



Patron Saints of Schools

GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, COURTICE

Jesus said to the Pharisees: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away -- and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep".

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will not listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd".

"For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father".

Jesus speaks of his own vocation as one of vigilance, caring and closeness to his sheep. His shepherding goes beyond his immediate flock and embraces the whole world. His mission is to lay down his life for all, to bring the whole human family into unity and communion with God.

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

(THE CENTRAL SYMBOL OF ALL
THAT WE BELIEVE)

Two crude pieces of wood, one taller than any human being, driven into the ground so that it

might stand upright, and the other shorter beam nailed across it - such a simple structure carrying a most powerful message. For the people of Jesus' time, it signalled the execution of a criminal - a slow, tortuous, and humiliating death. For Christian people, however, this symbol of death has been transformed into the ultimate symbol of hope. Jesus was executed on a crude wooden cross. He died, and he rose from the dead. Jesus lives on. The cross proclaims, as no other symbol can, our belief that nothing can overcome the power of God. Life cannot present any trial or obstacle that our loving God cannot transform, even our own sinfulness, and death itself.

So it is that Christians, these many centuries later, look upon the cross as the central symbol of all that we believe. For Catholic Christians, the cross not only signifies the reality of Jesus' death and resurrection but, in a wondrous way, it actually makes visible to us the saving presence of God. When we look upon the cross, we not only remember an event, but the same power that raised Jesus from the dead comes to life in us. We are a redeemed people.

To name a school "Holy Cross", is to proclaim to the world that our young people share in the loving power of God. It holds out to our students, staff and community, the security and hope that comes with believing that in all things God will prevail. Trusting in the message of the cross, our young people can embrace with confidence and hope all of life's joys and challenges.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

In 1958, the Blessed Virgin appeared to St. Bernadette in Lourdes, France. Telling

Bernadette that she was called the Immaculate Conception, she directed Bernadette to dig a spring. The spring's healing powers have become world-famous. Millions of people from around the world come to this holy shrine believing in Mary's miraculous power.

Officially taught by Pope Pius IX after consultation with the world's bishops, the dogma on the Immaculate Conception was promulgated on December 8, 1854, the day that remains its liturgical feast. This dogma declares that Mary was free from original sin from the first instant of her existence.

Mary's yes to God brought Christ into the world. The school community of Immaculate Conception has always said yes to God by its collective worship, prayer, and Christian action.

MONSIGNOR LEO CLEARY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, COURTICE

Monsignor Leo Cleary was born in Hastings in November 28, 1898. His studies led him to teacher's college and theology in Toronto. Monsignor worked in a number of parishes throughout the Diocese of Peterborough. His zeal for putting faith into action was quite apparent wherever he lived. Perhaps Monsignor's spirit can be best summed up in the reflections made by one of his peers and also children in his last parish.

Fr. Leo Coughlin shared the following insights: Monsignor Leo Cleary was a true brother of the people. He was a man who exercised no judgement of others. He always welcomed others and asked the following question: How can I help?

Monsignor Leo Cleary took no offence from the wrong doing of others towards him. He noticed that someone was angry or sad and that he was always ready to forgive.

Monsignor Leo Cleary practised being grateful. He gave inspiration for the living of one's life.

Some students from Monsignor Leo Cleary School shared the following reflections:

It seems to me he was a nice man, loving and caring. When I think of Monsignor Cleary I think of a person who was devoted to helping others.

Monsignor Cleary loved children very much.

I feel happy about Monsignor Cleary because if he wasn't alive we wouldn't have this school.

Monsignor Leo Cleary's tenacity, his concern for the poor, his hopeful vision about the possibilities for the individual and the community, and his deep commitment to an active prayer life that made the sacraments real continue to guide the parents, students and staff of Monsignor Leo Cleary Catholic Elementary School in Courtice.

MONSIGNOR O'DONOGHUE CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

Clayton O'Donoghue was born February 19, 1918. A true native son, he was raised in East City, baptized at Immaculate Conception Church and educated at Immaculate Conception School and at St. Peter's High School.

His vocation to the priesthood was influenced by many factors including his family and the example of his long time parish priest, Monsignor O'Sullivan. Clayton O'Donoghue's ordination by Bishop Berry in St Peter's Cathedral on June 8, 1946 initiated a life of priestly service as a dedicated scholar and advocate of the Faith, as a committed educator and as a kindly shepherd in pastoral work.

Over the years, Monsignor O'Donoghue linked his own love of learning to a zealous dedication to the growth of Catholic education in the Diocese. Children at St. John's Elementary School, at St. Martin's, at St. Joseph's, and at St. Patrick's all remember well the kindly, gentle man who visited frequently and who worked tirelessly, planning school liturgies and participating in class preparation for reception of the sacraments.

Plans to replace the old building occupied by St. Joseph's and St. Patrick's culminated in the opening of a new St. Patrick's School in March 1991. Those now at the school think of Monsignor as the builder not only of the structure but of the faith community within.

Monsignor's support of Catholic Secondary education at St. Peter's High School had been unstinting. In the early seventies, the financial position of the school was in crisis. Monsignor O'Donoghue's forthright challenge to the people of the Diocese brought a sincere response in fundraising activities.

Monsignor O'Donoghue's unflagging faith and energy have been translated into many good works in the parishes he served. He was loved by all as a caring, sensitive leader. His gentleness and understanding and his sense of humour have helped many in a world which sometimes seems cold and demanding. Families and individuals alike speak thankfully of his help in times of crisis. Parish organizations such as the Catholic Women's League and the Parent Teacher Association were grateful of his affirmation. The people of the Church were appreciative of his service.

