

Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association

Association canadienne des commissaires d'écoles catholiques



December/décembre 2012

CCSTA NEWSLETTER/COMMUNIQUÉ DE L'ACCEC

www.ccsta.ca

Come for the Conference, stay for the experience! Venez pour le congrès, restez pour le plaisir

The CCSTA Winnipeg 2013 Planning Committee is busy preparing for the AGM next June. We plan to offer you an experience that you will never forget. The Catholic School Community of Manitoba wants you to come and embrace the spirit of our Catholic Schools and the City of Winnipeg. You will experience the energy of our students through their music, dance, drama, art, and prayer. All seventeen Catholic Schools in Winnipeg are excited to be part of the experience of hosting the CCSTA. Be prepared to listen to a cool jazz band, young violinists, and the songs from musicals. We lift up our voices in prayer through the music of the choirs of our elementary and high schools.

We have a stimulating program of keynote speakers and workshops planned. Speakers include Rev. Stefano Penna, Dr. Sandra Kennedy, Mr. William Sadlier Dinger, Dr. Jerome Cranston, Rev. Mark Tarrant, and Archbishop Albert LeGatt.

We want the delegates to experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of Winnipeg. We have arranged for a pre-convention tour that includes Lower Fort Garry National Historic Park, Historic River Road and a French Canadian lunch at the Riverview Café. There will be two companion tours. One tour includes the Leo Moll Sculpture Gardens and stops at trendy shopping areas in the city and the Morden's Chocolate Factory. The second tour includes the sites of the French Quarter of Winnipeg, Saint Boniface including the home of Gabrielle Roy, the St. Boniface Museum and Cathedral.

All the senses will be heightened at the opening ceremonies when we celebrate the people of the Red River, the First Nations, Scottish, French, and Métis. Ca Claque will thrill you with the music and dance

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Le comité organisateur du congrès/AGA de l'ACCEC 2013 à Winnipeg se prépare activement pour juin prochain. Nous voulons vous faire vivre une expérience inoubliable. La communauté scolaire catholique du Manitoba désire que vous veniez participer à l'esprit qui anime nos écoles catholiques et la ville de Winnipeg. Vous serez comblés de l'énergie de nos étudiants à travers la musique, les arts et la prière. Chacune des dix-sept écoles catholiques de Winnipeg est fière de contribuer à accueillir l'ACCEC/CCSTA. Vous entendrez un groupe de jazz, de jeunes violonistes et des extraits de comédies musicales.

Nous élèverons nos voix en prière par la musique des chorales de nos écoles primaires et secondaires.

Nos ateliers et nos conférenciers seront vraiment stimulants. Parmi ces derniers, retrouvez le Rév. Stefano Penna, la Dr. Sandra Kennedy, M. William Sadlier Dinger, le Dr. Jerome Cranston, le Rév. Mark Tarrant, et Mgr l'archevêque Albert LeGatt.

Nous voulons que les participants aient une expérience visuelle, sonore et gustative de Winnipeg. Nous avons organisé une excursion pré congrès qui vous amènera au Parc historique Lower Fort Garry, au célèbre River Road et au Riverview Café pour un

lunch typiquement canadien-français. Il y aura aussi deux autres randonnées disponibles. L'une d'elles comprendra une visite du Leo Moll Sculpture Gardens avec un arrêt aux magasins à la mode de la ville et à la Morden's Chocolate Factory. L'autre comprendra une visite de Saint-Boniface, le quartier français de Winnipeg, avec des arrêts à la maison de Gabrielle Roy, au Musée de Saint-Boniface et à la cathédrale.

Lors des cérémonies d'ouverture, tous nos sens seront charmés par la célébration des peuples de la Rivière Rouge, des Premières Nations, des Métis, des Écossais et des Canadiens-
LA SUITE À LA PAGE 3



The Catholic Schools of Manitoba are preparing for the 2013 CCSTA AGM, which will be hosted in Winnipeg. Organizers have set an exciting agenda, which will include cultural performances!

Les Écoles catholiques du Manitoba vous attendent à Winnipeg pour le congrès/AGA de l'ACCEC 2013. Notre programme excitant sera agrémenté de spectacles culturels!

In This Issue



Gold Medal
Event



Hosting on the
Hill



Endowment
Fund Recipients

President's Message

I am honored to be serving as president of CCSTA. We had a very successful annual conference and AGM in Sudbury and I thank all those who worked so hard to make it a success. I am looking forward to continuing the good work of our previous presidents and boards. Thank you to Paula Peroni for her service as president and the leadership she provided us. I look forward to her continued support and guidance in her position as past president. Congratulations Mike St. Amand on his election as vice president and welcome to returning members of the board and to the new directors who have joined us. I wish to work with all of you in promoting and protecting Catholic education in Canada.

Through the summer hiatus and into the fall, we have continued to monitor activities across the country. There are new executive directors for ACSTA and AFOCSC. Dean Sarnecki and Benoît Mercier assumed their respective positions over the summer. The National Conversation executive committee continued to meet over the summer break and thanks to Gerry Bibby and his committee for continuing the planning work. The conference will be here before we know it. This will be the third in the series of national conversations about Catholic education and it will be as timely as ever. Please consider attending and participating.

In conjunction with our board of directors' meeting in October in Ottawa we were pleased to host a small reception for selected Members of Parliament to continue building relationships with political leaders in support of Catholic education. The gathering was a great success with many comments supporting Catholic education from those who attended. Thanks to our office staff and Ensign Canada, the firm we have engaged to help with political advocacy, for organizing this successful event.

The CCSTA Board of Directors devoted the day after the reception to discussing the business of the association as we prepare for upcoming activities such as political advocacy, communications, budget development and conventions. I am always impressed with what we are able to accomplish with the modest means at our disposal. The work continues thanks to our dedicated part-time staff and the volunteer efforts of our directors.

CCSTA is very proud of its initiative Toonies for Tuition which supports the Endowment Fund that provides assistance to families wishing to send children to Catholic schools in unfunded or partially funded provinces. The fund has been growing slowly and the demand is always much larger than we can support. You will recall that we approved the action for CCSTA to charge a modest administrative fee to help us grow the foundation. We expect to announce shortly the appointment of a person to assist in raising funds for the Endowment Fund. I look forward to doing all that we can to take this initiative to a new level.

Thank you to all of you who work so hard in support of Catholic education in Canada. I will continue to do my best in building relationships with our bishops, political leaders and the community. I believe that Catholic education is a choice for parents because we recognize that the gospel message enables us to lead meaningful lives and that Catholic values are consistent with a civil, democratic society. We are part of the Canadian fabric for over 170 years.

Thank you to John Stunt and Jean Montminy for the terrific work you do in our national office and thank you to all of you on the board for the dedication and effort you put into Catholic education.

