



PAUL CARR
President
2005-2006

“We Are Carriers of the Dream”

As principals and vice-principals, we are carriers of Jesus’ dream

We are called to be educators of the Gospel

We are called to be educators of the Church

We are entrusted with responsibility and privilege

We are committed to developing communities of disciples who

live simply

love tenderly

act justly

(adapted from “We Are Carriers of the Dream”, Shaping Safer Catholic Schools)

The role of the principal has changed dramatically over the last few years. It would be an oversimplification to say that it has been transformed from one of management to leadership, but we are all aware of the increased expectations placed on today’s principals. We are expected to be instructional leaders, mentors, and strategic planners as well as being responsible for maintaining safe school environments while developing an atmosphere of collaboration and collegiality – loads of emotional intelligence needed here! Together with an increasing emphasis on high academic standards, provincial testing, and accountability, the role of the principal has become extremely challenging.

I am both heartened and excited by the positive opportunities we should experience as Catholic leaders in our schools over the next year. Many of the initiatives from the *Role of the Principal* paper are reaching the implementation stage and will support the good work of our members. We have made much progress over the past year, and I remain confident that we will continue to achieve success under the leadership of our new president, Don Rait, and the excellent executive you have elected.

I am especially proud of the dedication and leadership our Council of District Representatives has demonstrated in its work related to the *Threats to Catholic Education*. As principals and vice-principals, we must form the vanguard in defense of the right to Catholic education in Ontario – if not us, then who?

As I travel throughout the province, I am often asked how the year has gone, or whether or not I’ve had a good year (as president). The simple answer to these questions rolls off my tongue without hesitation – it has been an incredible year! I have had the privilege to witness the passion and dedication with which you, our principals and vice-principals, carry out your role as leaders in our school communities every day. You are indeed “carriers of the dream”.

Success does not come without dedication and hard work. I wish to express my thanks to the members of the Executive Council for their dedication and support during the past year. The work they do on behalf of our members and Catholic education goes well beyond the call of duty.

I wish also to thank our executive director, Lou Rocha for his support and guidance throughout the year, along with the staff at the CPCO office for their diligent work.

My journey during the past year has enabled me to visit many school communities throughout the province. Wherever I traveled, I was welcomed and made to feel like a member of the community. I encountered a generosity of spirit that made my service to CPCO a joy that will long be remembered. I thank you sincerely for the opportunity to serve you, and our students.

As I complete my term as president of the Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario, I look forward to being re-united with my colleagues in Thunder Bay, and more so, to serving our students in a school. School principalship remains for me a most rewarding opportunity to make a difference to the lives of students we serve every day. It remains, of course, all about kids!

In the words of Mother Teresa, “The miracle is not that we do this work, but that we are happy to do it.” May God grant you the grace to continue to be a part of this miracle, and the happiness you deserve as you continue your journey.

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