MOTHER TERESA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, COURTICE

Internationally respected for her work to relieve the sufferings of the poor and dying, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, b. Aug. 27, 1910,

was awarded the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. An Albanian originally named Agnes Gonxha Bejaxhiu, she entered the order of the Sisters of Our Lady of Loretto at the age of 18. She taught in the order's school in Calcutta until 1945, when she experienced what she described as a "call within a call" to aid the desperately poor of India in a way that required she leave her convent. She received permission from Rome to do this and began her work by bringing dying persons from the streets into a home where they could die in peace and dignity. She also established an orphanage. Gradually other women joined her, and in 1950 she received official approval for a congregation of sisters, the Missionaries of Charity, whose members are dedicated to serving the poorest of the poor. The community at present includes about 3,000 sisters of various nationalities who work on five continents. In April 1990 she sent a letter of resignation to Pope John Paul II, saying that her health no longer allowed her to continue. She had had a heart attack in September 1989, and was no longer able to visit the order's homes, located in 87 countries. Mother Teresa died in the summer of 1997.

The students and staff of Mother Teresa School in Courtice have a wonderful example to follow as they engage in charitable works and outreach projects to those less fortunate in their own community.

NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, COBOURG

Over the centuries, Catholic Christians have given the title, "Our Lady" or in french, "Notre Dame" to Mary, the mother of Jesus. It honours the pre-eminent place Mary has among all disciples of Christ.

As a young Jewish woman, betrothed but not yet married to Joseph, Mary was chosen by

God to bear the Christ child, and lovingly raise him to maturity. From the moment she said "Yes" to God's call to be the mother of Jesus, Mary put her life to the service of God. Though the Gospels provide few details about Mary, they do bear rich witness to the impact she had on the people of her time. The message is clear, Mary was a woman of tremendous faith. She trusted God and courageously accepted all that was asked of her. For the people of her time, and for all succeeding generations, Mary models what is to be a faith-filled person, and a devoted disciple of Jesus.

So it is, in the history of naming great Catholic institutions, "Notre Dame" has found an honoured place. The students, and families and staff of "Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School" in Cobourg, bear the privilege and responsibility of carrying on this worthy tradition. With Mary as their model and inspiration, this community will enter the third Christian millennium brimming with desire and determination to be faithful followers of Jesus. Named in the Year of the Great Jubilee, they will "make a joyful noise to the Lord!" (Psalm 100:1), and work always to bring about the reign of God on earth.

St. Mary, Notre Dame, pray for us.

POPE JOHN PAUL II ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LINDSAY

John Paul II, b. May 18, 1920, was elected pope on October 16, 1978, succeeding John Paul I. His name was Karol Josef Wojtla. John Paul II is the first Polish pope and the first non-italian pope since the 16th century. During his pontificate he has travelled more extensively than any of his predecessors, preaching to millions of people on six continents and in more than 50 nations.

The son of a Polish army officer, Karol Wojtyla was born in Wadowice, Poland. He attended an underground seminary during the World War II German occupation and was ordained a priest in 1946. After studying in Rome and at the University of Krakow, he was appointed (1956) professor of ethics at the University of Lublin where he published the first of many articles and books on philosophical and theological themes. Consecrated bishop in 1958, he served first as auxiliary bishop of Krakow and in 1964 became archbishop of Krakow. He was made a cardinal in 1967.

John Paul II's pontificate has revealed his vigorous commitment to justice and peace. He has consistently encouraged nations to construct a social order that fosters human dignity. He has criticized the injustices of both Communism and capitalism.

John Paul II has been an active and forceful pontiff whose public exposure has made him a spiritual leader throughout the world. He has survived two assassination attempts; one in St. Peter's Square in 1981 in which he was seriously wounded, and another without injury, in Portugal in 1982.

John Paul II School in Lindsay continues to heed the words of our present pope as all partners in our Catholic community strive to be witnesses for justice and peace on a daily basis.

ST. ALPHONSUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

St. Alphonsus Liguori, the patron saint of this school, was born in Italy in 1696. He was the founder and superior of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Known as The Redemptorists), a talented lawyer and theologian, he became a missionary to the poor. He was also a painter, musician and

architect. At the age of 66 he became bishop of a rural diocese in southern Italy.

St. Alphonsus is known especially for his preaching of Christ's redeeming and abundant love. Though a tireless preacher, he wrote more than 111 books and treatises of moral and spiritual theology, where he emphasized compassion and concern for the common people. Pope Pius IX proclaimed him Doctor of the universal Church for his moral teaching and Pope Pius XI proclaimed him the patron saint of confessors and moral theologians.

Not less remarkable than the intensity with which Alphonsus worked is the amount of work he did. His perseverance was indomitable. He both made and kept a vow not to lose a single moment of time. He was helped in this by his turn of mind which was extremely practical.

His intercession healed the sick; he read the secrets of hearts, and foretold the future.

Finally, St. Alphonsus was a wonderful letter-writer, and the mere salvage of his correspondence amounts to 1,451 letters, filling three large volumes.

The eighteenth century was not an age remarkable for depth of spiritual life, yet it produced three of the greatest missionaries of the church, St. Leonard of Port Maurice, St. Paul of the Cross, and St. Alphonsus Liguori. St. Alphonsus died in 1787 at the age of 91.

Trusting in the example and witness of St. Alphonsus our school community continues today to nurture faith and be of service to all of God's children.

ST. ANNE'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

Anne meaning "gracious one" was mother of Our Lady, grandmother of Jesus and wife of St. Joachim. Anne was a member of the tribe of

Judah of the house of David. According to tradition Anne came to Jerusalem from Galilee. Historically and biblically not much is known of Anne.

The Church however, recognizes the grandparents of Jesus, Anne and Joachim as models of family virtue and faith, which they transmitted to their offspring. Anne is the patron against poverty, of homemaker's, grandmothers and patron saint of Canada. Her feast day is celebrated on July 26.