May the peace of Christ be with all of us as we enter into the holy season.

Ted Paszek
President, CCSTA



CCSTA/ACCEC President
Ted Paszek

Message de la présidente

C'est un honneur pour moi d'être président de l'ACCEC. Notre congrès/AGA annuel de Sudbury a été un grand succès et je tiens à remercier tous ceux qui y ont contribué. J'ai l'intention de perpétuer le bon travail accompli par mes prédécesseurs. Merci à Paula Peroni pour son leadership durant son mandat comme présidente. Sa présence comme présidente sortante me permettra de profiter de son appui et de ses conseils. Félicitations à Mike St. Amand pour son élection au poste de vice-président, et bienvenue aux membres du conseil d'administration, anciens et nouveaux. J'espère réussir avec vous à protéger et promouvoir l'éducation catholique au Canada.

Durant la pause estivale et le début de l'automne, nous avons continué d'observer les activités au pays. L'ACSTA et l'AFOCSC ont de nouveaux directeurs généraux. Dean Sarnecki et Benoît Mercier sont entrés en poste au cours de l'été. L'exécutif du congrès « un Échange national » a poursuivi ses rencontres au cours de l'été. Nous remercions Gerry Bibby et son comité pour le travail de planification de cet événement qui approche rapidement. Ce sera le troisième de la série des échanges nationaux sur l'éducation catholique, et il arrive à un moment très opportun. Votre présence et

vosre participation seront appréciées.

En plus de notre rencontre du conseil d'administration d'Octobre à Ottawa, nous avons eu le plaisir d'offrir une modeste réception pour certains députés choisis, afin de raffermir nos liens avec les leaders politiques qui appuient l'éducation catholique. L'évènement a connu un grand succès et plusieurs participants ont commenté en faveur de l'éducation catholique. Pour l'organisation de cet évènement réussi, nous remercions notre personnel administratif ainsi que Ensign Canada, la firme que nous avons engagée pour nous appuyer dans notre action politique.

Le conseil d'administration de l'ACCEC consacré la journée qui a suivi la réception à discuter des affaires de l'association, en préparation aux activités prochaines d'action politique, de communication, de planification du budget et des congrès. Je suis toujours étonné de la somme de travail que nous accomplissons vu nos modestes moyens. La mission se poursuit grâce au travail dévoué de notre personnel à temps partiel et aux efforts bénévoles de nos directeurs.

L'ACCEC est fière de son projet Toonies for Tuition, à l'appui du fonds de dotation qui fournit une aide financière aux familles désirant inscrire leurs enfants à l'école catholique dans les provinces où le financement public est partiel ou inexistant. Le fonds croît lentement, mais la demande dépasse toujours largement notre capacité d'appui. Vous vous souviendrez que l'ACCEC avait voté en faveur d'un léger frais administratif pour nous aider à augmenter notre fondation. Nous annoncerons prochainement la nomination d'une personne qui nous aidera à amasser de l'argent pour le fonds de dotation. J'ai l'intention d'appuyer les idées qui nous permettront d'augmenter notre capacité dans cette initiative.

Je remercie chacun d'entre vous qui travaillez si fort à l'appui de l'éducation catholique au Canada. Je ferai de mon mieux pour continuer à bâtir les liens avec nos évêques, nos leaders politiques et notre communauté. Je crois que l'éducation catholique est une option de choix pour les parents parce que nous reconnaissons que le message de l'Évangile nous permet de donner un sens à nos vies, et que les valeurs catholiques sont aussi celles d'une société démocratique et civile. Nous faisons partie du tissu social canadien depuis plus de 170 ans.

Nous offrons nos remerciements à John Stunt et Jean Montminy pour leur travail exemplaire au bureau national, ainsi qu'à vous tous au CA pour votre dévouement à la cause de l'éducation catholique.

Que la paix du Seigneur nous accompagne en ce début prochain de la sainte saison.

Ted Paszek
Président de l'ACCEC

A Gold Medal Success: CCSTA Attends Popular Networking Event

CCSTA President, Ted Paszek, and Executive Director, John Stunt, attended a Canadian Olympic fundraiser at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, November 5, 2012 as the guest of government relations firm, Ensign Canada.

The event draws a diverse crowd made up of local bureaucrats, Cabinet Ministers, MPs, Hill staffers and national media. The venue provided many opportunities to build relationships and have informal conversations about CCSTA's role and the importance of Catholic education to the social fabric of Canada.



CCSTA President Ted Paszek had the opportunity to network with a number of political contacts including (from top left), Candice Bergen, MP, Personal Assistant to Minister of Public Safety; Lisa Raitt, Minister of Labour; Peter Stoffer, MP, Sackville - Eastern Shore & Heather Ross McManus, Olympian; and Bob Rae, Interim Leader of Liberal party and wife, Arlene.

CCSTA AGM

FROM FRONT PAGE

of early Manitoba. Friday night is international night when we will celebrate the multicultural diversity of Winnipeg. Tasty foods and beverages from around the world will be served. A show will feature some of the many world class entertainment groups including Selo Ukrainian Dancers, Magdaragat Philippines Dancers, and Sokol Polish Ensemble that make Winnipeg home.

*

Please plan to check out the CCSTA/ ACCEC Winnipeg 2013 website that will go online in January 2013 with conference details and registration. Advance Hotel Reservations are recommended. The Fort Garry Hotel 1-800-782-0175 Event 10A6LC (The Fort Garry is currently full). The Best Western plus Charter House 1-800-782-0175 Group Number 376.

Congrès de l'ACCEC

SUITE DE LA PREMIÈRE PAGE

français. Ça Claque vous épatera avec la musique et les danses folkloriques manitobaines. Vendredi, une soirée internationale rendra hommage à la diversité culturelle de Winnipeg. Il y aura d'excellents mets et des rafraîchissements internationaux. Un spectacle mettra en vedette des groupes de calibre mondial tels que les Selo Ukrainian Dancers, les Magdaragat Philippines Dancers, le Sokol Polish Ensemble, tous de Winnipeg.

*

Visitez le site du congrès/AGA de l'ACCEC/CCSTA de Winnipeg 2013 à partir de janvier 2013 pour les détails du congrès et l'inscription. Réservez votre hôtel à l'avance! Le Fort Garry Hotel 1-800-782-0175 Code d'évènement 10A6LC (L'hôtel Fort Garry est déjà complet). Le Best Western Plus Charter House 1-800-782-0175 Numéro de groupe: 376.





Vision

"Enlivened by the Word of God and our tradition, we promote and protect the right to Catholic education in Canada. We speak as one."

Mission

The CCSTA works in communion with the Catholic Church through:

- Collaborating with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops;
- Dialogue with Catholic education organizations throughout the world;
- Working in solidarity with Catholic School Trustees' Associations and other partners in Catholic education throughout Canada;
- Providing opportunities for faith formation and professional development of trustees;
- Providing leadership and service by promoting and protecting the right to a Catholic education among the relevant government agencies within Canada;
- Promoting excellence in Catholic education throughout Canada.

