

Good News Release

Schools in Petawawa, Deep River and Chalk River have had a month full of Spring activities!

April 27, 2026

St. Francis of Assisi, Petawawa

At St. Francis of Assisi in Petawawa, connecting with the local Military Base, Garrison Petawawa, has been vital for their school community. In February, students from Ms. Brasche's and Ms. Watson's classes visited the Base Petawawa Museum, enriching their curriculum with a focus on Canadian military history. The excursion highlighted the contributions of Black service members, discussing topics like segregation and celebrating Black excellence, including stories from the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion. Students participated in a craft, toured the museum, and utilized the "dress up" articles. Thanks to Chaplain Wendy Duguid for making this local trip possible for St. Francis of Assisi students.

Ms. Brasche's Grade 6 class visited the 450 Tactical Helicopter Squadron at CFB Petawawa to learn about Canadian military aviation. Students got a close look at the massive CH-147F Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, capable of transporting 44 passengers or huge loads. Highlights included experiencing the flight simulator, door gunnery simulator, and night vision goggles. The class also learned about the squadron's history and its vital role in domestic relief and international missions, connecting classroom science to real-world engineering and fostering respect for the specialized skills of the air and ground crews.

Additionally, the PMFRC Kids Deployment Services Group has been active in the school, supporting all students with military connections, deployed or at home. During the Lenten season, students focused on the parables and decorated their classroom doors to animate a parable they had chosen to display. Then, students had a chance to learn about each parable. It was a fun way to engage in faith-based learning.

A heartfelt thank you to Nuclear Laboratory Partners of Canada! The students, families, and staff of St. Francis of Assisi would like to extend their deepest gratitude to Nuclear Laboratory Partners of Canada (the parent company of CNL) for its incredibly generous \$25,000 donation.

This contribution is a major milestone for the school, as it has helped them get very close to their fundraising goal for their new climbing structure project. This donation will directly benefit students' physical well-being and lead to many awesome opportunities for creative play and friendship in the schoolyard, for students and community members, for years to come. Stacia Caouette-Boss, Vice-President of Human Resources (NLPC), joined members of the school council to present the school with a big cheque.

A vibrant Métis Culture Assembly offered K-5 students a deep dive into their rich culture. Through engaging activities like dancing to fiddle music, discussing the Métis flag, and exploring music and artifacts, students connected with historical and contemporary Métis experiences. The program supported the Social Studies curriculum by helping Grade 1 recognize Métis cultural revitalization, Grade 2 explore traditions, and Grade 5 analyze Louis Riel's contributions to Canada.



Garrison Petawawa Museum visit



450 Squadron Visit



The Parables

Junior students also participated in Ms. Dube's Biinaagami Giant Floor Map presentation, focusing on the Great Lakes watershed (Biinaagami means "clean water" in Anishinaabemowin). Using the "Drop" simulation and Augmented Reality, students learned how water connects life, discussed protecting waters from pollution, and explored Indigenous stories and the legacy of Josephine Mandamin, the "Water Walker." This immersive experience stressed the essential nature of clean freshwater for all life.

St. Anthony's Catholic School, Chalk River

At St. Anthony's Catholic School, the "St. Anthony's PROUD" award fosters a culture where students feel safe, connected, and valued. Far from a standard reward for expected behaviour, this sticker is a rare distinction that students work remarkably hard to earn. It is reserved for those who demonstrate genuine integrity without seeking recognition—whether quietly supporting a peer or fostering inclusion when no one is watching. By intentionally celebrating these unprompted, selfless contributions throughout the year, the school highlights the character that truly strengthens its community.

The "St. Anthony's Sheriff" initiative further encourages students to take ownership of their environment by promoting responsibility and care in shared spaces through engaging "reports" on areas like cubbies and kindness. Together, these programs reinforce the message that every student plays a role in shaping a respectful, welcoming, and positive school culture, which in turn encourages them to take pride in their school.

Giving back to the community is an important part of St. Anthony's school culture. They strive to help students understand the meaningful impact of small acts of kindness. Recently, the Kindergarten class took part in a heartwarming initiative by creating handmade cards and delivering them to homes throughout the Chalk River community. With care and excitement, the students designed cheerful messages and pictures for their nearby neighbours.

This simple yet powerful act helped these young learners see that they have the ability to make a difference. By stepping outside the school and connecting with community members, students experienced the joy of giving without expecting anything in return. Initiatives like this not only strengthen their connection with Chalk River but also help instill a lifelong sense of empathy, generosity, and community pride in their students.

