



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
*Lighting the Way – Rejoicing in Our Journey*

## **MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Wednesday, October 5, 2005*

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### ***ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD PRESENTS 38 HONOUREES WITH ANNUAL “LIVING FAITH AWARD”***

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board will honour 38 recipients with the annual *Living Faith Award of Distinction*. The award is presented annually to staff, parents, students, volunteers, administrators and parish members who, in an exemplary way, support the mission of Catholic education.

“Each year we celebrate and honour representatives of our school communities with these awards,” says Margaret Nelson, Director of Education. “These are the people who, at the grassroots level, use their gifts and their faith in so many ways to benefit our students and our schools. We are thankful for their tremendous support of the mission and vision of Catholic education.”

The *Living Faith Award of Distinction* was introduced to St. Clair Catholic schools in 2003. Each elementary school community nominates one person, secondary schools may nominate two. There is also one system-wide nomination representing administration and maintenance.

The awards will be presented at the annual Employee Recognition Celebration, which also honours St. Clair Catholic District School Board retirees and staff who have reached career milestones of 20, 25 and 30 years of service with the Board.

***The Employee Recognition Celebration, including the Living Faith Awards of Distinction, will be held Thursday, October 6, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. at the Oaks Inn, 80 McNaughton Avenue, Wallaceburg. Members of the media are welcome.***

Following are the names of the *Living Faith Awards of Distinction* honourees, their school communities and a brief description of their contributions to Catholic education.

**Chris Kyte** – *Youth Minister, Christ The King Catholic School* – Chris Kyte has been a wonderful role model for the children of our school and our parish. As Youth Minister at Our Lady Help of Christians Church, he has touched so many young people with his faith and his gift of music. Chris’ great love for the Lord has inspired many of our young people to come to know God in a new and powerful way. His dedication to our school, our parish and the community of Wallaceburg has been a great example of Christian love to many. We have truly been blessed to have known him.

**Martha Gillier** – *Teacher, Georges P. Vanier Catholic School* – Martha lives out her faith every day in her classroom, her parish and her family life. She is a caring educator who instills in her students the virtues of Christ’s teachings. She establishes a community of faith within her classroom, not only through Catholic teachings, but also by showing her students how to love one another, and forgive one another, as Christ loves and forgives us. Martha is a blessing to the Georges P. Vanier Catholic School community.

**Pam Kemp** – *Parent, Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School* – Pam held the position of Catholic School Community Council chair for three years, during which she demonstrated her commitment to Catholic education, and her dedication to Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School. Pam is a wonderful role model for others, and actively participates in the faith development of the students by assisting with school liturgies. She has also created a “Faith Life” bulletin board, which celebrates students who are receiving sacraments. Pam has also been instrumental in implementing social justice projects and mission drives within the school community.

**Christine deNijs** – *Volunteer, Holy Family Catholic School* – Christine’s faith is so strong that she is willing to do anything to help anyone. She was instrumental in organizing and developing the Tim Sharpe Prayer Garden, which is dedicated to the memory of a much-loved former custodian at our school. She is also chair of the Faith Advisory team at Holy Family Catholic School. Her vision for our school, and love for our students and staff is evident in everything she does. Christine is a blessing to all who know her.

**Luana Sfalcin** – *Teacher, Holy Rosary Catholic School* – Luana is a Christian role model to everyone in our school community, approaching each day with faith, love, care and compassion for all those around her. She is actively involved in preparations for First Communion and Reconciliation, and has taught classes at home for students preparing for Confirmation. Luana has also been the driving force behind the school’s Naturalization Project, which includes many rare native plant species. We acknowledge and celebrate her great contributions to our students and our school.

**Jeff Young** – *Teacher, Monsignor Uyen Catholic School* – The light of Christ shines through everything Jeff does, and the Monsignor Uyen Catholic School community is blessed by the care and concern he shows for each of its members. He is a great encouragement to staff, parents and students. His Christ-centred classroom helps students to live Gospel values by acting as “Ministers of Peace.” Jeff is also the staff advisor to the Student Council, and is involved in countless charitable endeavours for our school.

