

OUR LADY OF WISDOM

CATHOLIC SCHOOL



**1565 St. Georges Street
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Catholic parents canvassing door-to-door in the Queenswood Heights community of Orléans to encourage enrolment at the newly opened Queenswood Catholic School, led to the construction of Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic School. This new school turned out to be the mother school for Catholic elementary education in the Orléans area, as other schools which opened over the ensuing years, with the increase in population and new development, could trace their heritage back to Our Lady of Wisdom. These include Convent Glen Catholic School, Divine Infant Catholic School, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic School and St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School.

Our Lady of Wisdom School can trace its lineage to Thomas D'Arcy McGee Catholic School in Beacon Hill. Many children from the Our Lady of Wisdom attendance area attended Thomas D'Arcy McGee and then moved to Blackburn Catholic School (Good Shepherd). Finally, Queenswood Catholic School opened on the grounds of Ecole Reine des Bois, with both schools coming under the jurisdiction of the Carleton Roman Catholic School Board.

During the 1972-73 school year, Catholic parents canvassed the area, encouraging other Catholic parents to register their children at the new Queenswood Catholic School, so that their goal of having a new school building erected in Queenswood Heights could be achieved. This initiative was successful and construction of the new school on St. Georges Street began at a cost of \$640,000. It was designed to accommodate 432 students. The new building was situated in a field within view of just a few houses. The Tenth Line, now a major thoroughfare, could be seen at a great distance from the school.

Our Lady of Wisdom School was built as an open-concept school, having no walls separating the classrooms, which surrounded a central library. Only the kindergarten students had a separate room. All of the others, ranging at that time from Grades 1 through 8, had their classes in the open area.

Our Lady of Wisdom grew along with the Orléans community that it served. At one time, student population growth necessitated the opening of an annex in an old school on Innes Road. The students traveled from the annex to the main school

building for some of their instruction. At one time, Our Lady of Wisdom had 13 portable classrooms on site, with a total school enrolment of nearly 800 students. In 1984, an eight-room port-a-pak was added. Over the years, the school has seen a number of other changes and improvements made to both the interior and exterior of the school.

In the early years of Our Lady of Wisdom School, it was associated with St. Joseph Catholic Parish. In 1983, the newly created Divine Infant Parish assumed the responsibility of caring for the spiritual needs of the school community.

Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic School has had some thrilling moments in its history. The school was in its infancy when former Prime Minister of Canada the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker visited in April 1976. Other highlight occasions in the history of the school include a citizenship ceremony held in 1995-96, presided over by Judge Suzanne Pinel, and the school's 25th anniversary celebration in May 1999, which featured a blessing and prayer by Ottawa Archbishop Marcel Gervais.

Present Principal

Pasquale (Pat) Ferraro

Past Principals

Gerard Leclair
 Andrew McKinley
 Richard McGrath
 Ralph Watzenboeck
 John Power
 Sheila Fergus

First Teaching and Support Staff

Marilyn Boucher
 L. Brazeau
 Grace Castonguay
 Sam Coletti
 A. M. Colwill
 M. Cooper
 Jane Domokos
 Sister Marie Doyle
 E. Gariepy
 Carolyn Hawley
 Nuala Hackett (Durkin)
 B. Jette
 Norma Menard
 Peter Sorrenti
 Murielle Nystrand
 Paul Barrette
 Michel Marcil

Former Staff and Students

Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic School staff who have gone on to become Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board superintendents are Lucy Miller, Yvonne Benton and Brent Wilson.

Staff who have become Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board principals are Deborah Robinson, Cindy Simpson, Gloria Horan, Austin DeCoste, Faye Powell, Grace Castonguay-Kenny, Diane Jackson, Donna Bekkers-Boyd, Dwight Delahunt, Kevin Mullins, Louise Garby and Nuala Durkin.

Student Jason Malette became a player with the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the Canadian Football League. He visited the school on May 4, 1998.

School Colours

Blue and gold

Logo

The school logo was designed by a grade 6 student, Christine Fournier.

It features a dark “O” circle in which are situated an “L,” a “W” and a cross.

Mascot

Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic School has two mascots: a tooth called “Willie Wisdom” and an owl named “Wise.”

Symbols

Diane Vaughan, a teacher at the school at the time, donated a framed picture of Mary, Our Lady of Wisdom.

Line Douglas, a teacher at the school at the time, donated a wooden statue of Mary in the front hall of the school.

School staff made the Our Lady of Wisdom banner.

A statue of Mary in the showcase at the school was donated by Madonna House, which is a lay apostolate located in Combermere, near Barry’s Bay. This organization works with the poor around the world.

Melanie McGillivray, a parent of the school at the time, made a banner of Mary, Our Lady of Wisdom.

Song

The school song of Our Lady of Wisdom Catholic School was written in 1982 by grade 6 student Joette Dobra. The song, entitled “Wisdom” is as follows:

This school is caring
 This school is Wisdom
 From all the teachers
 To all the students
 From all the classrooms
 To our library
 Wisdom was made for you and me.

As I was working in my classroom
 I saw around me my friends and classmates
 I saw before me my helpful teacher
 Wisdom was made for you and me.

As I was playing in the school yard,
 I saw so many happy faces
 I saw around me a school of friendship
 Wisdom was made for you and me.