



Paul Lacalamita
President

An Anchor & A Sail

Each CPCO president comes into the role with a vision of what he/she hopes to accomplish during his or her term of office. For me, an important part of my work was to re-ignite the story of and the passion for CPCO amongst members. The reason for this priority is simply that the membership of CPCO from 1998 to today has radically changed. Our census indicates that 75 per cent of our members have been in administration for less than 10 years and of that 75 per cent, 35 per cent have been in an administrative role for less than five years. I believed that it was crucial to embrace our history and the evolution of CPCO as an association in order to understand and appreciate where we are and perhaps more importantly where we are going as a professional association.

There is no denying that the role and duties of our members continue to become more complex. In order to realize the true potential of the principal in the school in leading student achievement, our education partners must embrace the reality of our members and address a real need to support principals/vice-principals in the operation of schools as well as student achievement. Ontario's Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) is an organization that models a high calibre of tri-level, results-based strategic leadership to support school and system leaders. The members of the IEL include representatives from the directors of education, supervisory officers and principals of the four publicly-funded school systems in Ontario, in addition to representatives from the Ministry of Education. CPCO is very hopeful about the role that the IEL can play in addressing our concerns in this regard.

A strong acknowledgement of the importance of partnership, locally, provincially and nationally, from all stakeholders in education is crucial in supporting the principals and vice-principals of our Catholic schools in Ontario. There is no doubt that nurturing the dynamics of the larger Catholic community can create the opportunity for the work of the Holy Spirit and the development of our fullest potential as Catholic school leaders. An authentic partnership will foster the growth of a system of education that will produce Catholic school graduates ready to make a difference in our society and prepare Ontario for the next generation.

Throughout the course of the year, I have endeavoured to keep the membership informed of the work of CPCO through my weekly online communication, *President's Journal* and my president's message in *Principal Connections*. Through my visits

to local associations, I have witnessed how vast and diverse our province truly is and I am confident that this diversity provides the core element of our strength as a professional association.

This has been a year with many challenges, but also one that has offered hope for the future. We should be proud of our 12-year history. We have grown from the turmoil of Bill 160 in 1998, which removed principals and vice-principals from teachers' unions and essentially launched CPCO, to a new Policy/Program Memorandum No. 152, which outlines provincial standards of practice for our employers to establish terms and conditions of employment of principals and vice-principals that are consistent province-wide. CPCO, under the leadership of our new president Joe Czackowski, our executive director Clara Pitoscia and the capable executive council in place for 2010-11 will continue to strive to create a synergy that evolves from traditions and practices of yesteryear to decisions and actions that respond to today's challenges for public education in Ontario. Accordingly, CPCO will act both as an anchor and a sail for our members in supporting their daily vocation.

As my term ends I look forward to being re-united with my colleagues in Waterloo and to leading a Catholic school community. Serving as a school principal remains for me a most rewarding opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of students every day.

This Moment of Promise addresses principals and vice-principals:

As no one else, you who are principals and vice-principals have a unique opportunity to create the character of your school. Your reach extends both into the classroom and into the community. The life, the values and the feeling of each school derive in large part from your commitment to your staff, to your students and to the gospel.

I would like to express my utmost appreciation to all members of the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario for allowing me the honour of serving you as president this year. The experience has been life-giving as I have come to a richer understanding of the enduring gift of Catholic education and the individuals who lead our schools and school boards.

May God continue to bless you in the important work that you do, overseeing the daily education and faith formation of the students and families in your schools.