

Re: My Message to the Marian College Parent Meeting on Wednesday 10 August 2011

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ

I write in solidarity and to acknowledge the grief each one of you is undergoing as you come to terms with the current loss of the ability to educate the Marian College students on my North Parade site. I too am sad that this property, with its recent splendid improvements, is out of use.

At this point, on the advice of geotechnical engineering experts, I am not in a position to provide you with safe buildings on my North Parade site. Happily, however, I am in a position to offer Marian College students a continuing Catholic education on my Catholic Cathedral College site.

I acknowledge the generous support of the Catholic Cathedral College Board of Trustees for its unanimous "yes" to my request for it to welcome and accommodate Marian College from next year, 2012.

I want both of these well-established Catholic secondary Colleges to retain and grow their separate school cultures and identities. It is also my hope that senior class timetables and facilities will be shared by both Colleges if this is desired by the Boards of Trustees of these two Catholic colleges in Christchurch city.

As members of a Catholic college community, we know we are a pilgrim people. St Mary of the Cross MacKillop exemplified life as a pilgrim; knowing pain and heartache throughout her life's journey. We can be educated and encouraged by St Mary MacKillop who always encouraged her Sisters "to have faith in God's presence in every circumstance". These words of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop concisely sum up God's call to each one of us to have faith in God's support and presence in these post-earthquake days.

May we never fail to thank God for the blessings of the abundant life we have come to us in Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Yours sincerely,

**+ Barry Jones
Bishop of Christchurch**