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

CCSTA NEWSLETTER / COMMUNIQUÉ DE L'ACCEC

December/Décembre 2018 www.ccsta.ca

Faith Moving Mountains:
Canmore To Host 2019 AGM & Convention

The 2019 CCSTA Annual General Meeting and Convention are just six months away, and the planning committee has been working tirelessly to prepare. They are very much looking forward to hosting delegates from across the country to connect, grow, and celebrate Catholic education.

The event kicks off with a selection of pre-convention activities on Thursday, May 30. These fun excursions will be a great way to start the convention, as well as give visitors a chance to enjoy the beautiful areas around Canmore. Delegates will be able to select a tour when they complete their convention registration. The associated fees for the tours, which include transportation, guides, and gratuities, will be paid directly to Banff Tours.

Each day of the convention will feature a different keynote speaker:

Thursday, May 30, 7:00pm: Most Reverend William McGrattan, Bishop of Calgary, "The Covenant between Humanity and the Environment—Educating Future Generations"
Friday, May 31, 9:00am: Fr. Stefano Penna – "I Lift Up My Eyes to the Mountains—The Transcendent God and Catholic Education"
Saturday, June 1, 9:00am: Most Reverend Sylvain Lavoie, Archbishop Emeritus of Keewatin-Le Pas – "Walking in Our Moccasins"

There will also be a number of social events for delegates to attend, such as the conference reception on Thursday, companion tours on Friday, and the gala banquet on Saturday. The Convention Committee is very excited to be hosting a barbeque at a scenic Rocky Mountain location on the shore of the Bow River on Friday as well. The Kananaskis Guest Ranch opened in 1923 and is the original family homestead of the Brewsters, one of the West's oldest business families. The famed Brewster 'Donut' tent, where the BBQ will be held, provides an authentic Western atmosphere. The Ranch's reputation for quality food, great service, and rustic western facilities make for an unforgettable Canadian experience. A central bonfire is the focal point of the 'Donut' tent, with an open view to the evening sky.

Students from two local schools – Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy and École Notre-Dame-des-Monts – will be involved in this year's convention.

The website and registration will open in January. Payment for registration fees, accommodation and activities will be accepted by credit card only, with the applicable services charges added at checkout.

There are only 164 guest rooms at the Coast Canmore Hotel and Conference Centre. Delegates can request and pay for their room when they register for the convention. The ACSTA has reserved some rooms for Wednesday, but they will only be available until February 1, 2019. These can be requested when you register, but availability is limited.



The logo for the 2019 CCSTA AGM/Convention. / Le logo du congrès / AGA de l'ACCEC 2019.

When all of the rooms are sold, the ACSTA will provide recommendations for alternate accommodation within short walking distance to the Coast Canmore Hotel and Conference Hotel:

- Blackstone Mountain Lodge (8 minutes)
- Georgetown Inn (6 minutes)
- Grande Rockies (6 minutes) (When booking at the Grande Rockies please identify yourself as being with the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association for 10% off current rates)
- Lodges at Canmore (5 minutes)
- Mystic Springs Chalets (5 minutes)
- Windtower Lodge and Suites (6 minutes)

The planning committee is grateful for and wants to recognize the assistance and support they have received from the two local school boards, Christ the Redeemer CSRD and Conseil scolaire FrancoSud

The CCSTA would like to thank the planning committee for all of their hard work: Convention Chair: Dean Sarnecki, Executive Director, Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association; Natalie Beland, Trustee, Conseil scolaire Centre-Est; Erin Currie, Trustee, Yellowknife Catholic Schools; Alene Mutala, Trustee, Edmonton Catholic Schools; Genevieve Poulin, Trustee, Conseil scolaire FrancoSud; Serena Shaw, ACSTA President and Trustee, Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools; Michelle Szott, Trustee, Elk Island Catholic Schools; and Robert Yaro, Trustee, Fort McMurray Catholic Schools.

Blessings to all. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

La foi déplace des montagnes : Canmore acueille le congrès/AGA 2019

Il ne reste que six mois avant le début du congrès / assemblée générale annuelle 2019, et le comité organisateur s'y prépare d'arrache pied. Ses membres ont très hâte d'accueillir les délégués de partout au pays pour célébrer l'éducation catholique.

L'évènement débute le jeudi 30 mai avec un choix d'activités pré-congrès. Ces excursions amusantes sont une bonne manière de commencer le congrès en permettant aux visiteurs de jouir des merveilleux sites entourant Canmore. On pourra choisir son excursion au moment de l'inscription au congrès. Les frais de ces excursions, incluant le transport, les guides et les pourboires, seront payables directement à l'entreprise Banff Tours.

Il y aura un conférencier différent à chaque jour du congrès :

- Le jeudi 30 mai à 19h00 : Mgr William McGrattan, Évêque de Calgary – The Covenant between Humanity and the Environment—Educating Future Generations (L'alliance entre l'humanité et l'environnement – Instruire les futures générations)
- Le vendredi 31 mai à 9h00 : P. Stefano Penna – I Lift Up My Eyes to the Mountains—The Transcendent God and Catholic Education (Je lève les yeux vers les montagnes – Le Dieu transcendant et l'éducation catholique)
- Le samedi 1er juin à 9h00 : Mgr Sylvain Lavoie, Archevêque émérite de Keewatin-Le Pas – Walking in Our Moccasins (Marcher dans nos mocassins)

Les participants pourront prendre part à plusieurs activités sociales, telles que la réception du congrès le jeudi, les sorties guidées le vendredi et le gala samedi. Vendredi, le comité organisateur offre en plus un BBQ dans un site enchanteur des Rocheuses, sur les rives de la rivière Bow. Le Kananaskis Guest Ranch a ouvert ses portes en 1923. Il s'agit du domicile familial original des Brewster, l'une des plus anciennes familles de gens d'affaires de l'Ouest. La célèbre tente « beignet » Brewster où prendra place le BBQ offre une authentique atmosphère « western ». La réputation du Ranch pour la qualité de sa nourriture, du service, et son cachet western rustique en feront une expérience canadienne inoubliable. Un feu de camp trône au centre de la tente ouverte sur le ciel nocturne.

Les élèves de deux écoles de l'endroit, Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Academy et l'École Notre-Dame-des-Monts, participeront au congrès de cette année.

Le site web et les inscriptions seront ouverts en janvier. Pour le paiement des frais d'inscription, de l'hébergement et des activités, seules les cartes de crédit seront acceptées. Les frais de services seront ajoutées à la fin de la transaction.

Seulement 164 chambres sont disponibles au Coast Canmore Hotel and Conference Centre. Les participants peuvent réserver et payer leur chambre au moment de l'inscription au congrès. L'ACSTA a réservé certaines chambres pour le mercredi, mais la réservation n'est effective que jusqu'au 1er février 2019. Vous pouvez tenter de réserver ces chambres en vous inscrivant, mais leur disponibilité est limitée.

Une fois toutes les chambres de l'hôtel réservées, l'ACSTA offrira des recommandations d'hébergement à distance de marche du Coast Canmore Hotel and Conference Hotel:

- Blackstone Mountain Lodge (8 minutes)
- Georgetown Inn (6 minutes)
- Grande Rockies (6 minutes) (mentionner faire partie de l'Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association pour obtenir un rabais de 10%)
- Lodges at Canmore (5 minutes)
- Mystic Springs Chalets (5 minutes)
- Windtower Lodge and Suites (6 minutes)

Le comité organisateur désire remercier et souligner l'appui offert par les deux conseils scolaires locaux, soit le Christ the Redeemer CSRD et le Conseil scolaire FrancoSud.

L'ACCEC remercie le comité organisateur du congrès : Président du congrès : Dean Sarnecki, Directeur général, Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association; Natalie Béland, Conseillère, Conseil scolaire Centre-Est; Erin Currie, Conseillère, Yellowknife Catholic Schools; Alene Mutala, Conseillère, Edmonton Catholic Schools; Geneviève Poulin, Conseillère Conseil scolaire FrancoSud; Serena Shaw, Présidente de l'ACSTA et conseillère, Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools; Michelle Szott, Conseillère, Elk Island Catholic Schools; et Robert Yaro, Conseiller, Fort McMurray Catholic Schools.