The community of St. Anne's School and parish take inspiration from the traditional prayer to St. Anne.

"O good St. Anne, Mother of Mary, grandmother of Jesus, intercede before God for our families and their children. May one generation hand on to another faith in God's promise and trust that he will do great things for those who reverence his name".

ST. ANTHONY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PORT HOPE

Anthony was born into upper class society in Egypt in the third century. After his parent's death he redistributed their wealth and lived a life of prayer and fasting. Legend has it that he struggled with the devil and experienced many temptations. Eventually St. Anthony pioneered a monastic way of life whereby fasting and prayer were priorities. It was from these monastic communities that we have many literal works that have helped us learn, understand and integrate the Christian life.

In the fourth century, at the height of Emperor Maximin's persecution, St. Anthony went to Alexandria to give encouragement and hope to the Christians being persecuted there. As founder of Christian monasticism, Anthony became famous throughout the world for his holiness and wisdom. People would come to

him from all walks of life for consultation and direction. From the literature of this Saint we grow to appreciate the importance of a vigilant prayer life that bears fruit in wisdom and austere living.

**ST. CATHERINE
CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
PETERBOROUGH**

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENNA (1347-1380)
PATRON SAINT OF NURSES

The youngest of twenty five children, Catherine was the daughter of a wool dyer in Sienna, Italy. She was an independent and devout child and practiced penance and fasting as a teenager. Between the ages of 16 and 19 she practiced silence and solitude within her own home.

However, at the age of 19 she returned to family life and began nursing and consoling the sick, the destitute and the outcasts. Catherine made holiness seem attractive and she soon had a large group of devoted followers. In 1374, her heroism blossomed as she continued to nurse the sick and buried the dead with her own hands.

As a young woman Catherine had a vision of the Lord at which time her body was marked with Jesus' wounds. She then felt summoned by God to work against political and religious strife and to work for unity and peace. She became a peacemaker between warring Italian cities and through her efforts at letter writing brought rebellious papal cities back to the Pope. Catherine was able to establish peace between civil rulers and the papacy. She was finally able to convince Pope Gregory XI to leave Avignon in France, where the Popes had been living during the so-called "Babylonian exile of the Church", to return to Rome.

Catherine soon fought against the establishment of an anti-pope in Avignon and gained recognition of Urban VI, the rightful

pope. Catherine was then called to Rome by Pope Urban VI to act as his counselor.

At the age of 33 Catherine died in Rome where she was seen by her contemporaries as a vibrantly vivid and fascinating woman and saint.

The staff, students and parents of St. Catherine's find inspiration in her qualities of consoling, peacemaking and healing.

**ST. DOMINIC
CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
LINDSAY**

(C1170-1221AD) FOUNDER OF THE
ORDER OF PREACHER (DOMINICANS)

Born at Castile Spain, Dominic Guzman was the youngest of 4 children. He studied the arts and theology, and after his ordination, he joined the Cathedral Chapter at Osma. In 1201 he became Prior of the chapter. His feast day is August 8.

On a journey to northern Europe with his Bishop, Diego, he came face to face with the Albigensian Heresy at Languedoc. Dominic was commissioned to be part of the preaching crusade against it, and along with 3 Cistercians he began itinerant preaching according to the gospel ideal. Gradually his number of fellow preachers grew, and by 1215, Rome approved Dominic's creation of an order of preachers comprised of highly trained priests. This community lived on a monastic basis bound by vows with emphasis on poverty but devoted to the active work of preaching and teaching.

St. Dominic always acknowledged the importance of the contributions made by women to the work of his community, so he established an order of religious women at San Sisto in Rome.

All evidence indicates that St. Dominic was a man of remarkable character and broadness of vision. He had deepest compassion for human

suffering and he recognized the need to use all resources of human learning in the service of Christ. The order founded by St. Dominic was a formative factor in the religious and intellectual life of later medieval Europe, and its diffusion is now world-wide.

**ST. ELIZABETH
CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
BOWMANVILLE**

St. Elizabeth was wife of Zechariah, Mother of John the Baptist and cousin to Mary, Mother of Jesus. She was also a descendent of Aaron. Luke recounts how, aged and barren, Elizabeth miraculously conceived and gave birth to her son, John. With confidence she attributed the gift of her son to the working of God, "The Lord has done this for me, she said." (Lk 1:25)

According to the writer of Luke's gospel, Elizabeth was a woman who "was worthy in the sight of God, and scrupulously observed all the commandments and observances of the Lord" (Lk 1:6). Rejected by many and frightened, the pregnant young Mary went to stay with her cousin, Elizabeth. While others disbelieved Mary (that she was carrying the Christ child), Elizabeth recognized this truth immediately and accepted it with joy, "Of all women you are most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy." (Lk 1:43-44). Elizabeth's utter trust in the promises of God was inspirational. "Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made to her by the Lord would be fulfilled." (Lk 1:45).

Elizabeth's nurturing, faithful, and trustworthy character is verified by Mary's choice to spend three months with her, when Mary herself was most vulnerable. Elizabeth is a model of one who is at once a trusting servant, faithful friend, and able to see the presence and hand of God in human experience.

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
NEWCASTLE**

Saint Francis b. Assisi, Italy, c. 1182, was the founder of the Franciscans. The son of a rich merchant named Pietro di Bernardone, he was very worldly in his early years and was recognized as a leader in the escapades of the town's youth. He was held prisoner for several months in 1202 during a dispute between Assisi and Perugia. This was followed by a period of illness. Dissatisfied with his life, he turned to prayer and service to the poor, and in 1206 he publicly renounced his father's wealth.

