

EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF THE CONFERENCE SINCE THE LAST PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, and the need for palliative care

Of all the challenges faced over the past year, the issues of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide and the urgent needs for palliative care were probably the most intense and demanding.



In view of the draft federal legislation on euthanasia and assisted suicide (Bill C-14) that was tabled in the House of Commons on April 14, 2016, and subsequently passed on June 17, 2016, the Conference worked in close collaboration with the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience. Bishops urged all Catholics and others who share similar principles and values to inform federal and provincial/territorial legislators of their concerns on the sanctity of life and the conscience rights of healthcare workers and institutions when they are faced with a patient's choice for assisted suicide. In order to consolidate efforts throughout the dioceses and eparchies, the Coalition made its resources available in both English and French.

The CCCB webpage on euthanasia and assisted suicide was revamped. A quick link was added on the CCCB's home page to direct visitors to the new webpage which provides links to statements by the CCCB President and other Bishops of Canada; resources from various organizations, including the Regional Episcopal Assemblies and the Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF); information on five major campaigns against physician-assisted suicide; and a number of other articles and media reports. The following is only a brief summary of the statements, articles and reports available on the web page dedicated to these issues:

1. At a news conference held immediately after the 2015 Plenary Assembly (September 18, 2015), newly elected CCCB President Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., on behalf of all the Bishops of Canada, expressed outrage at the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada to create a new "constitutional right" in Canada, the so-called "right" to suicide. In the statement he added: "... we cannot suppress our profound dismay, disappointment and disagreement with the Court's decision. The ruling would legalize an action that, from time immemorial, has been judged immoral: the taking of innocent life. Moreover, it puts at risk the lives of the vulnerable, the depressed, those with physical or mental illness, and those with disabilities."



2. On January 29, 2016, Bishop Crosby wrote to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, the Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, and the Minister of Health, the Honourable Jane Philpott, requesting that the Conference be invited to appear before the Special Joint Committee on Physician Assisted Dying. In his submission, he stated "that life is a sacred gift to be defended and protected."

In addition to the CCCB application, Cardinal Thomas Collins also requested an invitation to appear before the Joint Committee on behalf of the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience.



3. Following the release of the report by the Special Joint Committee on Physician Assisted Dying (*Medical Assistance in Dying: A Patient-Centred Approach*) on February 25, the CCCB published a pastoral statement for the Catholics of Canada. It stated that “the report fails to show how palliative care and home care can provide true options for those tempted by suicide, nor does it call for a national plan to prevent suicides. ... Suicide is not part of health care. Killing the mentally and physically ill, whether young or aged, is contrary to caring for and loving one's brother and sister. The dignity of the human person and the flourishing of the human community demand: 1) protection and respect for each human life from conception to natural death, and 2) freedom of conscience and religion for each person as well as each institution. Social wellbeing, personal security and the common good – together with religious faith – involve safeguarding, not endangering, the lives of those suffer.”

4. The CCCB issued a statement on April 14, 2016, the day that the Government of Canada introduced Bill C-14 (*An Act to amend the Criminal Code and to make related amendments to other Acts (medical assistance in dying)*):

“The teaching of the Catholic Church and the stance of the Catholic Bishops of Canada affirm the sacredness and dignity of human life. Suicide and euthanasia are contrary to the most profound natural inclination of each human being to live and preserve life. Furthermore, they contradict the fundamental responsibility that human beings have to protect one another and to enhance the quality of health and social care which every human life deserves, from conception to natural death.”

“Bill C-14, no matter how it may be amended, is an affront to human dignity, an erosion of human solidarity, and a danger to all vulnerable persons – particularly the aged, disabled, infirm and sick who so often find themselves isolated and marginalized. Moreover, it is a violation of the sacrosanct duty of healthcare providers to heal, and the responsibility of legislators and citizens to assure and provide protection for all, especially those persons most at risk.”

“As our country faces this new moral and social threat, the Bishops of Canada renew their call to federal, provincial and territorial legislators to consistently defend and protect the lives of all, to renew efforts to guarantee accessible home care and palliative care, and to protect the conscience rights of healthcare providers and agencies refusing to be part of euthanasia and assisted suicide.”