Nos meilleurs voeux à tous, et un Joyeux Noël. Au plaisir de vous rencontrer lors du congrès!

President's Message



Marino Gazzola
CCSTA President / Président de l'ACCEC

As we approach Christmas, it's so important to never lose sight of the real reason for the season – celebrating the birth of Jesus. With all the stress, shopping, parties, and presents, it can be easy to forget that Christmas isn't about what is or isn't under the tree. It's about remembering and appreciating that God loves us so much that He sent his only Son to live as a man so that we could be forgiven for our sins.

So take a minute every so often, in the midst of all the Christmas hustle and bustle, to stop and remind yourself why we celebrate at all.

The New Year is shaping up to be an exciting one for the CCSTA. Starting in 2019, the CCSTA will officially become a member of the Catholic International Education Office (OIEC). I am very excited to be attending their annual World Congress of OIEC in New York from June 5th to 8th with Executive Director Julian Hanlon. As a national organization, we believe it's extremely important for us to be more involved in the international Catholic education community. We look forward to meeting, teaching, and learning from our counterparts from around the world.

As we look back upon 2018, one thing is clear – Catholic education is strong and vibrant in Canada. Catholic boards across the country continue to excel in educating mind, body, and spirit. Good things are happening. Our students, teachers, and communities are flourishing in all aspects. We aim to keep that going in 2019.

Despite Catholic education's success in Canada, we must be ever vigilant in protecting it. Our ongoing local engagement strategy is one way we are doing so. We've been traveling across Canada's provinces to meet local MPs, going from west to east, and we're now in Ontario. I personally have already had numerous meetings. We engage with these politicians at the federal level in order to gauge their support for Catholic education. If there were ever a move to eliminate Catholic education in Canada, it would become a constitutional issue. We're forming these connections now, so we are prepared to defend Catholic education should it ever become necessary.

As outgoing President (my term is over in June), I have just one wish.

This school year, the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association has adopted Toonies for Tuition (T4T) as their official cause. That means all 29 Catholic school boards in Ontario will be having fundraisers throughout the year, specifically for T4T. That's a whole lot of school communities helping raise funds so students in non-funded provinces can enjoy the gift of Catholic education.

That said, my wish is that at our AGM this year in Canmore, I would be able to announce that, for the first time ever, every single dollar requested from families in non-funded provinces would be granted.

I know it's a long shot, but we can't be afraid to dream big. Besides, I learned long ago not to underestimate our national Catholic community. With that, I wish you and your family all the very best for the Christmas season and a joyous New Year. Merry Christmas to you and your family.

God Bless.



Respectfully,
Marino Gazolla, CCSTA President

Message du président

À l'approche de Noël, il ne faut pas perdre de vue la vraie raison d'être de nos célébrations, celle de la naissance de Jésus. Avec tout le stress, le magasinage, les réjouissements et les cadeaux, on peut oublier que Noël , c'est plus que ce qui se retrouve sous l'arbre. Il faut se remémorer et apprécier que Dieu nous aime tellement qu'Il nous a envoyé son Fils sous une forme humaine pour que nos péchés nous soient pardonnés.

Alors prenons une minute, au milieu de la cohue de Noël, pour s'arrêter et se rappeler pourquoi on célèbre vraiment.

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.

2018-2019 EXECUTIVE / EXÉCUTIF

President/Président: Marino Gazzola
Past President/Past Président: Ted Paszek
Vice-President/Vice-Président: Adriana LaGrange
Chaplain/Aumônier: Fr. Stephano Penna
Executive Director/Directeur général: Julian Hanlon

2018-2019 DIRECTORS/DIRECTEURS/DIREC-

British Columbia
Colleen Easson

Ontario French
Langis Dion

Alberta/NWT/Yukon
Serena Shaw

Ontario English
Patrick J. Daly

Saskatchewan
Vicky Bonnell

Ontario English
Mark Mullan

Manitoba
Teresita Chiarella

Atlantic
Catherine Burnham

Message du président (cont.)

La nouvelle année s'annonce excitante à l'ACCEC. En 2019, l'ACCEC deviendra officiellement membre du Catholic International Education Office (OIEC). J'ai vraiment hâte d'assister au congrès mondial annuel de l'OIEC à New York du 5 au 8 juin en compagnie de Julian Hanlon, directeur général. En tant qu'organisme national, nous croyons que nous devons nous impliquer plus dans la communauté catholique éducative internationale. Nous profiterons certainement de nos rencontres avec nos homologues d'ailleurs dans le monde.

L'année 2018 nous a bien montré que l'éducation catholique au Canada est vivante et dynamique. Les conseils scolaires catholiques continuent d'exceller à éduquer l'esprit, l'âme et le corps. Il se passe beaucoup de choses positives. Nos élèves, nos enseignants et nos communautés progresent dans tous les domaines. Nous souhaitons continuer dans cette lancée en 2019.

Malgré ces succès, nous devons continuer d'être vigilants et de protéger l'éducation catholique et notre stratégie d'implication au niveau local constitue l'un des moyens que nous employons. Nous avons parcouru les provinces canadiennesd'est en ouest pour rencontrer les députés dans leurs circonscriptions. Nous sommes en ce moment en Ontario. J'ai moi-même participé à plusieurs rencontres. Nous rencontrons les députés pour estimer leur niveau d'appui à l'éducation catholique. Si jamais survenait un mouvement d'éradication de l'éducation catholique, ce serait alors une question constitutionnelle. En établissant des liens maintenant, nous serons prêts à défendre l'éducation catholique si cela s'avère nécessaire.

Cette année, l'Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association a adopté Toonies for Tuition comme cause officielle. Cela signifie que tous les 29 conseils scolaires catholiques de l'Ontario ferons des collectes de fonds dédiées. Ça fait beaucoup de communautés scolaires qui aideront des élèves des provinces non subventionnées à profiter du don de l'éducation catholique.

En tant que président sortant, puisque mon mandat se termine en juin, je n'ai qu'un souhait : ce serait, lors du congrès/AGA 2019 à Canmore, de pouvoir annoncer que toutes les demandes d'aide financière aient été exaucées. Je sais que c'est un souhait optimiste, mais il faut oser rêver grand. Puis, je sais qu'il ne faut jamais sous-estimer notre communauté catholique.

Je vous souhait, à vous et votre famille, mes meilleurs voeux pour Noël et une joyeuse Nouvelle Année.

Que Dieu vous accompagne.



Marino Gazolla, Président de l'ACCEC

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www.ccsta.ca

From the Office Desk



Julian Hanlon
Executive Director / Directeur général

Winter certainly arrived early in Ottawa this year, with snow on the ground in mid-November. By the time you read this, Christmas will be a few weeks away. For those working directly with students, it is always a busy and rewarding time of year. Christmas events and liturgies are always a highlight of the school year. In addition, many schools reach out to those in need in their community and try to help the less fortunate enjoy Christmas.

CCSTA held another successful lobby day on Parliament Hill on November 8th. Our Board of Directors met with MPs, Senators, and representatives from the Justice Department. Once again, key messaging included explaining the impact Catholic Education has across the country. In addition, we made sure to talk about the Theodore Case and its potential impact. Overall, the feedback was very positive. I want to acknowledge the great work done by the Board of Directors.

Both ACSTA and SCSBA held their AGM'S recently. Marino Gazzola joined the members of ACSTA for their very successful meeting in Edmonton, AB, and I had the pleasure of joining the SCSBA AGM in Weyburn, SK. In spite of challenges like the Theodore Case, the atmosphere in Weyburn was very positive. In Edmonton, the Alberta Minister of Education, David Eggen, made it clear to all that his government is very supportive of Catholic Education. Serena Shaw, ACSTA president, was appointed to the CCSTA board, and we all look forward to working with her.

We received nothing but positive feedback from our AGM in Kelowna, and planning is well under way for our 2019 AGM/Convention in Canmore, AB. Registration will open in January. Check the CCSTA website regularly for more information.

We are pleased to announce that the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board and Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir will be hosting the 2020 AGM/Convention in the town of Blue Mountain, outside Collingwood, Ontario.

