



Durham Catholic District School Board

Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic Secondary School

**Motto: In Fide Et Veritate Crescentes
("Growing in Truth and Faith")**



In the Beginning

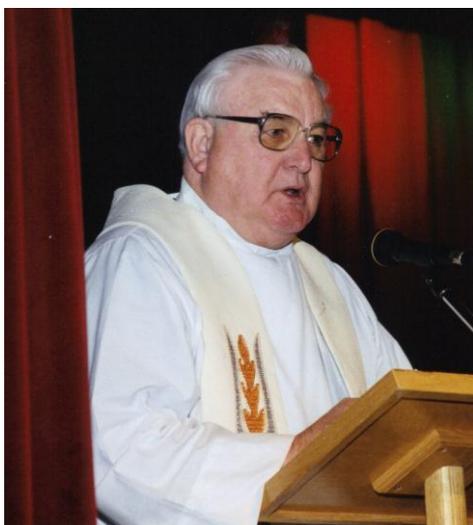
During the mid 1980s, a decision was made to turn Monsignor John Pereyma School, then for elementary students, into a Catholic high school. Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic Secondary School opened in September 1988. With extensive renovations and additions being done to the building on Conant Street in Oshawa, classes were initially held at Holy Cross Elementary School and in the basement of Holy Cross Church on Simcoe Street South. During its first year, the school admitted only Grade 9 students, and the school population consisted of less than 100 students. Despite the small number of students and the limited facilities, many Pereyma traditions were forged, including sports teams, instrumental music and a yearbook. From among the original staff members, Melody Walters and Shannon Quinn continue to teach at Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. Each year, as another grade was added, the Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. community was bolstered with the addition of many talented and dedicated staff members who continue to be a part of the community.



Laying a new floor

Leadership

Many individuals have left their mark on Msgr. John Pereyma Catholic Secondary School. The school has been blessed with principals who have each brought their own leadership style: Greg Pollock, Andy Fedak, Tom Fitzsimmons, John Vesters, Mike Powers, Cathy Mouck and Patti Wilson. Perhaps the individual who left the largest imprint on Pereyma was its "Little Chaplain," Father Don MacLellan. Father Don was a native of Cape Breton Island, and after a stint as a teaching principal in northern Quebec, he received a call to priesthood. He was ordained in 1965 and spent the first years of his calling serving as a parish priest, prison chaplain, counsellor, and chaplain to the Knights of Columbus. In 1992, he arrived at Pereyma, and would serve the school and community for the next 10 years. His commitment to the school, the Board and the community were visible in his efforts to organize and run food and toy drives; lead staff, student and Board retreats; and offer his time to numerous other causes. These efforts were recognized in 1997, when he was awarded the Durham Catholic District School Board Award of Merit for his "contributions to the people." The World Youth Day Cross, blessed by his Holiness Pope John Paul II, was present at Father Don's farewell Mass on June 12, 2002, as it made its way across Canada to Toronto. Msgr. John Pereyma was the only school in the Board to host the cross on its momentous journey.



Father Don MacLellan

Aside from his list of achievements, he is best remembered for his kind words, humility, and smile. He was always helping staff and students with their daily lives. Whenever Father Don was in the room, people were drawn to his booming voice and laugh. He retired in 2002, and was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal. The recommendation for this award summed Father Don up as "simply a wonderful human being: a man of character and conviction." After a selfless life in the service of God, he died on June 15, 2008 at the age of 70.

Symbols

In 1988, the school logo was designed by a Grade 9 Pereyma student, Lesley Balson. The "P" stands for both "the Patriots" and the Greek letter *rho*, which is associated with the monogram for Christ in the Greek alphabet. The crossed scrolls at the bottom of the logo are the Greek letter *chi*. When *chi* and *rho* are combined, this symbolizes the first two letters of Christ's monogram in the Greek alphabet. The third component of the logo is the maple leaf, symbolic of Canada and patriotism to our nation. Under the logo is the school motto, which is Latin for "Growing in Truth and Faith."



