

Brother André is one of the newer names for an Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board school but the school itself is far from new. In fact, the school community was created in 1975. While the construction of the new school on Elmridge Drive in Gloucester was being built, its students were housed in two different locations. Students from Senior Kindergarten through Grade 6 were housed on the second floor of St. Gabriel's, a nearby French school; the junior kindergarten pupils, meanwhile, were accommodated at Thomas D'Arcy McGee Catholic School.

In May 1976, the students and staff at these two separate locations came together as they moved into their new school facility. The official opening did not take place until one year later. The school was built at a cost of \$958,685.03, with Zygmunt J. Nowak as the architect. Construction, which was designed to house 411 students, commenced in October 1975. The completed facility would contain two kindergarten rooms, a special education room and nine regular classrooms. The school was built in a multi-level format as the architect designed the building to complement and follow the rocky and hilly terrain of the school property.

The community and staff were asked to suggest names for the new school. The name "Elmridge" was selected because it reflected its location on Elmridge Drive. After thorough consultation within the community, the school was renamed Brother André Catholic School at an official and solemn ceremony that took place on May 27, 2005.

Brother André was associated with the school in the years leading up to this renaming. During the school's 25th anniversary celebrations in May 2002, Brother André was chosen as the patron saint of the school. At the Education Week

BROTHER ANDRÉ

CATHOLIC SCHOOL



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Mass that year, Brother André prayer cards and medals were blessed by Father Richard Siok and distributed to each student. Later, a large statue of Blessed Brother André and smaller statues for the prayer table in each classroom were blessed by Monsignor Leonard Lunney. The large statue was placed in the foyer of the school, surrounded by a new showcase designed by student representatives from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6. Painted tiles represented the seven values in the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board's strategic plan, "Believing, Discovering, Achieving." The students began learning about the life of Brother André. In June 2002, grades 3 to 6 students traveled

to Montreal to visit Brother André's museum and Saint Joseph's Oratory, the shrine that was built on the strength of this religious Brother's faith.

At one time, the school had about 500 students, necessitating four portable classrooms in the playground area. However, 1986 was the last year that a portable was needed at the school. In its 25th anniversary year, school enrolment stood at approximately 300 students.

With the formation of the amalgamated Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board in 1998, and with the new school funding approach instituted by the Provincial Government, there were a number of school consolidations and closures as the Board tried to rationalize its use of space. The Elmridge Catholic School community made presentations and lobbied the Board to keep the school open, as it had been suggested for closure. The community was successful in this effort to preserve its local Catholic elementary school.

Over the years, a variety of activities and events have helped create school spirit and traditions, and develop a sense of community at the school. These have included a staff versus grade 6 basketball game, an Advent family Mass at St. Gabriel's Church, family dances on such occasions as Halloween and Valentine's Day, a meet-the-teacher barbecue, a Christmas play by grade 1 students, a Red Lobster breakfast with a visit from Santa Claus, a mentoring program by students from Lester B. Pearson Catholic High School, and a breakfast program. The school community has also supported a variety of charities such as the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and the Terry Fox Run.

Present Principal

Anne Noseworthy

Past Principals

James MacPherson
 Sister Rita McBane
 Hugh Marshall
 William Tomka
 Mary (Armstrong) Moss
 Patrick Jennings
 Maurene Atherton
 John Dorner

First Teaching and Support Staff

Claudette Lapointe
 JoAnn Cazabon
 Jane Barkley
 Doug Colwill
 John Lalonde
 Kathy Smilie
 Sharon Johnston
 Sister Rita McBane
 Rose Brossard
 Tina Bloess
 Linda McNeely
 Judy Brown, Secretary
 Gerry Boisclair, Custodian

School Colours

Blue and white

Logo

The school logo for Elmridge Catholic School has been a giant “E” with a heart, a cross and a pen.

Former Students

John Morris, Canadian Junior Curling Champion Skip

Jason Lachance, Paralympic athlete

Longtime Custodian

Rick Delaney has been the custodian at Brother André Catholic School since 1981.

School Mission Statement

In the 2005-06 school year, staff at Brother André Catholic School, as part of a school success planning initiative, developed a school mission statement: “Brother André Catholic School... learning and growing in faith.”

Memorable Move

In May 1976, when students and staff were moving from St. Gabriel School to the new school facility on Elmridge Drive, Teacher Jane Barkley remembers walking over with her 28 senior kindergarten pupils, carrying books and puzzles, with everyone filled with excitement about moving into the new school. When they arrived, they discovered that all of the classroom furniture, including tables and chairs, were still in their boxes. Mrs. Barkley remembers having to arrange the furniture on her own while also keeping her 28 excited, energetic five-year-old pupils under control. It made for a memorable move-in for her and her pupils.