**Yvette Glasier** – *Teacher, Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School* – Yvette’s faith is very evident in everything she does for Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School. She models the love of Christ, not just in her teaching, but in all interactions with students, parents and colleagues. She serves our school community in countless ways, but her outstanding contribution is to mission outreach. In this role, she has raised thousands of dollars to help those in need overseas and here at home. Yvette is a witness to her faith in both her professional and personal life.

**Bill Hemstreet** – *Principal (Retired) Sacred Heart Catholic School (Port Lambton)* – Bill exemplifies the true spirit of Catholicity through his faith in God, his students and his colleagues. With kindness and fairness, Bill encouraged and empowered the students and staff of Sacred Heart to believe in themselves, in their abilities and in the gifts that God has given them, and in doing so, he has helped create a caring community of believers. Bill’s wise counsel, guidance and leadership are reminders of the compassion and love of Christ.

**Phil Litrenta** – *Principal, Sacred Heart Catholic School (Sarnia)* – Phil’s outstanding commitment to Catholic education is evident on so many levels. He treats everyone, including students, teachers and parents, with the dignity that a child of God deserves. He is a strong faith leader, and always brings to school gatherings prayers that are thoughtful and meaningful. His commitment also extends beyond the school, where, through his dedication to Christian service, he helps others by supporting many worthy causes. Phil has been a blessing to his students and his many friends in the Sacred Heart Catholic School community.

**Roberta Lachine** – *Parent, St. Agnes Catholic School* – Roberta truly lives her faith through her service to her church and to the St. Agnes Catholic School community. At Blessed Sacrament Church she is a volunteer with the choir and youth group. At school, she is a valued volunteer who helps wherever she is needed, especially with the dance team. In her own quiet way, and without expectation of recognition or reward, Roberta demonstrates a dedication to bring our young people closer to God. She is a wonderful role model for everyone in our Catholic community.

**Donna Cook** – *Educational Assistant, St. Anne Catholic School (Blenheim)* – Donna exemplifies Christian values and contributes positively and significantly to our school community. Her patience, understanding and commitment are an encouragement to the exceptional students she serves. She is also active away from the school, whether she is serving lunch at the local soup kitchen or counseling grieving members of the community. St. Anne Catholic School is blessed with Donna's caring, compassionate presence.

**Olga Moscone** – *Educational Assistant, St. Anne Catholic School (Sarnia)* – Olga truly exemplifies the mission of Catholic education. She always respects the dignity of the child, as well as all others with whom she is associated. Her tireless efforts to promote student success and goodwill throughout the school community are greatly appreciated by those who work closely with her. In her quiet, humble and caring way, Olga embodies the Catholic Christian spirit and is a tremendous role model for staff and students alike.

**Anne Marie Parizeau** – *Program Resource Teacher, St. Benedict Catholic School* – Anne Marie has a strong faith and a deep sense of commitment and love for the students of St. Benedict Catholic School. Her witness to her faith is evident in her words of encouragement to the students in her resource program every day. Her smile, warmth and kindness make her classroom inviting for all. In our school community, she takes a leading role in our Advent prayer services. Anne Marie's strong commitment to Gospel values is evident to all who know her. She is a blessing to our school community.

**Karen Dedecker** – *Teacher, St. Elizabeth Catholic School* – Karen is a model teacher, who is devoted to living out her life as a disciple of Christ. She is dedicated to the mission of Catholic education. Her classroom is a place where students not only learn, but also grow in their faith. Karen is compassionate, and always puts others before herself. For many years, she has been active in parish life, serving the members of her faith community as a member of Parish Council. Karen radiates God's love, and is an inspiring role model for our school and parish community.

