



Durham Catholic District School Board

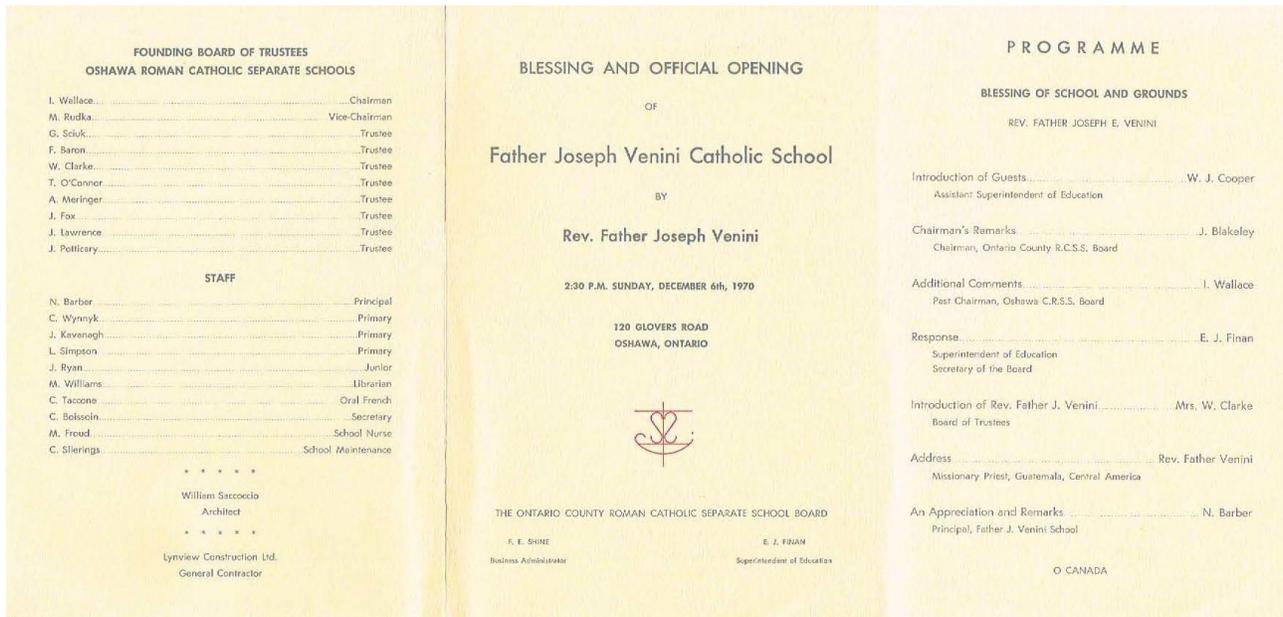
Father Joseph Venini Catholic School



In the Beginning

Father Joseph Venini Catholic School was officially opened on December 6, 1970, under the leadership of Edward J. Finan, Superintendent of Education for the Ontario County Roman Catholic Separate School Board. The highlight of the evening was the blessing of the school by the Reverend Father Joseph Venini, a former Oshawa resident and then missionary priest in Guatemala, Central America.

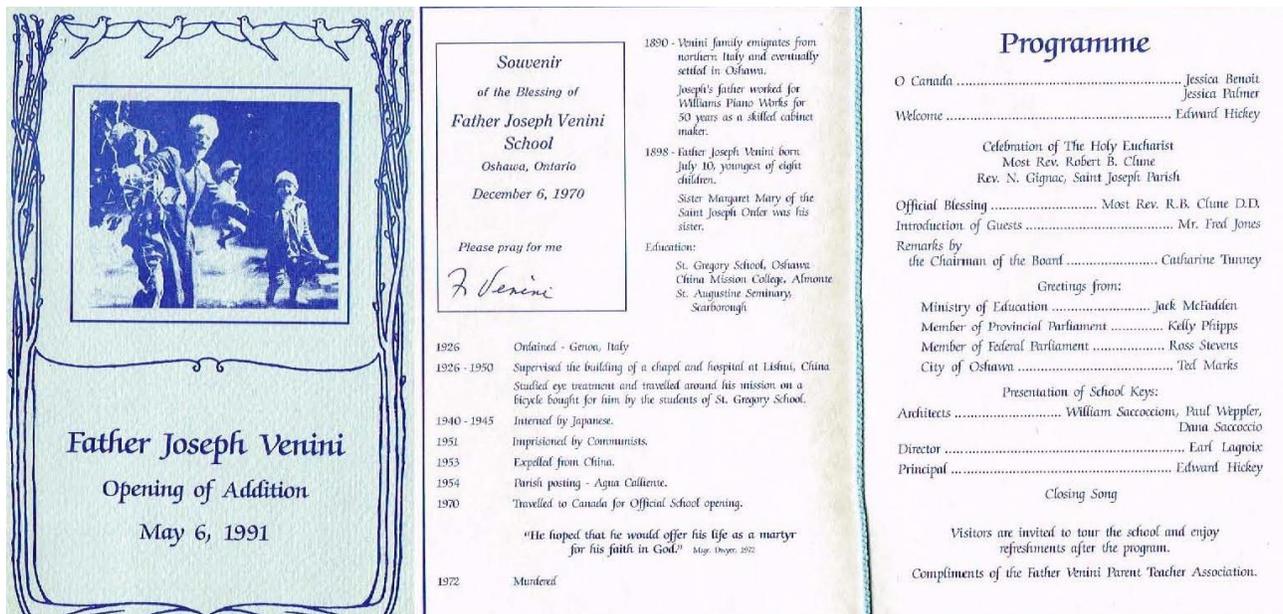
The school itself had opened its doors that September, with 92 students from Kindergarten to Grade 6. The school staff was comprised of the principal (Nick Barber), secretary, custodian, school nurse and six teachers.