The combined chi and rho Greek letters

The now familiar Pereyma Patriots athletic logo was not instituted until 1993, five years after the school opened. The logo was developed by students Victoria Lantz and Dave Coito. After establishing the nickname "Patriots," the students created the logo, which they felt was "fast, sleek and fierce." This is the logo Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. teams have worn with pride ever since.



Pereyma Traditions

Teen Ranch

Like most Catholic schools in Ontario, the retreat program has always been an integral part of Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S.'s Catholic education, providing a venue that gives our faith life, meaning and purpose. In 1992, under the direction of the school's new chaplain, Father Don MacLellan, the retreat program became larger than life. Recognizing the unique needs of the students, Father Don initiated a Grade 12 overnight retreat at Queen of the Apostles Centre in Mississauga. Its focus, "We've Come To Tell Our Story," provided our students with a safe and loving environment in which they could share their pain, life challenges, and insecurities without the fear of ridicule and with the support of their peers, the staff, Father Don and God. Over the 24-hour period, tears were shed, bonds were cemented and lives were changed.

The following year, Father Don introduced the three-day Ontario Academic Credit (OAC) retreat, held at Teen Ranch in Orangeville. Over the three days, the students explored who they were through an intensive investigation of the Myers Briggs Personality Type Indicator Test. They developed a deep sense of self-awareness and true understanding and acceptance of others. For weeks after the retreat, you could hear students say, "Oh, she's like that because she's an N or a T or a P," referring to letters assigned to various personality types.

Through budget cuts and program changes, Father Don rallied support from the Knights of Columbus and the Board to ensure these two retreats continued. When OAC was phased out and Father Don, the facilitator of the two senior retreats, had decided to retire in 2002, it was decided that the Grade 12 retreat should take on the Myers Briggs Personality focus. So why, after 10 years, has the Teen Ranch Retreat continued to be a solid tradition at Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S.? That would be because a passionate, insightful, inspiring priest who fell in love with the Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. community made staff promise to never let our retreat program die, and so it continues as a legacy to Father Don.

Spirit Week

February 15, 1991, marked the first Spirit Day for the students of Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. and the birth of a great tradition. The day, organized by the Student Council, was filled with winter fun. By 1995, Spirit Day had evolved into a spring Spirit Week. The Student Council, followed by the Leadership Class, worked for countless hours to provide a week of school spirit, camaraderie, and great memories for the entire Pereyma family. A theme was assigned to each day of the week and staff and students were encouraged to dress according to the theme. Daily theme-based activities were also organized. The week started off with the excitement of a Pep Rally Assembly, which was a blend of student participation games and the recognition of students belonging to school teams and clubs. Tuesday's assembly always featured an inspiring motivational speaker. The following day, some form of entertainment was provided, such as comedy acts, like Second City Comedy and Gerry Dee, hypnotists and magicians. Thursday was for soaking up the sun during the yearly barbecue and carnival day. And finally, on Friday, the week wrapped up with the spring talent show. Thanks to the support of administration, staff and students, this week of spirit will be remembered by many for years to come.





THINKfast!

Every year since March 2005, under the leadership of David Dubowits, chaplain, and Paula Sorhaitz, Chair of Canadian and World Studies, Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. has organized a *THINKfast!* Modelled after the 30-hour Famine, *THINKfast!* is an initiative of Development and Peace. In this Lenten activity, students challenge themselves to abstain from solid food for over 20 hours, enjoy some fun ice breakers, and always play a few games of dodge ball. Most importantly, time is spent learning about being better global citizens and the peace and justice dimensions of such topics as water privatization, mining and industrial agriculture. Over the past eight years, several thousand dollars have been raised in pledges for Development and Peace.

