

## St. Patrick's Church, Waimate

For some little time now the beautiful altar in St. Patrick's Catholic Church has been completed, and yesterday the altar and sanctuary appointments were solemnly blessed by Rev. Father McCarthy, Superior of the Marist Mission staff, in the presence of a very large congregation (says the *Waimate Times* for December 12).

Prior to the blessing ceremony Rev. Father Peoples said that as their Bishop had found it impossible to be present, Father McCarthy had consented to come to dedicate their altar. He asked those present to enter with him into the spirit of the ceremony of dedicating their beautiful altar, which would be a monument to their zeal in God's service.

tried to teach that nothing was too good for God and that was the spirit that animated the Catholic Church. He traced the growth of the beautiful temples erected by the Christians, each one outdoing the one before in the matter of beauty and glory. The one art that was pre-eminently the art of the Catholic Church was architecture. It was Cardinal Newman who said that the glory of the great Gothic architecture of the world belonged to the Catholic Church. The speaker mentioned St. Peter's of Rome as being the most glorious structure ever designed to the uses of religion. From speaking of the many beautiful temples of God of other lands, Father McCarthy mentioned the beauties of the churches in our own land. He referred to St. Joseph's and said it was due to the lively faith that had animated the priests of other days that this beautiful temple of God had been erected. He mentioned the names of Dean Regnault and Father Aubry also. Coming



Interior View of St. Patrick's Church, Waimate

Father McCarthy devoted his address to "The Church and the Fine Arts." He took as his text the words, "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy House and the place thy glory dwelleth."

The uplifting of human society down through the ages (he said) and the high pitch of civilisation we had reached were due to the ennobling influences of the arts. All that was best in music, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture could be traced to the Catholic Church. She was the mother of all the arts. She was their soul and inspiration, their very existence was due to her. The greatest painters, the greatest composers came from her bosom. And so with architecture. It was the Catholic Church that collected the scattered arts of Greece and Rome, using them to refine and instruct her people. She demonstrated the difference in pagan and Christian art. The Christian artists spoke to them of a living God, of an ideal womanhood, and of a God-man with a human heart. It was the ideal of the Christian artist to teach the people the sublime truths of the Holy Catholic faith. It was said of that great artist, Fra Angelico, that he never took his brush in his hand unless he had first prepared his soul by Holy Communion with God. The Christian artist, at all times,

then to speak of the reason for his presence that morning, the dedication of their most beautiful sanctuary, he said it was a matter of special joy for him to have come as representative of the Bishop of Christchurch, who was unavoidably detained in Christchurch, and who otherwise would have been here himself to sanctify the altar. The Bishop had said to him (Father McCarthy) "Go with my congratulations to them. Tell them that I shall be with them in spirit."

Father McCarthy concluded by saying that the beautiful sanctuary which had been placed in this church by the generosity and sacrifice of God's people was unparalleled in any district of the same size as Waimate in New Zealand or Australia, and he hoped that they would still go further in the matter of beautifying their church.

The first impression one has as he looks at the altar is its complete harmony with the remainder of the Roman architecture of the church. It gives a spirit of restfulness to the eye; there is nothing that clashes, and the whole altar suggests delicate tracery rather than something made of heavy blocks of marble from Italy and Australia, of greenstone from New Zealand, of tortoise stone from America. The beautiful dome weighs over two tons, but so