5. The President issued another statement, on June 27, following the approval of Bill C-14 and the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide in our country. In his statement, Bishop Crosby declared that this “stands as an appalling landmark decision to the utter failure of government, and indeed all society, to care truly, authentically and humanely for the suffering and vulnerable in our midst. We live in a country where the vast majority of the dying cannot access quality palliative or home care, where rates of suicide in many Indigenous communities are staggeringly high, and where it is suggested that the lives of vulnerable, chronically ill and disabled persons are not worth living. Paradoxically, and most unfortunately, our society has now enshrined in law that killing is a respectable way to end suffering. Our country's growing inability to recognize the sanctity of human life is staggering and deeply troubling.”

6. At a news conference held on Parliament Hill on October 29, 2015, the CCCB and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) released a joint statement on euthanasia and assisted suicide. The



statement had been endorsed by over 30 Christian denominations together with over 20 Jewish and Muslim leaders from across Canada. The *Declaration on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide* advocated for palliative care, respect for the dignity of the human person, human solidarity, and psychological, spiritual and emotional support as the ethical and moral response in end-of-life care. Archbishop Terrence Prendergast, S.J., was among the speakers at the news conference.

7. At another news conference held on Parliament Hill on April 19, 2016, Canadian religious leaders called on the Government to protect the vulnerable, improve palliative care and protect freedom of conscience. They expressed opposition to euthanasia and assisted suicide together with their concerns regarding proposed legislation on physician assisted suicide: "We stand together today, leaders within our respective faith communities – Jewish, Muslim and Christian – to express our grave concern over the decriminalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia. We believe that any action intended to end human life is morally and ethically wrong." Cardinal Thomas Collins was among the speakers at the news conference, representing both the CCCB and also the Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience.



8. On June 14, 2016, representatives from various faith communities united to issue a joint call to Canada's elected officials to support a robust, well-resourced, national palliative care strategy and to raise awareness of inadequacies in palliative care, particularly in the wake of the debate over physician assisted suicide. In addition to issuing an interfaith statement on palliative care, the spokespersons reaffirmed that compassion is a foundational element of Canadian identity that should directly shape Canadian public policy when it comes to end-of-life issues. They warned that assisted suicide must not become a default choice for those struggling with terminal illnesses, and that it is a national imperative to enhance both access to and the quality of palliative care.



INDIGENOUS ISSUES

Follow-up to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Another important challenge over the past year was raised following the ceremonies marking the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in June 2015 and the release of its final report. The Commission had issued its summary report and Calls to Action earlier in the year.

In response to Call to Action 48 (on adopting and implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples*) and the questions raised on the legal concepts known as "Doctrine of Discovery" and *terra nullius*, the CCCB, the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC), the Canadian Catholic Aboriginal Council, and the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace issued two documents as a Catholic response. Both documents appealed "to all our Catholic brothers and sisters – laity, members of institutes of consecrated life and of societies of apostolic life, deacons, priests, and Bishops" – to make eight



commitments in order to "continue to walk together with Indigenous Peoples in building a more just society where their gifts and those of all people are nurtured and honoured."

National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples

Every year, on December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Church in Canada celebrates the National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples. In 2015, the reflection by the Canadian Catholic Aboriginal Council identified areas of commonality found in traditional Aboriginal spirituality and the Catholic faith, seeking to point out bridges for mutual understanding. In the introduction, the Aboriginal Council stated: "These will hopefully lead to a deeper respect and appreciation among all Catholics toward traditional Indigenous spirituality, and at the same time show how Aboriginal Catholics see a relationship between their Catholic faith and their cultural and personal identity."



The Middle East and the refugee crisis

Situation in the Middle East

On September 17, 2015, as one of his last acts as President of the CCCB, Archbishop Paul-André Durocher wrote to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, asking that the Government of Canada "call on the Israeli authorities to find a just resolution" to the decision by the Supreme Court of Israel to reverse its earlier judgement on the construction of a security wall in the Cremisan Valley. The Court's ruling allowed the military to build the wall in a location that cut off 58 Palestinian Christian families from their agricultural lands.



On April 18, 2016, the new CCCB President Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., wrote to the Honourable Stéphane Dion, Minister of Foreign Affairs, again concerning the difficult situation of the small Palestinian Christian community in the Cremisan Valley, and also regarding the genocidal violence of the so-called "Islamic State". The letter was prepared in consultation with Bishop Lionel Gendron, P.S.S., who had been the CCCB delegate to the 2015 and 2016 meetings of the Coordination of Episcopal Conferences in Support of the Church in the Holy Land, together with Mr. Carl Hétu, National Director of CNEWA Canada.