2012-2013

Executive / Exécutif

Past President / Past Président
Paula Peroni
peronip@scdsb.edu.on.ca

Chaplain / Aumônier
Father Rémi Lessard
remles@puc.net

President / Président
Ted Paszek
tedp@eics.ab.ca

Executive Director /
Directeur général
John Stunt
john.stunt@ocsb.ca

Vice-President /
Vice-Président
Mike St. Amand
mike@ashlycw.com

2012-2013

Directors / Directeurs / directrices

British Columbia
Colleen Easson
eassonn@telus.net

Ontario (AFOCSC)
Joseph Bisnaire
jbisnaire@sympatico.ca

Alberta
Tony Sykora
tonysy@eics.ab.ca

Ontario (OCSTA)
Colleen Landers
landers@ntl.sympatico.ca

Saskatchewan
Jerome Niezgoda
j.niezgoda@sasktel.net

Ontario (OCSTA)
Nancy Kirby
nkirby@ocsta.on.ca

Manitoba
Margaret Kingdon
mkingdon@mymts.net

Atlantic
Robert N. Bernard
Robert.Berard@MSVU.ca

CCSTA Head Office

Catholic Education Centre
570 West Hunt Club Rd.
Nepean, Ont.
K2G 3R4
phone: 613-224-4455
extension: 2521
fax: 613-224-3187

For news and links, visit our website at www.ccsta.ca.

From the Office Desk...

It was my privilege and pleasure to attend and speak at the retirement celebrations for two of my executive director colleagues who are retiring after serving with distinction in their respective associations. Stef Michniewski served the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) for the past 13 years, and Carole Drouin of AFOCSC provided leadership to the French Catholic trustees of Ontario for the past six years.



Both Stef and Carole have been valued colleagues whose political judgement, wisdom and good counsel will be missed. Each, in their own way, has made significant contributions to Catholic education in their own province, and indeed across Canada.

I welcome their successors, Dean Sarnecki (ACSTA) and Benoît Mercier (AFOCSC), and look forward to working with them in the future.

CCSTA held another successful reception for parliamentarians in Ottawa this fall. Our strategy is to build relationships and a base of supporters at the federal level. We all know that education is a provincial matter; however, if any province wishes to seek a constitutional change to eliminate Catholic education, that decision must be supported by the parliament and senate of Canada. It is therefore strategic and prudent to have a presence in Ottawa, and to develop those

relationships with our supporters.

Plans for the National Conference in Ottawa, October 3-5, 2013, are well underway. We have secured top notch presenters who will address the role of Catholic Education and the New Evangelization. We have an excellent planning team in place who are preparing to welcome you to the nation's capital next fall. Please plan to attend.

As I come to know our membership across Canada, I continue to be impressed with the dedication of those elected, appointed or volunteer members who act as Catholic school trustees. Collectively you do so much for the students in your area, often with little or no recognition. Yours is a noble calling and a very important work in the church's mission of evangelization.

May God continue to bless your work, and may the blessings of this holy season be experienced by you and your loved ones.

Christmas blessings,

John Stunt
Executive Director, CCSTA

Nouvelles du bureau...

J'ai eu le plaisir et le privilège de participer aux célébrations de retraite de deux collègues directeurs généraux qui ont quitté leurs fonctions après avoir servi leur association avec distinction. Stef Michniewski a travaillé pendant 13 ans à l'Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) et Carole Drouin a offert son leadership à l'Association franco-ontarienne des conseillers scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC) pendant six ans.

Stef et Carole sont des collègues estimés dont le jugement politique, la sagesse et les bons conseils étaient appréciés. Chacun à sa façon, ils ont contribué de manière significative à l'éducation catholique dans leur province, et même au Canada.

Je souhaite la bienvenue à leurs successeurs, Dean Sarnecki à l'ACSTA et Benoît Mercier à l'AFOCSC. Ce sera un plaisir de travailler avec eux.

La réception offerte par l'ACCEC aux parlementaires cet automne à Ottawa a de nouveau été un succès. Notre intention est de renforcer les liens et d'augmenter les appuis au niveau fédéral. Nous savons bien que l'éducation est de juridiction provinciale; cependant, si une province demande un amendement à la constitution pour éliminer l'enseignement catholique, sa décision doit être appuyée par le Parlement canadien et le Sénat. Il est donc critique et avisé de posséder des appuis à Ottawa et d'entretenir les

liens avec ces partenaires.

La planification du congrès national à Ottawa, les 3, 4 et 5 octobre 2013 bat son plein. Nous avons réservé les services de conférenciers chevronnés qui traiteront du rôle de l'éducation catholique et de la nouvelle évangélisation. Notre excellent comité organisateur se prépare à vous accueillir dans la capitale nationale l'automne prochain. Soyez-y!

À mesure que j'apprends à connaître nos membres à travers le Canada, je suis sans cesse impressionné du dévouement des conseillers scolaires catholiques, qu'ils soient élus, nommés ou volontaires. En tant que groupe, vous accomplissez beaucoup pour les élèves de votre région, et ce, souvent dans l'ombre. Votre cause est noble, et votre travail important pour la mission de l'église, celle de l'évangélisation.

Que Dieu continue de bénir votre travail, et puissiez-vous et les vôtres profiter des bienfaits de cette sainte saison.

Mes meilleurs vœux pour Noël,

John Stunt
Directeur général, de l'ACCEC

Maintaining a Parliament Hill Presence

A graduate of Good Shepherd Elementary School, Dr. Kelly Leitch understands the importance of receiving a Catholic education.

As the Parliamentary Assistant to Minister of Labour Lisa Raitt, Dr. Leitch shared her story with CCSTA and her political colleagues during the CCSTA Parliamentary Reception at Rideau Hall in October.

"I, too, was educated in the Catholic school system," said Dr. Leitch. "Today, Canada's Catholic schools are rising to the challenge of their unique mission. In 2,000 schools across the country, they are giving Canadian students the world-class education they will need to thrive in the globalized knowledge economy of the twenty-first century. At the same time, through their deep commitment to Catholic teaching and to the gospel message, they are guiding their students towards lives of citizenship, service and faith."

Dr. Leitch received a warm reception from the attendees and her message is exactly why CCSTA continues to work hard to establish and maintain strategic political relationships.

The two-hour government reception allowed CCSTA representatives to meet and speak with MPs and key parliamentary staff, including Dr. Leitch,

Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews, MP Stella Ambler and Director of Policy for the Treasury Board of Canada, Aron Seal.

