**Official Opening & Blessing of a School Building**

**Name of New Building:**

**School Name:**

**Date of Opening, Time of Opening:**

**Welcome**

*A designated person (e.g. the Principal / School Board Member / Staff Member) gives a brief general welcome announces any WHS issues.*

**Name of speaker:**

**Speaker’s Position:**

*A Welcome to Country follows, if given by an Aboriginal Elder, or a brief Acknowledgement of Country by the Master of Ceremonies*

**Name of speaker:**

**Speaker’s Position:**

**Welcome and Invitation to the Blessing**

*The Principal or another school representative should give this address.*

**Name of Speaker:**

Archbishop O’Regan, we welcome you warmly, together with N. (the Government Official who is present), Dr Neil McGoran, Director of Catholic Education South Australia and other distinguished guests. *(Please add/amend the names and positions of any dignitaries attending who are not mentioned)*

As a community of faith we benefit by the completion of this facility, which will be a centre for our college and for the wider community. Today, as we give thanks, we ask God’s blessing on this facility of seeking, learning and teaching what is true.

We ask that those entrusted with the education of our young may always teach their students to join the discoveries of human wisdom with the truth of the Gospel so that they will be able to keep the faith and live up to it in their lives.

*Those present are invited to join in a Gathering Song or Hymn.*

**Name of song / hymn:**

**Composer:**

**MC / Commentator:** I now invite Archbishop Patrick O’Regan to begin our Blessing Ceremony.

**Introductory Rites**

**Sign of the Cross**

Archbishop: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

**All:** Amen.

Archbishop: Peace be with you

**All:** And with your spirit

**Opening Prayer**

Archbishop: Let us pray.

 Almighty and gracious God,

 you sent your Son, Jesus,

 to live among us as Teacher and Guide

 in your ways of love.

 Grant that all who enter \*these buildings

 seeking instruction and right moral guidance

 will truly hear the words of your Son

 and attend to the inner instruction of the Holy Spirit.

 We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

**All**: Amen

*\* You may wish to replace the words ’these buildings’ with the name of your building or the type of space being blessed eg. Library, Science Lab etc.*

*The readers come forward to the Lectern*

**Reading of the Word of God**

*If a Gospel reading is chosen, then the parish priest might be invited to proclaim it. If there is not priest or deacon present, then it could be read by another person.*

**Scripture Reading selected:**

**Name of Reader:**

***Example***

Reading Selected: 1 Corinthians 3:9-13, 16-17

A reading from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians.

For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done.

Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.

The Word of the Lord

**All**: Thanks be to God

**Other suitable Readings include:**

Proverbs 1: 1-7

Wisdom 7: 7 - 20

Wisdom 9: 1-6, 10 – 18

Ephesians 4: 11- 24

Matthew 5: 1b – 2, 13-16

Matthew 11: 25 – 30

**Homily**

**Archbishop O’Regan**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Archbishop: Lord God, you are the font of all wisdom and source of all truth.

[or Parish Priest]: Grant us your blessing, so that we may come to know you in all that we do.

Reader (Staff): We ask for our Lord’s blessing on Archbishop Patrick O’Regan, N. [parish priest] and on all Church leaders, that they may continue to guide us with wisdom and love.

 For this we pray.

**All:** Lord, give us the Spirit of wisdom.

Reader (Parent): We pray for the students of [School Name].

 May they always follow the way of Christ and learn to reach out to others, giving generously of their time and friendship.

 For this we pray.

**All:**  Lord, give us the Spirit of wisdom.

Reader (Student): We pray for all staff members of [School Name].

 May they be spirit-filled leaders who work together and share their gifts for the good of everyone at this school / college.

 For this we pray.

**All:** Lord, give us the Spirit of wisdom.

Reader (Staff): We pray for the parents of [School Name]. May they continue to guide and support the staff as they deepen their own faith and the faith of our students.

 For this we pray.

**All:** Lord, give us the Spirit of wisdom.

Reader (Parent): We pray for the friends and benefactors of [School Name].

 May they always work together with the parents and staff of the school / college to make God’s Kingdom more visible in our world.

 For this we pray.

**All:** Lord, give us the Spirit of wisdom

Reader (Student): We pray for the strength and courage to welcome the changes that life imposes, and to trust completely in God. Through our faith my we bring peace and comfort to those we meet.

 For this we pray.

**All:** Lord, give us the Spirit of wisdom.

Archbishop: God of wisdom and love,

 you understand our every need even before we ask.

 Show us your goodness in answer to these prayers, so that the benefits of this new facility may be reflected in lives of goodness and truth.

And now together we pray the words your Son taught us:

**All**: Our Father,

 who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,

 thy kingdom come, thy will be done

 on earth as it is in heaven.

 Give us this day our daily bread

 and forgive us our trespasses

 as we forgive those who trespass against us.

 And lead us not into temptation,

 but deliver us from evil.

 Amen

**Prayer of Blessing**

*The crucifixes and any other religious symbols to be blessed are brought forward.*

Archbishop: Lord God,

 in your kindness hear the prayers of this school and wider communities. We dedicate the [Name of Building / Project *– as appropriate*] and we bless and open it today for the education and well-being of the present and future students of [School Name], as they growth in faith, hope, love and learning.

 May it be a place where students and teachers will search for the wisdom that guides the Christian life and strive wholeheartedly to stand by Christ as their teacher.

 Bless these crucifixes + and may all connected to this college find hope and purpose in these symbols of the life, death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ,

 who lives and reigns with you,

 for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

**Sprinkling of building with Holy Water**

*While this is taking place a group of students could sing an appropriate song/hymn.*

***Name of Song / Hymn****:*

***Composer****:*

*If there are many spaces / levels which require blessing with Holy Water it may be opportune to have students perform more than one song or perform a short dance to fill the time.*

*When the Archbishop returns from sprinkling the building, he gives the Solemn Blessing.*

**Solemn Blessing**

Archbishop: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Archbishop: Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All: Now and forever.

Archbishop: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: Who made heaven and earth.

Archbishop: May the all-knowing God, who is Lord,

 show you the way.

All: Amen

Archbishop: May Christ, eternal Wisdom,

 Teach you the words of truth.

All: Amen

Archbishop: May the Holy Spirit, the blessed light,

 Always enlighten our minds,

 So that we may learn what is right

 And good and in our actions carry out

 What we have learned.

All: Amen

Archbishop: And may the blessing of almighty God,

 the Father, ✠ and the Son, ✠ and the Holy ✠ Spirit

 come upon you and remain with you forever.

All: Amen

**Final Hymn**

*A final hymn may be sung to signal the end of the Blessing (liturgical celebration).*

**Name of Song / Hymn**:

**Composer**:

**Official Opening and Speeches**

*The Principal (or Delegate) will MC the speeches.*

**Name of MC:**

**National Anthem**

*All are invited to listen respectfully while the School Choir sings the National Anthem.*

**Address 1 & Unveiling of the plaque – Government Representative**

**Name of Government Representative:**

**Address 2 – Chair, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools *or* Director, Catholic Education South Australia**

**Name of Speaker:**

**Speaker’s Position:**

**Concluding Remarks / Thanks and Farewell**

*The Principal (or Delegate) briefly thanks the Archbishop, special guests, staff, parents and students. If there are to be refreshments, an invitation is given at this point.*

**Official Party Departs**

*The Official Party departs to tour the new facilities and everyone else moves to where refreshments are being served.*