Refugee crisis

In a letter to the country's national political leaders, the President of the Conference asked them to collaborate in better assisting refugees, citing the resolution by the 2015 Plenary Assembly which "calls on the Government of Canada to expand, accelerate, and facilitate the private sponsorship of refugees during this time of urgent need." Bishop Crosby explained that "Our discussion made it clear that this resolution is intended not only to encourage the present government in its ongoing efforts, but also to urge that such measures be continued and expanded by the next government with the collaboration of all the parties represented in the House of Commons."

In addition to calling on the Government, the resolution by the Bishops of Canada was also addressed to dioceses, parishes and religious communities throughout the country, urging them to welcome refugee families. Canadian Catholics were also encouraged to support the joint campaign launched by three Canadian Catholic agencies (the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, Aid for the Church in Need Canada, and CNEWA Canada) to assist Syrian refugees seeking protection in the Middle East and Europe.



On the national and international stages



8th World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia was the host of the 8th World Meeting of Families, September 22 to 27, 2015. Pope Francis participated in the closing celebrations during his Apostolic Journey to Cuba and the United States. The theme of the World Meeting was "Love is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive." The CCCB official delegation was composed of Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., President of the CCCB; Bishop Lionel Gendron, P.S.S., Vice President; Archbishop Richard Smith, Chairman of COLF; and Ms. Michèle Boulva, Director of COLF. Approximately 15 other Canadian Bishops were also present, including Cardinal Thomas Collins and Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix. In addition, 90 Canadian couples representing 47 dioceses and eparchies participated in the World Meeting, a number of them with their children.

Official opening of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

On December 8, 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Pope Francis presided at the opening celebration of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in Saint Peter's Basilica. The event coincided with the annual visit of the Presidency to the Holy See, making it possible for the Canadian delegation to be present for the occasion. They were joined by the Most Reverend Nicola De Angelis, C.F.I.C., Bishop Emeritus of Peterborough, who was present for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist which the Holy Father presided on December 12.



2015 Synod of Bishops on the Family

The 14th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held in Rome October 4 to 25, 2015, on the theme *The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and Contemporary World*. The Bishops of Canada who participated were: Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop Paul-André Durocher, Bishop Noël Simard, and Archbishop Richard Smith. Three of them were elected as moderator or rapporteur for their respective discussion groups (*circuli minores*): Cardinal Collins as moderator of an English-language discussion group; Cardinal Lacroix as moderator of a French-language discussion group, and Archbishop Durocher as rapporteur of a French-language discussion group.



2016 Meeting of the Bishops of the Church in America

The 40th meeting of the Bishops of the Church in America took place in Tampa, Florida, February 22 to 25, 2016, with the presidencies of the CCCB, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM). This gathering provides an opportunity to the three major episcopal assemblies in the Western hemisphere to discuss recent developments. The theme this year was *Jesus Christ, the face of the*

Father's Mercy, with the Encyclical of Pope Francis *Laudato Si'* and the *Aparecida* text as foundational documents.

Year of Consecrated Life

The Year of Consecrated Life commenced on November 29, 2014, and concluded February 2, 2016, the World Day for Consecrated Life. To celebrate the special year, the CCCB invited the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) to be part of a joint committee to prepare resources and organize a key Canadian event. The highlight was the celebration of a Mass of Thanksgiving at Saint Joseph's Oratory in Montreal on September 17, 2015, with over 1,500 persons in consecrated life joining the Bishops of Canada. During the celebration, a joint message, entitled *Celebrating and giving thanks for the gift of consecrated life – Letter to all the members of the Church for the Year of Consecrated Life*, was issued by the President of the CCCB and the President of the CRC. A prayer to mark the Year of Consecrated Life was also released by the joint committee



Throughout the Year of Consecrated Life, the CCCB published various resources on the life and spirituality of Canadian Saints and Blesseds who had lived the consecrated life, with the English Sector Office for Evangelization and Catechesis developing catechetical resources on these witnesses of the faith.

2016 World Youth Day



The 31st World Youth Day (WYD) was held July 25 to 31, 2016, in Krakow, Poland, on the theme *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy* (Mt 5.7). Following the examples of the 2011 WYD in Madrid and the 2013 WYD in Rio de Janeiro, the Canadian pilgrims gathered again for a national celebration held this year on July 26, 2016, the Feast of Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The event took place in Krakow's Tauron Arena, which was also the major English-language site hosted by the Knights of Columbus throughout the WYD celebrations. Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix presided at the prayer service which involved Bishops, priests and deacons, consecrated persons, youth ministers, musicians, artists and several thousand young Canadian pilgrims.