Organized by government relations firms, Ensign Canada, the relaxed evening allowed CCSTA directors to meet with political figures to deliver their message to the federal political community about the role that Catholic education plays within Canada. This information was also contained in brochures provided to guests in both official languages, and allowed guests to learn more about CCSTA and its work.

CCSTA President Ted Paszek greeted the group, thanking them for attending the event. He welcomed the opportunity to continue the conversation about Catholic education in the future before introducing Dr. Leitch to the podium. Her words confirmed CCSTA has succeeded in establishing vital relationships with key figures on Parliament Hill.

"I want to commend the Canadian Catholic Schools Trustees' Association for your dedication to ensuring that all Canadian families can choose an exceptional Catholic education for their children," she said. "I look forward to a renewed discussion of the vital role that Catholic education has played and continues to play in Canadian life."



Être présents sur la Colline du Parlement

Mme le Dr Kelly Leitch, finissant de l'école Good Shepherd Elementary, comprend l'importance de l'éducation catholique.

En sa qualité d'assistante parlementaire de la ministre du Travail, Lisa Raitt, le Dr. Leitch a partagé son vécu avec ses collègues et les membres de l'ACCEC présents lors de la réception offerte par l'ACCEC aux parlementaires à Rideau Hall en octobre dernier.

« Moi aussi, j'ai fréquenté l'école catholique, » dit-elle. « À chaque jour, les écoles catholiques du Canada répondent au défi de leur mission unique. Dans 2 000 écoles au pays, on offre aux étudiants l'éducation de haut calibre dont ils auront besoin pour participer à l'économie mondialisée du XXI^e siècle. Par la même occasion, à travers son enracinement dans les enseignements catholiques et les messages de l'Évangile, l'école catholique incite ses étudiants à devenir de bons citoyens, menant une vie de service dans la foi.

L'intervention du Dr. Leitch a été chaleureusement accueillie par les participants, et son message illustre parfaitement les raisons qui poussent l'ACCEC à préserver ses liens politiques stratégiques.

Cette réception, d'une durée de deux heures, a permis aux représentants de l'ACCEC de rencontrer certains députés et leur personnel parlementaire clé, dont la Dr. Leitch, Vic Toews, ministre de la

Sécurité publique, la députée Stella Ambler et Aron Seal, directeur des politiques au Conseil du Trésor du Canada.

La soirée informelle, organisée par la firme de relations gouvernementales Ensign Canada, a permis aux membres du CA de l'ACCEC de faire valoir le rôle de l'éducation catholique au Canada auprès de la communauté politique fédérale. On a aussi remis aux invités un dépliant contenant les mêmes informations, dans les deux langues officielles, pour leur permettre de mieux se familiariser avec l'ACCEC et le travail qu'elle accomplit.

Ted Paszek, président de l'ACCEC, a souhaité au groupe la bienvenue, les remerciant de leur présence. Il a aussi ouvert la porte aux échanges à venir au moment d'inviter Mme le Dr. Leitch à prendre la parole. Son discours a confirmé que l'ACCEC avait bel et bien réussi à établir des liens vitaux avec certains politiciens fédéraux importants.

« Je tiens à féliciter l'Association canadienne des commissaires d'écoles catholiques pour son dévouement à offrir aux familles canadiennes la possibilité de choisir pour leurs enfants une éducation catholique exceptionnelle, » dit-elle. « J'accueille avec anticipation un échange renouvelé sur le rôle clé que l'éducation catholique continue de jouer dans la vie des Canadiens. »



CCSTA President Ted Paszek listens to Dr. Kelly Leitch's speech about her own experiences receiving a Catholic education in Alberta. Dr. Leitch spoke at the CCSTA government reception in October at Rideau Hall; A number of MPs and special guests attended the CCSTA government reception in October. Ted Paszek speaks with Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews; Hon. Ted Menzies, Minister of State for Finance, attended the reception and met with CCSTA's Ted Paszek; MP Charlie Angus takes a moment to speak with Ted Paszek and CCSTA Director Colleen Landers (Ontario); and Dr. Kelly Leitch speaks with CCSTA Executive Director John Stunt and directors Colleen Landers, Robert N. Berard (Atlantic Region), and Margaret Kingdon (Manitoba).

Ted Paszek, président de l'ACCEC, entend le témoignage de Mme le Dr Kelly Leitch sur l'éducation catholique qu'elle a reçue en Alberta, lors de la réception de l'ACCEC à Rideau Hall en octobre; Plusieurs députés et invités spéciaux ont participé à la réception de l'ACCEC en octobre. Ted Paszek discute avec Vic Toews, ministre de la Sécurité publique; l'Hon. Ted Menzies, ministre d'état aux Finances, en discussion avec Ted Paszek lors de sa participation à la réception; le député Charlie Angus en conversation avec Ted Paszek et Colleen Landers (directrice pour l'Ontario); Mme le Dr Kelly Leitch avec John Stunt, directeur général de l'ACCEC et les directeurs Colleen Landers, Robert N. Berard (région de l'Atlantique) et Margaret Kingdon (Manitoba).

Provincial Reports

British Columbia

Kamloops Diocese

The Catholic Distributed Learning School – All Saints Catholic E-school Network - has been delivered. They have just under 200 students enrolled this September from across the province. The cuts to government funding made it necessary to revise their original plan, but they are forging ahead.

On April 11, 2012 Education Minister George Abbott, announced that DL schools would have their funding rate changed to 50 per cent and 35 per cent of the public school DL rate, effective September 2012. Up until that time, all independent DL schools had been funded at 50 per cent and 35 per cent of the public brick and mortar rate in each school district. Public DL schools, on the other hand, were funded at one rate all across the province, specifically \$5,851/FTE student. It came to light at the Ministry of Education that Independent schools, funding was above 50 per cent of the funding allocated to the public DL system. When the announcement was made that DL schools would be receiving 50 per cent of the \$5,851/FTE effective September 2012, FISA immediately initiated further correspondence and meetings with government officials, both politicians and bureaucrats, to negotiate for a more sustainable DL funding rate. In the end, they reached an agreed upon rate of 62 per cent of the public school DL rate (\$3,627/FTE student) for the 2012-2013 school year and the 2013-2014 school year.

Nelson Diocese

The diocese has a total of six Catholic elementary schools which are located in Nelson, Trail, Cranbrook, Penticton, Kelowna, West Kelowna and one high school in Kelowna. The diocese is presently working on a market strategy to increase enrolment in the schools.

As a result of the Pope's declaration about this being the Year of Faith, "Open Wide the Door of Faith" is the theme for all formation activities being held this year.

Catholic School Leadership Course

The BC School Superintendents developed a Catholic School Leadership Course. It took place this summer in Vancouver. It was a one-week course for new or perspective Catholic school administrators to explore the position of administration in BC Catholic schools.