If anyone is interested in hosting CCSTA's 2021 AGM, please do not hesitate to contact Jean Montminy at the CCSTA office for details.

In closing, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and all the best in 2019.

Julian Hanlon
Executive Director

Nouvelles du bureau

L'hiver nous a pris par surprise à Ottawa cette année, couvrant le sol de neige dès la mi-novembre. Au momeent de lire ces lignes, Noël sera déjà à nos portes. Pour ceux qui travaillent auprès des élèves, c'est un temps de l'année très occupé mais gratifiant. Les liturgies et les autres activités de Noël sont toujours un point marquant de l'année scolaire. Plusieurs écoles en profitent aussi pour venir en aide à ceux de leur communauté qui ont plus de difficulté.

Le 8 novembre, l'ACCEC a connu une autre journée de lobbying fort réussie sur la colline du Parlement. Notre conseil d'administration a rencontré des députés, des sénateurs et des représentants du département de la Justice. Encore une fois, le message principal que nous avons véhiculé est l'impact de l'éducation catholique au Canada. Nous avons aussi discuté de l'affaire Theodore et de ses répercussions possibles. Dans l'ensemble, les commentaires ont été très positifs. Je veux souligner ici l'excellent travail des membres du conseil d'administration.

L'ACSTA et la SCBA ont toutes deux récemment procédé à leur AGA. Marino Gazzola s'est joint aux membres de l'ACSTA à Edmonton et de mon côté, j'ai assisté à l'AGA de la SCBA à Weyburn en Saskatchewan. Malgré les défis posés par l'affaire Theodore, l'atmosphère à Weyburn était très positive. À Edmonton, David Eggen, ministre de l'Éducation de l'Alberta, a réitéré l'appui de son gouvernement à l'éducation catholique. Serena Shaw, présidente de l'ACSTA, a pour sa part joint le conseil d'administration de l'ACCEC, et nous sommes heureux de la compter des nôtres.

Nous n'avons reçu que des commentaires positifs sur notre congrès/AGA de Kelowna. La planification du congrès de 2019 à Canmore bat son plein. L'inscription sera ouverte en janvier 2019. Consultez le site web de l'ACCEC pour plus de détails.

Nous sommes heureux d'annnoncer que le Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board et le Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir seront les hôtes du congrès/AGA de 2020, à Blue Mountain, près de Collingwood en Ontario.

Si vous êtes intéressés à accueillir le congrès de l'ACCEC de 2021, n'hésitez pas à joindre Jean Montminy au bureau de l'ACCEC pour tous les détails.

En terminant, je vous souhaite à tous et à toutes un Joyeux Noël et ce qu'il y a de mieux pour 2019.

Julian Hanlon
Directeur général

Stories from a Small Catholic School

By: Catherine Burnham



Catherine Burnham - CCSTA Director for the Atlantic Region / Directrice à l'ACCEC pour la Région de l'Atlantique

It's always a joy for me to share what I have witnessed in the small, humble spaces where Catholic Education is carried out in Canada. This incredibly rich and profound mission of Catholic Education, which has been safeguarded by Canadians for centuries, is something that is still being sought after – and something that many families are willing to sacrifice for in some non-funded provinces.

About two and a half years ago, I accepted a 6-month contract for a small, private Catholic school named Divine Mercy Catholic School (DMCS) in Saint John, NB to work in school development and fundraising. Having seen the school in my hometown since its inception in 2003, I knew that there were good things happening there and thought it would be nice to help out. The more I learned about the school, the more I came to value the mission of Catholic Education. I was reading Church documents on the aim of Catholic schools – I wanted to know what exactly it was that I was supposed to develop and what exactly the Church was asking of such missions. In my first few months, I was blown away by the incredible emphasis that the Church puts on Catholic Schools as a primary means of Evangelization in the world. I was not only falling in love with the Church's vision of Catholic Education, but I was seeing this vision lived out as a reality at my school. I was witnessing lives being changed because of authentic experiences of Catholic Education. I was completely and totally sold on the need for this kind of school – and from this place of conviction, began creating a development office for them. That 6-month term began almost three years ago… I accidentally fell in love with Catholic Education and am adamant that to safeguard and promote the mission of Catholic Schools in Canada is among the most important causes in our country today.

The vision of the founders was to provide solidly Catholic Education in a way that was accessible to as many people as possible. Keeping in mind that one of the pillars of Catholic Education is attentiveness to the poor, they kept tuition low, and the staff, from the very beginning, agreed to salaries that were less than half of what a teacher in a public school would make. One of the main founders became the first Principal in 2003 and is still in this position today. Her belief in this school and in Catholic Education has been central to its existence. In addition to the responsibilities and duties of a Principal, she teaches a full class load each year and in years when money was scarce, would come in on weekends to clean the school, or work in the office or size students for uniforms. This is the model of love and service upon which this Catholic school has been founded.

There was one year in particular where the school was facing serious financial difficulty. After some prayer and discernment, the staff unanimously decided to take a cut in their (already low) pay in order to keep the doors open that Fall. Since that year, the school has continued to grow steadily. We now have double the number of students and staff that we had that year. I am very aware of the fact that we are a school today only because of the tremendous sacrifices of those who have believed in the mission of Catholic Education from the very beginning. Some of those staff members, including the original Principal, are still working here today – even though they are all eligible for retirement! Every morning before school begins, our Principal arrives at 7:00 am to spend an hour in our Chapel praying for the school and the needs of the students and families. All our staff gather at 7:45 each morning to pray together before the day begins.

It's not only the staff who are making sacrifices to be part of DMCS – many parents sacrifice so their children can attend our school. Here are a few of the many stories of families who have, despite a lack of finances, found ways to provide Catholic Education for their children.

One year, we had a middle-aged man approach us saying that he was a single father of a little girl. Because he lived in a poorer neighbourhood, his daughter would be required to go to an inner-city school, and he was unhappy with this as his only option. He was searching for a place that would help him raise his daughter with values, a place that would accept and love her and give her a sense of belonging. Within a few weeks, several sponsors were found to assist this man and his daughter. This little one is now in middle school and her education is being funded by a walkathon called "The Big Heart Walk" which our students put on each year.

We once had a family who lived nearby the school and sold their family vehicle and walked their children to school every day so that they could attend DMCS. We've had families who have decided to cancel their cable or parents who have taken on second jobs to make tuition payments. A single mom once came for a tour of the school. She had been homeschooling her children and trying to hold down a job at the same time. In tears, she told us she would sacrifice whatever she needed to have her kids attend our school. We found ways to help her out and her kids joined us mid-year. The following year, she was approved for funding from Toonies for Tuition which enabled her children to keep attending. She continues to exclaim that having her children in our school has changed their lives. It is an absolute joy to daily see the smiles of parents and students who have been helped by the generosity of others to attend our school.

One thing is abundantly clear – our school wasn't built on money. These halls are not filled with financial wealth but on a wealth of love and passion for Catholic Education. When parents come to the school for a tour, they notice and immediately comment on the peace and love they feel upon entering our doors. We regularly...

Continued on next page...

Stories from a Small Catholic School (cont.)

...have parents approaching our staff and Principal, in tears, thanking us for loving their child and in turn, transforming their life. It seems that where there is poverty of one kind, there is always a blessing of another kind. My prayer and hope is that we can begin looking at the dynamic structure of Catholic Schools within Canada as a blessing – and realize that in our uniqueness, every one has something to offer. I believe that Catholic Schools are continuing to play a significant role in evangelizing our country and that God is asking us to continue this work. The Toonies for Tuition Campaign has the potential to be an important part of continuing this work and making it possible for smaller schools to continue being part of this beautiful legacy in Canada. Thank you – for the many smiles, for the tears of joy, for the relief and comfort of many, many families who have received assistance from Toonies for Tuition.

Histoires d'une petite école catholique

Par: Catherine Burnham

C'est toujours pour moi un plaisir de partager des anecdotes dont j'ai été témoin dans les petits endroits humbles du Canada où l'éducation catholique fait son chemin. Cette riche et profonde mission de l'éducation catholique, sauvegardée depuis des siècles par nombre de Canadiens et Canadiennes, laïques comme religieux et religieuses, est encore prisée par plusieurs familles, même au prix de grands sacrifices dans les provinces non subventionnées.

