

The Brisbane Courier (Qld. : 1864-1933), Monday 4 November
1929, page 18

MORAL FIBRE.

STRENGTHENING NEEDED.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ESSENTIAL.

That the people must be on guard to prevent the sapping of the moral fibre of the nation was stressed by Dr. Duhig (Archbishop of Brisbane) when opening the new St. Carthage's church and school at Gordon Park yesterday afternoon. His Grace maintained that the bulwark of the country should be Christian education as events were happening to-day similar to those in the period preceeding the decline of the Roman Empire.

Nations, continued the Archbishop, needed strengthening not in their armies and navies, but in their moral fibres. If Australia ever fell it would not be through any weakness of defence on land or sea but through the sapping of its moral fibre. Christian education should be the mainstay of the Empire. If the children got out of touch with God the future of the country was in danger. Catholics were working for such Christian education. While parliaments made laws, crime was punished and there were rules and regulations without end, there was no single Parliament in Australia that recognised the necessity of permeating the life of the country with the principles of Christianity. Apart from the work of the church nothing was being attempted to strengthen the moral fibre of the people. If matters continued as at present there would be an increase of crime here as had been experienced in America. There was now an outcry in America against the continuance of Godlessness in that country and there must be a similar outcry in Australia if the country was to be saved. No matter what happened Catholics were determined that their children should have Christian education. Thus the children would be taught the fundamentals of Christian life and help to bring citizenship into line with the aims of Almighty God to be not only the strength of the Church, but the great strength of the national life of the country. That was the reason why Catholics built schools and the reason why they would continue to do so.

St. Carthage's which constitutes the foundation of the new parish of Gordon Park is a handsome brick and concrete structure. An imposing double stairway leads up to the church hall which has accommodation for some 250 persons. Underneath is the school room with a capacity for about 200 scholars . Built by Concrete Construction Ltd. The architect was Mr. J. P. Donoghue. The building occupies a commanding site from which a fine view of the city and surrounding suburbs is obtained. The total cost of the building, land and presbytery was £4498 16 2 of which amount over £700 has already been raised. Services are now being held in the church but the school will not open until the beginning of next year. In officially declaring the building open Archbishop Duhig remarked upon the fine position it occupied and congratulated the people of Gordon Park on having secured such a handsome structure. It was only about six months before that he and Father E. A. Stannaway had selected the site. And now the hill has been transformed. His Grace commented on the enthusiasm which prevailed in Catholic communities. When coming to St. Carthage's that morning he said he has seen people flocking to all the Catholic churches en route. And when he arrived at Gordon Park Church he found it full and delivered Holy Communion to 80 persons. If not the largest St. Carthage's was one of the most beautiful church-schools in Brisbane. The Archbishop commented that during the present year there had been many centres established around Brisbane . He recalled that when he came to Brisbane as Coadjutor Archbishop in 1912, there were eight parishes here and now there were almost 50 within the Greater Brisbane area. His Grace said that he had been the subject of much criticism for establishing so many churches and schools, but in every instance their creation had been justified. It was delightful to see so many children present at the ceremony and to think they would be pupils at the new school. These institutions were rendering a service to the nation. If he had millions at his command he would build such schools so that the life of the country would become permeated with Christian principles.

The Archbishop was welcomed to the church-school by the new priest of the parish (Father J McCarthy) supported by Father E. A. Stannaway and Messrs H. H. Martin and Gilshenan.

[Acknowledgement: This article was made available by Mrs. Kath Kelly, a long time resident of Gordon Park and a mother of three children who attended the St. Carthage's school]