

Father John Redmond Memorial Award

Nelly Kelders, Support Services Coordinator

The Father John Redmond Memorial Award was instituted by the former Ontario Catholic Secondary School Principals' Association (OCSSPA) and was presented to the individual who had made an outstanding contribution to Catholic education in Ontario. The Father John Redmond award was continued with the merger of OCSSPA and CPCO. The award is made to an individual whose contribution to Catholic education has had a significant provincial impact.



The Catholic Curriculum Corporation is a consortium of 17 Catholic district school boards across central and western Ontario. Today the *Community of Catholic School Boards* is incorporated as the Catholic Curriculum Corporation (CCC) having built on the strength of the organizational and governance structure of the original body. This model of governance remains in place today and includes a representative from each of the 17 member boards in the central and western Ontario regions as well as partners from CPCO, OECTA and CARFLEO. The work of the CCC is funded by contributions from member boards and partners who contribute funds as an investment to ensure the development of uniquely Catholic resources for Catholic educators.

In order to provide resources, CCC needs to live not only within Ministry of Education policy, but equally listen to Catholic educators at all levels to ensure that presumed needs, in fact, fit actual needs. Representatives of member boards and partners who come together on a quarterly basis to share field level intelligence in terms of resources needed, resources in place and resources that perhaps need to be updated populate curriculum councils. It is within this framework of collaboration and cooperation that councils are invited to submit writing proposals through the curriculum manager, Fran Craig, in order to be considered for funding by the board of representatives.

A second area through which CCC provides resources to the Catholic educational community is the annual *When Faith Meets Pedagogy* (WFMP) conference, which is in its sixteenth year of operation. The conference is, to the best of our knowledge, the third largest gathering of Catholic educators in North America after the Los Angeles Religious Education Conference and the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) in the United States. WFMP typically attracts from 1,200 to 1,500 delegates, largely from Ontario but recently has begun to attract interest from Catholic educators across Canada. Most recently there has been an outreach

This year the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario is pleased to honour the three Catholic curriculum cooperatives in Ontario as the recipients of the Father John Redmond Memorial Award 2011. The Catholic Curriculum Corporation, the Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative and the Northern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative have made outstanding contributions to Catholic education through the development of resources that support and enhance Catholic curriculum in Ontario's publicly-funded Catholic school system.



From Left: Fran Craig, Joe Czaczkowski, Trish Kings, Patricia Manson, Michael Bator

to include parents through the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education and pastoral teams within dioceses to ensure that they are included as part of our community of Catholic educators.

Every second year, a Youth Forum runs on the first day of the conference and attracts up to 1,500 secondary students. The forum provides Catholic students the opportunity to interact with peers from across the province, develop confidence in their capacity as

Catholics to make a difference in the lives of others and demonstrate that Catholicism is as relevant today as it ever was. Principals and vice-principals are key leaders within the Catholic education community, leaders whose voices and witness are relied upon and as a consequence nurture the lives of teachers, students and parents.

CCC continues to be a voice for a distinctively Catholic curriculum; its work is enhanced by the continued commitment of its member boards and its partners. We are grateful to partners such as CPCO, who recognize the rich rewards of collaboration within the Catholic education community.



THE EASTERN ONTARIO CATHOLIC CURRICULUM COOPERATIVE

When the Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative (EOCCC) was formed 15 years ago, the World Wide Web was four years old and Amazon was a large river in South America. The technology that now links us so seamlessly was in its infancy. In Eastern Ontario, teachers were scattered in pockets of urban centres or small, country schools with as few as two or three colleagues on site. Catholic educators yearned for a network that would allow them to share resources, cultivate new ideas and build on their existing strengths.

The concept of Catholic curriculum cooperatives sprang from this need for a professional, faith-based collective, and the conviction that the group could achieve more by working together than any member could accomplish on an individual basis. We wanted to engage as a Catholic community, to maximize our effectiveness as a school system rooted in spirituality.

Over the past 15 years, existing connections have been reinforced and new links have been forged between the school boards that participate in the Cooperative and the individual educators who work for those school boards. Exciting partnerships have developed involving the Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB, the Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario, the Ottawa Catholic School Board and the Renfrew County Catholic DSB.