2016 Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus

The 134th Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus was held in Toronto, August 2 to 4, 2016. Several Canadian Bishops participated, including Cardinal Thomas Collins, Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, and Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops. Cardinal Collins presided at the Opening Mass of the Convention.

21st United Nations Conference on Climate Change

In view of the 21st United Nations Conference on Climate Change that took place in Paris, November 30 to December 11, 2015, CCCB President Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., signed a joint appeal by representatives of the world's regional groupings of Episcopal Conferences which was addressed to the negotiators who participated in the Paris conference.

On the issue of climate change, Bishop Crosby expressed concerns in a letter of congratulations which he sent to the new Prime Minister of Canada on November 4, 2015. In September 2015, Bishop Crosby was among the signatories to a joint statement by faith leaders in Canada, entitled "*On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada*".



PARIS2015
CONFÉRENCE DES NATIONS UNIES
SUR LES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES
COP21·CMP11

Interfaith dialogues

Anglican / Roman Catholic theological dialogue of Canada



The Anglican / Roman Catholic theological dialogue of Canada released a series of videos (in English only), entitled "*Did you ever wonder?*" Undertaken by the dialogue as a "Common Witness Project", the project began in April 2012 from a desire to speak to contemporary culture from the foundations held in common by Anglicans and Catholics, in order to address questions about human life and faith which many young people especially are asking today. The video, prepared by Salt + Light TV, was introduced by the Co-Chairs of the dialogue, The Most Reverend Donald Bolen, then Roman Catholic Bishop of Saskatoon, and the Right Reverend Linda Nicholls, Anglican Area Bishop for Trent-Durham and Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Toronto.

Meeting of the Anglican / Roman Catholic dialogue of Canada and the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission



On May 11, 2016, the Anglican / Roman Catholic dialogue of Canada (ARC) and the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) hosted an evening of prayer, discussion, and fellowship, sponsored by the University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto, and co-sponsored by Wycliffe College and Trinity College. The Co-Chairs of the two dialogues reflected on Anglican - Catholic relations, both national and international, using the overall theme "*Two steps forward... one step back*". The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham, England, and the Most Reverend David Moxon, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See and Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome, spoke on behalf of the international dialogue (ARCIC). The

Right Reverend Linda Nicholls, Coadjutor Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Huron, and the Most Reverend Donald Bolen, then Roman Catholic Bishop of Saskatoon, presented on behalf of the national dialogue (ARC).

National bilateral Catholic-Jewish dialogue

On November 25, 2015, the CCCB and the Canadian Rabbinic Caucus (CRC) convened the first national bilateral dialogue between Catholics and Jews in Canada. This initiative was launched as part of a joint celebration of the 50th anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*, the declaration issued by the Second Vatican Council which rejected antisemitism and underscored the importance of the Jewish roots of Christianity. The Co-Chairs of the new dialogue are the Most Reverend John Boissonneau, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto, and Rabbi Reuben Poupko of Beth Israel Beth Aaron Congregation in Montreal.



Caritas Canada

New logo



The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) presented its new visual identity at its meeting with the CCCB Standing Committee on Development and Peace in December 2015. The new logo

includes the addition of the words Caritas Canada in order to give greater visibility to Development and Peace being a member of *Caritas Internationalis*. The logo's use of the colour purple refers to the Bishops of Canada who founded the Organization almost 50 years ago.

Emergency aid for Syrians

In September 2015, the CCCB endorsed a joint fundraising campaign aimed at involving all the Church in Canada in order to assist Syrian refugees seeking shelter and protection in the Middle East and parts of Europe. The joint campaign involved CCODP, CNEWA Canada and Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) Canada. The Government of Canada also established a Syria Emergency Relief Fund and announced that, until December 31, 2015, it would match donations toward Syrian emergency assistance up to \$100 million. The deadline was later extended until February 29, 2016. As of February 16, 2016, the joint campaign raised more than \$3.5 million.

