



The Sentinel



31st Annual Christmas Party with Santa, more pictures on pages 6&7

Bill 48 and Changes to the Ontario College of Teachers: Moving towards Policing our Profession?

Filomena Ferraro, President

On October 25, 2018, Lisa Thompson, Minister of Education introduced Bill 48 The *Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act*. This bill makes amendments to four Acts, (the Childhood Educators Act, the Education Act, the Ontario College of Teachers Act, and the Teaching Profession Act) all 4 related to education. Of particular concern is the amendment to the definition of “professional misconduct” to include “prescribed sexual acts” (The Ontario College of Teachers Act). If members of the Ontario College of Teachers are found guilty of professional misconduct that includes prohibited acts of a sexual nature, there will be a mandatory revocation of

a member’s certificate. When this Bill was introduced there was some confusion about the need to put this into legislation as it already exists. Currently members found guilty are de-certified so why change the Act? In isolation, this seems insignificant, in reality however this act is an omnibus bill, an opportunity for the government to set the stage for nonsensical attacks on educators and to appease their supporters. Included in this omnibus bill are significant recommendations to change the governance structure of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Fundamental changes to the composition of the Council of the On-

tario College of Teachers (OCT) include new requirements for the composition of the Council’s committees, this causes much concern for the Association. It appears the government is making legislative changes that will shift the Ontario College of Teachers from its current status, a self-regulating body, to an arm of the government.

Local unit presidents have received a copy of the *Ontario College of Teachers: Governance Review Report, November 26, 2018*, prepared by Governance Solutions Inc. It is clear that teachers will no longer have the power to regulate their own profession in determining what

Attendance Support - Review Complete

Mike Totten, 1st Vice President

The Attendance Support program has been reviewed and revised as per the understanding in the 2014-2019 Collective Agreement. It is now in place for the 2018-2019 school year. Members who exceed the threshold (number of days agreed upon) can expect to be called to a meeting.

During bargaining in 2014/2015, the parties discussed the format of the Attendance Program. There were several aspects of the existing program which the Association did not consider to be supportive. When consensus regarding what the program should look like could not be reached it was agreed that the program would be placed under review. This review was completed last school year.

It is important that members are aware of both the Board's and their own, legal obligations in regards to attendance. The Board has a legal obligation, under Duty to Accommodate, to inquire of members when they do not have regular attendance at work. Members have a legal obligation, under a Supreme Court ruling under Undue Hardship, to maintain regular attendance or to face possible termination.

Considering these legal obligations the new program was designed to ensure regular attendance, on the employers part, while protecting the integrity and sensitivity of individuals while delivering the program. The As-

sociation worked with the board to develop a fair threshold (number of absences). The Board agreed to move away from a rolling calendar which had some members exceeding the threshold following a single absence in early September. These members were not feeling supported. A new threshold of 10 days was established. Therefore if you access 10 or fewer days in a school year you will not be affected by the program. **A half day absence will be applied as a half day and not as one full absence as in the previous program.**

The Attendance Support Program applies exclusively to sick days and does not include ANY other contractual days as outlined in the Collective Agreement. It does not deal with any matters that could be considered an abuse of the system as these matters will continue to be addressed through the Progressive Discipline Policy. The Program deals only with absences of 4 days or fewer, accessed randomly, over the course of a school year. Absences of 5 consecutive days or more are dealt through the Disability Support. When 10 absences are exceeded a meeting with your administrator will be arranged. This will fulfill the board's duty to inquire. If at this point the employee indicates he or she is dealing with a chronic or specific medical condition and is able to provide appropriate medical documentation he or she will be referred to Disability Support Program and will not fall under the Attendance Support Program.