Prince George Diocese

The Diocesan Assembly, "Fanning the Flame... The New Evangelization" was held September 20-21, 2012. Teachers, religious education coordinators, pastors and priests attended the event. The plenary facilitator was the Most Rev. Claude Champagne. He was named Bishop of Edmundston, New Brunswick on January 5, 2009. He also served as professor at St. Paul's University, Ottawa as well as being involved in youth ministry and vocation work.

We have a new Superintendent of Catholic schools, Mr. Chris Dugdale. Mr. Dugdale has spent over 20 years in education in the public school system. He graduated from the University of Calgary and completed his Masters at Gonzaga

University. He started his teaching career in Mackenzie, BC and as of June 2012, was Principal of Heritage Elementary school in Prince George. He is married and has five children.

Vancouver Archdiocese

The Federation of Independent Schools Association (FISA) was established in 1966 as an umbrella organization for all independent schools in BC. It is the voice for all of its members and acts as a liaison between the schools and the government and other educational offices.

New Parliamentary Secretary

The Premier announced the appointment of a new position in the Ministry of Education – a Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools. The Hon. Marc Dalton, MLA for Maple Ridge – Mission has been given that portfolio. He will be working only with independent schools to assess their needs and issues. He reports directly to the Premier and Minister. FISA has been working with Mr. Dalton for the last 10 months and he has visited approximately 30 independent schools across the province.

Regional Tours 2012

The Regional Tour for independent schools will include Theo VandeWeg, Inspector, and Brian Jonker, Deputy Inspector, Peter Froese, Executive Director of the Federation of Independent School Associations (FISA) and representatives from the Teacher Regulation Branch. The Tour started in Abbotsford on September 13 and ended in Cranbrook on October 15.

The presentation provided helpful information, review initiatives and current requirements and procedures, as well as responded to questions and concerns.

Victoria Diocese

The second annual Diocesan Conference "Open Wide the Door of Faith" was held October 26 and 27, 2012. Sandy Prather B.Ed. M. Th. was the conference speaker. She teaches and facilitates in the areas of faith and spirituality.

convention will feature keynote speaker Bishop Murray Chatlain on the theme of Standing Outside the Fire; the Life that Evangelizes.

The ACSTA is preparing for its 2013 Spring Conference: Beacons of Hope, Reasons to Believe with keynote speaker Mike Patin. The conference will be held from March 15 – 17, 2013 in Canmore, Alberta. Further information is available on our website: www.acsta.ab.ca.

The ACSTA will be hosting its annual S.P.I.C.E. Conference from April 25 - 28, 2013 featuring keynote speaker Jerry Goebel, and its Blueprints Conference from April 30 - May 3, 2013 featuring keynote speaker Dr. Richard Gaillardetz. Registration information will come available later in the year.

Communications

The ACSTA continues to work on its Education Act readiness public relations initiative. This is a communications initiative that will enable the ACSTA to provide timely, accurate and effective information on Alberta Education's work in their creation of the Education Act, 2012. The Act has now moved into 3rd reading in the Alberta Legislature.

The ACSTA continues to send ACSTA Happenings, a monthly e-newsletter, to its member boards and education stakeholders detailing the current activities and issues in which the ACSTA is involved.

The ACSTA published and distributed its 2012 Fall edition of the Catholic Dimension and the 2011-2012 Annual Report. This will be the final issue of the Catholic Dimension that is available in a print version, we are moving both the Catholic Dimension and the Annual Report to an online format.

Governance

The ACSTA held its successful 2012 AGM & Convention on November 16-18, 2012 in Edmonton. At the AGM Tony Sykora was re-elected as President of the ACTSA and Serafino Scarpino was re-elected as Vice-President of ACSTA,



Tony Sykora

Alberta/NWT

Advocacy

The ACSTA provides on-going education, advocacy and legal counsel to our member boards.

The ACSTA continues to participate as a key stakeholder in the Alberta Government and Alberta Education's drafting of the new Education Act legislation.

In addition, the ACSTA has maintained an active role in advocating for Catholic education within public discussions surrounding various issues involving the Catholic education community.

Faith Development

ACSTA ensures that our members continue to have opportunities for faith development through hosting various workshops and conferences.

The ACSTA hosted its 2012 AGM & Convention on November 16 – 18, 2012. The

Saskatchewan

Theodore Litigation

On May 16, 2012 the Theodore Litigation continued with a hearing in Yorkton. At this hearing the Judge was asked to consider changes proposed by both sides. In those proceedings, the Court dealt with applications to amend the plaintiff's claim, to amend the Crown's defence and to strike portions of the claim on the basis of standing.

On August 27, Honourable Judge Mills dismissed our application to strike portions of the claim on the basis of standing. After reviewing this decision, the SCSBA Board of Directors has agreed to apply for leave to appeal this judgement. The application was submitted on September 11, a hearing to determine if leave to appeal will be granted was held in Regina on October 24, 2012.

On October 29, we were informed that the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Provincial Reports

FROM PAGE 6

Honourable Judge Cameron dismissed our application for leave to appeal.

2012/13 Provincial Budget Announced

On March 21, 2012, the 2012/13 provincial budget was announced, which included the advent of a new funding formula for K - 12 Education in the province. This new funding model has been in the making for the past two years and all school boards have been anxiously awaiting the unveiling of this new formula. The intent of the new model is to provide equitable funding to all school boards across the province. The Ministry hosted a meeting on September 20, inviting representatives from all school divisions to provide input related to issues and concerns regarding the new funding formula. From the information provided at that meeting, it appears that there are no specific issues related to funding of Catholic school divisions, however there were a number of general concerns raised by all boards. The Ministry has agreed to take note of the issues raised and will investigate possible solutions for the 2013/14 budget.

2012 School Division Elections

On October 24, 2012 school division elections took place within our province. We are pleased to see the tremendous response in Catholic school divisions. There has been a recent change in legislation which has resulted in school trustees elected in 2012 serving a four-year term rather than the three-year term from the 2009 elections.

Joint Catholic Education and Catholic Health Conference

On November 2-4, 2012 the SCSBA jointly hosted a major conference in Regina with the Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan (CHAS). The conference theme was "One Lord, One Call – A Rainbow of Ministries". This conference provided a tremendous opportunity to celebrate the rich legacy of Catholic Education and Health Care in our province. One of the highlights of the conference was the presentation of the Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service award to Bev Hanson. Bev spent her entire career with the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division, serving as the Director of Education for the last six years. During that time Bev's passion for Catholic Education and her outstanding servant leadership were a true joy to experience. The SCSBA also presented Appreciation Awards in appreciation of commitment and contribution to Catholic Education in Saskatchewan to Therese Durston from Weyburn, the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate from Yorkton and the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions from Regina. At the AGM in Regina, the SCSBA membership re-elected Mr. Tom Fortosky from Saskatoon to serve as President and Mr. George Bolduc from Prince Albert to serve as Vice-President.

