

# Taking a Final Bow

By **Nelly Kelders**, Member Services Director

The executive council of the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO) invited its education and business partners to join the council of district representatives (CDR) to honour retired Executive Director Lou Rocha, on Friday, November 21, 2008. He retired from CPCO on October 20, 2008. Lou's service to CPCO began with his election to the executive council in 1998, followed by his successful application to become executive director in July 2000.

Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne attended the reception and offered words of congratulations and thanks to Lou for his work on behalf of Catholic principals and vice-principals. She was most appreciative of the collaborative spirit in the working relationship between the Ministry and CPCO.

## CDRs Reflect

Four experienced members of the council of district representatives were asked to reflect on their relationship with Lou over the last eight years. Following are excerpts from each presentation as well as the president's comments.



*Lou has aided in the growth of our organization and has seen its evolution from a fledgling organization to a credible and trusted leadership group that is respected by you, our Catholic partners, government and business partners. More importantly, Lou always took great pride in the fact that CPCO is able to offer superb service to our members. Lou, we thank you again for all you have done for our organization and congratulations on your retirement. You have dedicated your life to furthering the cause of Catholic education and we wish you many blessings as you continue your new work.*

**Joan Duckitt**, CPCO President



*So the question we have to ask ourselves is - why are we all so drawn to Lou?*

*I think it's because Lou exemplifies true servant leadership, earning the trust of our team and exemplifying three crucial elements of character: competence, moral values and shared personal values of performance as well as always having the attitude of "I'm here to help you reach your goals" and always encouraging our hearts.*

**Mike Bethune**  
Bruce-Grey Catholic



*Most important is my reflection on who you are as a person. It became obvious to me early on that you were someone who was genuine, passionate, wanting to serve others and wanting the best in your colleagues and the students all of us ultimately serve. Anytime I called, you always provided the time and support needed. You served as a true role model of the Gospel values.*

**Andre Potvin**  
Ottawa Catholic



*I believe that Lou's unwavering support for the work we do in our schools and his steady stewardship of CPCO have been integral to the success of this organization. On behalf of the principals and vice-principals in Toronto, I wish you well Lou in your future endeavours. I believe that the skills and talents you shared so graciously with Toronto Catholic principals and vice-principals and CPCO will serve you well in your continuing work on behalf of Catholic educators in the province of Ontario.*

**Gretchen Schuler**  
Toronto Catholic



*Lou Rocha is a genuine professional, an outstanding person, and a font of accumulated knowledge in educational and governance issues. He has been a tireless worker, giving so much of his time and energy to our organization. He was willingly available to us simply by picking up the telephone.*

**Celeste King**  
Thunder Bay Catholic