Program of the official opening on December 6, 1970

The Expansion

The community of Father Venini rose from a community of 92 students to 360 students; in May 1991, a new addition was officially blessed and opened. The addition had a gymnasium, staff room, stage, three intermediate classrooms, and three Kindergarten classrooms. The staff and students went from having gym classes in the general purpose area (now the school library) to a wonderful modern facility.



Father Joseph Venini Catholic School Today

Today, Father Joseph Venini Catholic School is home to 339 students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8. It is a Full Day Early Learning Kindergarten school and draws on

a very diverse socio-economic community.

Students from Father Joseph Venini attend Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic Secondary School upon completion of Grade 8. The parish of St. Joseph the Worker serves the community of North Oshawa.

The community of Father Joseph Venini embodies the spirit and charitable nature of its namesake. As a community, a lot of time and resources are spent raising money for people who are less fortunate. Some of the recipients of the money raised here include the St. Vincent de Paul Society and ShareLife.

Our Patron

The school was named after Father Joseph Venini, a graduate of the local school board. Joseph attended St. Gregory School and then Oshawa Catholic High School. Shortly after graduation, he joined the Scarboro Foreign Mission Society to study for the priesthood.

In 1922, Joseph left Canada for Italy to complete his studies. He was ordained on May 29, 1926, at Brignole Sale, Genoa, Italy. He celebrated his first Mass at Delebio, Italy, the birthplace of his parents, in the church in which they were married.

Shortly afterwards, Father Venini returned to Canada and that same year left for Linshui, China, to work for the foreign mission there. He spent 24 years in China and in 1938 took on a project to build a hospital in the area. When the Japanese invaded China, Father Venini was interned for the duration of the war. In 1946, he returned to Canada, but returned to China soon after to continue his work. Father Venini found himself a prisoner once again, this time at the hands of the communists. In 1956, after two years of being under arrest, he was expelled from China and returned once again to Canada.

Being a missionary at heart, Father Venini took on a new parish in Guatemala, and for 17 years he worked with the indigenous people of the area. He took a break in 1970 to come home to Oshawa, collect some much-needed supplies, open our school in his name, and return via truck to Guatemala laden with more supplies for his parish.

In 1973, after serving 17 years in Guatemala, Father Venini was murdered in the rectory of his church. People believed the motive of the murder was robbery.



Front-page story of Father Joseph Venini’s death from a Guatemala newspaper

Today, Father Venini’s spirit lives with the students and the community that bears his name. Father was always a giving man who gave his entire being to the people he served every day.

School Prayer

Thank you so much for our beautiful school
 where we learn so many things.
 May the lessons we learn here guide us
 to be loving, caring members of our school community.
 We thank God for our families, friends and teachers.
 We will do our best to treat each other with respect.
 We honour you, Father Venini, for your contribution to our school
 and model ourselves after your example.
 Bless the staff and students, that we may grow and learn in your spirit.
 Amen.

Mission Statement

We at Father Joseph Venini Catholic School, as educators and members of a Catholic Professional Catholic Learning Community, collectively commit to provide a Christ centered environment for the development and growth of every child - spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically.

Principals

Nick Barber
Jim Cushing
Rudy Zamarski
Nancy Drynan
Edward Hickey
Rob McLaren (1994-1998)
Frank Zochodne (1998-2003)
Mary Kay Boase (2003-2010)
Mike Young (2010-present)

Contributors:

Mike Young, Principal

Cheryl Stone, School Secretary