On Friday May 22 we celebrated our first O’Loughlin Catholic College Pentecost Mass. Our chief celebrant was Fr. Daniel Benedetti from the Missionaries of God’s Love (MGL) who reminded us that Pentecost marks the birthday of the Church. The English word “Pentecost” comes from the Greek word pentekostos, which means “fifty.” The Great Feast of Pentecost occurs exactly 50 days after Jesus’ Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Pentecost marks the day the church was born when God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Disciples.

Fr. Dan was assisted by Br. Luke van der Mark (MGL) and Lex Salas from Year 8. Larrakia student Kaytlyn O’Neil welcomed us to Country. Ally Gilmore and Kimberley Tchemjiri from Year 9, and David Suradi-Lawton and Michael Mullany from Year 8 assisted with the offertory procession. Ally brought forward an icon of the Madonna and child to be placed at the foot of the altar; one of the many titles for Our Lady titles is: Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Kimberley brought forward some artwork created in Larrakia style by one of our students, reminding us that we live and learn on Larrakia soil, but also that God’s Holy Creator Spirit was here long before we were. David and Michael brought forward the traditional gifts of the bread and the wine to be used in the Eucharist.

College Leader Jacob Dickman and Julia Woods from Year 11 proclaimed the word of God for us, while Melvin Shaju, Kira Frazer and Kebbeh Dennis from Year 7 read the Prayers of The Faithful. In the homily, Fr. Dan’s focused upon the promise of Jesus from the day’s Gospel reading: “how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Fr. Dan shared about his own life and how he had been empowered by the Holy Spirit as an 18 year old after moving to Melbourne from country Victoria in order to study. He explained how, he had had a Pentecost style experience where he came to receive the Holy Spirit just like the Apostles did at Pentecost 2000 years ago. He encouraged us to ask God the Father for the promised Holy Spirit so that our lives too could be transformed and so that we could become fully what God has made us to be.

As usual our college choir led the singing in a professional and skillful fashion and many students participated in the singing. We look forward to another Pentecost Mass next year and we now prepare for our next college Mass in August to celebrate the Feast of Mary MacKillop.

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GENERAL NEWS