To the Principal, Staff, Students, Parents and School Community

St Benedict’s Catholic College, Oran Park

You would be very aware that the Parish of St Paul’s Camden is one of the largest in terms of population and the northern part of this parish has one of the fastest growing populations in Australia. The North West Committee, which I established early last year to advise me as to how to proceed in this area, has recommended the establishment of a new parish in the Oran Park/Leppington area, and suggested the new boundaries. I sought advice of the Council of Priests who supported this recommendation.

I would like to advise that from 22 June 2015 the new Parish of Oran Park will commence. This is the first new parish in the Diocese since the declaration of Rosemeadow in 1994. The new parish will include St Mary’s Leppington and St Justin’s Catholic Parish Primary School and St Benedict’s College.

The new parish will include Bringelly, Catherine Field, Gregory Hills, Harrington Park, Harrington Grove, Leppington, Oran Park and parts of Rossmore. New estates on the eastern side of Camden Valley Way will also be included. It is likely that a further two new parishes will be necessary in this area over the next ten to twenty years, as the population continues to expand.

Plans are underway to have new parish facilities in place by the end of the year at Oran Park, adjacent to St Justin’s School. In the interim, Sunday Mass will continue to be celebrated at St Mary’s Leppington and a Sunday Mass will also commence as soon as possible using the facilities at St Justin’s Catholic Primary School.

This is an exciting time, particularly as we welcome the many new Catholic families who have moved in and who will move into this growing area. I am most grateful under God’s grace for the quality learning and teaching and faith development your school is achieving in the lives of your children. I take this opportunity to thank God for your commitment and support of this development. I also wish to acknowledge Fr Michael whose diligence and hard work has contributed to a positive platform for the future and to thank him for his dedicated pastoral care, and support of the Catholic Education Office and school communities at Oran Park.

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Fr David Catterall as the new Parish Priest. Fr David will take up his appointment on 22 June 2015. Fr David has been the Parish Priest at Albion Park for the past nine years. I know that you will welcome Fr David who will meet with you very early in his new appointment.

Let us continue to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we journey together, confident of the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Benedict and St Justin.

Yours in Christ

Most Rev Peter W Ingham DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG