



Durham Catholic District School Board

## **St. Francis de Sales Catholic School**

**Motto: "Inflame Our Hearts with Your Love"**



### **In the Beginning**

In 1893, Father Vincent McGivney called a meeting to start a Separate School Board in Pickering for the children of the parish families of St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church. The provisional Board of Trustees consisted of P.J. McCabe, Arthur O'Connor and Peter Kaiser. Two months later, a public meeting was called to announce the establishment of the Pickering Village Separate School Board.

Soon afterwards, the Board was able to obtain the land next to the church to build St. Francis de Sales Catholic Elementary School. The land was originally the location of the church rectory until it burned down in 1913.

A three-room school was built beside the church in 1953 at a cost of \$35,100. It was the first school built in the area. The first principal was Mr. W.J. Cooper (now a retired superintendent) and the first teachers were Miss M. Weir, Miss M. Harrigan and Miss E. McGee.

In 1954, two classes were added at the cost of \$25,000. 1959, the school board was able to purchase two and a half acres of land behind the school from Anglican Synod, and four new classrooms were built at a cost of \$68,200.

There was a significant increase from 1953 to 1965 in the number of students and teachers and in the school structure itself. The 1965–1966 staff consisted of nine teachers, one principal, one vice-principal, one secretary and one custodian. In 1966, the little school expanded once again, adding a gymnasium, two classrooms and an all-purpose room at a cost of \$135,000.



The School, 1966



The School Staff, 1966

P. J. O'Neill, W. Joseph Cooper-principal, Miss Doreen Horne, Lionel Kelly, (Sitting Left to Right)  
D. M. Jack, vice-principal, Mrs. Jaro Rimes, Mrs. Elizabeth Jones, Miss Joan Burns, Mrs. Marquerite FitzRoy.

In 1991, the final addition was built. The new wing included a big foyer, a new office and even more classrooms. In the same year, a realignment of boundaries

was drawn up as a result of many new subdivisions being built in the area. The feeder schools were St. Patrick C.S., St. Jude C.S. and St. Catherine of Siena C.S.

In 1993 to 1994, there were 12 teachers, 320 students, one librarian, two program support teachers, two French teachers, three educational assistants, one secretary, one principal and two custodians.

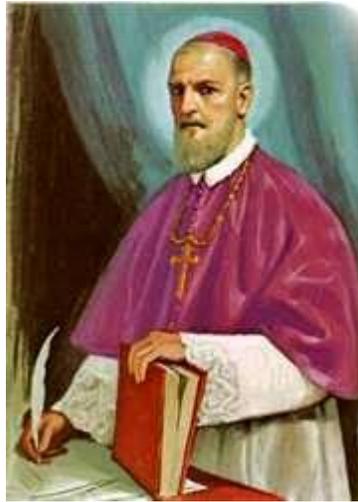
The school was now complete, with 13 classrooms, two boys/girls washrooms, a French office, a library, a staff room, a gymnasium, a principal's and secretary's office, a health room and two guidance rooms.

Our present school population is 171 students with a principal, one secretary, seven classroom teachers, one program support teacher, one French teacher, four educational assistants and two custodians.

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School has certainly evolved over the years. Portables once filled most of the children's schoolyard; today, the portables are all gone. St. Francis de Sales Catholic School is now 60 years old. Throughout our school history, the dedication of the staff, the Catholic School Council and the parent community to Catholic education has remained strong and vibrant.



*Present-day front foyer of the school*



### **Our Patron Saint**

The patron saint of the parish and school, St. Francis de Sales (1567–1622), was a bishop of Geneva who was known for his deep faith and for his writings on spiritual formation. Francis was born in France to a prominent family. Although his father wanted him to study law, he felt a call to the priesthood. He was highly respected as a writer and preacher and was known to be a friend of the poor.

Several communities of religious faith were founded in his name and to serve his principles. St. Francis is the patron saint of Catholic journalists and writers throughout the world, as well as of the deaf. His feast day is January 24.

### **School Prayer**

Father in heaven,  
you prompted St. Francis de Sales  
to become all things to all people.  
May his example inspire us  
to serve our brothers and sisters lovingly.  
St. Francis de Sales,  
help us to imitate your compassion and gentle charity  
through our everyday encounters with others.  
Amen.

**Principals**

M. Weir (1953–1955)  
W.J. Cooper (1955–1967)  
L. Kelly (1967–1971)  
J. Holowaty (1971–1975)  
J. Arbour (1975–1979)  
B. Ward (1979–1984)  
G. Kiernicki (1984–1988)  
J. D’Costa (1988–1993)  
J. Kettrick (1993–1997)  
B.A. Craig (1997–1998)  
C. Heeney (1998–2000)  
M. Tisi (2000–2002)  
J. Pellerin (2002–2007)  
D. Malleau (2007–2011)  
M. Clunis (2011–present)

*Contributor:*

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