Il y a environ deux ans et demi, j'ai accepté un emploi d'une durée de six mois auprès d'une petite école catholique privée, Divine Mercy Catholic School (DMCS), dans ma ville natale de Saint John, au Nouveau-Brunswick, pour promouvoir l'école et organiser son financement. Je connaissais bien l'école pour l'avoir vue depuis sa création en 2003 et je savais que beaucoup de bonnes choses s'y passent, donc je me présentais là avec l'intention de contribuer. Plus j'en apprenais sur l'école, et plus j'appréciais la valeur de la mission de l'éducation catholique. J'ai pris connaissance des documents de l'Église sur les buts de l'école catholique pour bien comprendre ce que je devais promouvoir exactement, et quelles étaient les attentes de l'Église par rapport à ces buts. Dès les premiers mois, j'ai été renversé par les attentes de l'Église concernant le rôle primordial de l'école dans l'évangélisation dans le monde. Non seulement je m'attachais à la vision de l'éducation catholique préconisée par l'Église, mais je la voyais prendre vie dans ma propre école. Je voyais des vies transformées par des expériences d'éducation catholique authentiques. J'étais dès lors absolument convaincu de la raison d'être de ce type d'école, et dans cette optique, j'ai commencé à créer un bureau de développement. Ce mandat de six mois a commencé il y a bientôt trois ans… Je suis accidentellement tombé amoureux de l'éducation catholique et je suis persuadé que de préserver et promouvoir l'éducation catholique au Canada est en ce moment l'une des causes les plus importantes dans notre pays.

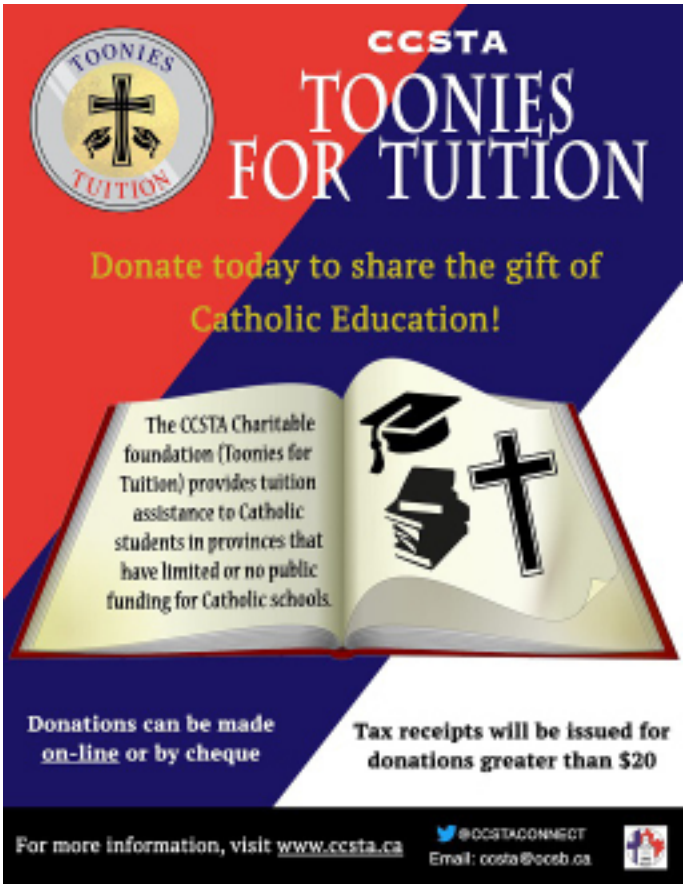
La vision des fondateurs, des fondatrices et du personnel, était depuis le début de fournir une solide éducation catholique et...

Suite à la page suivante...

SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS!

Send us your stories so we can share the good news of Catholic Education.

CCSTA/ACCEC



Upcoming dates:

2019 AGM: May 30 to June 1, 2019, Canmore, AB
2020 AGM: June 4 to June 6, 2020, Blue Mountain, ON
2121 AGM: Accepting host applications

Visit the our website at www.ccsta.ca for more information.

Histoires d'une petite ecole catholique (cont.)

...qu'elle soit accessible au plus grand nombre possible. Puisque l'un des fondements de l'éducation catholique est de prendre soin des plus pauvres, les frais d'inscription étaient bas et les enseignants acceptaient d'être payés moins de la moitié du salaire de leurs collègues du système public. L'une de ces fondatrices est devenue la première directrice en 2003 et elle occupe toujours ce poste aujourd'hui. Sa confiance en l'école et en l'éducation catholique est au centre de l'existence de l'établissement. En plus de ses devoirs de directrice, elle enseigne à plein temps à chaque année. Parfois, lorsque l'argent se faisait rare, elle venait les fins de semaines pour nettoyer l'école, travailler au bureau ou mesurer des élèves pour leur uniforme. C'est sur ce modèle d'amour et de service que cette école catholique a été fondée.

Une année en particulier, l'école s'est trouvée en sérieuse difficulté financière. Le nombre d'inscriptions avait diminué et le conseil d'administration a dû informer les enseignants que les fonds ne seraient pas suffisants pour opérer l'école cette année-là. Après avoir prié et s'être concertés, les membres du personnel ont unanimement décidé de subir une diminution de salaire – déjà très bas – pour garder l'école ouverte. Depuis cette année-là, l'école grandit sans arrêt et aujourd'hui, elle compte le double d'enseignants et d'élèves. Je suis très conscient que si l'école existe aujourd'hui, c'est grâce aux sacrifices de ceux qui ont cru depuis le début à la mission de l'école catholique. Certains de ceux-là continuent de travailler même s'ils pourraient être à la retraite! Chaque matin avant le début des classes, la directrice arrive à 7h00 et passe une heure dans la chapelle à prier pour l'école, ses élèves et leurs familles. Le personnel se réunit à 7h45 pour prier avant que la journée commence.

Il n'y a pas que le personnel qui fasse des sacrifices pour faire partie de la DMCS. Plusieurs parents se privent pour que leurs enfants fréquentent notre école. Voici quelques exemples de familles qui malgré une situation financière difficile ont trouvé moyen d'y inscrire leurs enfants. Un homme d'âge moyen nous a confié être le père monoparental d'une petite fille. Vivant dans un milieu pauvre, sa fille devrait fréquenter une école de quartier dont il ne voulait pas. Il recherchait un endroit qui l'aide à élever sa fille avec de bonnes valeurs, une école qui l'accepterait, l'aimerait et lui donnerait un sens d'appartenance. Quelques semaines plus tard, on avait trouvé plusieurs commanditaires pour leur venir en aide. Cette ppetite fille est maintenant au niveau intermédiaire et son éducation est subventionnée par un marcheton que nos élèves organisent, appelé « The Big Heart Walk ». Une autre famille vivant à proximité de l'école avait vendu sa voiture pour fréquenter laDMCS, et les parents reconduisaient les enfants à pied. D'autres familles ont abandonné leur abonnement à la cablodistribution, des parents ont entrepris un deuxième emploi pour défrayer l'inscription. Une autre fois, une mère monoparentale est venue visiter l'école. Elle faisait l'enseignement à domicile pour ses enfants tout en essayant de garder son emploi. En pleurs, elle nous a dit qu'elle ferait tout pour que ses enfants fréquentent notre école. Nous avons trouvé le moyen de l'aider. Ses enfants se sont joints à nous en milieu d'année. L'année suivante, elle a obtenu une subvention de Toonies for Tuition. Elle continue de dire que le fait de fréquenter notre école a changé la vie de ses enfants. C'est une joie incomparable de voir les sourires de ces parents et de ces enfants qui sont là grâce à la générosité des autres.

