**Blessing of a new School Building**

**Welcome**

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

*A brief Welcome to Country follows (given either by an Aboriginal Elder or by the Principal)*

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

*While this is being sung the Entrance Procession takes place.*

**Entrance Procession**

*This may consist of the Bishop, the parish priest, students with Cross and candles, someone carrying the Book of the Word of God, any other suitable symbols (e.g. School banner)*

**Introductory Rites**

**Sign of the Cross**

Bishop: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit
**All: Amen**

Bishop: Peace be with you
**All: And with your spirit.**

**Welcome and Invitation to the Blessing**

Principal Bishop N., we welcome you warmly, together with N. (the

(or delegate) politician(or who is present), N., Director of Catholic Education South Australia and other distinguished guests.

 All learning must have as its final purpose to bring us to a knowledge of the truth and to the worship of the one true God. Today we ask God’s blessing on this centre of seeking, learning and teaching what is true. 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.

 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.

 We pray too that the students will find in their teachers the image of Christ so that, enriched with both human and divine learning, they will in turn be ready and able to enlighten and assist others throughout life.

**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.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew:

Jesus went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Homily: Bishop N.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Bishop: Gracious and loving God,
 you are the font of all wisdom and source of all truth.

 We call on your blessing so that we may come to know and

 follow in our lives all that is true and right.

Reader (Student): We pray for Pope Francis and 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 (Student): We pray for the students of [School Name].

 May they always follow the way of Christ and, reaching out to

 others, give generously of their time and friendship.

 For this we pray.

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

Reader (Teacher): 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 (Teacher): 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 (Parent): 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.**

Bishop: 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 will be reflected

 in lives of goodness and truth.

 We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

**Prayer of Blessing**

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

Bishop: Lord God,

 in your kindness hear the prayers of this school community.

 We dedicate this building [*classrooms/facility/centre – as*

 *appropriate]* to the education and well-being of the present and

 future students of [School Name}, and to their

 growth in faith, hope and love.

 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*.

**Concluding Rite**

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

 - Unveiling of the plaque – Government Representative
 - Response from Director of Catholic Education

 - Final words from the Archbishop / Bishop

**Thanks and Farewell**

*The Principal (or Delegate) briefly thanks the Bishop, special guests, staff, parents and students.*

*If there are to be refreshments, an invitation is given at this point.*

*The MC invites everyone to stand for the Final Blessing*

**Solemn Blessing**

Bishop: May the all-knowing God, who is Lord, show you the way.

**All: Amen.**

Bishop: May Christ, eternal Wisdom, teach you the words of truth.

**All: Amen.**

Bishop: May the Holy Spirit, the blessed light, always enlighten your minds, so that you may learn what is right and good in your

 actions and carry out what you have learned.

**All: Amen.**

Bishop: And may the blessing of almighty God

 the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit,

 come down upon you and remain with you for ever.

**All: Amen.**

**Final Hymn**

*A final hymn may be sung. It is good if it is one that everyone can join in singing.*

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