

MacKillop Church first in Australia

A STRIKING new church under construction in Birkdale will be the first of its kind in more ways than one.

The Catholic Church on the corner of Birdwood and Hardy Roads, Birkdale, will be the first new church to be completed in Australia bearing the name of the nation's first saint, Mother Mary MacKillop, after her beatification by Pope John Paul II in Sydney this week.

And the dramatic building is believed to be one of the first churches in Queensland erected using industrial 'tilt-up' construction techniques, which has seen it arise out of the landscape virtually overnight.

Mary MacKillop Parish Priest, Father Luke Reed, who will attend the beatification ceremony in Sydney on Thursday, said the new church was providing tremendous inspiration to a flourishing parish community.

"Mary MacKillop Parish started just three years ago as an offshoot from the burgeoning St Anthony's Parish at Alexandra Hills, and has now almost fulfilled one of its first goals of building a church," Father Reed said.

"The growth in the parish has been such that the new church will provide much needed accommodation for our congregations at weekly masses," he said.

The church will ultimately seat 400 in the

main body of the building with a further 32 seats in the choir and Eucharistic Chapel. On special occasions the seating capacity is capable of being expanded by a further 308 to take the total to 740.

It is being built by Rohrig Constructions Pty Limited of Chandler at a cost of about \$880,000. It is due for completion in March for the official opening by Archbishop John Bathersby on Friday, March 31.

Father Reed endorsed the comments of the principal architect for the project, Roger Heathwood who said the new church was designed to be, like Mother Mary MacKillop, strong, down-to-earth, honest and unpretentious, open and hospitable.

Mr Heathwood said the prominent raking parapets of the church seen against the Queensland sky would be a strong symbol of the church in the community.

He said the ribbed or corrugated effect on the external walls was designed to be reminiscent of the corrugated iron buildings and sheds which dotted the surrounding farmlands in previous years.

"We wanted to carry forward some of that pioneering flavour into the present day, again in keeping with the pioneering spirit of Mary MacKillop herself," Mr Heathwood said.

"The natural concrete of the walls will



FATHER Luke Reed and Ron Pokarier admire the work being done on the Mary MacKillop Catholic church currently under construction at Birkdale.

provide a strong and pleasing contrast with the carpet and polished timber finishes in the interior of the building," he said.

Mr Heathwood said there would also be extensive use of natural light entering the church from windows and skylights to create a soft but bright atmosphere within the building.

Shire dog rego survey

REDLAND Shire Council officers will be conducting a major dog registration survey next month.

The survey will cover every household on the mainland and the islands.

Animal Control Supervisor Peter Lumsdale said the purpose of the survey was to update Council records, to identify and obtain new registrations and to catch up with overdue registrations.

According to Animal Control officer Brian Junor, there are several thousand unregistered dogs in the Redlands.

"Our survey officers will be authorised to take money for new registrations and to issue fines to people who fail to renew registrations," he said.

A \$50 on-the-spot fine will be issued to people who fail to comply with a request to register their dog or knowingly fail to register their dog.

Registration fees are \$50 a dog or \$17 for a desexed dog.

"The survey is not an easy job. Our officers are often threatened, abused and even attacked by some dogs," Mr Junor said.

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