Une chose est très claire, c'est que notre école ne s'est pas bâtie sur l'argent. La richesse qu'on retrouve dans nos couloirs est faite d'amour et de passion pour l'éducation catholique. Quand les parents viennent visiter l'école, ils remarquent tout de suite quelque chose de différent. Ils font spontanément des commentaires sur l'atmosphère de paix et d'amour qu'ils ressentent.Plusieurs nous abordent en pleurs, nous remerciant d'aimer leurs enfants et d'avoir transformé leurs vies. J'espère et je prie que partout au Canada, on commence à considérer la structure dynamique de l'école catholique comme une bénédiction, et que dans notre spécificité, chacun a quelque chose à offrir. Je crois que l'école catholique joue un rôle significatif dans l'évangélisation et que Dieu nous demande de poursuivre ce travail. La campagne Toonies for Tuition a le potentiel de grandement contribuer à cette mission en permettant aux écoles plus petites de participer à ce précieux héritage canadien. Merci pour les sourires, les larmes de joie, le soulagement et l'apaisement des nombreuses familles qui reçoivent l'aide de Toonies for Tuition.

Another Successful CCSTA Lobby Day

In early November, CCSTA board members spent a day meeting with several MPs and Senators in order to highlight the important and distinctive contribution that Catholic education makes across the country in order to garner support at the federal level.

"We want to let them know that Catholic education has a huge impact," says CCSTA Executive Director Julian Hanlon. "We talk about the kind of values that Catholic education teaches as well as our track record of academic excellence."

Even though education is governed by the provinces, support at the federal level is extremely important in order to help protect Catholic education across Canada. For over 170 years, Catholic education has been an integral part of our society, helping millions of students develop their full spiritual, academic, physical, and social potential.

Continued on next page...



CCSTA Directors Paul Bourassa (left) and Ted Paszek (right) meet with Ted Falk, MP for Provencher (middle) for a positive discussion about Catholic education. / Les directeurs de l'ACCEC Paul Bourassa (gauche) et Ted Paszek (droite) discutent d'éducation catholique avec Ted Falk, député de Provencher (centre).

Another Successful CCSTA Lobby Day (cont.)

"As a national organization with a general mandate to protect Catholic education, one of our functions is to lobby at the federal level," says Mr. Hanlon. "MPs are influential people in their communities, so if the question ever comes up about Catholic education and they speak in favour of it, that has an impact."

The CCSTA always tries to make sure that the board member from the MP or Senator's province is involved in the meeting. The meetings are to inform, educate, and answer questions about Catholic education.

"In a nutshell, the intent of the day is to highlight what Catholic education is doing across the country and address any questions or concerns the MPs or Senators may have," says Mr. Hanlon. "Then, at the end of the day, we ask for their support if we should ever need it."

Each year, the CCSTA is creating a bigger network of Catholic education supporters at the federal level that they can call on for support if need be.

"That threat to Catholic education is always there," says Mr. Hanlon. "There are groups out there that would prefer to see one school system. We don't want to wait until something happens before we start this process. This way, we already have the contacts in place if we have to act."

This year, CCSTA board members also met with some top-level bureaucrats from the Justice Department. With the Trinity Western Case that went to the Supreme Court and the Theodore Case possibly going there as well, the goal was to both learn and educate.

"It was just to say to the Justice Department people that we're here representing Catholic education, we're watching what takes place at your level, and here are some of the things that we do," says Mr. Hanlon. They can't affect the Supreme Court, but it was to get their opinions and give them a bit of information about Catholic education."

The CCSTA represents 90 Catholic school boards that educate more than 850,000 students in nearly 2,000 schools across the country. The day is meant to ensure that they have a voice at the federal level.

"We consider Lobby Day a success if our meetings take place, we're able to explain what Catholic education does, we leave them with our CCSTA brochure, and we create more supporters of Catholic education," says Mr. Hanlon.

Journée de lobbying de l'ACCEC 2018

Au début novembre, les membres du conseil d'administration de l'ACCEC ont rencontré plusieurs députés et sénateurs afin de souligner l'importance et la spécificité de la contribution de l'éducation catholique au pays, dans le but d'obtenir un appui sur la scène fédérale.

« Nous voulons qu'ils sachent que l'éducation catholique a un impact majeur, dit Julian Hanlon, directeur général de l'ACCEC. Nous parlons des valeurs véhiculées par l'enseignement catholique ainsi que de nos accomplissements scolaires. »

Même si l'éducation est un domaine de juridication provinciale, l'appui du fédéral est extrêmement important pour la pérennité de l'éducation catholique au Canada. Depuis plus de 170 ans, l'éducation catholique fait partie intégrante de notre société, aidant des millions d'élèves à développer leur plein potentiel académique, spirituel, physique et social.

« En tant qu'organisme national voué à la protection de l'éducation catholique, l'un de nos devoirs est de solliciter un appui du palier fédéral, dit M. Hanlon. Les députés sont passablement influents dans leurs communautés, alors si la question de l'éducation catholique survient et qu'ils y offrent leur appui, cela a un effet positif. »

L'ACCEC essaie toujours de pairer les membres du conseil d'administration avec les députés de la province qu'ils ou elles représentent. Ces rencontres servent à informer, à éduquer et à répondre aux questions concernant l'éducation catholique.



Kevin Lamoureux, MP for Winnipeg North (middle) shows CCSTA Directors Teresita Chiarella (right) and Catherine Burnham (left) the House of Commons chamber and the Parliamentary Library before closure for renovations. / Kevin Lamoureux, député de Winnipeg Nord (centre) fait visiter aux directrices Teresita Chiarella (droite) et Catherine Burnham (gauche), la Chambre des communes ainsi que la Bibliothèque du Parlement avant sa fermeture pour rénovations.

« En un mot, le but de cette journée est de faire valoir ce que l'éducation catholique accomplit et de répondre aux questions ou aux inquiétudes des députés et des sénateurs, dit M. Hanlon. Il est plus facile ensuite de solliciter leur appui le cas échéant. »

À chaque année, l'ACCEC agrandit son réseau de supporteurs de...

Suite à la page suivante...

Journée de lobbying de l'ACCEC 2018 (cont.)

...l'éducation catholique au niveau fédéral pour pouvoir les solliciter en cas de besoin.

« Cette menace qui pèse sur l'éducation catholique est toujours présente, dit M. Hanlon. Il y a des gens qui préféreraient ne voir qu'un seul système scolaire. Nous voulons devancer les évènements et être prêts. Nos contacts seront déjà en place si jamais nous devions agir. »

Cette année, les membres du conseil de l'ACCEC ont aussi rencontré des hauts fonctionnaires du ministère de la Justice. Avec l'affaire Trinity Western qi a été déposée en Cour suprême et l'affaire Theodore qui pourrait suivre la même voie, il était nécessaire d'apprendre ainsi que d'informer.

« Nous voulions faire savoir aux gens du ministère de la Justice que nous sommes là pour représenter l'éducation catholique, que nous observons ce qui se déroule à leur échelle et leur expliquer ce que nous faisons, dit M. Hanlon. Naturellement, il s ne peuvent pas influencer la Cour suprême, mais nous voulions connaître leur opinion tout en les informant sur l'éducation catholique. »

L'ACCEC représente 90 conseils scolaires catholiques qui desservent plus de 850 000 élèves dans près de 2 000 écoles au Canada. Ceette journée servait a leur assurer une voix au niveau fédéral.

« Nous considérons la journée de lobbying un succès si nos rencontres ont effectivement lieu, si nous réussissons à expliquer le rôle de l'éducation catholique, à distribuer notre dépliant de l'ACCEC et à recruter quelques nouveaux sympathisants pour l'éducation catholique, » dit M. Hanlon.

PROVINCIAL REPORTS

BRITISH COLUMBIA

CATHOLIC INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS BRITISH COLUMBIA

Updates on our Catholic Independent Schools

Catholic Independent Schools Vancouver Archdiocese

There are 41 elementary schools and 9 secondary schools in the Vancouver Archdiocese. The annual Spirit Day this year was held on November 4th and 5th. It was launched in 2005 at Archbishop Carney Regional High School to motivate the grade 7 students about their faith ahead of receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. The first event hosted 900 students. Spirit Day has been steadily drawing over 2,100 participants annually, including 150 volunteer staff. This year the event will be held in the Chandon Pattinson Auditorium at Pacific Academy in Surrey. The event is run by the Archdiocese's Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office.

Catholic Independent Schools Prince George Diocese

Enrolment

There are 1582 students in the Catholic schools across the Prince George Diocese, including 80 Special Education students, 37 of who are not funded by the government grant.

