

1890 - 1940

Golden Jubilee Souvenir

St. Lawrence's
Church

Hamilton, Ontario
Canada

November 17-18-19

1940



Dedication

This Souvenir Brochure, published on the occasion of the Celebration of the Golden Jubilee of St. Lawrence's Church, as a permanent record of the humble beginning and the progressive development of the Parish and its institutions, is dedicated to the revered memory of the wise and prudent Pastors, the Founders and Builders of the Parish.

James J. Flahagan
Pastor



THE MOST REVEREND JOSEPH FRANCIS RYAN, D.D., J.C.D.
Bishop of Hamilton.

1890 - 1940

Authentic Historical Survey of St. Lawrence's Parish

Foreword

The celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Lawrence's Parish is an appropriate occasion for looking back in retrospect over the last fifty years of parochial endeavour in the north end of the City of Hamilton.

A period of fifty years is indeed a short time when placed against the background of almost two thousand years of history which the Catholic Church has written in every land. However, in a new land like Canada, with the lapse of only a few hundred years since the heroic Jesuit martyrs first raised the Cross on its shores, fifty years of zeal and effort in the spiritual care of Catholic families is quite long enough to indicate the progress made in diocesan or parish work. Older people still alive furnish a link with the early days when churches and priests were few in number, when the march of Christian civilization was beginning and had not as yet expanded into the wider areas so populous to-day. Catholics of those pioneer generations were men and women of rugged frame, stern resolve, and enlightened vision. They laid

the foundations of future advancement and growth deeply and permanently. The various dioceses and parishes of this Province, in fact of this entire country, are a striking manifestation of the unquenchable permanence of the Catholic spirit which they embodied in their works. No one would dream of the hardships and sacrifices of the first Catholic settlers by a mere glance at the stately edifices and fine institutions which are the very heart of the thriving cities, towns, villages and countryside as we know them today. If those who have passed to their reward could but see the transformation wrought by loving hearts and willing hands down through the years, there is no doubt they would be overwhelmed by the stupendous fruits of their vision and toil.

In the history of the Hamilton Diocese we have a true reflection of the above picture. Pioneer bishops, priests and faithful, combined to build lasting and well for the future of the Church and other institutions in this part of God's Vineyard of which we are the grateful heirs.



REV. JAMES J. FLAHAVERN
Present Pastor

Inauguration of the Parish

St. Mary's and St. Patrick's were long the only English-speaking Catholic churches in Hamilton. Meanwhile the city was growing, and with it the percentage of Catholics was increasing. In keeping with her age-old custom of bringing the Church and Her ministrations to the doors of the people, the Most Rev. T. J. Dowling, D.D., then Bishop of Hamilton, authorized the erection of the present beautiful edifice of St. Lawrence. Bishop Dowling, a son of Hamilton, had been consecrated Bishop of Peterboro in 1887, but in 1889 had succeeded Bishop Carberry in the Episcopal See of Hamilton. He had been gratified to find that in 1882 under Bishop Crinnon's guidance a valuable property had been purchased on the corner of Picton and Mary Streets. This property had formerly been known as

"Bayside Hill." It had been used as a playing field, and was purchased by the diocesan authorities for the sum of less than two thousand dollars.

