



ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO  
ASSEMBLÉE DES ÉVÊQUES CATHOLIQUES DE L'ONTARIO

## LIAISON

October 2011

The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario held their Fall Plenary Meeting in Toronto from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

For the 2010-2012 term of office the Executive Committee is comprised of:

- President: Most Rev. Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto
- Vice-President: Most Rev. Ronald Fabbro, Bishop of London
- Member: Most Rev. Brendan O'Brien, Archbishop of Kingston
- Member: Most Rev. Jean-Louis Plouffe, Bishop of Sault Ste Marie

During the Plenary the following presentations were made to the bishops:

- Trends of religious practice in Canada/New Evangelization – Dr. Reginald Bibby
- Operations of the Toronto Regional Marriage Tribunal – Fr. Larry Bordonaro
- Formation Programs for International Priests – Carol Kuzmochka (St. Paul University, Ottawa), Richard Corneil (Institute for Catholic Formation, St. Peter's Seminary, London)
- Efforts of various Catholic education partners in support of publicly-funded Catholic education in Ontario – Mr. Lou Rocha
- Progress Report on a Study for the Reorganization of Northern Ontario Dioceses

The bishops received reports on the work of all of the Assembly's Commissions and Committees. Following are highlights of those reports:

### **The Executive Committee**

In addition to endorsing several recommendations from ACBO Commissions and Committees, the Executive addressed the following matters:

- Planning of a Retreat for the Ontario bishops during 2012
- Recommendation to the bishops of the ACBO's budgetary estimates for 2012
- Implications for dioceses of the New Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act
- Implications for dioceses of the Ontario Heritage Act

### **Education Commission**

The bishops discussed and provided input on the Caring for All Students Committee's draft guidelines for Catholic schools regarding the implementation of a framework for anti-bullying initiatives in the context of the Equity and Inclusion in Education Policy.

Bishops also reaffirmed their support for the ongoing collaboration that exists between Catholic school trustees and the members of the ACBO, and the continuation of consultation between Catholic school boards and bishops on matters involving faith and morals.

### **For English Language Catholic Schools:**

The bishops were informed that the revised Grade 8 student text and teacher guide of the Family Life Education series, *Fully Alive*, had been published, and that the Grade 8 Family Edition was now posted on the ACBO website. In addition, the professional development DVD for the revised *Fully Alive* program is expected to be available during the Fall of 2011.

**The Institute for Catholic Education's** report included information on the following:

- Review of the draft Elementary Religious Education Policy Document
- Development of a revised Family Life Education Policy Document
- Development of a Catholic companion resource for two courses within the Social Sciences Policy Document (2012)
- Facilitation of the implementation of the New Roman Missal in Catholic schools
- Revision of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations booklet, and development of a companion DVD
- Role of bishop where Religious Education Additional Qualification courses are offered on-line

### **For French Language Catholic Schools:**

The new Executive Director of OPÉCO, Fr. Jean Vézina, was introduced to the bishops.

**L'Office provincial de l'éducation de la foi catholique de l'Ontario (OPÉCO)** reported on:

- Change in location of OPÉCO office from Cornwall to Sudbury
- Follow-up to the 2011 Catholic Education Symposium, and related recommendations
- Meeting in June 2011 of Religious Education Consultants
- Report from the Catholic French Language Education Steering Committee, consisting of representatives of the ACBO, AFOCSC, and CODEC

The bishops approved for publication the Grade 6 French Language Religious Education program and related resources entitled "*Le magnétique.....Jésus-Christ*".

### **Commission for Priests**

The bishops endorsed a recommendation to organize a third Symposium for Newly Ordained Priests in 2013, as well as a 2012 Symposium for those priests who have been ordained 7-14 years.

Information was also received regarding the activities of the National Federation of Presbyteral Councils (Central Region), and English and French vocations in Ontario.

### **Social Affairs Commission**

Bishops approved in principle the development of a 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary statement based on the ACBO's 1989 publication "*People and the Land*".

The ACBO's support of ISARC's *Faith to End Poverty* Campaign was formally endorsed.

### **Institutional Chaplaincy Commission**

Bishops received a copy of the Ontario Multifaith Council's *Certificate of Faith Group Endorsement*, as amended by the ACBO Chaplaincy Commission for use by Catholic chaplaincy position applicants.

### **Ministry to the Deaf**

The bishops were provided with reports regarding the retreats organized for deaf persons and those who minister to them.

In 2011, the **Eastern Ontario Retreat** for the deaf community was held at Maison Notre-Dame-de-la-Providence (Orléans) on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>. Fr. Joe Mulcrone (Chicago) led the retreat, the theme of which was "Forgiveness Builds Community". The 2012 Spring Retreat for the deaf community is planned for April 27-29. Maureen Cerroni will continue as retreat organizer.

The **South-Central Ontario Retreat** for deaf persons, and for diocesan representatives who work with members of the deaf community, took place from September 9-11, 2011, at Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga. The theme was "Seasons of the Soul", and the presenter was Kate Slosar, who is the Pastoral Care Representative for the NCOD (U.S. - based National Catholic Office for the Deaf). The dates for the 2012 Fall retreat have not been finalized.

In July, 2011, an American Sign Language workshop on the New Roman Missal was held at St. Augustine's Seminary. Participants from across Ontario included priests, deacons, and pastoral workers who minister to deaf persons. The workshop was organized by the Archdiocese of Toronto's Deaf Ministry, and received support from the ACBO.

### **Supplementary Reports**

The bishops expressed their appreciation for the work outlined in the reports from the Military Ordinariate, the Catholic Women's League, the Knights of Columbus, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Catholic Health Association of Ontario, as well as verbal reports from the Liaison bishops to various other Catholic organizations in Ontario.

### **Next Plenary Meeting**

The next Plenary meeting of the Ontario bishops will be held from March 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

Report submitted by:  
Luciano (Lou) Piovesan  
General Secretary