

CARFLEO Newsletter

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A Time for Gathering: The Jewish Feast of Weeks—what would become our Pentecost—was an early harvest feast. This is the time of year when we see life all around us coming to fullness. In the fields, we can start to see summer crops ripening, and in the fields of our work in education, we are choosing award-winners, preparing for graduation, and summing up the year past. It's a time for early thanksgiving, and for formulating hopes for next year. May the summer break be a time of rest and renewal so that we can return to the fields in the fall ready to work those hopes into fruition.

CARFLEO Conference

The theme for the 2008 CARFLEO Conference, which was held at Nottawasaga Inn, near Alliston, on April 2nd and 3rd, was "Self, Relationships, Sexuality: Emerging Issues in Family Life Education. The Keynote Speaker, Dr. Moira McQueen, Director of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute and Professor of Moral Theology at the University of St. Michael's College engaged the delegates in a lively mix of presentation and dialogue on a range of issues in the fields of bioethics and Family Life Education.

Recognizing Excellence in Religious Education and Family Life Education

Fittingly enough for a conference centred around issues in Family Life Education, The Fr. Angus MacDougall Award was presented on Wednesday evening to introduce Moira McQueen's opening session. On Thursday morning, the opening prayer was followed by the presentation of the Archbishop Pocock Award.

Fr. Angus MacDougall Award

The Fr. Angus MacDougall Award for Excellence in Family Life Education was presented to Rita Mary Cote, who spent 37 years in Catholic education. It was during her tenure as Program Consultant in Family Life and Sexuality Education for the Welland County Catholic School Board that Rita Mary received a call from Fr. Angus, who had been asked by the Ontario Bishops to put together a writing team for a new Family Life Program. Rita Mary chaired the writing team for the Junior division of what would become known as the Fully Alive program. Rita Mary shared with us how she has been characterized by some of her colleagues as a grandmother of Family Life Education, and that Family Life Education was always her defining passion as a Catholic educator.

Archbishop Philip Pocock Award

The Archbishop Philip Pocock Award for outstanding contributions in the field of Catholic Religious Education was presented to Larry Trafford in recognition of his substantive and long-standing contributions to Catholic education in Ontario. Recently retired, Larry has worked as Program Coordinator for the Toronto Catholic District School Board, Course Director at York University's Faculty of Education, and in the Professional Development Department of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association, where he pursued his abiding interest in teacher education and curriculum development from a Catholic perspective. Perhaps best-known of Larry's writings is the document *Educating the Soul: Writing Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools*.

A Place of Honour

It was out of question at last year's Annual General Meeting, "What would a specifically Catholic Pathway look like?" that *A Place of Honour* originated.

A Place of Honour was written for the benefit of students at risk in Ontario Catholic schools. The document highlights key elements of our distinctive language and vision to help guide the development and delivery of Catholic school programs for our students at risk. Our outreach to them through these kinds of programs can be "a powerful reflection of Catholic education's distinctive values." (*A Place of Honour*, p. 2) Each section contains questions for group discussion or individual reflection.

These invite the reader to reflect on its contents in light of their own experience as educators, administrators, supervisory officers or trustees.

This format also allows the document to be explored and discussed at staff meetings over the course of a school year, during Student Success inservices, or as part of an adult faith development exercise.

Its title, *A Place of Honour*, serves as a reminder that persons in our communities who are most vulnerable and seem to have the least to offer the world are our most precious members. They draw us together in love, and reveal to us our brokenness and need for relationships through which the healing power of God's love can make us whole. We who have been baptized into the one body of Christ are called to be instruments of this love. We are called as individuals and communities to reach out and serve Christ in each other, particularly the neediest among us, in whom a special presence of our Lord is found. This is why we give a place of honour to all students who struggle in our Catholic school communities (cf. St. Paul's First letter to the Corinthians - 1Cor 12, 22-27).

A Place of Honour. Reaching Out to Students at Risk in Ontario Catholic Schools, by Tony Cosentino and Joe Bezzina

The full document is available for download at www.carfleo.org

Supplemental Resources in Grade 7/8 Family Life Education

This resource is the result of a dynamic partnership between CARFLEO, Institute for Catholic Education (ICE), Central Curriculum Corporation (CCC), Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative (EOCCC) and Northern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative (NOCCC). It has been developed and reviewed by Catholic teachers, consultants and the Education Commission of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops to support Grade Seven and Eight teachers who wish to offer a more contemporary perspective on topics that are addressed in their family life program.

The resource deals with such challenging areas as:

- Addictions
- Bullying prevention
- Dating & relationships
- Family structures
- Pornography
- Same sex attraction
- STI's
- Stress & Grief
- Substance Abuse
- Suicide Prevention

Copies of the CD with these resources were distributed to all delegates of the CARFLEO Conference, and they are available on the CARFLEO website (www.carfleo.org).

Mindful of the need for professional development with regard to this resource, CARFLEO is currently looking at ways to inservice consultants and teachers on this new and very useful tool to augment *Fully Alive* in the intermediate grades.

2008/2010 Executive Committee

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