

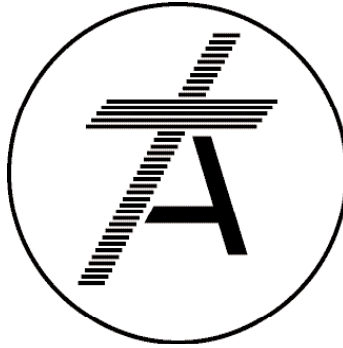
ASSUMPTION

Assumption Catholic School has existed as a beacon of Catholic education for English-speaking students in the Vanier area for half a century. Its beginnings can be traced to September 1926, according to records of student registrations. The early students attended classes in a hotel, which was converted for use as a school near the site of the present day Assumption Catholic Church on Olmstead Avenue in Vanier. In those early years, the school accommodated students from Grades 1 through 8. The Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception became associated with the school in 1934, with four classrooms of girls being taught by them while the Christian Brothers taught four classrooms of boys.

It is not known if the school was initially named Assumption or not, since the school predates the founding of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Eastview. It seems obvious, though, that it was the same concerns of the English-speaking Catholics of Eastview with regard to practicing and learning about their Catholic faith in their mother tongue that brought about both the school and the church at about the same time period. The Catholic parents were concerned about their children attending the public school and not being exposed to Catholic influences. Thus, the Catholic school was established in 1926.

Similarly, the English-speaking Catholics, who numbered about 118 families by the beginning of the 1930s, petitioned Archbishop William Forbes for their own parish as well, stressing their need for proper religious instruction in their own language. Assumption became a mission in August 1931, and was raised to the status of a full parish in October 1932. The church community purchased a building known as the Assembly Hall on Savard Street and this was used as a temporary church, until the new building was completed in 1940, on property on Olmstead

CATHOLIC SCHOOL



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Avenue that had been acquired as early as 1932. The new Assumption Church was blessed by Archbishop Alexandre Vachon in December 1940.

The original Assumption School, which came under the jurisdiction of the Eastview Catholic School Board, a separate entity from the former Ottawa Roman Catholic Separate School Board, was struck by tragedy in 1948 when it caught fire on a Sunday evening. Students were taught in the basement of Assumption Catholic Church until a new school could be built. The official blessing of the new Assumption School took place in March 1950 even

though the school was obviously not totally completed, since blackboards were borrowed for the event from a school in Renfrew and were returned promptly following the blessing.

Over the years, Assumption School has become known for its love of music as demonstrated by the school choir, for the offerings of its drama club, for its acceptance of the challenge to improve the literacy and numeracy levels of its students, and for its many sports and athletics activities. Several unique initiatives have been undertaken at the school. One example is the Knitting Club directed by Sister Barbara Ryan. Another is the Little Beaver Club, a noontime program designed to increase understanding between aboriginal and non-aboriginal children. A rich sense of community permeates the school community.

Present Principal

Ann-Louise Revells (2006-present)

Past Principals

Sister Ann of the Cross (1940-51)
Sister Theresa Kelly (1969-83)
Alex Nagle
Alan Morissette
Michael Kloepfer (1989-94)
Pearl Lavigne-DeMillo (1995-99)
Simone Oliver (2000-02)
Eileen Maychruck

Early Teaching Staff

(dates are when the staff members started at the school)

Violet Duford (1934)
Angelina Duford (1934)
Sister Mary Noreen (1934)
Sister Mary Lawrence (1935)
Sister St. Denis (1936)
Sister St. Helen (1937)
Sister Catherine of the Cross (1939)
Sister Ann of the Cross,
Principal (1940)

Sister St. Monica (1941)
 Sister Mary Rose (1942)
 Sister St. Brendan (1944)
 Sister Francis Maurice (1944)
 Sister Anne Louise
 Sister St. Hilda
 Sister St. Mary Gabriel
 Anna Kessels

School Colours

The school colour is a rich, brilliant blue reflecting the robes in which the Blessed Virgin is traditionally adorned.

Logo

The school logo is a circle in which there is a stylized cross which forms one side of the letter "A."

Order of Canada Recipient

Sister Ann of the Cross, who was Principal of Assumption School from 1940 to 1951, worked in the Dominican Republic from 1951 to 2000, where she established the first education system known in that area. She was awarded the Order of Canada in February 1994, by Governor-General Ramon Hnatyshyn for her contribution to education in both Canada and the Dominican Republic.

Sister Barbara Ryan

After her retirement as the Librarian at Immaculata High School in 1991, Sister Barbara Ryan volunteered to work daily at Assumption School, serving as librarian, reading coach, knitting club director and staff advisor.

Former Student

Bernard "Bunny" McCann, who died in September 2006 at the age of 86, attended Assumption Catholic School, as did his 16 children who are known for their musical abilities. Bunny himself had a lifetime filled with accomplishments: recipient of the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award; recipient of the Royal Canadian Legion's Dominion Command Palm Leaf; Governor of the Loyal Order of Moose Branch 1765; Moose of the Year (2004); member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 462 for over 50 years; founding member of Action Vanier; life member of the Institut Canadienne Francaise; a member of the Knights of Columbus Conseil 5571; a member of the Vanier Optimist Club; and a Vanier City alderman.

Peer Mediators

Dale Matsubara, a teaching assistant at Assumption School, established peer mediators at the school in 1992. This initiative has flourished right up to the present time.

Little Beavers' Club

Queenie McPhee, an aboriginal woman who, as a volunteer, was very involved with the life of students at Assumption School, established a link between the school and the Wabano Centre, which still exists today. The Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health is an urban, non-profit community-based healthcare centre on Montreal Road providing programs and

services for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. One of its mandates is to promote community building through education and advocacy. She established a noon program called the "Little Beavers' Club" for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal students. Here they can learn how to do beadwork and crafts and learn about native legends. Each year a First Nations banquet is held featuring beaver, deer, caribou, blueberry cake and fiddlehead ferns. There is also a sweet-grass ceremony. Queenie McPhee was instrumental in promoting pride in the gifts and wisdom of Inuit, Metis and First Nations cultures. After her husband's death, she ceased being a volunteer at the school.

An Early Christmas Concert

This is a story that is told about one of the first Christmas concerts held in the original Assumption School, a converted hotel.

Reportedly, Sister Anne, who was responsible for the Christmas concert at that time in the early history of the school, asked some of the male students who shared the premises, albeit in separate classrooms, to obtain a Christmas tree for the concert. The boys apparently made their way over to Notre Dame Cemetery where they obtained their Christmas tree. The boys delivered the tree to Sister Anne in no time. Sister Anne, prudently perhaps, did not question the boys about where they had obtained the tree but merely remarked on the beauty of the blue spruce, which went on to adorn the stage at the Christmas concert that year.