



Durham Catholic District School Board



St. Christopher Catholic School



In the Beginning

St. Christopher Catholic School opened its doors on September 7, 1956, serving the northwest portion of the Oshawa area. The original building had eight rooms. Rooms 3 to 8 were used as classrooms and rooms 1 and 2 were used for Mass and PTA meetings. The principal was the second person in a hundred years of history to be a layperson rather than a religious. The first year of enrolment in September 1956 consisted of 140 students in Grades 1 to 6. In the second-year, enrolment rose to 181 students and six staff members.

The school was blessed on January 18, 1959, by His Eminence James Cardinal McGuigan. The parish's first Mass was celebrated on October 13, 1957, at the school. A church hall was then built, with St. Mary of the People Parish, the first bilingual parish in the diocese, holding its first Mass in the hall on December 8, 1958, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. On May 25, 1958, a number of students from St. Christopher Catholic School celebrated the sacrament of First Communion at the church hall with Father Gignac. On November 29, 1964, the sod was turned for the church and on September 8, 1965, the first Mass was celebrated there.



Left to Right: [unidentified], Gerry Reinders, Lorna Finley, Sally Borovsky, Tess Fraser, Sister Mary Beatrice, Sister Damais, [unidentified], [unidentified], Lorena Malone; in front: Susan (Borovsky) Robertson



Father Gignac and First Communion girls from Miss McKenny's Grade 1 class at the Crowning of Mary Ceremony in May



THE EXECUTIVE of the newly-formed Catholic Parent-Teacher Association of St. Christopher's School was in-

stalled at the December meeting by the Reverend Leo Smyth, regional spiritual director. From left to right the offi-

cers are Mrs. Gerry King, vice-president; Mrs. Max Coleman, president; Mr. Frank LeVay, principal; Mrs. Leonard Weeks,

secretary, and Mrs. Kenneth Johnson, treasurer.

—Times-Gazette Staff Photo

Officers of New Parent-Teacher Association Installed At St. Christopher's School

The St. Christopher's PTA met on Wednesday, December 11, for its December meeting. Mrs. Max Coleman presided. Mrs. Leonard Weeks read the secretary's report and Mrs. Kenneth Johnson, the treasurer's report. It was decided to change the monthly meetings to the third Wednesday of every month. Reports showed that the bridge and euchre held on December 4 was a complete success and the president thanked all those who had helped. It was agreed to purchase a selection of supplementary books for the school library and also sweaters for the boys' hockey team.

Mrs. J. V. Doherty of Toronto introduced by Miss Pauline Boyle brought greetings from the east regional CPTA of which she is president. She spoke of the growing force of the CPTA and stressed that fathers should be encouraged to attend meetings and be given an active part in the organization. Mrs. Edward Kehoe expressed thanks to the speaker. The Rev. Neil Gignac introduced another special guest of the evening, the Reverend Leo Smyth, regional spiritual director who was present to formally install the new officers. The guest explained the duties of each offi-

cer as he or she was installed and then wished the unit success in its future endeavors.

Mr. Frank LeVay, principal of St. Christopher's, thanked the guest on behalf of those present.

The entertainment program was turned over to Mrs. Larry Beaupre. Eli Peters, a pupil of Miss Marian Hinch, sang two Christmas hymns, "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear" and "Hark The Herald Angels Sing." Pamela Fudge, a pupil of Mr. LeVay, played two selections on the accordion.

A sing song of Christmas carols was held with Mrs. G. McGhee at the piano.

The prize on a draw for the evening was won by Mrs. V. Tucker.

Refreshments were served by Mrs. Beaupre and her group.

Daily Times Gazette article, December 20, 1957

In 1961, the first addition to the school added six classrooms to the building to the west of the original eight rooms. On November 26, 1970, another addition of six classrooms, a library, a staff room and a gymnasium was officially opened and blessed by Father Gignac, the parish priest.

In 1999, St. Christopher C.S. was once again under construction. The office area was enlarged and a beautiful new library was built at the front of the building to accommodate the growing needs of the school.



Grade 8 band



Parents and students learn with scientists in schools



Lego Club, 2009

One in the Spirit

St. Christopher C.S. is a close-knit community with very strong ties to the parish. Many families have had three generations attend the school. Through all of the additions, renovations and fluctuations in student population, the spirit of St. Christopher C.S. has remained strong.

St. Christopher Catholic School is a community, a place where everyone is welcomed and accepted. No one is judged. A sign of this sense of community is found in a statue of St. Christopher that was donated by one of our families. The words on the plaque read:

St. Christopher
– patron of our school –
Donated in loving memory of
David Gregory Schneider
By his family
1986–1998

The sense of community students have at school with their friends and classmates is priceless. Students also get that feeling of community through all the sports and extra-curricular activities they do at school.

In September 2008, St. Christopher welcomed the students and families from St. Michael and St. Gregory Catholic schools when those schools were closed after an Accommodation Review process. The three schools quickly became one, bringing together the best traditions and practices from all three schools.

St. Christopher Catholic School was built and blessed and has grown stronger as a community since 1956.

Our Patron Saint

St. Christopher is one of the most popular saints of the East and West. There are many legends concerning this saint, many of which are confusing and contradictory. One of the most popular legends holds that St. Christopher was a giant who helped people across a raging stream. It is believed that he carried the Christ Child across this same stream. Hence, his name of Christopher, which means Christ-bearer. He is the patron saint of travellers and is invoked against storms, plagues, etc. He died a martyr during the reign of Decius in the third century. His feast day is July 25.

School Prayer

God our Father,
keep us safe at St. Christopher Catholic School.
Help us to use our special gifts to grow in knowledge
and to make our school a place where
peace, love, caring and friendship
can be seen and felt in all our words and actions
so that we can be faithful followers of Jesus
and good examples to others.
Amen.

Principals

Frank Levay (1956–1958)

Sr. Mary Beatrice (1959–1967)

Bill Ward (1968–1974)

John Holowaty (1975–1978)

Grant Andrews (1979–1980)

Brian Vrebosch (1981–1985)

Breen O'Connor (1986–1988)

Beryl Cameron (1989–1991)

Tim O'Connell (1992–2000)

Neil Robbescueten (2000–2003)

Suzanne Godin-Gallipeau (2003–2007)

Julia Pellerin (2007–2010)

Patty Orecchio (2010–present)

Contributors:

Patty Orecchio

Rose Connelly