



The benefits OF COMMUNITY AND SOLIDARITY...



Virginie Mazoyer and her children Capucine and Gabin, at the stone in front of École régionale Notre-Dame.

photo: Courtesy of Virginie Mazoyer

BY CAMILLE HARPER

While the very tight social fabric in rural areas can sometimes present an obstacle to integration for some newcomers, this was not the case for Virginie Mazoyer, who came from France in December 2016 to settle in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes with the two youngest of her seven children while her husband, Stéphane Mazoyer, remained in France to work.

Since her French teaching diploma was not recognized in Manitoba, the couple preferred to keep a job in France to ensure the family finances.

Virginie Mazoyer describes her host community: “I found a family in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, a great support. It made all the difference in difficult times.

“From my neighbours to my co-workers, everyone really welcomed me. During winter when my husband came to visit, for example, someone from the community offered to drive to Winnipeg to pick him up at the airport, just so I wouldn’t be alone on snowy roads or have to take a day off. Without this great support, I don’t know if I would have stayed in Manitoba!”