



# Official Opening and Blessing of New Schools and New Additions Guidelines

- ❖ The Official Opening and Blessing Committee will utilize the “School/New Addition Opening and Blessing Checklist of Tasks” as guidance in organizing the event.
  
- ❖ The Chair of the Official Opening and Blessing Committee will assign the tasks in consultation with the Manager of Communications.
  
- ❖ **The guest list will include three groups:**
  - Speaking Guests
  - Special Guests
  - General Guests
  
- ❖ **The list of speaking guests will include:**
  - Bishop
  - Parish Priest(s) serving the school
  - Sisters
  - Member of Federal Government (MP)
  - Minister of Education
  - Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)
  - Mayor of Municipality/Warden/Reeve
  - Chairperson of the Board
  - Manager, District Office, Ministry of Education
  - Director of Education
  - Chairperson, Catholic School Council
  - Principal
  - President, Student Council; or selected student
  - Architect
  - Contractor
  - Other (at discretion of Chairperson of the Board/Director of Education/Principal)

❖ **The list of Special Guests will include:**

- Area Clergy
- Municipal Councillors
- Superintendents of Schools/Business
- Superintendent of Schools for area
- Former trustees of the area
- Former administrators
- Contributors to the school (artists, sculptors, etc.)
- Representatives of staff federations/unions/associations
- Other appropriate administrative officials

❖ **The General invitation list will include:**

- Students
- Staff of the new school
- Parents
- All Principals
- Former Staff
- Principals of neighbouring elementary and secondary schools from coterminous Boards
- Managers/Supervisors of various Board departments
- Consulting Engineers
- Sub-contractors
- Representatives from religious orders affiliated with the school
- Representatives from the business community
- Others (at the discretion of the principal)

❖ **The program will generally include the following in this order:**

- Processional Entrance of Guest Speakers, Official Party, Dignitaries, School Staff
- Singing of O Canada
- Opening Remarks (Master/Mistress of Ceremonies)
- Opening Prayer [Parish Priest(s)]
- Official Blessing of crucifix(es) by the Bishop
- Entertainment (choir)
- Brief Greetings from the following Speaking Guests:
  - ❖ MP
  - ❖ MPP
  - ❖ Minister of Education

- ✧ Mayor/Warden
  - ✧ Councillor/Reeve
  - ✧ Chairperson of the Board
  - ✧ District Manager, Ministry of Education
  - ✧ Chairperson, Catholic School Council
  - ✧ Director of Education
  - ✧ President, Student Council; or student representative
  - ✧ Architect
  - ✧ Contractor
  - ✧ Principal
- Entertainment (choir, band, dance group, etc.)
  - Official ribbon cutting ceremony
  - Presentation of keys to the school
  - Multi-media presentation
  - Closing remarks
  - Closing prayer
  - Refreshments and tour of facility

### **Preparation of the School**

To mark the importance of the Official Opening and Blessing ceremony, the school will be appropriately prepared and decorated with the use of flags, art work, displays, flowers, balloons, welcome signs, direction signs, and guest books.

### **Blessing**

The ceremony for the blessing of the school will be conducted by the Bishop with assistance by the Parish Priest(s).

### **Media and Promotion**

- The event will be advertised in local newspapers, on local television networks, and radio stations.
- An invitation/flyer and poster will be designed and distributed in hard copy and electronically to parents, parishes, community organizations and agencies, and community members.
- An official program outlining the agenda for the event, the new facilities, and greetings from dignitaries, will be produced and distributed at the event.
- The media will be provided with information to promote the event and invited to attend.

## **Speaking Guests**

Speaking guests are guests who are invited to the event and will be asked to bring brief greetings on behalf of their organization.

## **Special Guests**

Special guests are guests who are invited to the event and recognized in the audience by the master/mistress of ceremonies.

## **General Guests**

General guests are guests invited to attend the event.

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