



**ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF ONTARIO  
ASSEMBLÉE DES ÉVÊQUES CATHOLIQUES DE L'ONTARIO**

## **LIAISON**

October 2016

The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario held its Fall Plenary meeting in Toronto from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

The meeting was chaired by the Assembly's President, the Most Rev. Ronald Fabbro, Bishop of the Diocese of London.

For the 2016-2018 term of office the ACBO Executive is comprised of:

- President: Most Rev. Ronald Fabbro, Bishop of London
- Vice-President: His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Collins, Archbishop of Toronto
- Member: Most Rev. Gerard Bergie, Bishop of St. Catharines
- Member: Most Rev. Marcel Damphousse, Bishop of Alexandria-Cornwall

The Chair welcomed the following individuals to the meeting:

- Most Rev. Robert Kasun, C.S.B., Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto, and new ACBO member
- Most Rev. Scott McCaig, C.C., Military Ordinary, and new ACBO member
- Msgr. Frank Leo, General Secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Ms. Laura Hughes, newly appointed Director of L'Office provincial de l'éducation de la foi catholique de l'Ontario (OPÉCO)

Presentations included:

- Assisted Suicide and Physicians' Conscience Rights (Deacon Larry Worthen, and Neil MacCarthy)
- Catholic Health Association of Ontario (Ron Noble, President and CEO)
- Assisting Northern Dioceses (Most Rev. Mark Hagemoen, Bishop of Mackenzie-Fort Smith)
- Catholic Near East Welfare Association (Carl Hétu, National Director - Canada)

### **The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee endorsed a number of recommendations from ACBO Commissions and Committees, as well as the Assembly's proposed budget for 2017.

A session was devoted to planning for the Ontario Bishops' Ad limina visit to Rome in April of 2017. The focus of the Ad limina visit is pilgrimage and celebration of the Eucharist at the pontifical basilicas of Saint Peter and Saint Paul; a meeting with His Holiness Pope Francis, and meetings with the Congregations and Pontifical Councils of the Roman Curia. The Ontario Bishops' last Ad limina took place in 2006.

## Commissions and Committees of the Assembly

Following are highlights of the reports received by the bishops on the work of the Assembly's Commissions and Committees:

### Education Commission

The Education Commission reported on the development of the "Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ" Elementary Catechetical Resources. The student and teacher resources for Grades 1, 2, and 3, have now been published in both print and digital formats. The online parish portal for these grades was available as of August 2016.

Michael Pautler, Executive Director of the **Institute for Catholic Education (ICE)**, addressed the bishops on a number of matters including:

- Catholic Education Symposium 2017
- Review of the Secondary Religious Education Policy Document
- Relocation of ICE Office
- Curriculum development in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report

The report from Laura Hughes, Director of **L'Office provincial de l'éducation de la foi catholique de l'Ontario (OPÉCO)**, included information on the following:

- Fully Alive Resource: the translation of Fully Alive into French, and the development of complementary multimedia resources
- Supplementary resource for World Religions course: in final stages of development and review
- Assessing French Catholic schools: the development of a reference document which will include profiles for teachers who work in a French Catholic School Board of Ontario, for graduating students, and for Catholic schools
- Joint planning with the Institute for Catholic Education for the provincial symposium for Catholic education in November 2017

### Commission for Priests

The Commission reminded the bishops that the next Symposium for the Recently-Ordained will take place from November 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Guidelines pertaining to the Permanent Diaconate had been finalized and distributed to the dioceses.

### Diocesan Insurance Committee

The Diocesan Insurance Committee provided status reports regarding the ACBO's diocesan property, liability, and employee benefits self-insurance programs.

### **Social Affairs Commission**

The Commission continues as a member of ISARC (*Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition*) which advocates for social justice specifically in areas of housing, a living wage, and social assistance programs. The next ISARC Religious Leaders Forum at Queen's Park is scheduled for November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Issues surrounding palliative care and the needs of an aging population are being studied by the Commission, and a joint meeting with Diocesan Social Justice representatives will take place in November 2016 to address other matters of concern.

### **Institutional Chaplaincy Committee**

The Chaplaincy Committee is currently studying ways to ensure access for chaplains to healthcare institutions.

Chaplaincy services in provincial correctional institutions will be addressed in the coming year in addition to services in federal correctional facilities.

### **Ministry to the Deaf**

Again this year two retreats were organized:

The **Eastern Ontario Retreat** was held from April 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> at Maison Notre-Dame-de-la-Providence in Orleans (Ottawa), and the **South-Central Ontario Retreat** for the deaf was planned for October 14 - 16, 2016 at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre in Mississauga.

The Ontario bishops are committed to continued support for this ministry.

### **Supplementary Reports**

The bishops expressed their appreciation for the report from Msgr. Frank Leo, the General Secretary of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and from the Most Rev. Scott McCaig, Military Ordinary of Canada.

Written reports were received from the Catholic Women's League, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Catholic Health Association of Ontario, and the Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario.

### **Next Plenary Meeting**

The next Plenary meeting of the Ontario bishops will be held in Toronto from March 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

Report submitted by:  
Roger Lawler, General Secretary