



**MOVING MISSION:** The church on Govett Ave was shifted to its new home at Sacred Heart Girls' College early yesterday morning.

Photo: NIC GIBSON

## Church of many faiths moves to greener pastures at girls' college

By SHARON MARRIS

SACRED HEART Girls' College students will have noticed a new building on the school grounds this morning.

The church was moved from Govett Ave to the school at 6.30am yesterday, in a 1½ hour journey across town.

Principal Diane Kawana said the church was bought by the family of Mary Phelan, a teacher at the school for 19 years before she died on May 19 this year.

"It will be known as Mary's Chapel for both Mary Phelan and Mary, the mother of God," she said.

The church had an interesting history, she said, having previously been a Presbyterian church and, before that, a Methodist church.

The proximity of the church was what set it apart.

"It was handy," said Mrs Kawana.

"Mary had looked at other ones and they were all too far away.

"When she saw this one we thought it was a good idea so we went about getting it."

Mrs Kawana said the school was unsure whether it could afford the building, but was saved when Mrs Phelan's family offered to buy it as a memorial to her.

Mrs Kawana said that having the church would make a big difference to the school.

"It will be wonderful," she said.

"It will be used for religious and quiet reflection and prayer, and the back room can be used for liturgies and retreats."

For the traditional leaving gift to the school by the senior class, a stained glass window has been commissioned for the building.

She was unsure when the church would be ready for use but said when it was it would be formally blessed by Bishop Peter Cullinane, of the Palmerston North Diocese.