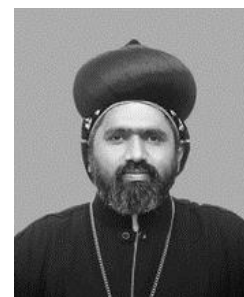


This was in addition to the millions of dollars raised by the three Catholic agencies in their earlier projects to assist Syrian refugees, as well as funds raised by Catholic parishes across Canada to receive Syrian refugee families.

Various appointments

New Eparchy for the Syro-Malankara Catholics in U.S.A and Canada

On January 4, 2016, Pope Francis elevated the Exarchate of the Syro-Malankara Catholics in the United States to the rank of an Eparchy, including the territory of Canada. The Holy Father also appointed the Most Reverend Thomas Mar Eusebius, until now Apostolic Exarch and Apostolic Visitor for the Syro-Malankara Catholics in Canada and Europe, first Eparch of St. Mary, Queen of Peace, of USA and Canada. The new Eparchy has 16 parishes and missions, including three parishes in Canada: Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary.



New Apostolic Exarchate for Syriac Catholics in Canada

On January 7, 2016, following a consultation with the CCCB Permanent Council, Pope Francis erected the Apostolic Exarchate for Syro-Catholics in Canada, with its See in Laval (Québec), and appointed Reverend Antoine Nassif as its first Apostolic Exarch. The Syriac Catholic community has been present in Canada since 1976.

New Counsellor at the Apostolic Nunciature in Canada

In a news release published July 5, 2016, the Apostolic Nunciature to Canada announced that Msgr. Fermin Emilio Sosa Rodríguez, P.H., had been appointed as Counsellor for the Apostolic Nunciature to Canada, succeeding Msgr. Maurizio Bravi, P.H., who has been appointed Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the World Tourism Organization and had left Canada on April 29, and also succeeding Msgr. Arnaldo Catalan, P.H., who had been transferred to the Apostolic Nunciature to the Philippines. Msgr. Rodríguez had arrived in Canada at the end of June 2016.





New President of the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC)

During its 31st General Assembly, May 26 to 29, 2016, in Montreal, the CRC elected a new Board of Directors. Sister Michelle Payette, a missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception, was elected President. The President of the CCCB, Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., the President of the Assembly of Quebec Catholic Bishops, Bishop Paul Lortie, and the Apostolic Nuncio to Canada, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, attended the General Assembly and addressed the participants. Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix presided at the

Eucharistic celebration which preceded the closing banquet on Saturday.

Resources and publications



Criteria for Catechesis

The English Sector Commission for Evangelization and Catechesis launched a new catechetical tool, *Criteria for Catechesis*. It is intended primarily to assist the dioceses of Canada in selecting, developing and approving English-language catechetical resources for use in their Catholic schools and parishes as well as with families.

On Good Soil

The English Sector Office for Evangelization and Catechesis launched a new electronic newsletter, *On Good Soil*. The resource assists diocesan directors of adult faith formation, parish leaders, and all those journeying in faith with adults who are seeking to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ.



New French-language liturgical and pastoral guide for the Sacrament of Confirmation

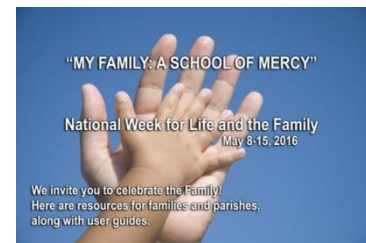


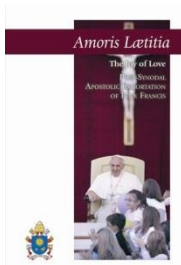
On October 14, 2015, the French Sector National Liturgy Office brought together 41 French-language catechists and 36 liturgists for a presentation of the new French-language liturgical and pastoral guide for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The diocesan representatives worked together on the theological, pastoral and liturgical significance of the sacrament and on elements for its celebration which are featured in the new guide. Liturgists had the opportunity to learn more about the ways catechists accompany the

celebrations, while catechists had the opportunity to appreciate how liturgists are needed to complete a catechetical program and to collaborate in preparing the celebrations of the sacrament.

Resource for 2016 National Week for Life and the Family

The fourth National Week for Life and the Family took place May 8-15, 2016, on the theme "*My family: A school of mercy*". The CCCB again offered dioceses/eparchies, parishes and other non-profit groups possible resources and options for planning and organizing local activities. Beginning this year, the CCCB invited COLF to undertake the responsibility for producing the annual resources, working in collaboration and consultation with the Conference.