St. Anthony's students and staff continue adding Indigenous language and culture to the school environment, regularly learning new Algonquin words at each assembly. This, along with the Grandfather teaching awards, reinforces the school's commitment to reconciliation and cultural awareness, making learning new words a collective and celebrated experience for all students and staff. Students will also be participating in the Annual RCCDSB Arctic Winter Games on April 28th, with 8 students heading to Eganville to participate in a day of Indigenous learning and friendly competition.

The school will soon be hosting a Teddy Bear Picnic, a kindergarten orientation event where future students are invited to bring their favourite teddy bear, take an exciting tour of the school led by current kindergarten students, and experience the magic of kindergarten at St. Anthony's.

St Mary's Catholic School, Deep River

At St. Mary's in Deep River, Cecily Vaughan earned a regional science fair medal and first place in her age category at the Renfrew County Regional Science Fair. Cecily's project involved a rigorous comparative study of various Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) devices (such as Dexcom and FreeStyle Libre) and the traditional finger-prick method to determine the most accurate way to measure blood sugar levels. Her comprehensive investigation proved her hypothesis correct and demonstrated her strong scientific skill in a topic of significant health relevance.



St. Anthony's Proud Award



Small Acts of Kindness in the St. Anthony's community



Cecily Vaughan with her regional science fair medal

Physical education at St. Mary's has evolved, with students in grades 4-8 enjoying a new archery program, led by two trained teachers who are instructing them on proper archery methods. The school's new curling sets have also arrived, and indoor curling has quickly become a popular and engaging activity among students.

The Virtue of the Month for April was Forgiveness. The school continues its strong relationship with the local parish through monthly masses. The April school mass saw the Grade 1 and 2 students take responsibility for the readings and petitions, as each class takes a turn monthly. During Lent, Mrs. Hermans, Religious Education Special Assignment Teacher (SPAT), visited and presented to all students to discuss the Icon Cross, which included time for prayer.

A new club has started with grade 4 students, and there is great newfound interest in learning to crochet among students!

All grades at St. Mary's Catholic School enjoyed virtual presentations focused on "working with magnets" provided by Scientists in the Classroom. Additionally, two students from St. Mary's Catholic School competed in the local Public Speaking competition, with Aurora Heal winning at the local level! The Deep River Orchestra Youth will be visiting St. Mary's Catholic School on one of their music days, and one of the students will have the opportunity to perform with them.

Students from St. Mary's Catholic School will participate in a Student Voice Forum for Indigenous students on April 30th to share their perspectives and experiences at school.

Students in grades 1 through 8 will be participating in a six-session swim program at the Deep River pool. This is part of the phys ed program, focusing on basic swimming skills, with students assessed and placed into groups by the lifeguards. Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 will attend a Skills Ontario presentation focused on the trades, providing students with early knowledge of the various career opportunities available to them.

Our Lady of Sorrows, Petawawa

At Our Lady of Sorrows, students engaged in the Stations of the Cross through the Lenten season. The Intermediate classes had the opportunity to participate in Mass, and the school continues to have a strong relationship with Father Dobec and Our Lady of Sorrows Parish.

Along with St. Francis of Assisi, Our Lady of Sorrows students in Grades K-5 also engaged in a vibrant Métis Culture Assembly. They experienced dancing to fiddle music, discussed the Métis flag, and explored artifacts, connecting with historical and contemporary Métis culture while supporting the Social Studies curriculum. Our Lady of Sorrows students also get support from the PMFRC Kids Deployment Services Group, as many students in both school communities have military ties. Both St. Francis of Assisi and Our Lady of Sorrows held a joint school dance as part of an ongoing collaboration between the Petawawa schools and Military families. Decorations were generously donated by families from both schools.

Our Lady of Sorrows Grade 6 students had a wonderful visit to Bishop Smith, as they prepare to start grade 7 there in the 2026-27 school year. The Bishop Smith community warmly welcomed visitors, offering school tours and engaging activities that provided a glimpse into life as a Grade 7 student at Bishop Smith Catholic High School.

Students across RCCDSB had an engaging and faith-filled month of April. With the warmer months approaching, the schools look forward to enjoying more outdoor learning activities with students.



Archery at St. Mary's



Curling at St. Mary's



Scientist in the Classroom Presentation