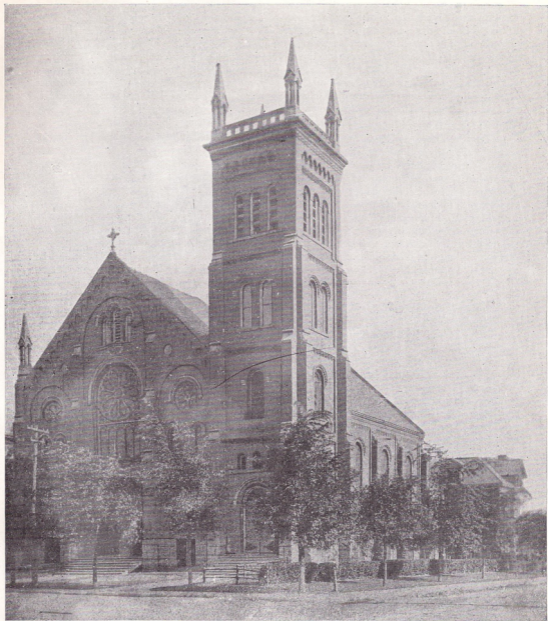
Laying of the Corner Stone

Rev. Father George O'Sullivan was appointed first pastor of the new parish of St. Lawrence by Bishop Dowling, who directed that excavations begin early in 1890. On the Feast of Pentecost, May 6th, of that year, in the presence of over two thousand people, the Bishop blessed and laid the corner stone of the new church. The Bishop was assisted in the solemn and impressive ceremony by Vicar-General Heenan, Vicar-General Kehoe, and Rev. Fathers Slavin of Oakville, O'Leary of Freelon, Carriere of Caledonia, Fathers Kelly, McEvay, Brady, Coty, Hinchey of Hamilton, and the pastor, Father O'Sullivan. Rt. Rev. M. Halm, who now resides at the House of Providence, Dundas, was also present.

Accompanied by the clergy, the Bishop proceeded to the platform erected at the north-east corner of the building, where he carried out the prescribed ritual of the Church, using for the occasion a specially fashioned golden trowel and mortar tray.



REV. LEO KELLY
Present Assistant at St. Lawrence's



ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, HAMILTON, ONT.

The stone was lowered and laid in position with the following prayer: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we lay this first stone in this foundation in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and pray that there may flourish true faith, the fear of God, and brotherly love, that this place may be devoted to prayer and to the praise of the Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth world without end. Amen."

Under the stone had been placed a receptacle containing copies of the Hamilton papers, the Catholic Review, the Catholic Record, a number of coins and the following document signed by the clergy who were present: "On Sunday the Feast of Pentecost, May 6th, in the year of our Lord 1890, the corner stone of this Church (erected by the faithful of Hamilton, to the honor and glory of Almighty God under the patronage of St. Lawrence, Martyr), was laid with all the ceremonies of the Roman Pontifical by the Most Rev. T. J. Dowling, Bishop of Hamilton; His Holiness Pope Leo XIII, gloriously ruling the Church; Her Majesty Queen Victoria, being Sovereign of the British Empire; His Excellency Lord Stanley, Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada; Sir Alexander Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Ontario; David McLellan, Mayor of the City of Hamilton, and Robert Clohecy, architect of the building. Among others who devoutly assisted at the solemn ceremony were the diocesan priests, together with a large concourse of people."

Erection and Blessing of the Church

So expeditiously was the work of construction carried on under the superintendency of Robert Clohecy, the architect, that the building was completed by Nov. 23rd, 1890.

The blessing and formal opening of the church took place at 10 a.m., on that date, with his Lordship Bishop O'Connor of London, Ontario, officiating. Among the dignitaries present were His Grace Archbishop

Walsh of Toronto; His Lordship Bishop Dowling of Hamilton; Rt. Rev. Vicar-General Heenan; Rt. Rev. W. McCann of Toronto; Father Marijoh, Provincial of the Basilian Order; Father Wm. Kloepper, St. Jerome's College, Kitchener; Rev. John Craven, St. Patrick's Church, Hamilton, Chancellor of the Diocese; Rev. Fathers Dougherty, Guelph; Best, Niagara Falls; Brennan, London; Dougherty, Arthur; Fathers McEvay, Brady, Coty, Halm, Haley and O'Sullivan of Hamilton.

The Most Rev. Bishop Dowling celebrated the Pontifical High Mass at 10.30. He was assisted by Vicar-General Heenan as assistant priest; Father Brady, deacon; Father Coty, sub-deacon; Fathers Marijoh and Kloepper, deacons of honor. Very Rev. Dean McCann and Father Dougherty assisted the Archbishop; Rev. Fathers Craven and Brennan assisted the Bishop of London.

Mozart's Twelfth Mass was sung by the combined choirs of the churches of Hamilton, accompanied by an orchestra of twelve pieces. Prof. D. J. O'Brien directed the entire musical service, with Mr. J. B. Nelligan as the leader of the orchestra, and Mr. J. W. Bauman as leading violinist.

