

In 1875, the Josephite Sisters opened a school at Monkland. This only operated for a few years and was accidentally burnt down. A Lay school then operated for a few years under the direction of Mr Johnny Bohan.

The first group of Sisters of Mercy arrived in Gympie by coach from Maryborough on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1879. They had travelled from Brisbane to Maryborough by boat. The presence of the Sisters of Mercy was due to some personal requests by the Parish Priest, Father Matthew Horan. Fr. Horan expressed his desire to develop a good Catholic school for his people.

On arrival in Gympie, the Sisters of Mercy conducted school in the home of Pat Lillis and they later opened a one-storey wooden school with an attendance of 173 girls and 101 boys on the site of the present Primary School Administration building. Monkland had a population of 10000 at the time and in 1897 the Gympie population grew to 30000 with the interest in gold mining.

Numbers soared to 600 in 1897 and this created the need for a new school. This was completed in 1899 when the present two-storey building was built for approximately 2000 Pounds (\$4000).

The Christian Brothers arrived in 1904 and both orders operated separate schools from Grade 5 onwards. Students in Years 1 – 4 were educated at the current Primary School site, in the current Administration building. After Year 4, boys attended school run by the Christian Brothers in the current College buildings and girls attended school run by the Sisters of Mercy in the current Primary Hall building.

In 1982 both boys and girls schools amalgamated with the formation of St Patrick's College, Years 8-12 and St Patrick's Primary, Years 1-7.

Our school history is richly blessed by the dedication and hard work of the Sisters of St Joseph, the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers.

St Patrick's Primary School proudly remains a Catholic School. This means that our school supports the teachings and ethos of the Catholic Church and is based on the values of the Catholic Faith. Our school has a rich heritage and is built on the strong faith foundations passed on through the Sisters of St Joseph, the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers. Building on this heritage, we aim to prepare the students in our care for their future by assisting them to know God and to nurture their relationship with God.

St Patrick's Primary School partners with parents and the community to develop Christian Character and individual excellence. We strive to be a Christian community, in the Catholic tradition, living out the values of the Gospels with Jesus as our model. In our school, opportunities are provided for children to develop their faith through Religion lessons, celebrations, prayer and liturgies. Students are also given the opportunity to celebrate their faith as part of the St Patrick's Parish Community.