

School News from the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario

**Schools: Our Lady of Good Counsel,
St. George's Catholic School**

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Celebrating 50 Years at Our Lady of Good Counsel and St. George's Catholic Schools

Long Sault, ON, Ingleside, ON – It was fifty years ago that two Catholic schools opened in the newly formed communities of Ingleside and Long Sault. The two towns, created during the building of the Seaway, were populated by many of the former residents of the “Lost Villages” that were swept away by the flooding. A small but determined group led by Father M. J. O'Brien had the dream of building Catholic schools for their children.

Fifty years later, that dream is now part of a rich history of Catholic education along the banks of the St. Lawrence Seaway. On Monday, June 23, 2008 hundreds of students, staff, parents, Trustees, and Senior Administration hosted past principals, teachers and past students as the occasion was marked with a day filled with festivities.

The celebration began with Mass at Our Lady of Grace Parish in Ingleside, presided over by Parish Priest and Chaplain for both schools, Fr. Louis Groetelaars. Following Mass, Board Chair, Ronald Eamer, congratulated the schools on the milestone. “This truly is a special occasion. It’s not only an anniversary, but a celebration of the determination of a community in seeking quality Catholic education for their children. We can see that same determination in the faces of our students; they are the legacy of Catholic education and will bring us through the next 50 years.”

The Catholic School Council from Our Lady of Good Counsel hosted an Anniversary lunch, which celebrated the schools’ rich history and that of the region. Principal, Pat Dennison, told the group, “Over the years we have seen our schools grow and we have seen our students grow. Always unchanged though, is how we embrace our Catholic values and strive to help our communities grow and thrive together.”

The group was treated to a traditional pioneer dance as performed by Mme Marie Paquette-Rivard’s Grade 3 class, before being addressed by Member of Parliament for Stormont Dundas and South Glengarry Guy Luzon. “Thank you very much for inviting me to share in your celebrations. I offer you all my best wishes as you mark this anniversary.”

Mrs. Dennison recognized several people in attendance, including Eleanor MacAllister, who has had either children or grandchildren attending St. George's or Our Lady of Good Counsel since 1965. "It's amazing how these schools have become a part of my life. I mean it from the bottom of my heart when I call them family," said Mrs. MacAllister.

Mrs. Dennison recognized the significant contribution that past teachers and principals had made to the school, and thanked those in attendance for being a shining example of leadership. Several former principals from Our Lady of Good Counsel attended, including Catherine Konink (1974-84), Kathleen MacNaughton (1984-88), Tannis Girard (1988-94), Charlotte Rouleau (1996-98), and Shirley Myre (1998-2004). Former principals of St. George's Catholic School in attendance were Michael van de Kamp (1986-87), and Michael Bradley (1992-96).

Following the luncheon, the group traveled from Ingleside to Long Sault, where they were treated to a talent showcase at St. George's, hosted by retiring principal, Carole Legros. "It is a joy to see you all here today. It is truly special and wonderful to celebrate this anniversary and to share memories of our past with one another. I thank you all for coming."

Stormont/South Glengarry MPP, Jim Brownell, a former student of St. George's, was in attendance at the showcase. Mr. Brownell, a long-time resident of Long Sault shared memories with the students before delivering a special message, "On behalf of Minister of Education, Kathleen Wynne, I wish to congratulate St. George's and Our Lady of Good Counsel, on this significant milestone." Mr. Brownell was also the guide on a bus tour of the community where he pointed out the many landmarks of the Lost Villages and shared his deep understanding of local history and the Lost Villages with students.

The talent showcase featured a wide array of entertainment. A science fair presentation by, Grade 7 student, Jake Bloomfield; a song by Grade 7 students, Lydia MacGillivray, Kaitlyn Duval, Alyson Vandrish and Lindsey Lévasseur; music from the school's recorder club, a performance by the school choir; and step and clog dancing by Emily Stang, were enjoyed by the audience.

Throughout the day, it was emphasized how close the schools are, and how welcoming and inclusive they are. Director of Education, Bill Gartland, stated, "No matter which of these schools you're in, you feel completely welcome by the students and the staff. You get a very real sense of family amongst the students and that feeling is projected on all who visit. That sense of community is what makes our Catholic school system so very strong."

That sentiment was highlighted by Grade 7 student, Lydia MacGillivray, who presented her speech about her Grade 7 class. She spoke of how the group has been together since Junior Kindergarten and how close they have become. Speaking in French, Lydia said, "We really are a close-knit class. We have one more year together before we head to high school. I don't know what is going to happen then, but I do know that I will always be very close with my second family."

For more information, please contact CDSBEO Communications Officer Bob Perreault at 613-258-7757 or 1-800-443-4562 ext. 206 or 613-859-0678 (mobile).

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario operates 40 elementary and 10 secondary schools across 8 counties. The CDSBEO offers excellence in Catholic education through provincial-leading programs to approximately 15,000 students.

Attached Photos:

Anniversary 1 .jpg – The dancer, the speaker and the thinker: St. George’s Grade 6 student Emily Stang performed Step Dancing and a Clog Jig and Reel, Grade 7 student Lydia MacGillivray presented her speech “My Seventh Grade Class” and Grade 7 Student Jake Bloomfield presented his science fair presentation DNAwesome at the Talen Showcase marking the 50th Anniversary of St. George’s and Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Schools.



Anniversary 2 .jpg - Mme Marie Paquette-Rivard's Grade 3 class performs a traditional pilgrim dance at the Anniversary Luncheon to mark 50 years of Catholic education at St. George's and Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic schools.

