

PASTORAL PLAN

School Name: St. Andre Bessette

School Mission Statement:

Our School Community is committed to promoting and empowering youth to embrace a Catholic worldview through relationship, prayer, sacramental life, the virtues, and our Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. We value all the gifts that have been bestowed upon our students and strive to nurture these talents in an environment that fosters intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical and social growth.

St. Andre Bessette is a place of vast diversity, and we respect and celebrate the richness this diversity brings to all our community members. We are committed to putting our Faith into action as we promote compassion and generosity to those in need, and the collective responsibility to care for our natural environment by ensuring opportunities to practice stewardship. We strive, as did our patron Saint, Andre Bessette, to remember "God does not ask the impossible. God asks that we offer our good intentions, accept the inconveniences that come with each day, and offer our daily work."

Providing a quality education in a caring and empathetic environment where academic excellence and student wellbeing are at the forefront, is our continued priority.

School Motto: Prayer, Humility, Service

Our Parish: St. Patrick

Pastor: Rev. Msgr. Owen Keenan, Rev. R. Fraser McLaren

Parish website: <https://stpatricksbr.archtoronto.org/>

Message from the Pastor:

Dear St. Andre Bessette Students, Parents, Staff and Community,

On behalf of Fr Fraser, our new Associate Pastor at St Patrick's Parish, and in my own name, I am pleased to offer of the assurance of my prayers and blessings to each of you and your loved ones as another school year begins. With academics, sports, arts and spiritual and community events, this promises to be another busy and productive year for us all. Please take time - quality time - to spend with one another, above all our beautiful children, who look to us for love, attention, guidance and goodness. Amid the numerous demands on your time, please do take the time to bring your family Mass each Sunday; time given to God is never time wasted, but in truth is the most important thing we can do: for ourselves, our families, our school and our community. St Patrick's Parish welcomes each of you, and we are here to help each of you, especially parents, who are the primary educators of your children in the Faith. Feel free to reach out and let us know how we can serve you.

With prayers and friendship,

Msgr Owen

Message from the Catholic School Council:

St. Andre Bessette Catholic School Council values the important relationship between school, home and church. We promote community involvement through a variety of fundraising, educational and charitable initiatives and strive to ensure a caring and responsible partnership with all community members.

Catholic Education Week – May 4th – May 9th, 2025

Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope ***L'éducation catholique: Pèlerins de l'espérance***

Throughout Catholic Education Week, we ask you to reflect on the significance of Catholic education's presence and contribution in our Church, and in our society.

The quote for Catholic Education Week 2025 is:

"We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us."
(Letter on the Jubilee Year of Hope, February 11, 2022)

"Nous devons garder allumée la flamme de l'espérance qui nous a été donnée."
(Lettre sur le Jubilé de l'espérance; 11 février 2022)

The sub-themes for Catholic Education Week 2025 are:

Monday: **By honouring human dignity / Honorent la dignité humaine**

Tuesday: **By caring for creation / Prennent soin de la création**

Wednesday: **By responding to the poverties in our world / Luttent contre les pauvretés**

Thursday: **By serving in solidarity / Servent en solidarité**

Friday: **By living as peacemakers / Vivent en artisans de paix**

Catholic Education Week will be a week full of activity, prayer, reflection and celebration of the gift of Catholic Education that we are blessed to have here at St. Andre Bessette. We will begin the week by celebrating Mass with Fr. Fraser McLaren. During the week, we will host an opportunity for families to visit classrooms and to witness the academic and spiritual growth of their children. We will be focusing on Christian meditation and teaching families how they can integrate this practice in their homes through demonstrations from our students. Through a committee of educators, activities and learning opportunities will be planned.

Faith Formation:

Forming ourselves in our Catholic faith is a foundational element in helping each of us understand and live in the example of Christ. All staff and students participate in all of the Liturgical celebrations that occur throughout the year. It is our goal to integrate prayer into all facets of our school day. All classes begin and end each day in prayer and reflection. We have a very active group of student Youth Faith Leaders who create, promote and participate in many different faith based activities, including those concerned with social justice and works of charity.

We promote active participation in the sacramental life of the church through preparation of the sacraments (First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation) and regular attendance at Sunday Mass. Staff and students participate in both Advent and Lenten retreats and activities.

Sacramental Preparation:

As Catholics, we understand sacraments to be "outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace." Together in partnership with our parish, we support the preparation of God's children in receiving the sacraments.

Event	Grade 2	Grade 7
Sacrament of Reconciliation	TBD	
Sacrament of First Communion	May 13 th , 2025 7pm	
Sacrament of Confirmation		May 2 nd , 2025 7pm

Liturgical Celebrations:

The Liturgical calendar is marked by the gathering in community to celebrate the Eucharist and share in prayer.