Post-Synodal Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*

The CCCB welcomed the Holy Father's Post-Synodal Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia: On Love in the Family*, and recommended its careful study to married couples and families, those agencies and organizations working with them, as well as pastors and those in consecrated life who are called to be at the service of family life.

Lectionnaire du Dimanche, Lectionnaire de Semaine, and Lectionnaire des Saints et Messes rituelles

On the first Sunday of September 2016, the new *Lectionnaire du Dimanche, Lectionnaire de Semaine, and Lectionnaire des Saints et Messes rituelles* were officially inaugurated in Canada. This past January, the CCCB had received *recognitio* from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments for the use of the three volumes in the dioceses of Canada. This follows the publication in 2013 of the new *Traduction officielle liturgique de la Bible*.



Online resources to celebrate the Jubilee for Catechists

In view of the Jubilee for Catechists, the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis prepared an online resource entitled "*The Jubilee for Catechists: Announcing the Mercy of God*". Designed for reflection by individuals or in a larger group setting in dioceses and parishes, the resource can be used at any time throughout the pastoral year by clergy, directors of religious education, parish pastoral workers, chaplains, teachers and parents to emphasize the special role of the catechist.

A dialogue guide for *Laudato Si'*

Elaborated by the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice, CCCB Publications has released *On care for our common home: A dialogue guide for Laudato Si'*. The resource includes key quotations from the encyclical, examines its content, and offers questions for group discussions in order to foster a deeper commitment to the care of creation as well as for the environment and ecology.



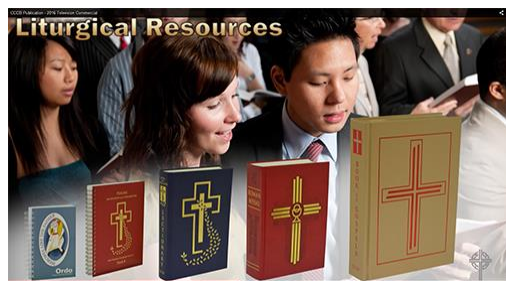
Order of Confirmation



This ritual is the second official English-language translation of the liturgical texts for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is the first of the retranslated liturgical books expected to be promulgated in the next few years. The guidelines provided in *Liturgiam Authenticam* ensure that a translation follows the original Latin text more closely so its full meaning may be better appreciated. This is the sole English-language translation that is approved for use in the Dioceses of Canada, beginning on the Solemnity of All Saints, November 1, 2016.

The Beauty of Mercy: Pope Francis and Confession

To aid Canadian Catholics in celebrating the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, which concludes this November 20, the Commission for Doctrine prepared a text entitled *The Beauty of Mercy: Pope Francis and Confession*. This is a series of quotations from the Holy Father on the importance and beauty of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and likewise contains words of encouragement and challenge for both penitents and priest confessors.



Promoting CCCB Publications

CCCB Publications offers resources for liturgy, faith education and formation, catechesis, life and family, as well as documents from the CCCB and the Holy Father. In order to highlight the numerous resources available from CCCB Publications, a commercial is currently airing on Salt + Light TV.

Other CCCB statements and correspondence by the President Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I.

Statement on the announcement by the Government of Canada to close its Office of Religious Freedom

“It was with deep regret that the CCCB learned of the intention by the Government of Canada to close its Office of Religious Freedom. The Canadian Ambassador for Religious Freedom and the Office of Religious Freedom were an important signal to the international community and to Canadians – as well as a reminder to civil servants and diplomats of the country – of the singular importance of religious freedom, and of the unfortunate lack of voices in society prepared to come to its defence. The CCCB urged the Government of Canada to reconsider its decision, and to provide a plan on how it will carry out its commitment to defend and promote religious freedom as a part of its human rights agenda.”



Joint statement by the Primate of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church Diocese of Canada and the President of the CCCB on the apostolic visit of Pope Francis to Armenia

Joint Statement
by the Primate of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church Diocese of Canada
and the President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
on the Apostolic Visit of Pope Francis to Armenia

It is with great joy that we, His Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., Bishop of Hamilton, President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, and His Grace Bishop Abgar Hovakimian, Primate of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church Diocese of Canada, announced to our faithful that upon the invitation of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, along with the Government of the Republic of Armenia, together with the American Catholic Centers, His Holiness Pope Francis will visit June 24 to June 30, 2016, with an apostolic visit to the Republic of Armenia (30 days) and Constantinople - Armenia, which did so in 2011.