His Grace Archbishop Walsh preached an eloquent sermon from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (C. 1, Vs. 23-24), "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the gentiles, foolishness. But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

Description of the Church

The handsome structure is built in the Norman Romanesque style of ecclesiastical architecture. The south facade is on Picton Street, with the massive and lofty tower on the eastern side, giving the whole edifice a majestic appearance. The building, exclusive of tower and vestry, measures 130 x 55 feet. The foundation is of solid uncoursed rubble stone. The superstructure is of the best quality brick, and is finished with cut stone elaborately carved throughout. The front is divided into buttresses



VERY REV. R. E. M. BRADY

and arches, and is separated by pilasters into three bays. The main entrance in the centre bay is finished with a pediment richly capped with mounted stone coping, and an ornamental stone cross. Immediately above the pediment is a very handsome mullioned rose window surmounted by a richly moulded transom. Above this window in the gables is a beautiful triple window, elaborately finished in carved cut stone. To the east of the south facade or front stands the lofty and imposing tower. The tower is built in four stories, with windows on each level. Parapets and pinnacles rise to a height of 110 feet. The south-west angle of the church has diminished buttresses and pinnacles corresponding with those in the tower. The sides are divided into six bays by pilasters and buttresses, and each bay is pierced with a mullioned circlehead in tracery. Extending north from the main building is the chancel, with circular apse and circular windows. Adjoining the chancel on the east and west are chapels with a spacious vestry on the west side. The entire building, with basement and vestry, is amply provided with light.

The Interior

Passing through the main entrance, one enters a wide and deep vestibule communicating with the nave of the church, the basement hall and the gallery, all being easy of access. Stepping within the church proper the first view of the nave and sanctuary is one of impressive vastness, unobstructed by pillars, and within comfortable range of the vision. Above, the vaulted ceiling, richly panelled, spreads a splendid canopy over the interior, while the semi-circular chancel, with its dignified marble altars, gives heart and meaning to the whole perspective. A lofty arch delicately moulded, and encircled with label moulds and corbels, separates the nave from the chancel. The side arches leading to the chapels are identical in design and finish. As one turns from the arresting view of the interior of the church, the choir loft or gallery meets



RT. REV. J. F. HINCHEY



INTERIOR OF ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH SOME 40 YEARS AGO



PRESENT INTERIOR OF ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH

the eye. This is commodious in size and is embellished with nicely contrived cornice and recessed circular panel work in wood.

The windows of cathedral glass, with finely tinted margins, are tastefully designed with geometrical and symbolic figures.

A very important characteristic of any large building in which public speaking is featured is that of the acoustics. In St. Lawrence's Church these are remarkable, as the human voice, even in low pitch, comes clearly and distinctly from the Sanctuary or the pulpit to the vestibule doors. Not of much less importance is the ventilation. In this building the stern demands of the modern system of ventilation are very well met, providing the maximum of comfort for the congregation.

Altogether, the vision and thoroughness exercised in the erection and completion of the church, including the installation of a permanent slate roof, reflect the greatest credit on those responsible for its construction, and down the years each pastor has made his contribution to the permanence of the edifice.

Noteworthy Improvements

In 1891 the bell was placed in the tower and the Stations of the Cross erected. In 1908 the church was decorated and together with the marble altar was consecrated by Bishop Dowling. In this same year the organ was installed. The steam heating system and the electric fixtures were placed in the church in 1909 and 1913 respectively, while improvements were made in 1923. For the purposes of record it should be here interposed that in 1937 the church arch showed evident signs of serious impairment. These necessary repairs were made so that the safety of the building is secured for years to come.

The Altar and Pulpit

The main altar, in keeping with the Romanesque architecture of the church prop-

er, was the gift of the late R. O. and A. B. McKay, prominent non-Catholics and owners of steamship lines. Carved and sculptured by world-famous artists in the renowned Italian Carrera marble quarries, this altar with its immense reredos is exquisitely set in the large Sanctuary. Like it, the altar and the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and those of St. Joseph are of Carrera marble. The former, erected and blessed in 1926, were purchased with church funds augmented by small donations from parishioners, the latter being made possible by one hundred contributions of \$25.00 each. The pulpit is of marble and was installed in 1929. The marble work in St. Lawrence's Church may be placed in the finest category of any in this country. The quality of material and delicacy of workmanship are superb, being a constant source of admiration to visitor and parishioner alike. Nothing has been left undone to bring the whole structure and its fittings into appropriate harmony, and this is what gives the edifice an exceptional religious and inspirational spirit.

Decorations

The church has been decorated twice since erection, the first time, as has been noted, in 1908 under the direction of Rev. Father Brady, the second in 1935 under the supervision of Rev. Father Flahaven. However, the original motif of the first artists has not been greatly changed except for further adornment. Pictures of the Apostles and Evangelists lend beauty to the ceiling of the Sanctuary, while that of the nave is set in relief by representations of Angels, each with a scroll containing a verse of the Te Deum, the hymn of St. Ambrose.

When the decoration was undertaken in 1908, a large number of canvas murals, with beautifully executed religious subjects, were placed on the walls of the church. These were obtained through donations received from the Most Rev. T. J. Dowling, Most Rev. F. P. McEvay, Archbishop of Toronto, Rev. J. H. Coty, and many parishioners whose names appear on a tablet at the rear of the church.



THE RECTORY OF ST. LAWRENCE'S PARISH

The Rectory

The present priest's residence was built in 1898 by the Rev. Father Brady, who until that time had lived at 442 Mary Street. He gave it the sobriquet "Bellurbet Terrace."

St. Lawrence's School

The name of the patron of the parish, St. Lawrence, did not originate with the building of the church in 1890. A lot of romance attaches to this name in the north end of Hamilton, since the opening of St. Lawrence's Separate School took place in 1869. The north end is one of the oldest sections of the city, but its development was hindered by the condition of the terrain. Houses were built, it is true, but it was necessary to divide them into different groups located on the higher levels of the land, which were in turn separated by inlets from the bay or low marshy places unsuitable for buildings. Narrow and sometimes precipitous pathways were the only means of communication between these groups of houses. There were no roads or sidewalks.

Confronted with these difficulties of going any distance to school, and with the number of children rapidly increasing, the opening of a school in this section became imperative, especially for the accommodation of the younger children. A two-storey stone building on what is now the southeast corner of Ferrie and John Streets was purchased for the purpose. Formerly occupied by the grandfather of Edward Crofton of Ferrie Street East, it was made ready for occupation as a school by transforming the upstairs into a room for the girls, and the downstairs into one for the boys. An outside stairway, rudely enclosed, was used to reach the upper room.

The first teachers were members of the Sisterhood of St. Joseph. Names familiar to old-timers are those of Sister Ambrosia, Sister Francis Joseph, Sister Gertrude, Sister Berchmans, Mother Xavier, Mother Vincent, Sister Helena, Sister Perpetua and Sister Cecilia. These revered women, with a host of many others, are held in memorable esteem in the parish.

It was not long until the number of children outgrew the accommodations. A small brick addition was built in the 70's. This soon proved inadequate, and in 1885 the old stone building was demolished and replaced by a more up-to-date brick school, which satisfied the needs of the school section until 1922. In that year the present fine school building was erected, and the school grounds were enlarged to their present proportions. A modern diet kitchen in the basement now gives the school ten schoolrooms, with an enrolment of 365 pupils. The staff comprises six sisters of St. Joseph and three lay teachers.

Early Families

The history of St. Lawrence's would not be complete without recalling the names of some of the families prominent in the early history of the north end. Two native sons rose to prominence in the Church in the persons of the late Most Rev. T. J. Dowling, D.D., who presided over the destinies of the Diocese of Hamilton for some thirty-five years, and the Most Rev. Joseph Francis Ryan, D.D., J.C.D., who was consecrated Bishop of Hamilton, October 19th, 1937, in the Cathedral of Christ the King, Hamilton. Other native sons given to the Church will recall the names of well-known families of St. Lawrence's congregation: Rev. Thomas McMahon, S.J.; the late Rev. J. P. Cummings, the late Rev. Father Willoughby; the late Rev. Dennis J. McBride; the late Rev. Wm. Dermody; Rev. B. A. Harris; Rev. Leo McBride; Rev. Joseph McCarthy, O.F.M.; Rev. Philip Campbell; Rev. J. Corbett Warren; Rev. Anthony O'Brien, and the present pastor, Rev. James J. Flahaven. The following list of Catholic names, while not complete, will nevertheless serve to bring back memories of the early days along the bay front: Barry, Berry, Blake, Canary, Carey, Clark, Cleary, Connolly, Conway, Cullen, Crofton, Dillon, Dowd, Dowling, Dunn, Enright, Fagan, Falahee, Flahaven, Ford, Friday, Glavin, Gompf, Hanley, Harris, Hayes, Hickey, Hunter, Kavanagh, Joyce, Keating, Keegan, Kinsella, Kyle, Mc-