Manitoba

The eighteen Catholic schools in Manitoba con-

tinue to show moderate growth. The school age population in Manitoba is now remaining constant after years of decline. Final numbers are taken on September 30th which is then reported to the Province in order to receive funding. In this current year, the Province of Manitoba will provide each full time equivalent student \$4,945 in support which represents a 2.5 per cent increase from the 2011/12 school year. This grant represents 50 per cent of the cost of educating a public school student in Manitoba in the 2010/11 school year. Each school also receives a \$60 curriculum support grant per student and are eligible for special needs funding for individual students of \$9,220 (level II) or \$20,515 (level III) on a case by a case basis.

High School Work

Two of our high schools are currently building additions to their facilities. St. Paul's is adding on a multiplex to increase their athletic facilities at the cost of \$11 million. St. Mary's Academy is building an addition to house facilities for the performing arts. Each project is being financed through donations from the community. These two schools are fortunate to have large alumni bases that are very supportive. Over the past few years most of our schools have replaced roofs, furnaces, and windows as our buildings continue to age. These funds have also come through donations. Most schools have replaced their lighting with the assistance of grants from Manitoba Hydro.

Our Bishops

Catholic Schools in Manitoba have a close relationship with the Archbishops of Manitoba and the diocesan structure of the Church. The Director of Education and his staff are employees of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Catholic Schools offices are located in the Catholic Centre. Administrative and support services are also provided to the schools in the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface and the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg through a service agreement. The Director of Education meets on a regular basis with a Bishop's Advisory Council in Winnipeg and in Saint Boniface. Each Bishop is responsible for Catholic Schools in his Diocese and is supported by the Catholic Schools Office. There is no central school board.

Each school has a separate board of directors. The Council of Board Chairs' meets on a regular basis with the Director of Education.



We are very pleased to be hosting the CCSTA/ACCEC Convention in June 2013. This is our opportunity to celebrate and showcase Catholic Education in Manitoba. All of our school communities will be participating in some format with the convention. We are planning to offer you the best hospitality that Manitoba has to offer. We are excited with the excellent response to date from

across the country as 175 rooms have already been reserved as of September. We promise to provide an experience that you will not forget as you Embrace the Spirit with us.

We hope that our motto of Friendly Manitoba will be experienced by all.

Ontario

Catholic Education – Trustee Training Modules

OCSTA's Trustees' Professional Development program has been very successful. To date, all but one of the Trustee Training modules has been presented to the membership.

At the January 18-19, 2013 Catholic Trustees' PD Seminar in Toronto, the Association will be delivering the final module - Module 15 ("The Trustees We are Becoming"). This module is being developed by OCSTA and St. Michael's College (University of Toronto) to examine the distinctiveness of the "Catholic" trustee's role in the management and leadership of Catholic schools.

Fall 2012 Regional Meetings

OCSTA's annual series of Regional Meetings are currently taking place at locations throughout Ontario. This year's program focusses on future plans for Catholic education in Ontario, local lobbying strategies, and best-practices in school board management.

Copyright Update

As a result of the recent June 12, 2012 Supreme Court ruling regarding copyright tariffs, teachers will now be able to make multiple copies of copyright material for students in class. The impact of this decision was explained in a report prepared by York CDSB Chair, Elizabeth Crow, for the OCSTA Board of Directors. Following are highlights from that report:

The copied pages (short excerpts) that constitute "fair dealing" create a potential reduction of \$0.36 to the FTE rate of \$5.16. Nationally this could mean a refund of up to \$6.4 million dollars for the tariff years 2005-2009. Since the tariff for 2010-12 has not yet been determined and Boards have been paying the \$5.16 per FTE, there is a potential reduction of \$1.3 million per year for 2010 onwards.

It is expected that Access Copyright will challenge this interpretation, however the Tariff Proceedings Committee will still be recommending that all "short excerpts" made in an educational context are fair and not subject to a tariff, significantly reducing if not eliminating the need for a tariff.

Once this direction is endorsed by the CMEC Committee, OCSTA will assist Catholic School Boards with understanding the changes and operational implications.

OCSTA awaits a further update from our representative, Elizabeth Crowe, and will communicate with member boards once more information is received.

Upcoming CCSTA AGM

Fr. Martin Bradbury from Saint Boniface is currently on a medical leave from his responsibilities with Catholic Schools for the remainder of the 2012/13 school year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Provincial Reports

FROM PAGE 7

Awareness Campaign

Later this fall, the Association will launch a new promotional campaign to increase public awareness of the contribution and success of Ontario's publicly funded Catholic schools to the life of this province and to help fulfil the mandate of Catholic trustees as advocates, guardians and stewards of Catholic schools.

The campaign theme is titled Faith in Our Future and will include posters, a special website, editorial articles (for placement in local newspapers), a core speech to be customized and used by trustees at local events and a social media strategy.

Details and timing of the campaign were explained at the Annual Seminar for Catholic School Board Communicators, Friday, November 2, 2012 at the Dufferin-Peel CDSB. Detailed information, including artwork, graphics and copy, will be shared with all school boards.

Catholic Education Week May 5- 10, 2013

The theme for the 2013 Catholic Education Week is "Growing Together in Faith."

Packages were shared with Boards at the beginning of the school year that included prayers and reflections focused on the main CEW theme and the following sub-themes:

- Faith that is Rooted
- Faith that is Nurtured
- Faith that is Discerned
- Faith that is Witnessed
- Faith that is Celebrated

For more information visit the OCSTA Catholic Education Week website at www.goodnewsforall.ca. NOTE: Resource materials can be downloaded from this website.

AFOCSC

Entrée en fonction d'une nouvelle direction générale

Le début de la nouvelle année scolaire a vu l'arrivée de Benoit Mercier à la direction de l'AFOCSC. Il a remplacé Carole Drouin qui,

après six années comme d.g. avait annoncé son départ pour la fin août afin de poursuivre d'autres activités. Cependant, Mme Drouin a demeuré quelques semaines pour faciliter la transition. Le domaine de l'éducation n'est pas un mystère pour M. Mercier puisqu'il avait été auparavant le président de l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens. Nous accueillons chaleureusement Benoit en lui souhaitant succès dans ses nouvelles fonctions et en lui assurant l'appui de son conseil d'administration et des conseils membres.

14e AGA de l'AFOCSC

"Au Nord des sentiers battus, accueillons notre mission!"