Under the sign of the Resurrection of Jesus, where according to the Biblical narrative Mary's Ark is located to give a new birth to life on Earth (St. H.A.), His Holiness Pope Francis will be welcomed by, and will pray together with, His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians. This momentous pastoral gathering will take place where Saint Gregory the Illuminator is venerated as the Only Begotten Son of God Himself.

On April 12, 2016, Pope Francis proclaimed the 10th century Armenian monk, Saint Gregory of Narek, Doctor of the Universal Church. The solemn proclamation took place during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Saint Peter's Basilica - Rome, in commemoration of the 50th year of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey, and was attended by the Armenian Catholicos and Bishops together with other members of the clergy and faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church and the American Catholic Church.

Please join us in prayer for our spiritual leaders - His Holiness Pope Francis and His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians. Let us make our own the words they shared in Rome in 2015: that with courage we "gather together and profess our faith often for the sake of the establishment of love, justice, and peace in the world, and the promotion of integral human development and progress." Archbishop Karakachian's "implication" the words mean that the world is changed beginning with the conversion of each heart, and that this happens through the mercy of God! (Pope Francis).

Friday, June 3, 2016

The Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, O.M.I.
Bishop of Hamilton and
President of the Canadian Conference
of Catholic Bishops

His Grace Bishop Abgar Hovakimian
Primate of the
Armenian Holy Apostolic Church
Diocese of Canada

The CCCB President and His Grace Bishop Abgar Hovakimian, Primate of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church Diocese of Canada, announced that following the invitation of His Holiness

Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, along with the Government of the Republic of Armenia, together with the Armenian Catholic Ordinary, Pope Francis would visit Armenia, June 24 to June 26, 2016.

Joint statement by the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs and the CCCB on the visit of Pope Francis to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp

On July 29, 2016, Pope Francis visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in Poland. It was the third papal visit to the infamous site, following in the footsteps of Saint John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. To mark this important occasion, the CCCB President and the Chief Executive Officer of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs released a joint statement in which they implored “all people of good will to remember the past, not only with sadness and mourning, but as a lesson and a call to action. In so doing, today's generation can learn the importance of vigilance in confronting hatred, and the imperative to work together to plant the seeds of a more just and loving society.”



Oblates of Mary Immaculate celebrate 200th anniversary

Two hundred years ago, on the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle, Saint Eugene de Mazenod and a small group of companions formed a society which became the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. To mark this anniversary, the CCCB President wrote to the Superior General of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Father Louis Lougen, O.M.I.



On August 28, 2016, as part of their festivities to mark this anniversary, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate celebrated the 175th anniversary of the arrival of the first Oblates in Canada at Mont St. Hilaire, Quebec. Bishop Crosby presided at the Holy Eucharist. In his homily, he recalled that "so many regions of the country have been blessed by the presence and ministry of Oblates, and their missionary determination! So many creative initiatives of individual Oblates have changed the lives of countless numbers of people." He added that "communities exist because Oblates encouraged and supported their foundation. Newspapers, magazines, historical documents, dictionaries and grammars, provide information about the growth of communities, villages, counties, provinces, indeed the nation – all contributing to a better world."

Death of Dr. Victor Goldbloom



Following the death of Dr. Victor Goldbloom, the CCCB President wrote to Mr. David J. Cape, President of the Board of Directors of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. In his letter, Bishop Crosby recalled that "The significance of his contributions to Jewish and Christian relations was celebrated in a special way during 2012 when Pope Benedict XVI named Dr. Goldbloom a Knight of the Order of Saint Sylvester, in recognition of his outstanding leadership in promoting Jewish-Christian dialogue and understanding." Archbishop Christian Lépine represented the CCCB at Dr. Goldbloom's funeral on February 19, 2016.

Canadian ecumenical pioneer Father Irénée Beaubien, S.J., celebrates 100th birthday

To celebrate this anniversary, the CCCB President sent a congratulation letter to Father Beaubien.



Honouring the memory of the late Father Benoît Lacroix, O.P.

Father Benoît Lacroix, O.P., passed away on March 2, 2016. He had turned 100 in September 2015, and in 2012 celebrated the 75th anniversary of his profession as a member of the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans). The CCCB prepared and posted on its website a text in memory of the late Father Lacroix.