**Joanne Mitchell** – *Teacher (Retired), St. Ignatius Catholic School* – Joanne Mitchell has been a valuable member of the St. Ignatius Catholic School community for 29 years. Although she has retired, Joanne has continued her involvement with our school. She brings her faith into all that she does. Whether it is a kind word to a student or staff member, or giving extra help or advice when needed, Joanne is always kind and patient. Joanne's faith was always evident in the classroom. Her fair treatment of all and her witness to the Gospels, is an inspiration for all.

**JoAnn Van Engelen** – *Parent, St. John Fisher Catholic School* – JoAnn has dedicated many hours to help serve St. John Fisher Catholic School and the wider Catholic community. As a parent, she always does what is best for students, and has served as a willing volunteer on a number of committees. In her parish, she has worked tirelessly to build the membership of the Catholic Women’s League. Her faith is evident through her actions and her willingness to help others. Our community is blessed by her tireless devotion and her on-going commitment.

**Dorothy Debiasi** – *Volunteer, St. Joseph Catholic School (Chatham)* – Dorothy brings warmth, kindness and compassion wherever she goes in our school, and helps wherever she is needed. She lives her faith everyday in her quiet service to our school community. Dorothy has built positive and supportive relationships with staff and students. She models the values of teamwork and respect for others. Dorothy freely gives of her time with a true Christian and charitable spirit. She is loved and appreciated by all.

**Margaret Ryan** – *Principal, St. Joseph Catholic School (Corunna)* – Margaret is a person who radiates her faith. She lives it every day and encourages others to do the same. Margaret exemplifies the Christian values of kindness, compassion and fairness to everyone. She celebrates the achievements of our students and is a strong advocate for the Families and Schools Together Program. Margaret promotes a strong sense of community within the school and the local faith community. She is a true blessing to Catholic education.

**Jeanne Girard** – *Program Resource Teacher, St. Joseph Catholic School (Tilbury)* – Jeanne models Gospel teachings in her daily interactions with students, staff and families. Whether in the classroom or on the playground, she teaches students to love and respect one another, as Christ would. Jeanne is a Eucharistic Minister at her parish in Merlin, where she and her husband are also actively involved in COR, offering guidance to young people. Jeanne’s energy, enthusiasm and devotion to her faith are an inspiration to the St. Joseph Catholic School community.

**Bill Musgrove** – *Volunteer, St. Margaret Catholic School* – Bill is a retired engineer who spends much of his time bringing science alive to our students. His love of children is a joy to watch. His deep-rooted Christian faith is evident to all, and as a result our students have learned from him more than just science, reading and math. They have also learned kindness, giving of oneself and sharing God’s gifts with others. He is our “Bill Nye the Science Guy” as well as our mentor, coach and friend.

**Terri Rawlings** – *Resource Teacher, St. Mary Catholic School* – Terri’s strong faith is evident every day. Her words of encouragement, her devotion to Catholic education and her wonderful sense of humour make Terri a motivating force at St. Mary Catholic School. Terri is positive and encouraging to the students she teaches. Her love for them shines through in all that she does. We see God working through Terri every day, as she puts Gospel values into action, by serving anyone around her who has a need. She is a witness to her faith and an inspiration to our school community.

**Therese Sanders** – *Educational Assistant, St. Michael Catholic School (Bright's Grove)*  
– Therese exemplifies our Catholic teachings through her devotion to our church, school and students. Therese is always there with a helping hand when there is work to be done. She brings gentleness and kindness to her profession, along with her wonderful smile. She is devoted to the students with special needs, whom she serves. Therese is also a volunteer at her parish, helping with the youth group. She touches many lives through her quiet service to others. She is an inspiration to all who know her.

**Judi Desmarais** – *Program Resource Teacher, St. Michael Catholic School (Ridgetown)*  
– Just as Jesus, the Master Teacher, always beckoned the children to Himself, Judi always gives freely of her time, reaching out to students, before, during and after school, helping them to reach their full potential. Judi lives her faith, attending Mass daily, and sharing her love of God with everyone around her. She is full of life and love. Her sense of humour lifts us up, and her compassion touches our hearts. St. Michael Catholic School is grateful to God for the gift of Judi Desmarais.