Professional Development

The Diocese of Prince George hired Evangelicum Consulting to work with the Superintendents, CISPG office staff and the 8 Principals to form a healthy organization and cohesive team of leaders and learners, despite geographical challenges.

Catholic Independent Schools Kamloops Diocese

Staffing

Ms. Holly Paluck has been hired as the new Superintendent of the CISKD. Originally from Regina Saskatchewan, she received her K-12 Education from the Regina Catholic School Division. She obtained her Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Regina and Campion College and a Master of Education from the University of Victoria BC. She has served as both an elementary and secondary teacher, vice-principal, principal, and a Religion and Family Life Consultant, as well as international experience in Japan. She replaces Kelly Tires who retired. Kelly along with the other four Superintendents – Bev Pulyk, Victoria Diocese; Sandy Marshall, Archdiocese of Vancouver; Art Terrien, Nelson Diocese; and Chris Dugdale, Prince George Diocese did a great job hosting the 2018 CCSTA AGM and Convention.

Mr. Patrick Niwa has been hired as the new Principal of St Ann's Academy in Kamloops. He replaces Mr. Shawn Chisholm who has been hired as the Executive Director for FISA.

Continued on next page...

Catholic Independent Schools Nelson Diocese

On April 25, 2018, the Most Reverend Gregory Bittman was installed as Bishop of Nelson. He replaces the most Reverend John Corriveau OFM Cap who retired.

Enrolment
The student enrolment for the 2018-2019 school year stands at 1283. The Diocese has 6 elementary schools located in Nelson, Trail, Cranbrook, Penticton, Kelowna, and West Kelowna. There is one high school in Kelowna.

Catholic Independent Schools Diocese of Victoria/Island Catholic Schools

Closures
St Joseph's Elementary School in Chemainus has faced immense financial challenges and very limited options for future sustainability. With much regret and heavy hearts, the difficult decision was made to close the school. CISDV was able to accommodate students, families, and most staff at Queen of Angels School in Duncan. A thank you to all the staff, families, alumni, and school supporters of St Joseph's School in Chemainus for their loving support over the past 50 years.

Catholic Schools Ask, "What Do You Want of Me Lord?"
This is the theme for our Catholic Schools in BC this year. As priest, bishop, and now Pope, Pope Francis has always sought "to live the Gospel," as Jesus asked. In our Catholic schools, we are striving to learn and act as Jesus would want us to and as Pope Francis is challenging us to.

Catholic Independent Schools Vancouver Archdiocese

New CISVA Superintendent
Deacon Henk Luyten accepted the position of Superintendent, effective September 1, 2018. Deacon Henk had been serving as Principal at Archbishop Carney Regional Secondary in Port Coquitlam. He has been part of the CISVA for 32 years and has served as a teacher, vice principal, principal, and deacon. He holds a Doctor of Science Education (UBC), a Master of Science (UBC), and a Bachelor of Science (UBC). In 2015, he was awarded a Graduate Diploma in Pastoral Studies from Saint Mark's College and was one of the first men to be ordained to the Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

His faith and expertise in Catholic education will ensure the future growth of CISVA schools as communities that are committed to the development of the whole person in "environments that form disciples of Christ and champions of the Gospel of Life."

The CISVA community congratulates Deacon Henk Luyten on his new position and enthusiastically welcomes him to the Office of the Superintendent.

New CISVA High School
A new Catholic high school recently opened its doors to serve the Catholic community in South Surrey. Officially named St. John Paul II Academy, the school officially opened in September 2018, with an inaugural class of grade eight students.

"This is a bold new initiative for the Archdiocese," says Archbishop J. Michael Miller. "It has been spearheaded by a core group of talented and extremely dedicated parents. Their efforts, along with those from the Superintendent's Office, have created a momentum that has led us to open the doors in September 2018. This school will help meet the growing demand for Catholic education in the South Surrey area as this part of the Lower Mainland continues to grow and develop."

Mr. Michel DesLauriers has been hired as Principal to lead the new school. Michel brings to this role extensive teaching and administrative experience, having taught and served in administration at Vancouver College, as well as serving as Principal of St. Thomas More Collegiate for the past 6 years.

ALBERTA/NWT/YUKON

ACSTA
Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association
Celebrate, preserve, promote and enhance Catholic education

There has been change in the leadership at the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA). In early June, the ACSTA Board of Directors elected Serena Shaw, Board Chair with Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools, as the new president of the organization. She replaced resigning Chair, Adriana LaGrange, who held the position for the past 2 1/2 years.

Serena Shaw has been an active and supportive Director on the ACSTA board for the past three years. She has served as Chair for the Advocacy Committee and played an active role in the development of the ACSTA's Strategic Plan. Serena is well versed and prepared to engage the government, stakeholders and educational partners and she is looking forward to working with the Bishops, Superintendents, Alberta School Boards Association and the Ministry of Education to further the success of Catholic education across the province.

Advocacy & Communications

ACSTA communications ensures that our member boards are kept up to date on important and relevant communications initiatives that the ACSTA is involved in. This is done through social media, sending out regular President Updates, media news headlines updates, emergent emails with information regarding legislation, and through the ACSTA publication, The Catholic Dimension.

The Spring 2018 edition of The Catholic Dimension was released in June. The issue was distributed to all stakeholders, posted online, and to the ACSTA website and social media.

ACSTA launched its newly designed, mobile device-responsive and

Continued on next page...

user-friendly website in September. The site features:

- Prominent placement of new information items
- Connection to ACSTA social media
- Information about the ACSTA, the Board of Directors, and its publications
- Resources through the easy-to-find menu bar
- A Board Login module which the Board of Directors and division communications specialists will have access to their own "non-public" materials

The site is also mobile friendly, as it will adapt to the device it is viewed on, allowing smartphone or mobile device users a seamless website experience and access to ACSTA information. Users will find it easy to remain up-to-date about Catholic education through social media integration, fresh content, and ongoing updates. We encourage you to explore the website: http://www.acsta.ab.ca

SASKATCHEWAN

SASKATCHEWAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Theodore Fundraising

We have essentially reached our goal of $300,000 and have kept precious resources in the classroom where they belong. Additionally, we have raised awareness of Catholic Education among all of our stakeholders and supporters.

Grades 9-12 Catholic Studies Development

The new Grades 9-12 Catholic Studies Curricula have been posted on the Ministry website, along with a list of resources. The Catholic Education Coordinators/Consultants Association of Saskatchewan (CECAS) has created a new integrated resource to support the new curricula. There is a customized textbook. All Catholic school divisions in Saskatchewan are implementing the new curricula, but each is at a different stage. The French Catholic Studies Curricula translation has been reviewed and approved. It has been posted on the Ministry website.

Strategic Communication Plan

In the coming year, the SCSBA Board has been tasked with creating a communications strategic plan to tell the positive story of Catholic Education in advance of the Theodore appeal and beyond.

2018 Convention and AGM

SCSBA held their 2018 convention and AGM on October 26-28 at McKenna Hall in Weyburn, SK. The conference theme was "Sharing Stories of our Fruitful Harvest." Special thanks to Holy Family Catholic School Division for hosting an excellent convention. At the AGM, Vicky Bonnell was re-elected to serve as President and Delmer Wagner was re-elected as Vice-President. Paula Scott, currently Vice-President of the CCSTA, remains a member of the Executive Committee as Past-President. As a result of Paula's election to CCSTA, Vicky Bonnell was appointed as the Saskatchewan representative on the CCSTA Board of Directors.

On Saturday evening at the Convention Banquet and Awards Ceremony, the SCSBA presented the following awards:

- Appreciation Awards to Joanna Landry and Donna Ziegler.
- The Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award was presented to Geri Hall and Darrell Zaba.

MANITOBA

Embrace the Spirit
Vivez de l'Esprit
Manitoba
Catholic Schools

School enrolment continues to be strong, although there are some small fluctuations in individual school communities. As of September 30, we have a reported student population of approx. 5200 from kindergarten to grade 12 in our 19 schools. Several school communities are currently in the planning stages for building projects that would increase the capacity of our school system. We currently have very limited physical space to increase our enrolment and many schools have waiting lists. We are also considering several proposals that could add a new elementary school and a French immersion program to an existing parochial school. There are considerable costs associated with new schools, as there is no government funding of capital projects. New schools must be in operation for three years before they receive operational funding, which is 50% of what public schools receive.