Francis began to live as a hermit and soon attracted followers. He preached the necessity of a poor, simple life-style based on the ideals of the Gospels, Pope Innocent III approved his way of life, gave him and his disciples permission to preach on morale topics, and had Francis ordained a deacon.

During the Middle Ages, a number of movements were based on the ideal of poverty. What made the movement led by St. Francis different was that his attractive personality and passionate dedication to the message he preached. One of the most popular of saints, he combined austerity with poetic gentleness. Francis popularized the custom of the Christmas crib. Besides the three branches of the order that he established, many other religious societies bear his name.

He died Oct. 3, 1226 and was canonized in 1228. Feast day: Oct. 4.

The school community of St. Francis of Assisi in Newcastle recognize Francis as a man of tremendous spiritual insight and power, whose consuming love for Jesus and creation find expression in the life of our parents, students and teachers.

**ST. JOHN'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
KIRKFIELD**

John, apostle and evangelist and called the 'Divine' was a son of Zebedee. He and his brother James were Galilean fishermen. One day they were called from mending their nets to follow Jesus Christ. The brothers apparently had an excitable and quick-tempered side to their character and Jesus nicknamed them 'sons of thunder'.

Jesus, chose John, James and Peter to be with him on special occasions such as his transfiguration and his agony in Gethsemane. Tradition has always identified John with the unnamed 'Disciple whom Jesus loved', who leaned on his Master's breast at the Last Supper, to who Jesus on the cross confided the care of his mother, who ran before Peter to the tomb on the morning of the resurrection and, seeing it empty, believed, and who first recognized the risen Lord by the Sea of Tiberias. After the Resurrection, John who had taken the Blessed Virgin Mary, following Christ's words on the Cross, as his adopted mother, was prominent in the early Church. He shared in the preaching, organization, and even imprisonment of Peter.

In the Acts, John is again found associated with Peter, at the healing of the lame man in the Temple, sharing his imprisonment, and going with him to the converts in Samaria. St. Paul names John with Peter and James as pillars of the Church in Jerusalem.

In later years John was exiled to the island of Patmos because he 'preached God's work and bore his testimony to Jesus'. John is said to have past his last years at Ephesus and to have died there at a great age. St. Jerome wrote, when he was too old to preach, John would simply say to the assembled people: 'Love one another. That is the Lord's command: and if you keep it, that by itself is enough.'

When we read John 4:18 John is introduced as one of the first disciples called by Jesus. It appears that John, along with the other disciples in this particular account demonstrate some important characteristics of discipleship. Real discipleship involves the following:

- to be able to spontaneously say yes to the call without knowing any of the particular details or demands
- to be able to say yes without any real knowledge about where this call will lead
- to be able to follow the call, free of any time constraints
- to appreciate that all relationships and material things are gifts and not possessions
- to trust that God will give us all we need in order to respond
- to appreciate that following Jesus' spirit may put us in the company of people we would not ordinarily choose

It would appear from scriptural references that John remained a faithful companion and follower from the beginning of Jesus' ministry right up until his resurrection. John continued to witness to Jesus' spirit in his ministries of teaching, preaching and healing. Our school community strives to witness this spirit of discipleship in student, parent and staff relationships, and in the ways we try to serve the needs of the poor in and beyond our parish.

**ST. JOHN'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
PETERBOROUGH**

John the Baptist was the son of Zachary, a priest of the Temple in Jerusalem, and Elizabeth, a kinswoman of Mary who visited her. He was probably born at Ain-Karim southwest of Jerusalem after the Angel Gabriel had told Zachary that his wife would bear a

child even though she was an old woman. He lived as a hermit in the desert of Judea until about A.D. 27. When he was thirty, he began to preach on the banks of the Jordan against the evils of the times and called men to penance and baptism "for the Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand". He attracted large crowds, and when Christ came to him, John recognized Him as the Messiah and baptized Him, saying "It is I who need baptism from You." When Christ left to preach in Galilee, John continued preaching in the Jordan valley. John inspired many of his followers to follow Christ when he designated Him "the Lamb of God," among them Andrew and John who came to know Christ through John's preaching. John is presented in the New Testament as the last of the Old Testament prophets and the precursor of the Messiah. His feast day is June 24th.

The students, staff and parents of St. John's School in Peterborough are challenged by the example of St. John to preach the good news and call themselves and others to Christ's message of love and fellowship.

ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BOWMANVILLE

Saint Joseph was the husband of MARY, the mother of Jesus Christ. Given prominent attention in the first two chapters of Matthew and Luke, Joseph is portrayed as a carpenter in Nazareth, a righteous descendant of Bethlehem's David, and a kind husband and father. Although little else is known by his life, Joseph's faithful cooperation in the birth of Christ earned him sainthood. He is venerated by Orthodox and by Roman Catholics, who consider him the patron saint of workers.

For many years now the entire faith community of St. Joseph's in Bowmanville has been guided by this faithful carpenter who always did what God asked of him even when he wasn't sure of the outcome.

ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, COBOURG

St. Joseph's School in Cobourg is blessed with the Spirit of St. Joseph as a guiding light. One significant place to appreciate the 'spirit' of Joseph is in the Gospel of Matthew. In this story we read about the characteristics that deepen individual and community faith. In Matthew 1:18 Joseph is described as an upright and compassionate person.

'Joseph her husband, an upright man unwilling to expose her to the law, decided to divorce her quietly'.

In his characterization we are called to appreciate the importance of laws and traditions that have been passed on to us. It is in Joseph's compassion and his openness to the Spirit of God for direction, as evidenced in his courage to listen and follow the prompts of the angel in his dream, that we can both learn and witness true discipleship in every area of our lives. This kind of discipleship, by its very nature, will often be tested in a variety of ways. Being open to God's Spirit for direction will ensure that our responses to these tests in our school, our homes, and our community will be real acts of faith that will give witness to 'Emmanuel', God is with us.