**Brenda Lesy** – *Secretary, St. Michael Catholic School (Turnerville)* – Brenda has been actively involved at St. Michael Catholic School for most of her life. She attended St. Michael as a child, her children also attended the school and now her grandchildren attend. Not only has Brenda devoted her life to Catholic education at the school, she also is an active member of her parish. Her Christian values and attitudes are respected and admired by the entire St. Michael Catholic School community. Brenda is a living witness to her faith and an inspiration to all who know her.

**Roseanne Cameron** – *Volunteer, St. Paul Catholic School* – Roseanne is a tremendous supporter of Catholic education. She is always willing to give generously of her time and her gifts to the staff and students of St. Paul Catholic School. She has been an active member of the Board Advisory Council and the Catholic Faith Advisory Committee. Even though her children have now graduated from St. Paul, she continues to operate a Homework Program through the Learning Disabilities Association. She is also an active member of the parish through her work with the youth and the Catholic Women's League. Roseanne is a shining example of someone who lives her faith through service to others.

**Father Richard Saldanha** – *Parish Priest, St. Peter Canisius Catholic School* – The staff and students of St. Peter Canisius Catholic School eagerly look forward to the many visits that Father Richard makes to our school. Father "Lights the Way" for our students through his commitment to the faith and to the faith development of everyone in our school and parish community. We regularly see Father enjoying a game of basketball with students in the school yard, or enjoying a time of fellowship with staff. He is actively involved in helping prepare our students for the Sacraments, and with helping to form them in the Catholic faith. His endless devotion and love for young people is overwhelming. We are truly blessed to have been given the gift of Father Richard.

**Steve Gelinas** – *Principal, St. Peter Catholic School* – Since he came to our school in 2002, Steve has been a tremendous Catholic leader and an inspiration to our entire school community. His positive, good-spirited and easy-going personality has been a blessing to our students and our staff. Steve has been a true servant leader, and can regularly be found cooking hamburgers for a school luncheon, or coaching basketball. He has touched our hearts with words of encouragement and praise at times when we need to hear it most. His wisdom, compassion and faith shine through to the students, teachers and parents. Steve demonstrates his faith in all that he does, and has been a great role model for our entire school community.

**Father Dan Vere** – *Parish Priest, St. Philip Catholic School* – Father Dan has earned the admiration and respect of students, staff and parish members, all of whom have been touched by his faithfulness. Father Dan lives his faith in countless ways. He has a passion for social justice, and devotes much of his time to community outreach. He touches our hearts and inspires us to lead lives that are more Christ-like. He is particularly gifted in his compassion for those who hurt. Father Dan has been a teacher, a spiritual guidepost, a friend and role model for our entire parish and school community.

**Helen Gillespie** – *Teacher, St. Therese Catholic School* – Helen is a spiritual leader for the staff and students at St. Therese Catholic School. Her gentle manner and strong faith are evident in her commitment to the well being of the staff and students. Helen is a source of compassion and hope. She is an inspiration and faith model to us in our professional and private lives. She is a witness to our faith in the sacramental preparation of our students. Helen cares deeply for her students and encourages them to always do their very best. She is an inspiration to all who know her.

**Pam Rupert** – *Teacher, St. Ursula Catholic School* – Pam’s impact on our school community is far reaching and exemplary. She is very involved in the co-planning of liturgical celebrations; in particular, her leadership and support in school Masses, prayer services and outreach programs for those in need, is inspiring. Pam’s efforts to bring our faith alive are remarkable. Through collaboration with other teachers, she has helped create the “Trinity Christian Dance Team,” which performs at various school and system celebrations. Everything Pam does, both in her classroom and throughout the school, is guided by her faith and the gospel teachings of Jesus Christ.

