




Speech by
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Tuesday, 2 August 2011

ALL HALLOWS' SCHOOL, 150TH ANNIVERSARY

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (11.27 pm): As a very proud past pupil, it was a great pleasure on the weekend of 23 and 24 July 2011 to attend the 150th anniversary of All Hallows' School celebration mass and the school's sesquicentenary celebrations. I was joined by the Minister for Education, Hon. Cameron Dick, who I am sure enjoyed the day just as much as I did. The mass was celebrated by Archbishop Bathersby and Father Ken Howell, with many distinguished guests, past and present students, parents and friends, teachers and staff coming together to enjoy Brisbane's perfect weather on the beautiful lawns of All Hallows'.

Two years after the separation of the colony of Queensland from New South Wales, All Hallows' School for girls was founded by the Sisters of Mercy, and the first pupil, Annie Tighe, from Drayton on the Darling Downs was enrolled as a boarder on 15 December 1861. The school was the first permanent home of the Sisters of Mercy in Queensland—who are also celebrating their sesquicentenary—and is the oldest surviving secondary school in Brisbane. I pay tribute to those pioneering women of the Sisters of Mercy for their courage, vision and determination in ensuring that girls received the same education opportunities as boys. Their story is a truly inspiring one when one considers that this occurred 150 years ago in times when girls and women did not enjoy the same opportunities that we do today.

I want to acknowledge Sister Sandra Lupi, congregation leader, and other members of the congregation leadership team who were also present for the celebrations and their ongoing support for the school. After 150 years, although buildings and teaching methods have changed, Principal Dr Lee-Anne Perry and staff at All Hallows' School remain committed to creating an educational environment characterised by the Christian values of love, reconciliation, challenge, justice, mercy, service, faith, hope and freedom of spirit in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy.

For many years, All Hallows' has been served extremely well under the leadership of the principals: Mother Vincent Whitty, Mother Bridget Conlon, Mother Rose Flanagan, Mother Patrick Potter, Mother Regis Quirke, Mother Borgia Byrne, Mother Alban Salmon, Sister Mary Loretto Flynn, Sister Mary Marguerite Doyle, Sister Jean-Marie Mahoney, Sister Anne Hetherington, Sister Ann O'Farrell and current principal Dr Lee-Anne Perry. They are all outstanding women who have worked and are working tirelessly to educate girls and maintain the proud history and record of All Hallows' School. I know over 1,400 female students, and my own daughter, are currently benefiting from their inspirational work and commitment.

Celebrations like these do not happen without hard work, coordination and planning, and I want to acknowledge the small committee and other members of the school community who have worked tirelessly over the last 18 months. Thank you to Angela O'Malley, Tim Sherlock, Lenore Thompson, Terry Cobcroft, Louise Gruhl, Kristin Devitt, as well as the Mothers' Network and Parents and Friends Association, the Past Pupils Association and staff in the Sisters of Mercy Heritage Centre. I also want to thank and acknowledge Pam Betts, Chair of the School Board, and all board members who I know worked tirelessly to ensure a successful day. Principal Dr Lee-Anne Perry and her staff also deserve special mention and sincere congratulations on a job well done in opening up the school to all visitors who I know enjoyed all the displays and activities on offer. In conclusion, in the words of Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, in Dublin in 1831—

... no work of charity can be more productive of good to society, or more conducive to the happiness of the Poor, than the careful instruction of women ...

(Time expired)