Manitoba has a new Minister of Education, the Hon. Kelvin Goertzen, who is connected with the independent Christian school in Steinbach. We are optimistic that we can strengthen our relationship with the Province of Manitoba.

In 2013, the Archbishops of Manitoba approved the Sadlier religion program "We Believe" for use at the K-8 levels, as they wanted a complete program to replace the old "Born in the Spirit" series that was discontinued by the CCCB. The new Canadian program being developed by Pearson for the Bishops of Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta was just in the first stages in 2013. With the Pearson program "Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ" nearing completion (2021), the Archbishops have agreed to begin reviewing it for approval as an option for our schools.

Continued on next page...

ONTARIO

Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association

Ontario Municipal Elections

Ontario municipal elections took place on October 22. OCSTA once again joined with the province's three other trustee associations in preparing the trustee election website.

Managed through the Ontario Education Services Corporation, the Ontario trustee election website provided information to voters on the role of trustees, the election process, and trustee candidate profiles (information provided by candidates).

Following the election, all elected and re-elected trustees were posted to the website to facilitate awareness and engagement in the election of school trustees.

To view the website and election results visit: http://elections.ontarioschooltrustees.org/2018Election/Search.aspx

Cannabis Legislation

As of October 17, it is legal for adults 19 years and older in Ontario to use, buy, possess, cultivate, and distribute recreational cannabis in the province. The Cannabis Act, 2017 amends the Education Act to reflect suspension, expulsion, and code of conduct changes so that cannabis remains prohibited at school, on school property, and at school-related activities.

The Ministry of Education has taken several steps to help schools and school boards prepare for the legalization of recreational cannabis, including revising ministry policies for schools and school boards to reflect the changes to the Education Act.

These policies and supporting fact sheets have been updated and are available at www.ontario.ca/safeschools.

OCSTA Student Short-Video Contest

OCSTA recently launched its annual short-video contest for students in grades 4 through 12 at Catholic District School Boards across the province. The theme for the 2018 short-video contest is "Community Builders."

This year's theme invites students to create a two-minute video demonstrating how their participation in a school- or parish-based charitable/social justice initiative serves to strengthen their community.

Partners in the Community Builder Program

OCSTA is pleased to announce that the Ontario chapters of the Catholic Women's League (CWL) and the Knights of Columbus (KoC) are collaborating with the Association in support of this year's "Community Builders" short-video contest for students.

Many CWL and KoC chapters have or will be launching charitable initiatives this fall and invite students to explore these local Christian service activities as possible subjects for short-video submissions.

Given that CWL and KoC chapters are not located in every parish, students are encouraged to contact their parish to explore alternative parish-based charitable or social justice activities or similar Christian service activities at their local schools.

The dozens of videos created for this contest by student participants will contribute to the varied and timely online/social media content that OCSTA generates and promotes to support Catholic community awareness and engagement regarding Catholic education.

AFOCSC (English)

Vitality of the Francophonie

Centre Jules-Léger

AFOCSC and ACÉPO have been working together to ensure the... transfer of governance and management of the Centre to the Franco-Ontarian community, which was originally scheduled for August 2018. The election, on June 7, has impacted the transfer, as challenges not previously identified have surfaced. Negotiations are ongoing to implement the transfer, now planned for April 1, 2019.

Catholicity

Health and Physical Education Curriculum

The Ford Government is fulfilling an election promise to modify the health and physical education curriculum, at the elementary level, citing a lack of consultations of parents before its implementation. Therefore, elementary school teachers should build on the 1998 curriculum. This decision has created an uproar, both positive and negative, from sex education experts, parent groups and education experts. For French-language Catholic schools, this decision does not have much impact as the resource Fully Alive, supported by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, includes some of the contentious elements taught under the lens of the Catholic faith.

Continued on next page...

Organizational capacity

New Communications Officer
On September 4, AFOCSC welcomed Ms. Marie-Josée Roy as its new Communications Officer. Ms. Roy comes to us with extensive experience in communications, public policy, and event planning from positions at the provincial and federal governments.

Renewal of collective agreements
The current collective agreements all expire in August 2019. Already, AFOCSC is in consultation with its member boards in preparation for the upcoming round of bargaining. We will monitor the government's intention in terms of amendments to the agreements in places.

Monthly meetings of the AFOCSC Executive Committee
The AFOCSC Executive Committee is composed of the President and Vice-President of the Association. The Executive Director also participates as a resource person. This year, the Executive Committee will meet on a monthly basis to review the Association's financial statements and discuss emerging issues.

AFOCSC (French)

Vitalité de la francophonie

Centre Jules-Léger
L'AFOCSC et son homologue l'ACÉPO travaillent de près afin d'assurer le transfert de la gouvernance et de la gestion du Centre à la communauté franco-ontarienne. Ce transfert était prévu pour août 2018. Cependant, l'élection d'un nouveau gouvernement a eu un impact important sur le transfert car des défis qui n'avaient pas été identifiés auparavant sont survenus. Les négociations se poursuivent afin de finaliser le transfert prévu pour le 1er avril 2019.

Catholicité

Curriculum en santé et éducation physique
Le gouvernement Ford rempli sa promesse électorale de modifier le curriculum en santé et éducation physique du niveau primaire soi-disant parce qu'il n'avait pas fait l'objet de consultations auprès des parents. Les enseignants devront donc enseigner le curriculum de 1998. La décision a soulevé un débat impliquant des experts en éducation sexuelle, des groupes de parents et des experts en éducation. Autant de groupes se prononcent pour et contre la décision du gouvernement.

Pour les écoles catholiques de langue française, cette décision a moins d'impact puisque la ressource Vivre pleinement soutenue par l'Assemblée des évêques catholiques de l'Ontario, reprend certains des éléments contentieux qui sont enseignés sous la lentille de la foi catholique.

Capacité organisationnelle

Nouvelle responsable des communications
Le 4 septembre dernier, l'AFOCSC accueillait dans ses bureaux Mme Marie-Josée Roy en tant que responsable des communications. Madame Roy arrive avec beaucoup d'expérience en communications, en politiques publiques et en organisation d'évènements acquise dans des postes aux gouvernements provincial et fédéral.

Renouvellement des conventions collectives
Les ententes collectives en vigueur viennent à échéance en août 2019. Déjà, l'AFOCSC est en consultation avec ses conseils membres en prévision de cette prochaine ronde de négociation. Nous resterons à l'affût des intentions du gouvernement dans ce dossier.

Rencontres mensuelles du comité exécutif de l'AFOCSC
Le comité exécutif de l'AFOCSC est composé de la présidence et de la vice-présidence de l'Association. La direction générale participe aussi en tant que personne ressource. Cette année, le comité exécutif se rencontrera sur une base mensuelle pour revoir les états financiers de l'Association et de discuter des dossiers de l'heure qui sont émergents.

RCISA, AR

Enrollment

2018-19 enrollment figures for Schools of the Atlantic Region show a slight increase over the previous year. Indeed, for the first time, the total enrollment has edged past 1200. Parents continue to see Catholic schools, among other obvious important objectives, as a most reasonable economic alternative to the public system. The zero-funding policy for private schools of the three provinces concerned continues.

Board and School Initiatives

Boards and their schools are off to their usual busy year with several new initiatives underway. In Saint John, the Divine Mercy Catholic School Board has launched into a major fundraising project directed towards grade and facility expansion. In Corner Brook, Immaculate Heart of Mary School are the recipients of a 'Farm to Cafeteria' grant. Staff training sessions are underway with the opening target date for early 2019. The students of Sacred Heart of Halifax began

Continued on next page...

the year with a 'Global Service Day,' with activities such as making blankets (some 75) for ICU patients in city hospitals. The smallest school, Our Lady of Grace, is considering the possibility of moving to new quarters. And St. Bonaventure's College students began the year with retreat days. So, while small and independent of each other, the Boards and schools are ever looking for fresh ways to keep their programs both attractive to the school community and of service to the wider community.