**Beth Dillon** – *Secretary, St. Vincent Catholic School* – Beth’s Christian values are evident every day in her work as secretary for St. Vincent Catholic School. She is frequently a nurse, friend and mother to our students. And to our parents, she is a helpful advisor and a tremendous source of information. She is respected by our staff for her patience and her tenderness. Beth’s energy is inspiring to all and she is a joy to be around. She models the Christian values of respect, care and commitment to Catholic education and to her parish. It is an honour for us to know such a faithful and devoted friend.

**Nicole Buscema** – *Student, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School* – This year, Nicole was the driving force behind the school’s relief effort for the victims of the tsunami in southeast Asia. Through her efforts, the students of St. Christopher adopted a school in India. Nicole has represented the school at two leadership seminars at the University of Western Ontario. She is an altar server and reader at her parish, and volunteers in the emergency room at a local hospital. Nicole epitomizes the Christian spirit and joy of giving to others.

**David George** – *Student, St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School* – David is a true leader by example. He has been recognized many times for the tremendous level of volunteer work he does, both at school and in the community. Last April, David represented St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School at the Forum for Young Canadians in Ottawa. He is also a tremendous supporter of the school’s annual *Cyclone Aid* food drive. David has devoted many hours of service to helping those in need.

**Chad Callander** – *Student, St. Patrick’s Catholic High School* – It is not so much what Chad has done, but rather how he does it, that is noteworthy. Chad leads by example, in a quiet and dedicated manner. His greatest example, and his gift to others, has been his service to his school and his community. He has been a student representative on the Board of Trustees for the St. Clair Catholic District School Board, Finance Minister for the School Council, a student representative to the Blue Water Health Advisory Board and a member of the Hugh O’Brien Building Youth Committee. Our school community is blessed to have known Chad, and to have benefited from his gifts and his service to us.

**Jim Tripp** – *Teacher, St. Patrick’s Catholic High School* – For over 30 years, our school board has been blessed by Jim Tripp. Jim has been a special education teacher, vice-principal and teacher of religion. Whatever the role, Jim has demonstrated his compassion, respect for others, and support for everyone around him. We have also grown to love his gentleness and his sense of humour. Jim is also an active member in the Knights of Columbus council in his parish. St. Patrick’s Catholic High School is proud to honour Jim with this award.

**Melissa Sharpe** – *Student, Ursuline College Chatham Catholic Secondary School* – Melissa witnesses her faith through her tremendous involvement in her parish and her community. At Melissa’s parish, she leads the music ministry and has founded the “Children’s Festival Choir,” which sings on special occasions. She also gives free guitar lessons to choir members and prepares all the music for the parish Masses. Her outreach to her community is also outstanding. Melissa coaches the basketball team at St. Joseph Catholic School in Tilbury. She is the swim coach for the community team and a member of the Mayor’s Youth Council. At school, Melissa has completed a term as Prime Minister and as a student representative on the Board of Trustees for the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. Melissa is a joy to know.

**Herb McCauley** – *Teacher, Ursuline College Chatham Catholic Secondary School* – Herb is an outstanding teacher, who is motivated by his faith. He is a gift to the students he teaches, and to those he mentors as a football coach. Herb has developed a unique and innovative program for students with special needs, and has helped them achieve great things through his never-ending support and encouragement. When the football team is on the road, Herb arranges for the players to attend Mass, where they are often recognized and welcomed in a special way. In his parish, Herb leads the Baptismal Preparation program. He shares his faith openly and easily, and is a blessing to all who know him.

**Nancy Bechard** – *Administrative Assistant, Catholic Education Centre* – Nancy truly models her faith in her role as administrative assistant to the Superintendent of Education. Her kindness and warmth are evident to visitors to the Catholic Education Centre and to those who work with her. Despite the demands of her own position, Nancy is always ready to lend a helping hand wherever she is needed. She has the confidence and trust of all who know her. She is a true supporter of Catholic education and one who celebrates her faith by inspiring others to always achieve their best for our schools.