



Durham Catholic District School Board

Mother Teresa Catholic School

Motto: "Sharing Our Love"



In the Beginning

On September 5, 1997, the Board of Trustees of the Durham Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board approved the construction of the new school. Also on September 5, 1997, Mother Teresa, a great woman of our faith, died, leaving a legacy that touched every part of the globe. When she was beatified on October 20, 2003, Pope John Paul II offered his thanks to Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, founder of the Missionaries of Charity, for being close to him in her lifetime and for courageously showing the world what it means to love and serve Jesus completely. "The venerable servant of God, Teresa of Calcutta, from this moment on will be called blessed," he stated. The school is named for her.

Students and staff of the new school were housed in portables at St. Bernadette Catholic School, located south of the site, for the 1998 school year. The school opened in September 1999 with 350 students and continued to grow throughout the following decade.



Bishop Meagher blesses the school's crucifixes, assisted by Family of Schools Superintendent Teresa Freedman.

The Most Reverend Bishop Anthony Meagher blessed and officially opened Mother Teresa on November 11, 1999. Greetings were sent on behalf of the Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chrétien; Member of Parliament Dan McTeague; the Premier of Ontario, Mike Harris; MPP and Minister of Education Janet Lynne Ecker; and the Mayor of Ajax, Steve Parish. Remarks and greetings were also shared with those in attendance by the Chair of the Board, Mary Ann Martin; Director of Education Grant Andrews; and founding principal Patrick MacKinnon. The official program for the blessing and opening states:

Our school was named in honour of Mother Teresa. To many, Mother Teresa was a living saint, dedicating her life to the service of others, helping people all over the world to believe that even small actions can change the world....

The Mother Teresa Catholic School Community has adopted the motto Sharing our Love which exemplifies our commitment to following the example of Mother Teresa's life.



Founding Principal Patrick MacKinnon addresses students, staff, parents and invited guests at the official blessing and school opening on November 11, 1999. Looking on from left to right are DCDSB trustee Janice Oldman, Chair of the Board Mary Ann Martin, [not identified], Father Roy, [not identified], and Bishop Meagher. Director of Education Grant Andrews was also seated on stage.

To this day, the spirit of Mother Teresa is alive and well in the hearts and minds of

students, staff, and parents and guardians. At any moment in the day of the life of the school, it is common to hear the Mother Teresa School Prayer being recited in classrooms, during the announcements or at the beginning of school meetings. It was written by a committee of stakeholders to forever ingrain and support her works into the culture of the school and to support our Board's philosophy of including and respecting all those who walk through our school doors.

To keep pace with the growing population in north Ajax, in September 2012 St. Josephine Bakhita Catholic School was opened so that 156 Mother Teresa students could go to school in their home neighbourhood. Concurrently, Mother Teresa school opened a full-day Kindergarten program and French Immersion programming in September 2012, bringing new registrations to the school.

The relatively short history of Mother Teresa School has fostered student achievement, community spirit and success. A notable accomplishment was the production and performance of the musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* on May 9, 2001, which received rave reviews. Many gifted athletes have contributed to several basketball, volleyball and track-and-field championships over the years, and our students have participated in the Ajax Battle of the Books, Blue Spruce, Silver Birch and Red Maple literacy programs. In honouring Mother Teresa's words that "to keep a lamp burning, you must continue to put oil in it," the staff, students, parents and guardians have supported many local, national and international social justice initiatives, raising thousands of dollars for those in need. The installation of an outdoor classroom by the school's ECO Green team in April 2012 is a testimony to the school's environmental stewardship.



Grade 6 student Storme Hardy and his father were the first official occupants of our Mother Teresa outdoor classroom in the spring of 2012. Students on the ECO Green team, in association with the school board and support from TD Canada Trust, planned and installed the outdoor classroom for school and community use.

Our Patron

Agnes Bojaxhui was born on August 27, 1910, to parents who were said to be unfailingly charitable to the poor. After taking her preliminary vows as a Sister of Loreto at the age of 18, she taught Geography at St. Mary High School for girls. In 1937, she became Principal of St. Mary H.S. and took the name "Mother Teresa."

In 1948, Mother Teresa became the first Catholic nun in 300 years to be allowed to work outside the convent. She began her missionary work among India's poor and homeless, and in 1952, opened a home for the dying called Mirmal Hriday (Pure Heart). A year later, she opened an orphanage. In her long life of service, Mother Teresa was responsible for the creation of more than 445 Missionaries of Charity houses, providing shelter for the homeless, food for the starving, medicine for the sick and comfort for the dying in nearly one hundred countries worldwide. She was beatified on October 20, 2003.

School Prayer

Blessed Teresa,
Lead us to understand who we truly are through God's words.
Inspire us to believe in ourselves and others,
Guide us to care for each other by our actions,
Help us to accept one another as one family, and
Teach us the full meaning of "sharing our love."
Amen.

Principals

Patrick MacKinnon (1998–2001)

Elizabeth Snow (2001–2006)

Giselle Vesna (2006–2008)

Jim Wilson (2008–2011)

Robert Camozzi (2011–present)

Contributor:

Robert Camozzi