Wildfire disaster in Fort McMurray

Pope Francis and the CCCB President issued messages to the Most Reverend Paul Terrio, Bishop of St. Paul, concerning the wildfire disaster in Fort McMurray and surrounding region. The letter from Bishop Crosby included an invitation for all Bishops to encourage their faithful to pray for those in the city and area, as well as to make donations to assist those impacted by the terrible natural disaster.

Death of six volunteers in Burkina Faso

The CCCB President sent a letter to Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix in which he conveyed the condolences and prayers of the Bishops of Canada following the killing in Burkina Faso of six volunteers from Quebec who were serving on a mission trip which also involved the Sisters of Notre-Dame du Perpétuel Secours.

Violence in La Loche

The President wrote to Archbishop Murray Chatlain to convey the condolences and prayers of the Bishops and faithful of Canada following the recent violence in La Loche, Saskatchewan.

Attacks in Brussel

The CCCB President issued a letter to the Most Reverend Jozef De Kesel, Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussel, conveying condolences and prayers following the tragic attacks in Brussel, March 22, 2016.

Shooting in Orlando

The President forwarded a letter conveying condolences and prayers to the Most Reverend John Noonan, Bishop of Orlando, following the shootings on June 12, 2016, in Orlando, Florida.

The Honourable Graydon Nicholas appointed to the Order of Canada

On June 30, 2016, the Honourable Graydon Nicholas, former Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, was appointed to the Order of Canada by the Governor General. Bishop Crosby sent him a letter of congratulation in which he thanked him for his dedicated service to the Kingdom of God and to God's people: "I think particularly of your faithful work over the years as a member of the Canadian Catholic Aboriginal Council as well as of the Knights of Columbus."



Tragedies in France

The CCCB President sent a letter of condolences and prayers to the Most Reverend Georges Pontier, Archbishop of Marseille and President of the Bishop's Conference of France, following tragedies in France: the attack on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice during celebrations of France's national holiday, and the killing of Father Jacques Hamel, together with the assault on two Sisters and a group of parishioners perpetrated at the church in Saint-Étienne-du-Rouvray during Mass.

Earthquake in Italy

The President sent a letter conveying condolences and prayers to His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, Archbishop of Genoa and President of the Italian Episcopal Conference, following the August 24 earthquake which struck towns in the dioceses of Rieti, Spoleto-Norcia, and Ascoli Piceno.

Varia

2015 Presidency visit to the Holy See

The 2015 visit of the Presidency to the Holy See took place November 28 to December 11. On December 3, Pope Francis received in a private audience the CCCB delegation: President Bishop Douglas Crosby, O.M.I., Vice President Bishop Lionel Gendron, P.S.S., and General Secretary Msgr. Frank Leo, Jr., C.S.S.



French Sector National Liturgy Office

During 2015, the Permanent Council decided to relocate the French Sector National Liturgy Office. The former Montreal office was therefore closed and, in October 2015, Father Louis-André Naud, Director of the Office, and Mr. Mario Coutu, Office Coordinator, moved into their new facilities, alongside other CCCB staff, in the building located on Don Reid Drive, Ottawa.

2016 National March for Life

The National March for Life was held in Ottawa on May 12, 2016. A number of Bishops participated and presided at several Eucharistic celebrations, including Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishops Terrence Prendergast, S.J., Brendan M. O'Brien, Christian Lépine, Paul-André Durocher, as well as Bishop Christian Riesbeck, C.C., and Eparchial Bishop John Pazak, C.Ss.R.



2016 Pentecost message for Canadian Catholic movements and associations

The CCCB Standing Committee for Relations with Movements and Associations issued its annual Pentecost message. Referring to how grace is always both a gift and a responsibility, the Standing Committee said that the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy is an invitation to Catholic

Movements and Associations to be open "to the gift of mercy" and "to take up the responsibility of promoting mercy. Our membership in the various Movements and Associations gives each of us unique opportunities to both experience God's mercy and be ambassadors of God's mercy."

Six mission dioceses in Northern Canada transferred to the common jurisdiction of the Church

On January 25, 2016, the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle, following a consultation with the CCCB and the approval of the Holy Father, the six mission dioceses in Northern Canada, which until then were under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, were transferred to the competency of the Congregation for Bishops and passed over to the jurisdiction of the common law of the Church. The six are the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas and its suffragan Dioceses of Churchill-Hudson Bay and Moosonee, and the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan with its suffragan Dioceses of Mackenzie-Fort Smith and Whitehorse.