



'St. Teresa of Calcutta' to be the Name of the New South Chatham Catholic Elementary School

The Board of Trustees has endorsed *St. Teresa of Calcutta* as the name of St. Clair Catholic's newest elementary school, located on Tweedsmuir Avenue, W. in south Chatham.

"I want to thank the school communities, especially the students, for their diligent research and thoughtful considerations, in arriving at the name *St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School*," says John Van Heck, Chair of the Board. "What a fitting name for a Catholic school. During her lifetime, St. Teresa lived her faith through her mission work to feed and clothe the poor. She is a symbol of compassion for the world."

Students in the Georges P. Vanier and St. Ursula communities, which includes the former St. Joseph Chatham, did research to determine a range of names, which were then put forward for consideration. The South Chatham Catholic Elementary School Transition Committee used the *Thoughtexchange* online consultation tool over a two-week period in June 2023. A link to the *Thoughtexchange* portal was emailed to all families in south Chatham and published in parish bulletins.

The consultation resulted in 263 participants sharing 221 thoughts about the names and rating the suggestions of others 12,340 times. The names *St. Teresa of Calcutta* and *Mother Teresa* emerged in a tie for the top spot, as the clear choice for the names most valued by the community. With input from the Diocese, *St. Teresa of Calcutta* was selected as the name which most appropriately respects and honours both the individual and her canonization as a Saint in 2016.

"I want to thank our communities and Bishop Fabbro for their thoughtful approach in helping to name our new school," says Scott Johnson, Director of Education. "This is an important step in the development of a new culture and identity for a Catholic school community; and the legacy of St. Teresa will provide fitting inspiration for our students and staff, as they continue their work to be the Hands and Feet of Christ in south Chatham."

The construction of *St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School* is expected to be completed by Spring 2024. Furniture, equipment and technology will be moved in and set up during the summer and the school will be open to students and staff in September 2024.

For further information regarding this release, please contact:

Catholic Education Centre
420 Creek Street
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4
www.st-clair.net

Director of Education
Scott Johnson
519-627-6762, ext. 10241
media@st-clair.net

Chair of the Board
John Van Heck
519-350-0025

Supervisor – Communications
and Community Relations
Todd Lozon
519-627-6762 Ext. 10243
todd.lozon@st-clair.net



Superintendent of Education Laura Callaghan Announces Her Retirement

After a long and successful career in Catholic education, which spans 35 years, Laura Callaghan has announced her retirement as Superintendent of Education, effective November 1, 2023.

Mrs. Callaghan began teaching French with the former Kent County Roman Catholic Separate School Board at École St. Francis in Tilbury, in 1988. She also taught at St. Joseph, Tilbury; Ursuline College; Monsignor Uyen; and the former Our Lady of Fatima before moving to the Catholic Education Centre as a Catholic Curriculum Consultant, with primary responsibility for French and the Arts.

She was appointed to her first principalship at Holy Family, which was followed by appointments at St. Joseph, Chatham and Christ The King. Her time as a school principal was interrupted with a return to the CEC, when she was appointed to the role of Assistant to the Superintendent. In 2015, Mrs. Callaghan was appointed to serve as Superintendent of Education. Most recently, she helped lead the school community consultation for the new Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School, which is currently under construction in Sarnia.

Provincially, Mrs. Callaghan served as President of OCSOA (Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association) during the 2022-2023 school year and has sat as a member of the organization's Board of Directors for several years. She is currently Chair of the Catholic Curriculum Corporation, a consortium which provides curriculum services to 17 Catholic school boards across central and western Ontario.

"For 35 years Laura has faithfully and lovingly served students, families and colleagues, both at St. Clair Catholic and across the province, with wisdom, grace and a gentle spirit," says Scott Johnson, Director of Education. "Her love of Catholic education and its mission to provide faith-filled learning in the formation of young people to become disciples of Christ has been at the centre of her life and her career."

"Now, she leaves to take on a new role, perhaps the best ever, as Grandma to two new grandbabies. Although we join in her excitement as she embarks on this new chapter in her life, we do so with a measure of sorrow, for the loss of a loved colleague and the tremendous knowledge and experience that she will take with her," says Mr. Johnson. "Laura, on behalf of us all, God's blessings to you and your family, for a rich and rewarding retirement!"

Members of the Board of Trustees expressed their thanks and appreciation to Mrs. Callaghan for her service to St. Clair Catholic and to Catholic education across the province at the Regular Board Meeting of Tuesday, October 24, 2023.

For further information regarding this release, please contact:

Catholic Education Centre
420 Creek Street
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4
www.st-clair.net

Director of Education
Scott Johnson
519-627-6762, ext. 10241
media@st-clair.net

Chair of the Board
John Van Heck
519-350-0025

Supervisor – Communications
and Community Relations
Todd Lozon
519-627-6762 Ext. 10243
todd.lozon@st-clair.net



Michelle Sawa Appointed Superintendent of Education

Director of Education Scott Johnson has announced the appointment of Michelle Sawa to the position of Superintendent of Education.

Ms. Sawa began her career as an educator with the Kenora Catholic District School Board in 1999. She comes to St. Clair Catholic from the Wellington Catholic District School Board, where, as a key member of Executive Council, she has provided leadership and direction under the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, Board Improvement Plan and Student Achievement Plan. Her portfolio responsibilities also included supervision of Special Education, a family of elementary and secondary schools, and the board's alternative education program. She is Chair of the Board's Faith Formation Student Achievement Team and is responsible for leadership of system-wide professional development.

Ms. Sawa has extensive experience as a school administrator in both elementary and secondary schools and has served as a classroom teacher, special education resource teacher, literacy teacher and teacher-in-charge. As an educational leader with extensive experience in northwestern Ontario, she has an authentic and deep understanding and respect for Indigenous histories, cultures, and perspectives. Ms. Sawa is passionate about promoting culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies that positively impact students, families and educators.

Together with this experience, she has comprehensive system-level expertise in special education, which includes a thorough knowledge and ability to impact equity and inclusion, eliminate systemic barriers, promote inclusion and close gaps to ensure student opportunity for all pathways. She is committed to embracing the development of equity, diversity and inclusion so that all students and staff can reach their full potential.

"I know that the entire St. Clair Catholic family joins with me as we welcome Michelle to our senior team," says Scott Johnson, Director of Education. "We wish her much continued success in her new role."

Ms. Sawa's first day at St. Clair Catholic will be November 13, 2023. She will take on the portfolio currently held by Laura Callaghan, who, announced her retirement on September 6, 2023.

For further information regarding this release, please contact:

Catholic Education Centre
420 Creek Street
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4
www.st-clair.net

Director of Education
Scott Johnson
519-627-6762, ext. 10241
media@st-clair.net

Chair of the Board
John Van Heck
519-350-0025

Supervisor – Communications
and Community Relations
Todd Lozon
519-627-6762 Ext. 10243
todd.lozon@st-clair.net