

Church of the Pioneers

First Catholic Church in Lake Macquarie, a wooden church structure, opened in Cooranbong on 25 November 1861 doubling as a Non-vested School for 17 years till Cooranbong Public School opened. This original Church has since been replaced in 1906 with the current brick structure.

Celebrating 150 years of Catholic presence in Cooranbong ~ Morisset embraces our communities:

- Australia's First Saint, Mary MacKillop, and sisters provide education to the poor
- St John of God Brothers developing young people's life skills
- St Joseph Sisters of Lochinvar who provided education at the Parish School, soon to celebrate 50 years
- St Vincent de Paul assisting the less fortunate in the community
- Mercy Sisters offering support to local Aboriginal communities
- Community for a Better World offering Faith and Spiritual development

On 26-27 November 2011 an estimated 350 people celebrated the milestone enjoyed by all ages ranging from 1 year old to 100 years old. Some families had four generations represented.

After a week of consistent rain, the planned St John Vianney Primary School games day was cancelled. On Saturday night commencing at 6.00pm, after a Liturgy of the Word, a family dinner with over 100 in attendance was held on the grounds at St Patrick and St Brigid Church Cooranbong. Mass on Sunday morning at 9.30am was Concelebrated by Bishop William Wright and Fr Clive Magill with at least 250 in attendance. In a Church that holds a congregation of 90 on any other occasion, a large Marquee was erected on Friday prior, in anticipation of seating everyone in comfort and televising the Mass live to the participating crowds. Afterwards more activities began. Morning Tea, Mini Fete Stalls, Self-Guided Cemetery Tours, Major Raffles and free sausage sandwiches were offered to all the parishioners and guests.

The whole weekend was celebrated with such joy and happiness it will be written as our historical mark in time.



Picture 1 Parish Dinner held in Marquee



Picture 3 Bishop with Sr Pat & Aboriginal Community



Picture 2 Community Mass at Cooranbong



Picture 4 Mini Fete in Marquee where Mass was celebrated just half hour prior

Historical references of 150 years can be found in our "TIMELINE OF EVENTS" booklet for sale at \$30 plus postage available from Parish Office on 02 4973 6859. All proceeds go towards Parish expenses.