



CATHOLIC SCHOOL
CHAPLAINS OF ONTARIO

MISSION:

CSCO exists to develop, support, and promote the profession of Catholic School Chaplaincy in Ontario.

VISION:

Working in unity with all partners in Catholic education in Ontario, witnessing to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

VALUES:

- *Being Christ-centered in all our efforts, decisions and encounters*
- *Unity, joy and collegiality among our members*
- *On-going faith formation and professional development*
- *Advocacy for the vocation and profession of Catholic School Chaplaincy*
- *Collaboration with our partners in Catholic Education*



NEWSLETTER



From the Vice-President

Greetings my friends and colleagues!

I hope this newsletter finds you well, perhaps a little stretched with all the things that end up on our plates with the arrival of Lent.

I would like to share with you what a pleasure it is to prepare this newsletter for you. I try to think of things that might boost your spirits and in the process, I certainly boost my own. Allow me to offer you something I shared in a retreat I recently gave for my board for Lent. I used Anne Jamieson's book, ***Divine Conversations***, as my inspiration for this retreat. In it, Anne unpacks eight examples from scripture of people in a divine conversation with God. (If you are looking for a wonderful Lent book, might I suggest this one. It's full of wonderful insights and it's an easy read.)

One of the conversations she unpacks is the one with Moses. We all know the story of Moses: an ordinary day tending to the sheep and out of the burning bush, a voice speaks to him. When he started out that particular morning, there was nothing to indicate that the day would be anything other than all the days before it. God speaks to him and instructs Moses to go free the Israelites from the Egyptians. Moses' response is one I think we also have when God calls us or we find ourselves in the path of doing some mission God has in mind: *who...me? Who am I to be the one to do that task? Who am I to be the one who speaks up? Who am I to be the one to lead this particular group?* God reassures Moses (and us!) that God will be with him, and that is enough.

For those of you feeling a little...off your game?...new?...full of doubt you're making a difference?...struggling?...tired?... experiencing "imposter syndrome"?... This is what we need to remember: God is with us. There's an adage that has recently popped up in my life and it is certainly helping with my own feelings of inadequacy: ***God doesn't call the qualified, God qualifies the called.*** Well, this takes a load off my shoulders! Whew!

IN THIS ISSUE

I hope your journeys in this Lenten season are filled with a deepened sense of God's presence within you, around you, and within and around all the communities to which you belong.

Blessings to you all and in 40 some odd days those of us attending the conference will be together and for those who are unable to be with us in person, you will be with us in spirit.

In this issue you will find:

- *an article written by a principal, Norm Roberts, on a vision for a collaborative relationship between the principal and the chaplain which first appeared in an issue of Principal Connections, the magazine for Catholic principals in Ontario (pages 2, 3, and 7);*
- *intentions for our prayers this Lent;*
- *hors d'oeuvres for our ministry which include contemporary songs for Lent, various Ignatian retreat centres that are scattered throughout Ontario, and an animated short video with a message you may want to use with students (page 4);*
- ***our Bulletin board which has a link to a form where you might want to provide your talents for upcoming workshops either at our conferences, for our own professional development and/or for When Faith Meets Pedagogy--we would like to generate a pool of talent for these opportunities (page 5);***
- *a talk by Fr. Michael Himes--something to nurture your faith and theology (page 6);*
- *there are links for the Brian Halferty Award and Executive Nomination positions (page 6);*
- *and the newsletter ends with a prayer for your personal use or to use with staff;*
- *Finally, I'm in the process of getting masses said for us each month throughout the province.*

Keep up the good work that you are doing. Be gentle with yourselves and try not to doubt the good that you are doing--it takes time to grow into greatness! And trust that God is walking with you and working behind the scenes though you may not always see it!

Cheers, Adriana Rerecich



We are called to work in God's vineyard. (Matt. 20.1-16). We each have been doing this for various lengths of time. Each newsletter will feature one of our members sharing stories and perspective from their area of God's vineyard.

The Principal-Chaplain Relationship by Norm Roberts, HCDSB Principal (Article first appeared in Principal Connections)

Service in Catholic Education is derived from the very essence of Christianity which is itself rooted in service. Before the Government mandated community service hours, we have had a long tradition of encouraging our students to engage in service projects locally and around the world as a means of teaching them who we are as opposed to what we do. Each of the Catholic Graduate Expectations has a component of service integrated into its vision of building the Reign of God.