ST. JOSEPH'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, DOURO

Everything we know about the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus comes from Scripture and that has seemed too little for those who made up legends about him.

We know he was a carpenter, a working man, for the skeptical Nazarenes ask about Jesus, "Is this not the carpenter's son?"

We know Joseph was a compassionate caring man. When he discovered Mary was pregnant after they had been betrothed, he knew the

child was not his but was as yet unaware that she was carrying the Son of God. He planned to divorce Mary according to the law but he was concerned for her suffering and safety.

We know Joseph was man of faith, obedient to whatever God asked of him without knowing the outcome.

We know Joseph loved Jesus. His one concern was for the safety of this child entrusted to him. Not only did he leave his home to protect Jesus, but upon his return settled in the obscure town of Nazareth out of fear for his life. When Jesus stayed in the Temple we are told Joseph (along with Mary) searched with great anxiety for three days for him (Luke 2:48). We also know that Joseph treated Jesus as his own son for over and over the people of Nazareth say of Jesus, "Is this not the son of Joseph?" (Luke 4:22).

We know Joseph respected God. He followed God's commands in handling the situation with Mary and going to Jerusalem to have Jesus circumcised and Mary purified after Jesus' birth.

We celebrate two feast days for Joseph: March 19 for Joseph the Husband of Mary and May 1 for Joseph the Worker.

The community of St. Joseph's, Douro has always looked to the gifts and charisms of their patron saint to lead them in their strong sense of faith and commitment to God.

**ST. LUKE'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
DOWNEYVILLE**

THE EVANGELIST

Living in the first century it is believed that Luke was a physician, thus patron saint of physicians. Some sources say that Luke accompanied Paul on three different missionary journeys to help teach and evangelize. Luke was also with Paul during

both his imprisonments. There is a great deal of uncertainty about exactly when the gospel of Luke and the Acts were written. In these writings there is a great deal of emphasis on following the Spirit and cultivating life in the christian community.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore, he has annointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives. Recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners, to announce a year of favour from the Lord. (Lk 4:18)

Our patron saint encourages us to continue to evangelize by bringing the Good News to those in our midst and also by attending to the needs in other lands. Listening and following the Spirit enables us to continue with Jesus' mission with the students, staff and parents of our school community.

He was a medical man, "Luke, the beloved physician." His home was at Antioch and he was almost certainly a Greek. St. Luke is presumed to be the author of the Acts of the Apostles as well as the third gospel.

He was primarily an historian or recorder, writing for the information of Greeks. St. Luke travelled on several missionary journeys with St. Paul.

He is believed to have been unmarried and died at the age of 84 at Boetia. He is the patron saint of painters of pictures and physicians and surgeons. St. Luke's symbolic representation was the ox or calf. His feast day is October 18th.

**ST. MARTIN'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
ENNISMORE**

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

Martin, born about 315 at Sabaria in Pannonia (now Hungary), was the son of an officer in the army. Both parents were pagans, but, when



he was still a boy, he had himself enrolled as a catechumen. As a soldier's son he was a conscript. As an officer at Amiens he shared his military cloak with a beggar, and the following night, he saw our Lord wearing the halved cloak. In consequence he was baptized but remained reluctantly in the army. Two years later barbarians invaded Gaul. Martin asked leave of his commander, probably Constantius, to resign his commission. "I am a soldier of Christ, it is not lawful for me to serve." Charged with cowardice, he offered to stand unarmed in the forefront of battle. The barbarians, however, surrendered without a fight. Martin was then permitted to leave the army (probably in 339).

The bishop of Poitiers, St. Hilary, ordained him an exorcist. He spent the ensuing years in various places and was for some time a hermit in an island off the Italian coast. He converted his mother and was flogged for public opposition to the Arians. He rejoined St. Hilary when that bishop returned from exile and founded at Ligege, near Poitiers, a hermitage which soon expanded into a community of hermits.

He was elected bishop of Tours for the repute of his holiness, though perhaps still more for the miracles which attested it. An influential minority, however, of his future flock and some of the bishops who assembled for his consecration - noblemen or landowners - objected to a bishop who was not a gentleman: 'a man so contemptible with dirty clothes and unkempt hair.' He was consecrated on July 4th, 371.

Martin fell mortally ill at Candes, a village in his diocese where his services were required as peacemaker. As he lay dying his disciples implored him not to leave his flock at the mercy of wolves, the powerful section of opponents whose victory he foresaw (see Brice). He made the immortal reply of the

good shepherd: 'Lord, if thy people still need me, I will not shirk the toil. Thy will be done.' The sacrifice was not asked, for he died on November 8th, 397. Three days later, on his present feast day, he was buried at Tours. He was the first neither martyr nor reputed martyr, to receive the cult of a saint. His shrine became the most venerated Gallic sanctuary.

St. Martin has been a model of courage, compassion and charity for all members of our school community in Ennismore.

ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, CAMPBELLFORD

St. Mary's School in Campbellford is part of the parish named Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was Mary's 'yes' to God that prompted her to visit Elizabeth. Herein we find Mary's canticle in the gospel of Luke. 'My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit finds joy in God my savior...' (Lk 1:46ff)

It is in Mary's canticle we celebrate the joys when, like her, we trust in God. Mary reminds us that trust encourages us to remember God's saving works throughout history. She also encourages us to appreciate the lives of our ancestors who have created so many possibilities and opportunities for us today. In Mary's magnificat we are reminded that God's saving work is evident in the needy, the lowly and the humble of heart.

