



*ENTERING the front doors of the new Mary Mackillop church for the dedication ceremony are Parish Priest Father Luke Reed and Archbishop Bathersby.*

## Mary Mackillop Church dedicated

Hundreds of worshippers converged on the Mary Mackillop Catholic church at Birkdale for the ritual dedication on Friday night by Archbishop John Bathersby.

The ceremony began with a procession to the new church from Wellington Point State High School where weekend masses have been held for parishioners during the past three years.

Representatives of the architects Heathwood, Cardillo Wilson Pty Ltd and the builder Rohrig Constructions Pty Ltd officially handed over the plans and keys of the church to Archbishop Bathersby before he carried out the dedication.

The new church is the first to be com-

pleted in Australia bearing the name of the nation's first saint, Mother Mary Mackillop, since her beatification by Pope John Paul II during his visit to Sydney in January.

A large crowd of 700-800 people, including Redland Mayor Eddie Santagiuliana, local members of Federal and State Parliaments Con Sciacca and Darryl Briskey and other local dignitaries were present to witness the dedication.

With a total floor area of just over 1000 square metres, the church will accommodate about 400 worshippers but can be expanded to over 700 for special occasions. It has taken about six months to construct at an overall project cost of \$880,000.

Archbishop Bathersby praised the new

parish of Mary Mackillop for what had been achieved during the relatively short time since its establishment.

Mary Mackillop Parish Priest, Father Luke Reed, said the entire parish was thrilled with the magnificence of the new church which marked a huge milestone for the parish community.

The new church provides a superb setting for all occasions with its bright and airy interior focussed on the altar space decorated with a natural timber cross bearing a gold spiral ring at its centre.

To the right of the altar is the baptistry, featuring a sunken wading pool with steps at either end and an alcove housing the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary.