

[Back to regular view](#) [Print this page](#)

[newssun](#)

Founder of new Frassati Catholic Academy named Distinguished Pastor

By Judy Masterson

jmasterson@stmedianetwork.com

Last Modified: Feb 5, 2011 02:37AM

WAUCONDA — Students, faculty and staff at Frassati Catholic Academy gathered on Friday to celebrate their founding president, the Rev. Ronald Lewinski, pastor of St. Mary of the Annunciation Catholic Church in Mundelein.

Lewinski, who will accept the Distinguished Pastor of the Year Award in April from the Washington, D.C.-based National Catholic Education Association, led three neighboring parishes — his own, plus Santa Maria del Popolo, also in Mundelein, and Transfiguration in Wauconda — in the creation of the first-ever middle school in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Named after anti-Fascist Catholic activist Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, an Italian who was barely 24 when he died of polio in 1925, the school's academic program offers a concentration in math and science and the creative use of technology. Students use Macbooks in their coursework.

The school at 316 W. Mill St. opened in August and serves 132 sixth- through eighth-graders. Students gathered in the gym to watch a congratulatory video presentation for Lewinski that they helped to make.

"He's been an inspiration to all of us," said eighth-grader and student body president Megan Teehan, 14.

Lewinski thanked the pastors and members of the academy's partner parishes, as well as Frassati students and staff.

"Behind every award, there's a whole lot of people," he told students who sat before him on the gym floor. "No matter how brilliant a vision is, you need people to run with it and make it happen."

Frassati said he used to wonder what the school he envisioned would look like.

"Now I know," he said. "It looks like you."

Lewinski urged students to continue to look to Giorgio Frassati, who was beatified by the church in

1990, as a model for perseverance.

“You may have a good idea, but you must find people to support it, to continue to move it forward,” he said. “This award is congratulations to all of us and an invitation to ask ‘Where do we go from here?’”

Students responded by shouting Frassati’s motto, “verso l’alto!” or “to the top!”

Katie and Patrick Teehan of Mundelein, Megan’s parents, said the new school offered a nurturing atmosphere for middle-schoolers and a better preparation for high school.

“They’re able to have their own community now,” Katie Teehan said.

Copyright © 2011 — Sun-Times Media, LLC