It is in Mary's Visitation to Elizabeth that our parents, students and teachers are called to be ministers of the Gospel in the ways we attend to the hungry, the lowly and the disadvantaged. As ambassadors of the Gospel our work of cultivating the Spirit of God with one another necessitates works of love and charity guided with a vigilant prayer life; then personal, family and community life can truly proclaim the greatness of the Lord.

**ST. MARY'S
SECONDARY SCHOOL,
COBOURG**

And Mary said, 'My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit exults in God my saviour; because He has looked upon His lowly handmaid. Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed, for the Almighty has done great things for me.' (Luke 1:46-49) These words are attributed to a young, unmarried Jewish woman whom God chose to bear His son, Jesus. In spite of the ridicule, and potential penalty of death by stoning, Mary accepted God's call to bear the Christ child and lovingly raise him to maturity.

As Mary's life unfolded, her fidelity to God remained strong. Though the Gospels provide few details about her life, they do bear rich witness to the impact Mary had on the people of her time. The message is clear, Mary was a woman of tremendous faith, and she courageously accepted all that God asked of her. She witnessed the danger and humiliation her son, Jesus, endured, and ultimately, she witnessed His death on a cross. Through it all Mary placed her trust in God, and continued to put her life at the service of God. For Catholic Christians today, Mary is pre-eminent among the disciples. She models for all generations, what it is to be a faith filled person, and a devoted disciple of Jesus.

The students, staff and parents of St. Mary's Secondary School find their inspiration in the example of Mary's life. Striving as she did to trust in God's ultimate wisdom and be faithful disciples of Jesus, this school community embraces life with great hope, great strength, and great love.

St. Mary, pray for us.

**ST. MARY'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
GRAFTON**

OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION

"On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII defined as a truth revealed by God that Mary, when the course of her life on earth was finished, was taken up body and soul into heaven. Such is the dogma of the assumption of Mary into heaven..."

(Lives of the Saints, P 315)

It is in the spirit of the Feast of the Assumption that we celebrate Mary's fidelity to God. In the scriptures, one account of Mary's courage and fidelity to Jesus is emphasized in the story of the women at the tomb. (Lk 24:1ff) This story emphasized Mary's complete discipleship to Jesus as evidenced in her return to the tomb and her witness to His resurrection. (Lk 24:1-10) The Feast of the Assumption commemorates Mary's constant fidelity of mind, heart, and body to God's call. On their return from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and the others. (Lk 24:9ff)

The Feast of the Assumption reminds us to be relentless in our call to witness Jesus fully alive in our school, in our homes, in our parish, and in our global church.

**ST. MARY'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
LINDSAY**

St. Mary's Elementary School in Lindsay is part of the parish named Blessed Virgin Mary of the Purification or more commonly referred to as St. Mary's.

The presentation ceremony is when the infant Jesus was brought to the Temple and Mary was purified after childbirth.

According to Luke 2:22-40 Mary came to fulfill the requirements of the Torah (Exodus 13:2, 12; Lev 12:6-8).



Mary of course, was the daughter of Joachim and Anna, an elderly couple who were barren until her birth. She was with child when she and Joseph went to Bethlehem to register in the census. After the birth of her son, the family travelled to Egypt and resettled in Galilee. She was frequently with the disciples of Jesus and stood by him at the crucifixion. She was also present at the Ascension and Pentecost. Mary died at Jerusalem or Ephesus.

As Bishop Mathew Clark of Rochester once wrote in his pastoral letter "Mary is a woman with her feet planted firmly on the earth, Mary of Nazareth, the new Eve, the new Mother of all the living, the woman whose risk in faith first made Christ present among us".

The staff and students of this school community are inspired by Mary's example as they also strive to bring Christ's love to all.

**ST. MARY'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
PORT HOPE**

Mary's life, as portrayed in the gospels, demonstrates the constant virtue of mercy, one of the major charisms our school community at St. Mary's emulates. In the gospel of John we read the following: On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there ... At a certain point the wine ran out, and Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine." (Mary continued.) "Do whatever he tells you." (Jn 2)

This scriptural reference is one of the passages that reflects Mary's sensitivity and compassion for others. We also see Mary's faith in her ability to intercede for changes that create new spirit and life for this community at Cana.

As part of Our Lady of Mercy parish in Port Hope, St. Mary's school community offers

opportunities for the students, the parents and the staff to demonstrate this same spirit of compassion and sensitivity in our life together: it is in these moments that our Catholic faith life is enriched both inside and outside our school community.

**ST. MICHAEL'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
COBOURG**

St. Michael is usually pictured as strong and youthful, clothed in armor and wearing sandals. In the Book of Daniel St. Michael is depicted as a heavenly prince who stands guard over God's people, helping them return from captivity. Michael is also mentioned in the Book of Revelation, portrayed as the main fighter in the battle against Lucifer or Satan. Second century Christians who experienced a great deal of persecution, took courage from these scriptural accounts of St. Michael: they often asked for Michael's courage and strength in times of adversity.

St. Michael, often portrayed as a 'protector of the faith', challenges us to always take heart as propagators and leaders in the practice of the faith. It is Michael's Spirit that prompts us to take a stand in times of adversity and injustice, ensuring that God's will prevails: such postures demand that we be a people of prayer in our homes, our school our parish and our global faith community. St. Michael's Spirit, as we know it, also challenges us to be advocates for social justice and human dignity between women and men, children and adults, and across all social and cultural areas of our world.

**ST. PATRICK'S
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
PETERBOROUGH**

St. Patrick of Ireland is one of the world's most popular saints.

There are many legends and stories of St. Patrick, but this is his story.

Patrick was born around 385 in Scotland, probably Kilpatrick. His parents were Calpurnius and Conchessa, who were Romans living in Britain in charge of the colonies.