As a Catholic system we articulate our mission to serve through the lens of faith. While the word service is used throughout society and in many secular settings that reflect good deeds, our faith context leads us to a deeper understanding that is rooted in the life of Jesus and is at the core of our identity. Our call to serve is a participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, what we know as the Paschal Mystery. As Pope Francis stated: "Our lives are like that: they radiate light only if they are consumed, if they spend themselves in service." Catholic leadership is not about gain but rather about loss. The goal of leadership is not about power, authority, material gains or competition but rather about spending one's life to promote and reveal the beauty of the Children of God, the beauty of God's Creation. We participate in the divine mission of redemption by dying to self so that others may live. This concept of service is the *modus operandi* of Catholic Education whereby the educator is both inspired by and formed by Christ the Teacher. Through our pedagogy and commitment to the dignity of all, we create an environment for the student to discover that existentially they are first and foremost a child of God.

 *Lord, hear our prayers...* 

O God, each day holds promise and opportunity.
We come to You with gratitude and petition.

Creator God, You have shaped us as unique persons:
help us to accept the gentle touch of your creative hand.

Compassionate Saviour, Your glance can heal wounds:
Give us Your eyes to look upon the world with love.

Gracious Spirit, You have the power to transform hearts:
Form and reform us in the fire of Your love.

Hidden God, You come to us in the flesh of our brothers and sisters:
Give us hearts open to see and welcome You.

Faithful God, You know our every need:
Help us to persevere in faith and in the commitments we have made.

Compassionate God, we give You thanks for Your great mercy.
Encourage us to follow Your example that we may work to restore compassion to the human family. Through our words and deeds, may Your people know Your faithful love. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

[*Intercessions of Mercy: Prayers by Members of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.](#) Compiled, edited and expanded by Joy Clough, RSM. 2009. 98.



For all the faithful departed:

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

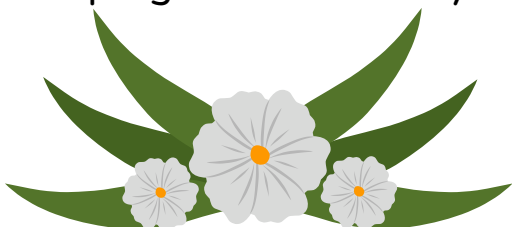
We pray for the souls of Eugene O'Connell, Marie O'Connell's father; and Peter Morrow, Leanne Davis' father-in-law.



MILESTONES

Have a milestone to share with us? Allow us to honour you and recognize this milestone with you!

Email cscovp@gmail.com with your news!



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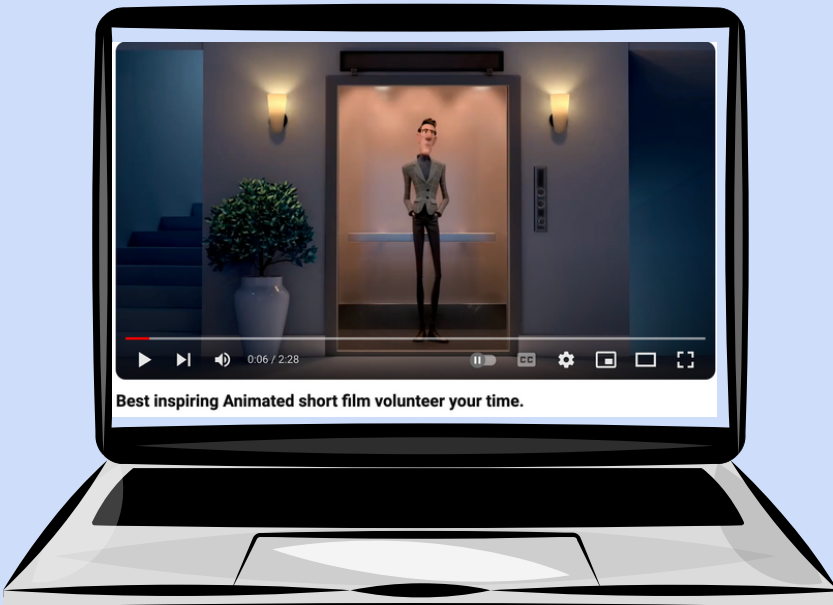
(Cont'd from page 2)