Cabe, McCarthy, McCully, McGowan, McGovern, Mahoney, McMahan, Marck, Mulvale, Murphy, McKeever, Nelligan, Nelson, Noonan, O'Brien, O'Connor, O'Neill, O'Reilly, Pauley, Phillips, Phoenix, Quinn, Quinlan, Reardon, Roach, Shaughnessey, Schelter, Sullivan, Taulty, Thompson, Tyne, Walsh, Warren, Willoughby, Winn, White, and Yorrell.

Parish Records

As in every Catholic Parish, the parish registers are an illuminating and exact record of the spiritual life of the parishioners throughout the years. The inscribed details of the baptisms, first communions, confirmations, marriages and deaths reveal the history of the parish, and form as it were a continuous chain of historical events in the lives of the parishioners. It is interesting to note that the first baptism administered in St. Lawrence's Church was that of James Glavin, son of the late Patrick and Mrs. Glavin, Ferrie Street. This took place December 15th, 1890, the officiating priest being Rev. George O'Sullivan. The first wedding was that of Dennis Phillips and Sarah McDonald on March 21st, 1891, and the first funeral was that of James Conway, January 9th, 1891.

St. Lawrence's Choir

Since the inception of the parish, St. Lawrence's Choir has written an enviable record in the annals of the church. Some splendid musicians have added lustre to its accomplishments, and inspired the work which has carried it down the years to its present high reputation. Ever realizing the important place given music, its instrumental and vocal rendition in the liturgy of the Church; conscious also of the deep honor and responsibility devolving on themselves, members of this choir in succeeding generations have labored faithfully to render the ceremonial chants of the Church in a manner befitting the House of God.

Among the choir directors, such well known musicians as J. B. Nelligan, A. J.

Nelligan, Margaret Nelligan, Mrs. Joseph Campbell, Thomas Sweeney, Bella Marcks (Mrs. J. Tilden), Oscar Hiscott, Josephine Morrissey, and the present organist and leader James F. Morrissey, have in their day made notable contributions of talent and time to the excellence of the Choir.

Parish Societies

The Societies of the parish functioning at the present time show forth the zeal of the priests attached to St. Lawrence's, and the earnestness and fidelity of the people—a splendid legacy of devotion from the past. They are as follows: The St. Vincent de Paul Society, The Legion of Mary, The Holy Name Society, The Altar Society, The Holy Childhood, The Ladies' Aid, The C. Y. O., The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament and the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

Novena in Honor of St. Anthony

The perpetual Novena exercises in honor of the gentle Saint of Padua were inaugurated Tuesday night, December 1st, 1933. A very attractive shrine was incorporated in the Chapel of St. Joseph, where a petition box is kept for the convenience of the faithful. Difficult to obtain and very precious indeed is the first-class authentic relic of St. Anthony in the possession of the parish. It is exposed for veneration at each of the weekly devotions, which have been carried on consistently every Tuesday night since 1933.

Pastors and Curates

As has been mentioned, the first pastor to take charge of St. Lawrence's was Rev. George O'Sullivan, who remained in office during the year 1890 and part of 1891. Shortly after completing the first year of his pastorate he was compelled to retire on account of illness.

He was succeeded in December, 1891, by Very Rev. R. E. M. Brady. Father Brady came to Hamilton from Montreal, having been ordained in 1888. A zealous and tireless administrator, he contributed in no small way to the spiritual and material growth of the parish. Revered and loved by Catholic and non-Catholic alike for his many unusual personal and priestly gifts, he was a familiar figure on the streets of the city, and in the homes of numberless people where he was greeted always with great affection and with the deepest respect. In March, 1911, after a fruitful ministry of 20 years at St. Lawrence's, he was appointed pastor of St. Basil's, Brantford, and Dean of Brant and Haldimand Counties, which office he held until his death.