As a boy of fourteen or so, he was captured during a raiding party and taken to Ireland as a slave to herd and tend sheep. Ireland at this time was a land of Druids and pagans. He learned the language and practices of the people who held him.

Patrick began preaching the Gospel throughout Ireland, converting many. He and his disciples preached and converted thousands and began building churches all over the country. Kings, their families, and entire kingdoms converted to Christianity when hearing Patrick's message.

Patrick's captivity lasted until he was twenty, when he escaped after having a dream from God in which he was told to leave Ireland by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britain, where he reunited with his family.

He had another dream in which the people of Ireland were calling out to him "We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more".

He began his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained by St. Germanus, the Bishop of Auxerre, whom he had studied under for years.

Later, Patrick was ordained a Bishop, and was sent to take the Gospel to Ireland.

Patrick preached and converted all of Ireland for 40 years. He worked many miracles and

wrote of his love for God in Confessions. After years of living in poverty, traveling and enduring much suffering he died March 17, 461.

Patrick was a humble, pious, gentle man, whose love and total devotion to and trust in God is a shining example of St. Patrick's school community.

**ST. PAUL'S, LAKEFIELD
ST. PAUL'S, NORWOOD
ST. PAUL'S, PETERBOROUGH**

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE

Paul, originally named Saul, was born of Jewish parents. Born in Asia Minor, Saul claimed Roman Citizenship. Through his studies he became obsessed with Jewish nationalistic ideals, hating the name of Christ.

In the year 35, Saul appeared as a self-righteous young Pharisee almost fanatically anti-Christian. He became a persecutor of Christians and the enemy of Christ and Christianity. Saul was present at the stoning and death of Stephen, the Church's first martyr.

One day as Saul travelled to Damascus to persecute again more Christians, he was knocked from his horse and found that he was blind. The Holy Spirit helped Saul see his wrong doings and Saul's sight was soon returned. From then on he was known as Paul.

Of all Christ's followers, Paul is the most colourful. His campaign for Christ became his life adventure. In his writings Paul left a vast imprint on Christian thought.

During his preaching, Paul made four missionary journeys, suffering perils by land and sea, hunger and thirst, shipwreck and persecution. On his final return to Jerusalem, the Jews succeeded in having Paul imprisoned by the Romans. Having Roman citizenship, Paul appealed to Caesar and was brought to Rome

and given ample freedom, whereby he helped St. Peter in his work. He was set free after two years.

Paul decided to make another journey after his release from prison. He travelled as far as Spain teaching and converting for Christ. He was arrested under Nero, taken to Rome, and beheaded there.

Paul's spirit lives on even today in the fourteen epistles which are a fountainhead of the Church's doctrine. In these letters Paul brilliantly probes the greatest mysteries of faith. Even today Paul's epistles still call our theologians and scholars into debate. St. Paul shows himself to be a profound religious thinker and he has had an enduring formative influence in the development of Christianity. The centuries only make more apparent his greatness of mind and spirit.

The staff and students of St. Paul's Peterborough, Lakefield and Norwood find hope and encouragement from Paul's message in the epistles and from his missionary zeal.

ST. PETER'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

Saint Peter was the most prominent of Jesus Christ's disciples. Originally named Simon son of Jonah (Matt.16:17), he was given the Aramaic name Cephas by Jesus or the early church; the name means "rock" and is translated into Greek as Peter.

All that is known of Peter's life before he was called by Jesus is that he was a Galilean fisherman with a brother named ANDREW. Peter is mentioned numerous times in the Gospels and first 15 chapters of Acts. He is pictured as a leader and spokesman of the disciples; he identifies Jesus as Messiah (Mark 8:27; Matt. 16:16) and is selected as the rock on which the church will be built (Matt.

16:18); He is mentioned several times with the brothers James and John, with whom he witnesses the TRANSFIGURATION and Jesus' agony in Gethsemane. After Jesus' arrest Peter denies knowing him three times and later repents his denial (Matt. 26:69-75); John 18:10-27).

In Acts, Peter is a leader in the Jerusalem church and engages in missionary activity in Samaria, Galilee, Lydda, Sharon and Joppa.

The New Testament says nothing about Peter's life after his presence at the meeting in Jerusalem with James and Paul (Acts 15). Later sources say that Peter went to Rome, was martyred (64-68) under Nero, and buried on Vatican Hill. Evidence concerning his presence, activity and death in Rome is slight.

New Testament documents assign Peter a variety of roles. He is seen as a missionary fisherman, pastoral shepherd, martyr, recipient of special revelation, confessor of the true faith, magisterial protector, healer and repentant sinner. These roles and images help explain the wealth of later stories and legends surrounding Peter and his high status in Christian literature, including his role in Roman Catholic belief as founder of the papacy.

Peter's life is a good role model for the students and staff of St. Peter's Elementary School in Peterborough as they take on leadership roles calling people to a deeper faith in God and love of neighbour.

ST. PETER'S SECONDARY SCHOOL, PETERBOROUGH

Peter was a native of Bethsaida, a village near Lake Tiberias. Peter was called Simon and was a fisherman. It was his brother Andrew who introduced him to Jesus: it was Jesus who gave Simon the name Cephas, the Aramaic

equivalent of the Greek name Peter. It is in Mark 1:14-22 that we see Jesus calling the disciples before beginning his public ministry. This is a good teaching for the importance of working together in the faith community ensuring authenticity.

As he made his way along the Sea of Galilee, he observed Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets in the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come follow me: I will make you fishers of people." They immediately abandoned their nets and became followers.

Peter teaches us some of the core characteristics of true discipleship. Peter says yes without asking any questions about how long it will take or where it might take him. Peter's spontaneous yes demands that he trust that everything and everyone he leaves behind will be fine. Peter's 'yes' to Jesus will also put him in the company of people he would not have chosen.

