

## CHURCH AT PROSTON.

### BLESSED AND OPENED.

#### The Archbishop Performs Ceremony.

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Sunday last was a memorable day for the Catholics of Proston and district for on that day His Grace the Archbishop blessed and opened their new church, dedicated under the patronage of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour. Proston is a rapidly rising township 30 miles from Murgon, at the terminus of a branch railway line. It is the centre of a rich agricultural and dairy district, and possesses a handsome butter factory, which produces about 500 tons of butter every year.

The idea of erecting a Catholic church at Proston originated with the Rev. Father Costello, the first parish priest of Murgon. While Murgon was still in the Nanango parish, Mr. Beil of Proston had left to Father F. Masterson, parish priest of Nanango at the time, £69/2/2 in trust towards the cost of securing a suitable church site in Proston. This site Father Costello purchased for £114/11/-, and in paying for it the Beil estate was absorbed. Besides the residue required, namely, £45/8/10, Father Costello also raised, during his eight years' tenure of the Murgon parish, £385 towards the actual cost of the church building.

#### The New Church.

Soon after his arrival in Murgon, Father Cullen, who had been appointed to succeed Father Costello as parish priest, decided to proceed with the erection of the Proston church. Accordingly plans were prepared by Mr. Frank L. Cullen, architect, of Mackay, and the actual building erected by Mr. J. Krebs, builder and contractor, of Murgon, at a contract price of £660.

The new church, simply but attractively designed in timber throughout, is an excellent example of the small country church of its type. A front entrance porch gives access to a spacious nave, which has seating accommodation for approximately 150 worshippers. Divided from the nave by a semi-circular arch is the sanctuary, flanked by the sacristy on one side and by a room for the accommodation of the visiting priest on the other. Occupying as it does a commanding position overlooking the township, the new church is a worthy addition to Proston and to the many fine church buildings already erected in the Murgon parish.

#### Blessing the Opening.

The ceremonies associated with the blessing and opening of the new church began at 11 o'clock with the formal blessing of the building by the Archbishop. Mass was then celebrated by the Rev. Father Cahill, special music being provided by the choir from Kilkivan. After Mass the Rev. Father Cullen extended a cordial welcome to the Archbishop and to the other visitors, and then read a balance sheet, which disclosed an expenditure of £660 on the church building and £95 on the church furnishings. The Archbishop then

appealed for contributions towards the building fund, and as a result of this appeal £110 was realised.

In the course of his remarks the Rev. Father Cullen paid a tribute to the Rev. Father Costello, former parish priest of Murgon, who had raised £385 towards the cost of the building; to Mr. J. French, who had ably assisted Father Costello in all his organising work; to the Beil family, who had made the purchase of the church site possible by their generous contribution for this purpose; to Mr. W. Elliott, who had cut and donated the church stumps; to Mr. F.L. Cullen, who had designed the building,; and to Mr. J. Krebs, who had erected it and who was justifiably proud of his work.

#### **Future of Proston.**

After the religious celebration in the church, a further celebration in the form of a luncheon, provided by an energetic committee of ladies under the presidency of Mrs. J. French, took place in the church grounds. The Rev. Father Cullen presided, and amongst those seated at the principal table with him were His Grace the Archbishop, the Rev. Fathers Costello, Cahill, Troy and Frawley, Councillor E.J. Keys, Messrs. J.F. French, F.L. Cullen and J. Carey. A lengthy toast list was honoured.

The Rev. Father Cullen proposed the toast of "The Pope and the King." The toast of "The Hierarchy and Clergy" was entrusted to Mr. John Tiernan, of Murgon, who stressed the important part played by the clergy in the lives of the Catholic people. He spoke of the high regard in which the Archbishop was held, and he paid a tribute to Father Cullen, whom he had known since they were schoolmates together at the Christian Brothers' College at Gregory Terrace, Brisbane. The Archbishop, in reply, thanked Mr. Tiernan for the kind thoughts to which he had given expression. The Rev. Father Cahill also responded.

The next toast, "Proston and District," was proposed by His Grace the Archbishop, who spoke of the rapid rise of the town itself, the wonderful fertility of the soil in the district, the good roads, and the prospect of a greater future with the connecting of the Proston and Durong districts by a bridge over the Boyne. He stressed the importance of local geography.

Councillor E.J. Keys, in response, gave a very interesting resume of the history of the Proston district. Few, he said, were in a better position to do this, as he prided himself on the fact that he was one of the very first settlers. The remaining toast honoured was that of "The Visitors," proposed by Mr. Jas. Carey and responded to by the Rev. Fathers Costello and Troy.

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(This document was typed from a photocopy of the original newspaper article supplied by Catholic Archives, Brisbane)