

# OUR JOURNEY...OUR TEST

## 2010 Address to Delegates

**T**he Windsor conference committee selected the theme *Embracing Our Catholic Vocation* for this year's conference. How appropriate, for this is the journey we have been traveling together as Catholic educators and it is this journey that will continue to test the fabric of who we are and what CPCO will be in the future.

We need to continue to promote and celebrate Catholic education. Once again, we will be challenged to protect our Catholic school system in the upcoming 2011 provincial election. This time we will not be faced with extending public funding for education to all religious groups, but we will have to defend the funding of two systems, so that the same situation does not occur in Ontario as it did in Newfoundland and Quebec. We are in a better place heading into this election than we were in the previous one because of the work of FACE (Friends and Advocates of Catholic Education) and our Catholic partners.

Our journey as a CPCO organization will also be tested (challenged) if the outcome of the *Public Sector Compensation Restraint Act* does not exclude principals and vice-principals. This could drastically change the composition of our membership in the wealth of experienced administrators/mentors in the boards. We may find ourselves in a situation where our local associations will have to negotiate for their membership. If so, *PPM 152 Terms & Conditions of Employment* will be tested as we negotiate these terms and conditions with our local school boards. We remain optimistic.

CPCO will always continue to advocate on behalf of its members. We will engage with the Ministry and monitor several critical areas:

- the Early Learning Program (Sept. 2010 implementation);
- the Principal/Vice-Principal Performance Appraisal (PPA);
- principals in board positions;
- the return to teaching issue;
- the role of the principal;
- safe schools and supervision; and
- the impact of declining enrolment.

Maintaining a good working relationship with OPC and ADFO will be important as we all work toward addressing many of the same issues.

It is truly an honour and a privilege to be your next CPCO president. Like those before me who kept the lamp shining and bright on our organization, I hope to continue Paul's journey as a servant-leader. He challenged us with his passion and commitment to CPCO as have Joan, Dan, Don, Paul, Patrick, Terri, Nelly, Brent, Arlene, Mary Catherine, Marny and Jim before him. Clara, our executive director has brought a refreshing, transparent perspective to us and it will be my pleasure to work with her in continuing the vision and service of CPCO along with the hard working and dedicated staff at our office.

I have heard previous presidents repeatedly say that their association visits have been a highlight of their term in office, so I too look forward to sharing your successes and listening to your concerns. Feedback in the form of surveys, teleconferences and meetings from CDRs, standing committees and our membership play a very important role in guiding the executive council to meet the needs of its members.

Congratulations to the new executive council. I look forward to working more closely with you. Thank you to my friends and colleagues in Thunder Bay for your support and best wishes, and to the Thunder Bay Catholic DSB for supporting my presidency with CPCO for the upcoming school year. A heartfelt thank you goes to my family for their encouragement and support over the years. My year as president will no doubt have an impact on our close family and I am grateful for their support! To Joan for your six years on the CPCO executive council, we are thankful for your passion and leadership over those years. To our current president, Paul Lacalmita, who has worked diligently for our membership and who positively challenged the executive council to better our interests, we thank you for the personal sacrifices that the job demands. I have one question Paul. Is the BMW passed on to the next president?

The WWF (Windsor Wow Factor) was truly evident this weekend at our annual conference; the first conference held in Windsor. You provided us with an extremely well-organized conference and you were most gracious hosts. For that, we thank you.

Thank you to the Toronto Catholic principals and vice-principals for hosting last night's hospitality. You have given us an indication by your enthusiasm and dedication to detail that the 2012 conference will be excellent and one to which we look forward.

Finally, as Catholic educators let us always remember the theme of this conference *Embracing Our Catholic Vocation*, because our journey will continue to have its challenges. We will need to remember John's words in Chapter 1, *Jesus is the true light that enlightens every man* (John 1:9). For:

*No one after lighting a lamp hides it under the jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lamp stand, so that those who enter may see the light.*

~ Luke 8:16



Joe Czackowski assumes the role of CPCO president July 1, 2010.