We have presented unified messages and acted as a strong voice for Eastern Ontario at various forums within the Ontario Ministry of Education. We have worked with the other Catholic curriculum cooperatives of Ontario (the Catholic Curriculum Corporation and the Northern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative), as well as the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association and the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, to further the interest of Catholic education throughout our region. We have developed a strong community that continues to reach to new heights and have influence with new audiences.

The EOCCC has been the recipient of invaluable contributions of time, expertise and dedication. Writing teams have tackled summer projects. Teachers have provided feedback and new ideas. Principals and members of the senior administration teams have provided support and encouragement. School board trustees, priests, bishops and others have supported us financially and spiritually. The results speak for themselves in the contributions that the EOCCC has been able to return to the Eastern Ontario education community and beyond.



From Left: Joe Czackowski, Lorne Keon, Patricia Manson

The Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative gives us a focused forum to develop relevant curriculum specifically for Catholic schools. In a secular world, Catholic education stands apart. It is the Christ figure at the heart of our education system that makes it so. And it is that very Christ figure that shapes the growing bank of materials being developed through Catholic curriculum cooperatives such as ours in Eastern Ontario.

The future of Catholic education is being publicly debated and questioned on a regular basis. The strength of the materials we produce, the power of the networks we create and the clarity of our focus in Christ provides our resounding response to those questions.

The products of our Catholic curriculum cooperatives can be measured in the content available on our websites, in the materials we produce and distribute, and in the way those materials are put to use. But we are doing ourselves a disservice if we depend solely on such measurable outputs to evaluate our work. The true value of our Cooperatives is found in the benefits we cannot measure; the commitment, the community and the contributions we build together when we are one in spirit and purpose.



Recognizing that the tasks of developing curriculum are made unique for Northern Ontario Catholic schools by long distance, isolation, small numbers, climate and terrain, the Cooperative was conceived as a means of responding to that uniqueness. It allows the Northern Ontario Catholic education community, which already shares a common faith and mission, to develop a common core curriculum through a further sharing process.

The development and implementation of a Catholic curriculum through the Cooperative provides not only improved learning in our classrooms, but a process through which our teachers grow as educators in their knowledge of curriculum, as they participate through the Cooperative, in sharing their professional talents. The whole concept of this Cooperative is that people come together as a Catholic community to share their resources, to enable the group to achieve more together than they could individually.

The management of the development and operation of the curriculum model has moved from one based on individual school board control to one cooperatively controlled by the major partners with voting representatives from the participating boards: Huron-Superior Catholic DSB; Kenora Catholic DSB; Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic DSB; Northeastern Catholic DSB; Northwest Catholic DSB; Sudbury Catholic DSB; Superior North Catholic DSB; and Thunder Bay Catholic DSB. Also included with representation on our board of directors are the Bishops of Northern Ontario and the provincial associations: Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario; Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association; Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association; and non-voting representatives from the Ministry of Education and the Native First Nations.

The NOCCC works in collaboration with the other Catholic Cooperatives on provincial curriculum initiatives and in the spirit of sharing of curriculum materials. Although each Cooperative follows their own distinct mission statement, the three cooperatives strive to fulfill the most important task of developing and educating our Catholic children to live their lives in the spirit of the Gospels.

Over the past few years the NOCCC has taken a faith-based approach to its curriculum at the request of the teachers that the NOCCC serve. Some of the Catholic curriculum produced includes the following:

- *Advent Christmas*
- *We Are An Easter People, Lent, Easter, Spring*
- *Celebrate Eucharist...food for the journey*
- *The Beatitudes*
- *The Rosary*
- *Pope Benedict XVI*
- *Celebrate Eucharist...food for the journey*
- *The Way of the Cross (Intermediate & Primary)*
- *Peace... A Catholic Approach to Peace*
- *Guide to Staff Room Prayers*



From Left: Joe Czackowski, Suzanne Wishak, Patricia Manson

- *Christianity and Ecology*
- *Designing Prayer Centers*
- *Preserving our Heritage – An Aboriginal Science Resource*
- *Character Education: A Shared Approach*

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The NOCCC strongly believes that distinctive expectations for graduates of Catholic schools are determined and shaped by the vision and destiny of the human person emerging from our faith tradition. Catholic education views human life as an integration of body, mind and spirit. Rooted in this vision, Catholic education fosters the search for knowledge as a lifelong spiritual and academic quest. The expectations of Catholic graduates are described not only in terms of values, but attitudes and actions.