Bursary Funds

The raising of bursary funds is, of course, of paramount importance. Many parents would not be able to consider enrolling their children in a Catholic school without some form of financial assistance. CCSTA bursary awards continue to play an important part in those fund-raising activities; hence, schools have been strongly encouraged to participate in this year's Toonies campaign.

Chaplain's Message
Silence – A Distinct Gift of Catholic Education



Fr. Stephano Penna
CCSTA Chaplain/Aumônier

Two hundred years ago, Fr. Josef Mohr walked to visit his friend the organist of Sankt Nikolaus Kirche in Oberndorf, Austria. Fr. Josef hoped that a poem he had written a couple of years before might be set to music by his friend, Franz Xaver Gruber – who was also a school teacher. The poem, "Stille Nacht, Heilege Nacht," was to become arguably the most popular song in history – we know it as the carol "Silent Night". It was natural for a priest to ask a school teacher to translate his Church teachings into a popular and accessible form that everyone could understand. This is the way of it. The Church clergy entrust to Catholic educators the rich doctrine and culture of the Christian Community for them to translate this into the music that resonates with their children. These children – entrusted to Catholic educators by the families who have the responsibility of raising their children – are thus able to sing the truth of Jesus' birth into our world with the accompaniment of the Catholic School. Praise God for the beauty of those children's choirs – they have grown into the chorus that has witnessed, is witnessing, and will witness to Christ in the world.

Is it strange that the most popular song ever should have as its first word "Silence"? Hardly, for it is a Christmas Carol. And the true meaning of Christmas is: GOD. God becoming fully present in His world for the very first time not with a blast of trumpets but with the silent yes of a young virgin woman. The powers of the world missed it – by the Holy Spirit we do not. We see the beginning of the healing of the World – the beginning of God's full presence in the World in the miracle of a Conception in a woman. We see God emerge into our history – not just of the world but of each of us – in the 'silence' of a birth – one among billions – in an outback of a large empire. This empire was too busy and noisy with power to recognize that everything had changed. Those who were silenced by the imperial power – shepherds and a small displaced couple – they alone could hear the choir of Angels. So too with us.

Some have written of "the eclipse of God" – they could well write of the "eclipse of silence". I once heard a wise Religious sister comment, "if there is no room for silence in our lives then there is no room for God." If the inn of our soul is crowded and noisy will there be "room in the inn" for God-with-Us – Jesus Emmanuel? This is why one of the distinctions of Catholic Education is to equip our students to ready a daily room for Christ. Catholic Education is to be a place of educating children for silence. Not the fearful silence of "Keep Quiet!" but the rich silence of Mary – a loving silence receptive to God's coming.

Such noisy lives we have prepared for our children. Plugged into a technological armamentarium of streaming music, flashing video games, and demanding social media apps, silence is a rare experience for children. My brother is a talented teacher and years ago he recognized that along with the information in faith he was to pass on he also had to hand on formation for faith – for life – by forming his students for silence. Beginning with a few seconds of focussed silence he gradually led them to being able to sit silently and focussed on the Word of God for ten minutes. No surprise their marks went up – they were math students – and they soon came to recognize this silence as a physical and spiritual need.

Dear trustees, God-with-Us – Jesus Christ – has entrusted to you the Holy Silence of the Annunciation and Virgin Birth. No real cost in materials this … just the gift of making certain that schedules and rhythms of schools do not tell God that there is "no room in the inn". May God give you the joy of a Silent and Holy Night always.

Fr. Stefano Penna
Chaplain CCSTA

Message de l'aumônier
La paix – Un don particulier à l'éducation catholique

Il y a deux cents ans, le P. Josef Mohr s'en allait à pied rendre visite à son ami, l'organiste de l'église Sankt Nikolaus, à Obendorf en Autriche. Le P. Josef espérait que son ami Franz Xaver Gruber, qui était aussi enseignant, puisse composer une mélodie à son poème qu'il avait écrit quelques années auparavant. Ce poème, Stille Nacht, Heilege Nacht, allait devenir l'une des chansons les plus populaires de l'histoire, celle que nous connaissons sous le titre de « Sainte Nuit ». Il semblait naturel à un prêtre de demander à un enseignant de transposer dans une forme populaire et accessible un enseignement de l'Église qui lui était confié. C'est comme cela que ça fonctionne. Le clergé confie aux enseignants et aux enseignantes catholiques la riche doctrine et la tradition de la communauté chrétienne pour qu'ils la mettent sur une musique que les enfants puissent comprendre. Ces enfants, confiés par leur famille aux enseignants et enseignantes catholiques, peuvent alors, accompagnés de l'école catholique, chanter la naissance de Jésus dans notre monde. Bénissons Dieu pour la beauté de toutes ces chorales d'enfants. Ils grandissent dans un milieu qui a été témoin, qui témoigne et qui témoignera encore de la présence du Christ dans le monde.

Il n'est pas étrange que les premiers mots de la chansons la plus populaire évoquent la paix. Il s'agit en effet d'un cantique de Noël, et le vrai sens de Noël, c'est DIEU. Dieu qui devient pour la première fois entièrement présent dans Son monde, sans tambour ni trompette, mais avec l'accord silencieux d'une jeune vierge. À l'insu des puissances du monde, mais grâce à l'Esprit saint, pas au nôtre. Nous voyons le commencement de la guérison du monde, le début de l'entière présence de Dieu dans le monde par le miracle de la Conception par une femme. Nous voyons Dieu émerger dans notre histoire, non seulement pour le monde mais pour chacun de nous, dans la paix d'une naissance, une parmi des millions, aux confins d'un grand empire. Cet empire était trop préoccupé par le pouvoir

pour reconnaître que tout avait changé. Ceux qui étaient mis à l'écart par le pouvoir impérial, quelques bergers et un couple déplacé, eux seuls entendaient la chorale des anges. Et nous aussi.

Certains ont écrit au sujet de « l'éclipse de Dieu ». Ils pourraient aussi bien parler de l'éclipse de la paix. J'ai un jour entendu le commentaire d'une religieuse qui disait : « S'il n'y a pas de place dans nos vies pour le silence, alors il n'y a pas de place pour Dieu. » Si notre âme est encombrée et bruyante, y aura-t-il de la place pour Dieu-avec-nous, Jésus Emmanuel? Voilà pourquoi l'une des spécificités de l'éducation catholique – et si elle n'est pas « distincte » on nous l'enlèvera – est de préparer nos enfants à faire à chaque jour une place au Christ. L'école catholique est le lieu où éduquer les enfants à la paix. Non pas la tranquillité qui suit un « Silence! », mais bien la paix accueillante de Marie, une paix aimante et réceptive à l'arrivée de Dieu.

C'est nous qui créons cette vie tumultueuse pour nos enfants. Branchés sur un arsenal de musique en continu, de jeux vidéos frénétiques et des médias sociaux prenants, les enfants ont rarement l'expérience de la paix et du silence. Mon frère est un enseignant talentueux. Il s'est aperçu il y a des années qu'en plus de l'information sur la foi qu'il devait transmettre, il devait aussi éduquer pour la foi - pour la vie – en formant ses élèves à accueillir le silence. À partir de quelques secondes de silence conscient, il a pu graduellement les amener à rester assis en silence pendant dix minutes, à réfléchir sur la Parole de Dieu. Sans surprise, leur notes ont augmenté – c'était un cours de math – et ils ont bientôt reconnu le silence comme une nécessité physique et spirituelle.

Chers conseillers et conseillères scolaires, Dieu-avec-nous, Jésus Christ, vous a confié la sainte Paix de l'Annonciation et de la naissance virginale. Il n'y a aucuns coûts matériels ici… mais seuls le don et la volonté de s'assurer que le déroulement de la journée et l'horaire scolaire laisse une place à la Paix de Dieu.

Que Dieu vous accorde toujours la joie et la sainteté d'une Nuit de Paix.

P. Stefano Penna
Aumônier de l'ACCEC

Stay up to date on the AGM details by visiting the CCSTA website at www.ccsta.ca!

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Merry Christmas!
Joyeux Noël !

