




Speech by

Jason Costigan

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

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ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (8.56 pm): I rise in the House to congratulate all concerned in relation to the recent opening and blessing of St Catherine's Catholic College, in the Whitsundays. Next year, for the first time ever the college will provide local parents with the opportunity to give their children a Catholic secondary education in the Whitsundays. On 18 July 2012, representing the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, I was delighted to be at the opening of the new school in Renwick Road, Proserpine, in the presence of Bishop Michael Putney, representatives of the Townsville Catholic Education Office, including executive director Dr Cathy Day, principals David Burke and Sharyn Bell, teachers, parents, parishioners and, of course, students.

As I noted in my address, I was there not just as the member for Whitsunday but also as a proud parent. I know I speak for all parents in the Whitsunday Catholic parish in saying that we are extremely proud of what has been achieved on what was once a canefield on the edge of town. This project was funded jointly by the Commonwealth, the state government, Catholic Education and parents themselves.

Madam Speaker, in Catholic education there is an old saying that I am sure you are familiar with: not there to be different but to make a difference. I have no doubt that St Catherine's Catholic College, through its strong commitment to education and pastoral care—

Mr Johnson: They do a good job.

Mr COSTIGAN: They do do a good job; I take that interjection from the member for Gregory, who would know—which comes naturally with a Catholic education, will make a difference in churning out our citizens of tomorrow. Geographically, I believe St Catherine's will become a true regional school, catering for students from Bowen to Bloomsbury, Hamilton Island to Hamilton Plains. Secondary students arrive at the senior campus in 2013, complementing primary students in years 5 to 7 who are at the campus right now.

From my perspective, one of the highlights of the opening was meeting Sister Josephine, who was visiting from Townsville to be part of this historic and special occasion, not just for the Catholic education sector but indeed for the Whitsundays community. In my address, I acknowledged the wonderful contribution of that pioneering order of nuns, the Sisters of Mercy. In 1925 the Sisters of Mercy established St Catherine's. Decades later they helped to keep a certain future MP from the north on the straight and narrow during his formative years.

In closing, I warmly congratulate everyone who worked together to get this new school constructed. I know the school will instil a set of values and principles in its students, thus standing them in good stead for their journey through life.