If no supporting medical documentation can be provided the member will move to the first stage of the Attendance Support Program. The 4 stages of the program have been summarized below:

Stage One:

- Meeting with Administrator and Union Rep (as requested)
- Goal setting - 10 days or less in a 12 month period
- Absences monitored by Attendance Support



Coordinator

Stage Two:

- Meeting with Attendance Support Coordinator, Administrator and Union Rep (as requested)
- Goal setting - 10 days or less in a 12 month period
- Absences monitored by Attendance Support Coordinator

Stage Three:

- Meeting with Superintendent of Human Resources, Attendance Support Coordinator, Administrator and Union Rep (as requested)
- Goal to be discussed with the employee
- Absences monitored by At-

tendance Support Coordinator

Stage Four:

- Meeting with Superintendent of Human Resources, Attendance Support Coordinator, Administrator and Union Rep (as requested)
- May result in a review of employment status

While the Attendance Support program is a requirement under legislation, the government fails to put in place proper supports to assist teachers who are social workers, carrying the baggage of our student's issues in addition to the stresses of our own personal lives on a daily basis. They continue to

reduce supports that are needed by teachers who are front-line workers in classrooms that can often be violent. Recognizing the demands of our jobs and allowing teachers to take days to assist them with monitoring their mental health as needed is an important part of maintaining high standards in our profession and preventing high burnout rates.

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM

Stage One:

Meeting with Administrator and Union Rep(as requested)
Goal setting of 10 days or less In a 12 month period
Absences monitored by Attendance Support Coordinator

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Gearing Up for Work

Reg Shepherd, Certified Worker Member

What should I wear to work today? Shirt, pants, socks, spit shield, Kevlar gloves, shin pads, arm guards and a padded jacket!

Sounds like a prison guard . . . or an FDK teacher going into their classroom of 4 and 5-year-olds.

This new reality in our schools comes with an increased presence of violent and aggressive students.

Violence in our schools is a growing concern. In recent years there have been increased reports of violence. Due to this increase the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour joined forces last year to consult with each school board in the province. All children have the right to an education and to attend their neighbourhood school. You, the worker, have the right to a safe work environment. The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) states that the Employer, in our case the Board, is obliged to ensure the safety of all of its employees.

The Administrator in each school, under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, is required to:

- tell workers about hazards and dangers and respond to their concerns;
- show workers how to work safely and to make sure they follow the law, and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures;
- make sure workers wear and use the correct protective equipment;
- do everything reasonable, under the circumstances, to protect workers from being hurt.

The OHSA gives workers three important rights:

- **the right to know about workplace hazards and what to do about them;**
- **the right to participate in solving workplace health and safety problems;**
- **the right to refuse work that they believe is unsafe.**

Education workers (teachers, EA's EI's, etc) are constantly being put in harm's way. Staff need to be made aware, by their direct supervisor (the principal) of the options available to them, as well as be given any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that may be required to safely complete this job.

There are students in our system who kick, punch, bite, spit, headbutt, etc. The Board is required to act, to ensure the safety of its employees. So what can they do? They can:

- create a safety plan (all workers have the right to participate in its creation);
- provide additional support;
- provide training for the staff; and
- provide Personal Protective Equipment

So what can you, a TEACHER, be asked or directed to wear to work?

- spit shield with gowns
- shoulder pad
- head protection
- arm guards
- Kevlar gloves

Students who present any type of aggressive behaviour should have a safety plan put in place immediately. There should be no need to 'gather info' as each of these targeted aggressive incidents would have been followed by an SE 50 (if the student is in special ed) and/or an Online



Incident Report.

While you are wearing full protective gear the employer (Board), as outlined by the Ministry of Labour, is responsible for ensuring the following steps have been taken;

1. To Recognize that this student has targeted staff.
2. To Assess and to identify what occurs, how and why
3. To Control, to have measures in place to ensure the safety of the worker

The "Control" is done in 3 ways, in the following order:

1. At the source - How can the student be helped to stop the aggressive behaviour.
2. Along the Path - What measures can be put in place to separate the worker from the aggressive student when the hazard arises?
3. At the worker - What training and/or PPE can be accessed to protect the worker?

Option 3 is to be considered as a last resort, only after the other options have been unsuccessful or when such measures have been included in the student's plan of action.

