Christian education. Examination results are not the best criterion of successful education, but such results should not be ignored. The Director of Catholic Education, Rev. Fr. Russell, has given me the results of the past year. It is a long list and I will only quote briefly. In the Leaving Certificate examination of South Australia Catholic schools obtained first place in the State in

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### **DIOCESAN EDUCATION BUILDING OPENED.**

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**Botany and equal first place in Modern History and in Economics, as well as credit passes in many other subjects. In the Intermediate Certificate examination Catholic schools obtained first place in the State in Latin; first,**

place in the State in Latin; first, second, and third places in Book-keeping, and second place in French, as well as many additional credit passes. In the Qualifying Certificate exam. the percentage pass of Catholic pupils was 93.9 per cent. For purposes of comparison I shall take the State of Victoria—a State with which I am well acquainted, and in which the standard of teaching in Catholic schools is admittedly very high. In comparison with that State on a Catholic population basis, the number of complete passes in the examinations on this list before me almost

equals the excellent Victorian results, except in the Leaving Honors group. I am pleased indeed to pay this tribute to the splendid work of Nuns and Brothers and pupils in our schools, and I pray that God may bless their work even more abundantly in the future.

"It is also of interest to note now that we have accurate figures of pupils in various schools that in the city and suburbs of Adelaide 87 per cent. of Catholic children are in Catholic schools. While that figure may sound satisfactory, we shall not be content until all our children are receiving an education which is "rooted and grounded in God." Our children, who are our greatest pride, have that right by Divine Law.

"During the past week, Holy Week, we have had admirable evidences of Catholic devotion to the Passion of Our Divine Saviour. Three times on Good Friday the Cathedral was crowded with worshippers: that would not have been the case if we had not the Catholic schools. And in this connection I want to say that I was astounded to notice that the cinemas were open and sporting fixtures were held on the day on which we commemorate the Passion and death of Christ. In a recent Quiz session over the radio six people in succession were unable to give an answer to the query: Why is Good Friday called good? The smallest child in the Catholic schools could have answered that question by replying that the day was called 'good' because on that day Our Divine Saviour died for the salvation of the world.

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"In addition to what I have mentioned there will also be provision for adult education in the matter of Catholic Action. The Central Catholic Library under the patronage of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More will also have excellent quarters in the new building. This library, which was formerly the property of the Guild of Social Studies Library, will still be managed by its existing committee and will, I hope, increase the most valuable work it has been doing for a number of years past in South Australia. There will also be provision for a Chapter Room, in which conferences of the clergy will take place."

His Grace concluded by paying warm tribute to the work of the architect, Mr. Herbert Jory, and of the builders, Messrs. F. Fricker & Co. He joined with Priests and people in thanking John and Mary Fennescey for their benefactions to the Archdiocese: the longest life would come to an end all too soon, but that building would stand for many years as a memorial of their generosity. He joined, too, with Mgr. Hourigan in thanking the Catholic people, the majority of whom had little of this world's goods, and their non-Catholic friends who were ever generous in contributing to the advancement of religion and education.