Right Rev. J. F. Hinchey, D.P., now pastor of St. Mary's Church, was chosen by Bishop Dowling to succeed Father Brady. For 22 years, that is until March, 1933, Monsignor Hinchey carried on his pastoral work with the same conscientious zeal as his predecessor. Held in high esteem and reverence for his priestly character and his manifold gifts, he endeared himself to his people, and his name and accomplishments, like those of Father Brady before him, will be cherished memories in the annals of this now historic parish long after the celebration of this fiftieth anniversary has passed.

With the exception of Rev. Father Cooper, who assisted Father Brady for a short time in 1905, there were no permanent assistant priests attached to St. Lawrence's until January, 1922, when Rev. T. B. Traynor, M.A., was appointed the first curate of the parish. He was succeeded in September, 1926, by Rev. V. A. Dermody, M.A., then by Rev. James Ryan, M.A., who in turn, was followed in September, 1928, by Rev. J. Clair Leavey, who remained until 1933, when he was given temporary charge of the parish of Ayton, and later made pastor of Southampton.

In March, 1933, Most Rev. J. T. McNally, D.D., Bishop of Hamilton, appointed the Rev. James J. Flahaven, pastor of St. Lawrence's. This is a strikingly noteworthy event as Father Flahaven is a native of the parish. Until his college days he spent his

boyhood in the shadow of the church of which he is now pastor. He went to St. Lawrence's School and received his direction from Father Brady. A graduate of St. Jerome's College, Kitchener, Ontario, and of the Grand Seminary, Montreal, he was ordained in St. Mary's Church by Bishop Dowling on December 23rd, 1911. For over three years he served as curate of St. Patrick's Church under Deans Cory and Craven, and in the years which followed he was successively pastor at Acton, Markdale, Teeswater, Hespeler and Brantford (St. Mary's) before assuming charge of St. Lawrence's. His personal and administrative qualities have won him lasting respect and endearment. He has brought exceptional solicitude and care to his responsibilities of office, and he ranks high in the affection and regard of his parishioners who now number some three hundred families.

Since accepting this incumbency he has been assisted in his parish work by Rev. F. X. Neville, Rev. P. Campbell, Rev. Gilbert Dehler, Rev. Daniel Simpson, and by the present curate, Rev. Leo Kelly. The Rev. Frank Kelly, of the staff of the Cathedral High School, was also his assistant until his unfortunate demise, February 18th, 1940.



Ad Multos Annos

Now that fifty years have gone by and the occasion has been fittingly memorialized by the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the parish on November 17th, 18th and 19th of this year, 1940, and now that these chronicles are set down as an enduring record of great achievements in the past for God and for souls, and as a tribute to former parish builders, one may be pardoned for hoping that what has been done so fruitfully down through the years may serve as a light of inspiration and a beacon of guidance for the next fifty years, and for the other years yet to come.

Golden Jubilee Functions



SUNDAY, NOV. 17th

11.00 A.M.—Solemn Pontifical High Mass,

The Most Rev. J. F. Ryan, D.D., Bishop of Hamilton, Celebrant.

Assistant Priest—

Rt. Rev. J. F. Hinchey, D.P.

Deacon—

Rev. J. J. Flahaven.

Sub-Deacon—

Rev. V. A. Dermody.

Honorary Deacons—

Rev. Leo Kelly.

Rev. J. C. Warren.

Master of Ceremonies—

Rev. Anthony O'Brien.

7.30 P.M.—Holy Hour of Thanksgiving.

Rt. Rev. J. F. Hinchey, Preacher.

MONDAY, NOV. 18th

9.00 A.M.—Solemn Requiem High Mass for all deceased parishioners and benefactors.

TUESDAY, NOV. 19th

9.00 A.M.—High Mass for all present and former parishioners of St. Lawrence's Church who are living.

7.30 P.M.—Perpetual Novena Devotions in honor of Saint Anthony.



ST. LAWRENCE'S SCHOOL