If you should find yourself in a situ-

ation which you consider to be dangerous ask yourself, “What has my employer done to ensure my safety? What training has been provided? What has been done to recognize, assess and control this hazard, so that I can return home in the same condition in which I left my home?”

And while you’re getting dressed in the morning (shirt, pants, kevlar gloves and spit shield), you may want to remember your three rights as a worker!



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Bill 48 and Changes to the Ontario College of Teachers: Moving towards Policing our Profession?

is best for education; instead, there will be more of a focus on public interest, which will ultimately affect classrooms.

In 2006, Premier Dalton McGuinty expanded the number of elected and appointed Councillors to 23 and 14, from 17 and 14 respectively, numbers determined under Premier Harris. Currently OCT members hold the majority of seats. The Report’s recommendations would drastically and negatively impact the OCT. It is clear in the report that the proposed changes to the OCT are being done in the interest of protecting students and of serving the public interest.

The report makes 37 recommendations in total. Some of the more critical recommendations include:

- Changing the name from the Ontario College of Teachers to “The Ontario Teachers Regulatory Authority”;
- Consolidating power in the Registrar’s hands; and,
- Altering the OCT structure and composition process

- I. Council will be comprised of 14 members, 7 from the profession and 7 from outside. They will be appointed, not

elected. This is a reduction from 37 members and teachers will lose its majority,

- II. Council members will be selected from a pool of qualified applicants following a robust transparent process. The lack of definition of “qualified applicant” can be subjective. Does this mean more Principals and Superintendents holding master degrees may be appointed over classroom teachers?

This report and its recommendations can be viewed as a direct attack on the teaching profession and the professionalism of teachers. When the College was established the Association and other education stakeholders advocated for self-regulation to ensure that the individuals overseeing the profession would be familiar with, and understand the circumstances in which teachers work. The proposed changes risk teachers losing their voice at the table and eliminate teachers’ ability to regulate the activities of their own profession. The result will be the de-professionalized policing of our profession. Teachers are parents, community leaders, voters and

consumers. We must maintain that our profession remain self-regulated and at arms-length from the government.

York Catholic Teachers has a proud history of political activism. We have an engaging Political Action Committee (PAC) and we do our best to mobilize and inform members during all elections. In between elections we visit our local politicians and MPPs to discuss issues important to us as educators and as part of the broader labour movement. During the weekend of November 16-18, 2018, the co-chair of PAC and myself attended the PC Convention. We set out to meet and to introduce ourselves to some of the York Region MPPs in hopes of setting up a meeting at a later date. We were well received. It is our hope that the local MPPs will listen to the concerns of York Catholic Teachers and that we do not return to the governing model that existed under the leadership of Premier Mike Harris. Nevertheless, we must prepare ourselves for the worst. The local unit office will keep you informed of any updates. Please remember, united we are stronger.

31st Annual Children's Christmas Party

Jolly Old St. Nicholas Lean Your Ear This Way....

The tradition continues 31 years later. A very successful Children's Christmas Party took place on Saturday, December 1, 2018 at St. Elizabeth CHS! Children participated in many activities including a games room with jumping castles, pokemon arcade games, a basketball throw, a Magic Show, crafts, airbrush tattoos and of course a special moment with Jolly Old St. Nicholas! Many children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews of York Unit members were in attendance. We invite you to join us next year at this annual event. Thank you to Mike Totten and Devon Dimney, along with the Social committee, the volunteers, the elves and Santa for making this heart-warming, and enjoyable event possible.