C'était le thème pour le 14e congrès annuel de l'AFOCSC qui s'est tenu du 4 au 6 mai 2012 à North Bay en collaboration avec le Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord, fier hôte de cette 14e édition. Le prix pour l'excellence en éducation catholique a été remis à Suzanne Roch, conseillère scolaire qui avait défendu les intérêts des administrations scolaires catholiques francophones lors de leur disparition et intégration aux conseils limitrophes. Ce prix a été remis lors du banquet du samedi soir. L'assemblée a renouvelé le mandat de Melinda Chartrand, présidente, pour un second mandat et a réélu Ronald Demers au poste de la vice-présidence. Les membres du Conseil d'administration restent en poste au moins jusqu'à la réunion inaugurale des conseils en décembre.

Les membres ont appris que la prochaine assemblée annuelle, la 15e, aura lieu les 4, 5 et 6 mai 2013 à London en Ontario. Le Conseil scolaire catholique du Sud-ouest sera le conseil hôte de cette rencontre qui se déroulera à l'hôtel Hilton.

Évêques en Ontario francophone

Depuis le départ de trois des évêques francophones en province, nous attendions la nomination de leurs remplaçants. En effet nous apprenons la nomination récente de l'évêque Marcel Damphousse, ordonné le 2 septembre dernier en la cathédrale Saint-Finnan à Alexandria. Mgr Damphousse est natif de St-Joseph au Manitoba et avant sa nomination était recteur de la cathédrale de St-Boniface au Manitoba. Le diocèse d'Alexandria-Cornwall compte 29 paroisses et missions. Les régions de Timmins et de Sault-Ste-Marie demeurent toujours en attente.

La loi 13 – Anti-intimidation

Dans nos écoles, il y en ce moment très peu de demande pour la création de groupe gai-hétéro. Plusieurs directions et directions-adjointes ont reçu une formation à ce sujet. Les directions sont avisées de ne pas refuser la création de ce groupe dans leur école. Par contre, elles peuvent garder le contrôle de l'agenda du comité en refusant des éléments qui vont à l'encontre de l'enseignement catholique. Le COREC (Comité d'orientation en éducation catholique), en collaboration avec l'OPÉCO (Office provinciale pour l'éducation catholique en Ontario), développera une ressource pour les directions d'écoles afin de faciliter la mise en place de ce groupe dans leur école car il est important que toutes les communautés scolaires en province soient sur la même longueur d'onde à propos de ce dossier.

Rencontre stratégique des partenaires en éducation catholique de l'Ontario

Cette retraite annuelle de deux jours s'est tenue les 5 et 6 septembre et a permis des discussions de fond sur les enjeux courants en éducation catholique et sur les projets prévus par chacun des regroupements représentés. Beaucoup de discussions se sont tenues au sujet des négociations, des enjeux à long terme pour le rôle des conseils scolaires et des élus (conseillères et conseillers scolaires) et il y a eu aussi des échanges au sujet des suivis au projet de loi 13 contrant l'intimidation. Cette rencontre fut une excellente occasion d'intégration du nouveau directeur général de l'AFOCSC au réseau catholique anglophone.

Négociations provinciales

Visiblement choqué par l'entente conclue entre le ministère de l'Éducation et l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, l'AFOCSC et l'ACÉPO ont émis un communiqué dénonçant un processus qui effectivement écartait les conseils des négociations. Le syndicat avait quitté la table le 1er août pour ensuite signer une entente avec le Ministère en excluant les conseils.

Les 12 conseils francophones ont donc déposé une requête auprès de la Commission des relations de travail accusant l'AEFO de pratique déloyale. L'AFOCSC considère ces gestes comme une ingérence de la part du gouvernement provincial dans la gestion des écoles de langue française et une atteinte aux droits constitutionnels des francophones à gérer leurs écoles.

Entre temps, les conseils catholiques de langue française sont tournés vers l'avenir et s'apprentent à tenir leurs négociations localement afin de se conformer à la nouvelle loi qui donne jusqu'à la fin de l'année 2012 pour conclure des ententes locales. Au plan provincial, l'AFOCSC sera appelée à travailler au sein de trois nouveaux comités qui examineront les grilles salariales, les programmes d'avantages sociaux et le processus de négociation pour la prochaine ronde, en 2014.



With the theme, Growing Together in Faith, OCSTA celebrates Catholic Education Week in early May, 2013.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Provincial Reports

FROM PAGE 8

AFOCSC

AFOCSC welcomes its new Executive director

Ready to assume his duties at the beginning of the new school year Benoit Mercier has begun to assimilate the many and varied dossiers that awaited him. He replaces Carole Drouin who after six years, had announced her departure for the end of August to pursue other endeavours with her husband. Mme Drouin generously agreed to stay the month of September in order to assure a smooth transition. Education is not a stranger to M. Mercier as he previously presided over the francophone teachers' association, AFOCSC. We welcome Benoit warmly, wishing him success in his new role and we can reassure him of the collaboration and support of his board of directors and of the member school boards.

AFOCSC's 14th AGM "Au Nord des sentiers battus, accueillons notre mission!"

That was the theme for the 14th annual meeting that was held in North Bay from May 4-6 in collaboration with the host board Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord. At the banquet on the Saturday night, the AFOCSC award for excellence in Catholic education was given to Suzanne Roch, trustee, who defended the interests of the northern catholic school authorities when these were abruptly eliminated and amalgamated with the local Catholic boards.

The members re-elected Melinda Chartrand president for a second term and also renewed vice-president Ronald Demers' mandate for another year. AFOCSC's board members remain in place at least until the school boards' inaugural meetings in December.

The members also learned that the 2013 AGM will be held at the Hilton Hotel in London Ontario, May 3, 4 and 6, 2013.

Bishops in Ontario's francophone community

Since the departure and loss of three francophone bishops, we have been waiting for the appointment of their replacements. We were therefore elated to hear of the recent nomination of Msgr Marcel Damphousse as bishop of the diocese of Alexandria-Cornwall. Msgr Damphousse, a native of St-Joseph in Manitoba, was ordained September 2 in the Cathedral of St. Finnan in Alexandria. Before this new assignment, he was rector of the Cathedral in St-Boniface. His new diocese is comprised of 29 parishes and missions.

The regions of Timmins and Sault-Ste-Marie are still in a waiting mode.

Bill 13 – Accepting schools Act – 2012

At this moment, there is very little demand for the creation of gay-straight clubs. Many principals and vice-principals have received some training concerning this issue. The principals have been advised to not deny the creation of such a club in their school if requested.

However, they can exercise control over the agenda by refusing topics that would go against Catholic teachings. The COREC (Orientation Committee on Catholic Education), in collabora-

tion with OPECO (Provincial Office for Catholic Education in Ontario) will develop a resource for school principals to help them establish this group in their school because it is imperative that every school community in the province be on the same wave length concerning this issue.

Strategic meeting of the partners working in Catholic education in Ontario

This annual two-day retreat, which was held last September 5 and 6, allowed for discussions on the key issues of concern in Catholic education and the initiatives being driven by each of the groups represented. Much of the discussions centred on the provincial negotiations, the long term implications for the role of school boards and its trustees, along with discussions about the follow-up to Bill 13 – anti bullying. The meeting proved to be an excellent forum for the new executive director of AFOCSC to connect with the catholic education network.