The Catholic school is called to be a community centered and inspired by God's love, which in its essence is a call to service. Pope Francis proclaimed during a homily to Cardinals and Bishops: "The meaning of life is found in our response to God's offer of love. And that response is made up of true love, self-giving and service,". As we continue to serve in the context of a secular post-Christian society, the role of Catholic education is more vital than ever. The need to support the spiritual formation of administrators, teachers, students, and parents is critical to sustaining communities that nurture the hearts and minds of our students who become beacons of God's love for the world. When our praxis is rooted in Christian service, we participate in the mission of salvation by modelling the Paschal Mystery.

It is in this light that we understand the tremendous insight of the Ontario Bishops, who 35 years ago when Catholic Schools received full funding, called for Chaplaincy Leaders in all Catholic Secondary Schools. As our schools opened to a more secular population of students that included a diversity of faiths and cultural backgrounds it became even more important to establish a pastoral presence that could support the faith formation of both faculty and students. Responding to the needs of a Catholic School in the context of a secular setting, there was a move from catechesis to evangelization. Catechesis presumes a faith experience, whereas evangelization seeks to create an experience of faith to encounter God's love as revealed through our interconnectedness with one another and with all Creation. Over the past 35 years our Chaplains offered retreats, reflections, led social justice projects, advocated for the poor and vulnerable, and have served as reminders that we are a Catholic faith community rooted in God's love.

(cont'd on page 7)

HORS D'OEUVRES FOR MINISTRY



SAVE THE DATE

2023-2024:

April 12: DEADLINE TO SUBMIT WFMP WORKSHOP IDEAS!

April 16-18: AGM & CSCO Conference

April 17: CSCO Mass & Banquet

May 5-10: Catholic Education Week

Oct. 20-26: Spiritual/Pastoral Care Week

Oct. 24-26, 2024: WFMP 2024

If you have a topic of interest that you would like to write about and share, please consider submitting! Articles should be 250 words. Scan the QR code for more information!

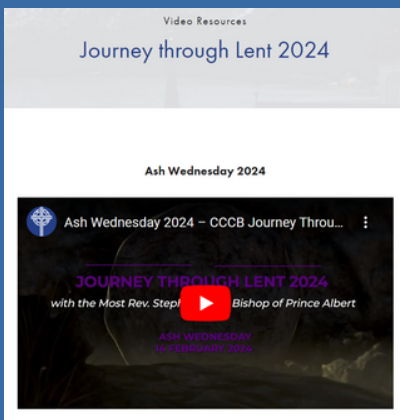


If you would like to submit intentions or be part of any other features in our newsletter, email: cscovp@gmail.com Or SCAN the QR code.

Bulletin Board



Do you have workshop ideas for WFMP? or for our annual conferences? Click the photo and let us know!
WFMP workshop deadline for CSCO: April 12, 2024!



Journey through Lent with our Canadian Bishops!

Each Monday, a new video is shared. Click the photo for the link!

Mass will be/has been celebrated for us:

January 2024:

February 2024:

March 2024:

April 25 2024: Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton @ 8 a.m.

May 6, 2024: St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica, Toronto @ Noon

June 2024:

July 2024:

August 2024:

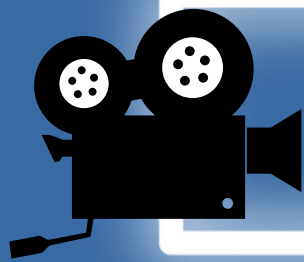
September 3 2024: Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton @ 8 a.m.

October 2024:

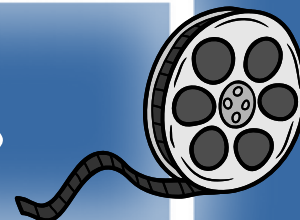
November 2024:

December 2, 2024: St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica, Toronto @ 12 Noon





Now playing...



Click the award icon and it will take you to the Award Nomination form. You will have to download it, save it, then complete it and send it as an attachment to: cscovp@gmail.com

Click the election box icon and it will take you to the Executive Nomination form. You will have to download it, save it, then complete it and send it as an attachment to: cscovp@gmail.com

The positions up for election this year are: Vice-President, Secretary, Communication Coordinator, Members-at-Large 1 and 2.