York Catholic Teachers 10th Annual Teachers Christmas Party





What a wonderful way to celebrate York Unit's 55th year representing teachers than with a huge Christmas party commemorating this milestone. Filomena Ferraro, President, welcomed teachers representing all four areas of the board, both elementary and secondary schools to the Venetian Hall. She ended with a heartwarming toast to teachers for their hard work and dedication to students. *"You put in countless hours to ensure student success, safety and creating a positive and caring environment. York Catholic District School board is one of the top boards in the province largely because of you. You are part of the front line workers with whom our wonderful student interact and see every day. For all these reasons and more this night is for you. Have a wonderful time with your colleagues, friends and family! Merry Christmas! CHEERS"*

Mike Totten, First-vice President, the host of the event brought laughter and energy throughout the dinner, especially when drawing for huge prize giveaways. Top prizes included tickets to the Leafs and Raptors game. The dinner followed with DJ Mr. Joe Barile, who had the crowd up dancing and singing along to old favourites and the top 20 hits. Special thank you to Patricia Chiarella, 3rd VP for planning the event. We look forward to seeing you all next year!

You Better Watch Out! You better not cry! You Better not Surf, I'm Telling You Why.....

Julie Pauletig, Councillor & Release Officer

Yes, Big Brother is watching you! Years ago when the school board was introducing the internet and encouraging the use of computers and related technology there was a great deal of pushback from teacher unions regarding the use of technology for the classroom and for personal use. We feared the implications down the road and we were trying to avoid any matters related to the use of technology and personal devices that could possibly lead to discipline.

Today the YCDSB wifi service is provided at every school for use by staff and students. Our concerns are now coming to fruition and we are seeing the implications of the widespread availability and use of technology both in and outside the classroom.

When at I was in a school I used my personal cell phone and my own data when communicating electronically because the school board has the

authority to surf all of your activity when you use board equipment and/or the board's wifi service. That includes the iPad and laptop that was purchased through the PD initiative and was automatically set up through the board's internet service. This also includes personal devices used on school property when using the board's wifi service as a guest or through your employee login.

In essence, the board can check what sites you are visiting and when and for how long you access those sites. They can also determine if you are using time during the work day for personal use (i.e. purchasing Leaf tickets, concert tickets and/or shopping online).

Amazon has become an enormous problem. If you shop with Amazon while at work the number of new websites / URLs or pop-ups that will appear could be a cause of concern for the board if they check your activity while at work. In addition,

sites you visit while at home on the same device you use at school could potentially appear or pop-up in your data "history" when using the board's internet service during the work day.

Be wary of any firewalls being removed arbitrarily as a plethora of sites will come through. Any activity on your device could be attributed to you as an employee and perceived as misuse of technology. Be aware that it is not only the particular sites which are visited, but also the time at which the member is accessing the Board's internet service and those sites for personal use, with which the Board could take issue.

In the event you are ever called to a meeting regarding the use of board technology including the internet, please contact the Unit office for representation.

Be Wary! Be Wise! The Future is at hand!



Tenant Insurance, is it Worth it?

About 34 per cent of Canadians rent their homes, yet more than half of Canadian renters (58.2 per cent)¹ are living without any tenant insurance coverage. While tenants are not currently required to have a tenant insurance policy in place, most are confused about the level of coverage available through their landlord's insurance. Below is a list of three reasons why you should have a tenant insurance policy.

To learn more, visit www.otipinsurance.com/article32

Reflections From the Fempower Conference #WOMENOFECTA

Diana Corazza, Recording Secretary

“I won’t let them break me down to dust
I know that there’s a place for us
For we are glorious” (Keala Settle, This Is Me)

Yes, there is a place for each and every one of us and on November 22nd and 23rd, 2018, over 200 women from across the province took their place at the inaugural OECTA Fempower Conference. I had the privilege to be one of 13 representing our unit. The energy of being surrounded by strong women leaders, each in their own right, from our Association and from within the labour movement, emanated throughout the room. The conference was timely in that our Association is celebrating its 75th anniversary and our local unit is celebrating 55 years. Throughout these years women have made great strides that have helped to shape both the local unit and our provincial association of which we are proud members.