Provincial negotiations

Visibly stunned and angered by the agreement concluded between the Ministry of Education and AEFO (the French language teachers' union), AFOCSC and ACÉPO (the public francophone school board association) issued a communiqué denouncing the process which effectively eliminated the boards from the negotiations. The teachers' union left the table on August 1 to immediately sign an agreement with the Ministry, totally excluding the Boards.

The 12 francophone boards filed a complaint with the Labour Relations Commission accusing AEFO of bad-faith bargaining. AFOCSC considers these actions interference by the provincial government in the governance rights of boards and an undermining of the constitutional rights of francophones to operate their schools.

Meanwhile the French Catholic school boards prepare for the local rounds of negotiations in order to conform to the new provincial rules which give boards until the end of 2012 to conclude local agreements. At the provincial level AFOCSC will be called to participate within three new committees which will examine salary grids, the benefits programmes and the negotiating process for the

next round in 2014.

Atlantic Region

The schools of the Atlantic Region are back to classes with enrollment steady; final figures were released in October. There has been no change in the zero-funding policy of the four provincial governments concerned. Despite the serious implications of such a common negative policy on tuition fees, student registration has, to this point, remained stable.

Unfortunately, Our Lady of Schools in Halifax was flooded out in an early September storm. A suitable alternate location has been secured for the School for the fall term, and the School will review its options after evaluating repairs made to the building.

All schools have been notified of the 2012-13 Toonies for Tuition campaign; a good response is expected. On behalf of those students and their families who were awarded CCSTA bursaries for the current year, our schools are most grateful for the bursary program. It is one more source of student tuition funding that supports the programs that the schools operate at the local level.

Sister Anne Wachter, RSCJ, has been appointed Headmistress of Sacred Heart School of Halifax. Sister Anne brings with her many years of administrative experience in Sacred Heart schools in the United States.

RCISA, AR accepted the invitation to participate in the annual conference of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars (Canada), which was held in Halifax from October 19-21, 2012. Several sessions will touch on the day-school system, particularly Catholic independent schools. The venue also presented the members of the two Halifax Boards an opportunity to 'meet and greet' with CCSTA President Ted Paszek.

The offer of the Board of Governors of St. Bonaventure College, St. John's, to host the 2015 CCSTA convention has been accepted. A Planning Committee for the convention has begun its work. The members of the five RCISA, AR Boards will be encouraged to attend the convention.



The Rogers Family from the Atlantic Region were recipients of the CCSTA Endowment Fund, giving them the opportunity to send their children to a Catholic school.

Chaplain's Corner/ Un mot de l'aumônier

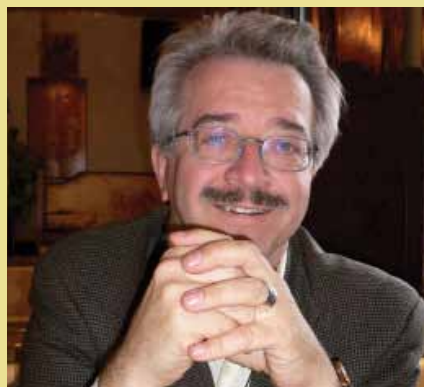
Let us celebrate life!

Last month, while I was preaching at a retreat to the Clerics of St. Viator in Rigaud, Québec, Brother Bernard Tougas, a 91-year-old and artist by profession, showed me drawings of his ambitious project for a future artistic creation to celebrate life. By means of this artistic structure he would like to celebrate life in three distinct ways: by praising life, by respecting life and by portraying life at its best. What a dynamic project!

Could our Canadian Catholic schools choose to emulate such a project? I believe that Brother Tougas is right to call us to celebrate life. To praise life is first and above all to recognize that it is a gift of God, that this gift manifests itself in various forms and blesses God, as the prophet Daniel expressed it in his Hymn to the creation (Dn 3). To respect life is to appreciate its fragility and its beauty. It is also making conscious efforts to nourish life, protect it, and foster its development. And how can someone portray life at its best if not by loving? The Gospels suggest that the two main ways to express love are to love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength and to love your neighbour as yourself.

Could this not become a pastoral project, to be expressed by numerous ways according to regions and languages, in all Canadian Catholic Schools? It would surely value human, and all life unfolding in the universe as well as affirming the loving presence of God in the ever-evolving history of humanity. This project would certainly inspire students and personnel of Catholic Schools to perceive the beauty within the world and to celebrate life and its multiple expressions.

Why not propose this project for the coming Advent season? Would it not be an excellent way to welcome the Author of life himself?



Fr. Rémi Lessard
CCSTA Chaplain/Aumônier

Osons célébrer la vie !

Me voilà chez les Clercs de Saint-Viateur à Rigaud au Québec, à prêcher une retraite quand le Frère Bernard Tougas, 91 ans et artiste de profession, me présente son grand projet d'une construction éventuelle pour célébrer la vie. Il veut que son œuvre d'art célèbre la vie de trois façons : en faisant l'éloge de la vie, en respectant la vie et présentant la vie à son meilleur. Quel projet dynamisant !

Et si nos écoles catholiques du Canada entier épousaient ce projet? Je crois que le Frère Tougas à raison de nous rappeler que la foi chrétienne nous invite à célébrer la vie. Faire l'éloge de la vie, c'est d'abord reconnaître qu'elle est don de Dieu, qu'elle se présente sous une variété de formes et qu'elle bénit le Seigneur comme le suggère le prophète Daniel dans son Hymne à la création (Dn 3). Respecter la vie, c'est reconnaître sa fragilité et sa beauté. C'est également engager tous ses efforts pour la nourrir, la protéger et assurer sa croissance. Et comment la présenter à son meilleur si ce n'est qu'en manifestant l'amour? Aimer Dieu de tout son cœur, de toute son âme, de tout son esprit, de toutes ses forces et aimer son prochain comme soi-même sont les deux voies proposées par l'Évangile.

Voilà un projet scolaire qui pourra s'exprimer de mille et une façons, selon les lieux et la langue parlée, dans les écoles catholiques canadiennes. Il aura le bienfait de valoriser la croissance humaine et de reconnaître la présence aimante de Dieu au cœur de l'humanité. Son inspiration permettra de voir le beau dans la création et alimentera le goût de célébrer la vie et ses multiples expressions.

Pourquoi ne pas en faire un thème scolaire ou encore une activité personnelle à l'occasion de l'Avent. Ne serait-ce pas là une excellente façon de se préparer à accueillir l'Auteur de la vie lui-même !



Merry Joyeux
CHRISTMAS NOËL



Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association
Association canadienne des commissaires d'écoles catholiques