The scriptures also give evidence that Peter is just as ordinary as we are in many ways. Different passages illustrate Peter's ongoing struggles as he deepens his faith life. It is in his humanity that Peter discovers who Jesus really is for him. Peter's Spirit continues to guide St. Peter's Secondary school community as they witness discipleship with each other and the local and global church.

ST. STEPHEN'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BOWMANVILLE

Our patron saint is the first martyr of Christianity, St. Stephen. His feast day is on December 26th. Stephen was a church deacon in Jerusalem, in charge of distributing funds and food for the early Christians. Stephen was a brave man who was not afraid to speak out about salvation through Jesus. This angered some of the political leaders who brought

Stephen to court and falsely accused him. Stephen angered the officials even more when he said they had rejected God's messengers, the prophets and now God's Son. The officials were furious and dragged Stephen outside and stoned him to death. As he was dying, Stephen prayed for the forgiveness of those who were prosecuting him. We read about St. Stephen in the Acts of the Apostle, chapters six and seven.

Our school community is called to witness St. Stephen's spirit by having the courage to proclaim the gospel messages of justice, honesty and integrity in our daily lives. St. Stephen's life as illustrated in the Acts also reminds us of our common call to forgive those who persecute us and to seek forgiveness when we have persecuted others. In reaching out to provide food and other resources to the poor we continue to cultivate St. Stephen's spirit throughout our christian community.

ST. STEPHEN'S SECONDARY SCHOOL, BOWMANVILLE

"You brothers and sisters, must select from among yourselves seven persons of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom...The whole assembly approved of this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 6: 3-5)

So began the journeys of Stephen, a Greek speaking Jew who lived in Jerusalem, and converted to Christ. As a leader of the Hellenist Christians, he argued that the new faith could not develop except by separating itself from Judaism, and he passionately urged the Church to expand its mission, so that the Gospel might be preached to Gentiles as well as Jews. People described Stephen as a man whose wisdom could not be disputed as it was the Holy Spirit who prompted him, and filled him with grace and power. For his

unwavering fidelity to Jesus, Stephen gave up his life. Stoned by an angry crowd, Stephen became the first Christian martyr.

**ST. TERESA
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL,
PETERBOROUGH**

Saint Teresa of Avila, b. Mar. 28, 1515, d. Oct. 4, 1582, as a Spanish Carmelite and mystic who was declared a doctor of the church in 1970. The daughter of a noble Spanish family, she was originally named Teresa de Cespeday Ahumada. In 1535 she entered the Carmelite monastery of the incarnation of Avila, where the nuns observed the rules of the order in a relaxed or ("mitigated") way. After a serious illness and a prolonged period of spiritual apathy Teresa experienced (1555) a spiritual reawakening that convinced her of the need for strict observance of the austere Carmelite rule. Despite strong opposition, she succeeded (1562) in opening the Convent of Saint Joseph in Avila, the first of the reformed Carmelite houses. Until her death she led the way in reforming both the male and female branches of the Carmelite order.

Besides her activity in directing the reform of her order, which involved extensive travel and communication with nobility and church officials, Teresa wrote many works, among which are some of the greatest classics of mystical literature. A mystic of great stature who achieved the rare state of union referred to as mystical marriage, she wrote advice and direction for others, especially her nuns, with unusual beauty and equally unusual practical wisdom. She is considered an authority on spirituality in the Western world, and her writings are read and studied today as much as ever.

The community of St. Teresa's school in Peterborough look to St. Teresa for direction in their own spiritual re-awakening and will continue to follow her practical wisdom.

**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL,
LINDSAY**

St. Thomas Aquinas, priest and doctor of the Church, patron of all universities and of students. He was born toward the end of the year 1226. He was the son of Landulph, Count of Aquino, who, when St. Thomas was five years old, placed him under the care of the Benedictines of Monte Casino. His teachers were surprised at the progress he made, for he surpassed all his fellow pupils in learning as well as in the practice of virtue.

When he became of age to choose his state of life, St. Thomas renounced the things of this world and resolved to enter the Order of St. Dominic in spite of the opposition of his family. In 1243, at the age of seventeen, he joined the Dominicans of Naples. Some members of his family resorted to all manner of means over a two year period to break his constancy. But all their efforts were in vain and St. Thomas persevered in his vocation. As a reward for his fidelity, God conferred upon him the gift of perfect chastity, which has merited for him the title of the "Angelic Doctor."

After making his profession at Naples, he studied at Cologne under the celebrated St. Albert the Great. Here he was nicknamed the "Dumb Ox" because of his silent ways and huge size, but he was really a brilliant student. At the age of twenty-two, he was appointed to teach in the same city. At the same time, he also began to publish his first works. After four years he was sent to Paris. The saint was then a priest. At the age of thirty-one, he received his doctorate.

At Paris he was honoured with the friendship of the King, St. Louis, with whom he frequently dined. In 1261, Urban IV called him to Rome where he was appointed to teach, but he positively declined to accept any ecclesiastical dignity. St. Thomas not only wrote (his writings

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filled twenty hefty tomes characterized by brilliance of thought and lucidity of language), but he preached often and with greatest fruit. Clement IV offered him the archbishopric of Naples which he also refused. He left the great monument of his learning, the "Summa Theologica," unfinished, for on his way to the second Council of Lyons, ordered there by Gregory X, he fell sick and died at the Cistercian monastery of Fossa Nuova in 1274.

St. Thomas was one of the greatest and most influential theologians of all time. He was canonized in 1323 and declared Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V.

Combining a sense of belonging with a firm discipline Catholic Education at St. Thomas Aquinas provides students with the solid moral grounding they need during their formative years.