Collaborative Leadership

(cont'd from page 3)

Having worked with Chaplains in Catholic Education for more than 35 years, their commitment and desire to be faithful stewards are edifying. As we continue to evolve and discern as a Catholic community it is time to unpack and revision our 35 years of experience; what has worked well; what can we improve upon; and where do we grow from here. This type of initiative requires a group of informed and committed educators and spiritual leaders to discern and articulate a vision of Catholic Education and the gift of Chaplaincy for the future. Recognizing that Principals and Chaplains have a symbiotic, relationship it is important that a renewed vision involves a nurturing of that relationship to facilitate a synergy rooted in service.

Throughout its history the rapport between Principal and Chaplain has varied according to the charisms of those involved. When the Principal and Chaplain work together there is a positive energy that feeds the spirituality of a community. However, there have been times when Chaplains have felt isolated and lacking respect, not aware of major decisions or activities happening in the school. Situations have also arisen where principals have struggled to see the Chaplain as vital to the spiritual life of the School community. They have seen the Chaplain as ineffective in supporting a vision of the school. When these tensions exist, the whole community suffers and ultimately the students are not served to the fullness of what we have to offer or what we have promised as a Catholic Education system.

Moving forward it is essential that we return to the source of Christian Service when articulating the role of both Principals and Chaplains, recognizing our identities as being Paschal in nature.

By sharing in the salvific mission of the Church we participate in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. This is realized when we work collaboratively and respectfully to build a community centred on God's love and at the service of students. At their best, Chaplains are sacramental, an outward sign of the presence of God in that they are existentially a constant reminder that Catholic Education is the work of the Church and is salvific in nature. At their best, Principals provide a leadership that creates an environment that empowers the community to embrace and serve, with a special attention to the poor, vulnerable and at-risk students.

As we continue to revision and articulate our understanding of Catholic Education there are a few things we can do to nurture the collaboration between Principal and Chaplain:

1. Pray together (weekly)
2. Invite Chaplains into regular meetings with Administration (weekly, monthly)
3. Collaborate on a review of the spiritual needs in the community at the end of each semester
4. Debrief school activities in light of our call to serve students with a special attention to those who fall under the category of poor, vulnerable and at risk.

The purpose of this article was to recognize the tremendous gift of Chaplaincy in Education and to spark a conversation that nurtures a collaborative and fertile relationship between Principal and Chaplain that radiates the light of Christ, as they seek to lead and serve the Children of God in the context of a Catholic School. It is with joy and hope that I look forward to the continued flourishing of Catholic Education in a society so in need of gifts we have to share.

A PRAYER AT THE END OF THE DAY

Lord, as the day come to an end
help me to settle for a moment in your
presence...
to be still and set aside the agitations of the
day,
to be grateful for my life,
for the gift of everything.

Help me now to consider the day--
to let the events play out,
my encounters with people, my thoughts,
my reactions to unexpected moments, to
interruptions.

What rises in me when I think of today?
What plays on my mind? What tugs at my
heart?

What drained me of life?

What enlivened me?

What stretched me a little into being?

What diminished me?

What did I do for others

that was helpful, that was unhelpful?

Did I say something to demean another,
to get one over, one up?

Where might I have been more attentive?
What in my lifestyle remains unexamined
that I know is unhealthy, selfish, unsustainable?
What am I sorry for?
Where did I fall again?
What is going to change?
Where does your Spirit need to get at me,
to make me more forgiving, more
compassionate, more patient,
more committed to my neighbour?

Lord bless all those I love this night.

Keep us from fear and anxiety and bring us
safely to a new day, with new purpose and a
new desire to change, to grow, to be our better
selves.

*(taken from At Your Side: Prayers for Messy, Delightful,
Complicated, Outrageous, Everyday Life by Raymond
Friel and David Wells. 2020. p. 21-22.)*



We honour the lands on which we live, work and learn.
We honour the many First Nations, Indigenous, Metis and Inuit
that have been stewards of this land and continue to shape it,
influence it's eco-systems, sustain its diversity
and teach us to do the same.

Throughout our days, let us remember where we are, how we
got here, and the people who came before us and continue to
lead and guide us on how to care for this land.

Stay connected with us!



www.cscoc.ca