Celebration	Date
Opening Mass	October 8 th , 2024
Remembrance Day Liturgy	November 11 th , 2024
Advent Mass	December 5 th , 2024

St. Andre Bessette Feast Day Liturgy	January 6 th , 2025
Ash Wednesday Liturgy	March 5 th , 2025
Confessions	March 25 th , 2025
Lenten Mass	April 3 rd , 2025
Stations of the Cross	April 17 th , 2025
Education Week Mass	May 5 th , 2025
Crowning of Mary	May, 2025
Graduation Liturgy	June 16 th , 2025

Social Justice / Outreach Activities / Charities:

Catholic Social Teachings of the Church root our actions in supporting human dignity and the preferential option of the poor which calls us to serve the most vulnerable in the world.

Our school community contributes to a variety of social justice causes, and charitable outreach programs. Our contributions include monetary donations as well as awareness and informational campaigns. Programs supported include: The Terry Fox Foundation, ShareLife, The Knights Table, Dr. Simone, The Heart & Stroke Foundation, and assisting families in our community at Christmas with our gift card drive. Our Eco-Team focuses on initiatives that support stewardship such as: “The Big Gulp”, “The Big Crunch”, waste audits, yard clean-ups and planting gardens.

Recognizing Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations:

Framed by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE), our graduates will be effective communicators, reflective thinkers, lifelong learners, collaborative contributors, caring family members, responsible citizens and discerning believers formed in the Catholic faith community.

As a school community, we work collaboratively to highlight the OCSGE in the lessons being taught in the classrooms, as well as in our interactions and relationships with others. We use

our weekly community updates to highlight the OCSGE for families, and we complete a monthly “Virtue Assembly and Activity” that is paired with an associated OCSGE.

Celebrating Virtues:

A virtue is a habit or established capacity to perform good actions according to a moral standard. When we practice these virtues, we strengthen them and thereby make the presence of God more and more visible in the world around us.

Each month we highlight the Virtue of the month in a school wide virtual liturgy and/or virtue activity that provides time for direct teaching of the virtue and a time of reflection for students. These monthly assemblies provide students with the opportunity to develop their understandings of how we can better strengthen our school community and reflect the values and teachings of Jesus. Each month, students from every class are recognized for exemplifying the previous month’s virtue. Their names are read out to the entire school community and they are awarded with a certificate and a virtue bracelet. Our altar, front cabinet and lobby bulletin board are used to display artifacts and information about each virtue and we use our weekly community update and boulevard sign to highlight the virtue that we are focusing on to the greater school community.

Visible Signs of our Faith:

Through symbol and service, we are instruments of God’s love whose work within our communities stands as a witness to our faith.

Upon entering our school you are welcomed by our altar that displays the colours and symbols of the Liturgical Season. The cross and the crucifix are the most common images that are located in all classrooms and offices in the school as a reminder of the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ for all peoples, and the kind of love He calls us to have for others. In addition, all classrooms have a sacred space that is used to display the various symbols of our Faith, some of which are created by our students. Throughout the year, teachers use the bulletin board strips located outside their classrooms to display student work that demonstrates their understandings of our Faith, values and responsibilities as Christian people. The Bible is our core resource when preparing liturgies, Masses, lesson plans, and daily prayers.

Resource List for Parents/Guardians:

- General Roman 2024-2025 Liturgical Calendar - [2024-2025 Liturgical Calendar](#)
- Religious Education Curriculum - [Ontario Religious Education Curriculum](#)
- New Family Life Curriculum 2023 - [Ontario Family Life Curriculum 2023](#)
- New Family Life Education Curriculum and Support Resources – [Institute for Catholic Education](#)
- Fully Alive Program information - [Ontario Bishops' information on Fully Alive](#)
- **Encyclical Letters** : ‘Laudato Si’, ‘Laudato Deum’ and ‘Christus vivit’
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation - [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- Catholic Education Week 2025 – [Catholic Education Week 2025](#)
- Jubilee Year 2025 – [Pilgrims of Hope](#)

Resource List for Schools:

Board

- General Roman 2024-2025 Liturgical Calendar - [2024-2025 Liturgical Calendar](#)
- Multi-Year Strategic Plan - [Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#)
- Renewing the Promise – [A Pastoral Letter for Catholic Education](#)
- **Encyclical Letters** : ‘Laudato Si’, ‘Laudato Deum’ and ‘Christus vivit’
- National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation - [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- Catholic Education Week 2025 – [Catholic Education Week 2025](#)

Signature Page

Pastor



Faith Ambassador(s) (*as applicable*)

Teacher(s)

ATORES

Chair of Catholic School Council



Vice Principal(s)

J. G. to.

Principal

J. Page

Superintendent