Out of *THINKfast!* Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S.'s Social Justice Club started in the fall of 2009, under the leadership of two Grade 12 students, Rachel Hancock and Rachel St. Pierre. Besides supporting the work of Development and Peace, the Pereyma Social Justice Club has partnered with Free the Children and has participated in WE DAY, Halloween for Hunger, the Vow of Silence, and Dodge Ball 4 Kenya.

March for Life



Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S.'s participation in the annual March for Life in Ottawa began in 2000, when 13 of the school's students accompanied Chris Gainey to Parliament Hill, along with about 2,500 other Canadians. As many as 60 students have attended each year since then, as well as several staff members. Last year there were 15,000 Canadians at the March. Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. students consistently stand up for innocent, defenseless unborn persons.

Addition to the School Building

The new millennium brought big change to the school. On March 5, 2002, the new addition to Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. was officially opened and blessed. Thirteen classrooms were added to accommodate the growing student population. Thirteen crosses were officially blessed by Father Don at the Mass, and later in the day he visited each of the new classrooms to officially bless them. Pereyma teacher Gerry Goulding composed and performed a song at the celebration to commemorate the occasion. A contemplative rock garden was designed to be an inspiration to students in the years ahead.

An Exceptional Student

A Msgr. John Pereyma C.S.S. graduate was the first student to enrol at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) in Oshawa in June 2002. The student was admitted on an exceptional basis as there were no courses established and the university wasn't to officially open until September 2003. He began his Bachelor of Science degree at Durham College taking courses through Trent University while UOIT was still under construction. As a UOIT student he was the first to receive a laptop computer as part of his regular school equipment.

In Memoriam

Tragedy struck at Monsignor John Pereyima in 1994, when student Chantel Gauthier passed away suddenly after falling ill in the school gym. She was remembered in the school yearbook as "an angel ... with her arms open and a smile upon her face." Her passing is commemorated with a plaque and tree in front of the school, dedicated to her memory. Chantel inspired a scholarship award, given to a Pereyima graduate each year.



Chantel Gauthier

Moving forward

Msgr. John Pereyima Catholic Secondary School continues to build on the foundations laid in 1988. Generations of Pereyima graduates have carried the torch of community, faith and service out into the world. As we move forward, the heritage provided by the events and people that came before us act as an inspiration and guiding light for taking on present and future challenges.

Our Patron



Monsignor John Pereyma

The name Monsignor John Pereyma had long been associated with education in south Oshawa. A native of Goodow, Saskatchewan, Father Pereyma was appointed parish priest of St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Oshawa in 1936. Here he endeavoured to act not only as a spiritual leader of the community, but also as the driving force behind the promotion of educational and cultural development within the Ukrainian Catholic community. His efforts resulted in the landmark St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church on the corner of Albert and Jackson Streets in Oshawa in 1957.

After this project, Father Pereyma devoted his time to a campaign for a Catholic elementary school within his parish. The result was the opening of John F. Kennedy School on Conant Street in September 1964. Father Pereyma worked closely with the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, a Ukrainian religious order, and Holy Cross Parish to ensure that the school met the spiritual and cultural needs of all the children attending this new school, not just those of Ukrainian descent. Following his death on January 31, 1976, John F. Kennedy School was renamed Monsignor John Pereyma Catholic School.

School Prayer

O Loving God,
as a member of the Monsignor John Pereyma family,
I thank you for the gift of a faith community.
May I value the power of education
and the gift of your Guidance in all that I do.
Help me to see Jesus in myself and others.
Help me to be more like you in all that I do.
May I live each day in the light of your Word.
Amen.

Principals

Greg Pollock (1988-1990)
Andy Fedak (1990-1991)
Tom Fitzsimmons (1991-1997)
John Vesters (1997-1998)
Mike Powers (1998-2003)
Cathy Mouck (2003-2009)
Patti Wilson (2009-present)

Contributors:

Sean Stack
Justin Osier
Melody Walters
Dianne Deveau