

“What a gem!”

St. André French Immersion school officially blessed



Father Gary Goyeau of Good Shepherd Parish leads a blessing ceremony at St. André Catholic French Immersion Elementary School, which opened in September.

(Tecumseh, Wed. Jan 6, 2016) – Asked to describe what her son’s experience has been like in senior kindergarten at the new St. André French Immersion Catholic Elementary School since it opened last September, Katie Corbett-Noseworthy had three simple words.

“What a gem!” she said.

“It’s a very family-oriented atmosphere,” added the chair of the school’s parent council.

“Everybody is very eager to help, they’re friendly, and they want to be here doing their job. As a parent, that’s the most reassuring thing to me.”

The school, formerly known as St. Gregory, re-opened last fall, offering single-track French Immersion to students in kindergarten, and Grades 1 and 2, with plans to grow the school as current students move through the grades, and even more enroll.

Named after St. André Bessette of Montreal – who was canonized by Pope Benedict in 2010 – the school was officially blessed by Father Gary Goyeau of Good Shepherd Parish at a ceremony on Wednesday and attended by numerous parents and local dignitaries.

WECDsB Director of Education Paul Picard expressed his gratitude to the parents who have enrolled their children in the school, noting his expectations that the school will certainly grow dramatically from its current enrolment of 76 students.

“Thank you for having faith in this journey that we have engaged in,” he said. “This place is going to get real big real fast.”

But for now, parents like Corbett-Noseworthy are extremely satisfied with the small, family like atmosphere at the school.

“Just to know that all of the children are with their own age group and that they’re going to grow together is really special,” she said.

Tecumseh school board trustee Susan Tope credited the passion and dedication with which the parents have embraced the school for making it so successful.

“Most importantly it’s the students who make this happen,” she said.

Tecumseh Mayor Gary McNamara thanked the board for re-opening the school and bringing Catholic French Immersion to his community.

“Neighbourhood schools like this are the foundation of any community, and this school provides us with a great opportunity to grow our community,” he said. “We have a partner in the school board and we’re looking forward to continued growth.”