Thursday evening began with an empow-

tackled the topic of sexual misconduct in the workplace, a harsh reality for women in the workforce, and the revolution of the #MeToo movement. Each woman on the panel, including our very own Liz Stuart, spoke about the challenges they have faced in their path toward leadership. The resounding message was that as much as we have made progress in the promotion of women into leadership positions we remain underrepresented. There is still much work to be done to change the culture of our workplaces and, particularly in the political realm of our Association.

Considering that our profession is 80% women leadership opportunities in our Association could easily be dominated by women, and they are not. Women are reluctant to put their name forward for a vari-

proud to say that at York Unit, 9 of the 12 executive board members are women and throughout the province, women represent 53% of our unit presidents but, we must continue to build upon those numbers, both locally and provincially with the support of our union brothers.

Throughout the conference it became evident to me that women in our labour movement have made inroads to make it possible for me and the many other women present to be here and it is incumbent upon us to take up the torch and continue to move forward. What resonated with me most was when Nicole van Woudenberg, executive member of the Simcoe Muskoka Elementary Unit, and the Chair of the Ontario College of Teachers summed up the purpose of leadership by saying, “you serve knowing that it will make it better for someone else”. So when we work together and build each other up, we all rise and improve not only our situation but those of other equity seeking groups.

“Look out 'cause here I come
And I'm marching on to the beat I drum
I'm not scared to be seen
I make no apologies, this is me”
(Keala Settle, “This Is Me” *The Greatest Showman*)

I feel empowered after participating in this conference and I encourage all women to take their place in whatever leadership role they choose to pursue whether it be in the classroom, on a local committee or in an executive position, locally and/or provincially in our Association. Don't be scared to be seen or make any apologies, because we all have a place, and our gifts and talents can affect change. In the words of Justin Trudeau, in his video greeting to us, “When women lead, they change the game.”



ering video showcasing the activism and accomplishments of our Association's women leaders - past, present and future. The video was played to the song “*This is Me*” from the movie *The Greatest Showman*. In my view, this song is our anthem. Every single woman in that room was meant to be there and each brought with them their own skills, talents and stories to share. The fireside chat which followed

ety of reasons including childcare, family responsibilities and lack of encouragement in areas usually dominated by men. This conference opened the discussion of the barriers to pursuing leadership roles and ways to overcome them. What was clear to me was that we, women, should be one another's *femtors*. By encouraging one another we can break through the glass ceiling of leadership. I am very



DEFEND GOOD JOBS

Canadians are devastated to hear General Motors announce it will close the Oshawa assembly plant. There are over 2,500 union jobs at stake, which impacts all the surrounding communities. Closing the Oshawa plant will hit many others - for each direct job, it's estimated that there are up to seven spin off jobs that are key to the local economy. GM says it is moving its focus to creating the next generation of low-emission vehicles, yet it is ending production of the hybrid Chevy Volt in Detroit. Economist Jim Stanford identifies the real culprits in this tragedy – the relentless demand of hedge funds for much higher returns on their shares, regardless of the damage to production capacity or the communities involved.

General Motors registered \$6 billion US in profits in the first three quarters of this year. It has been the recipient of massive public financial support, particularly after the financial meltdown a decade ago. Tragically, the Harper Conservatives sold off GM shares that came from the 2009 bailout at a bargain price and lost all leverage over investment decisions. Both they and provincial Liberals have cut corporate tax rates with no strings attached.

While GM's explanation for the closure is deceitful, we know that a carbon-neutral economy is required and that there is a growing market for low-emission vehicles. We need a just transition to that future. The Ford Conservatives have sabotaged any meaningful approach to green industrial transition with their short-sighted war on carbon pricing, while the Premier throws up his hands to say nothing can be done to change the GM decision. No politician should simply accept the outcome. Instead, Mr. Ford should be leading the charge to have future low-emission vehicle production assigned to Oshawa.

The day after the GM news, Ford held a press conference taking credit for a new Maple Leaf Foods chicken processing plant in London. He boasted about creating new jobs, but the reality is that the Conservatives are giving \$34.5 million to one of Canada's richest families (the McCains) in order to shut down three existing plants and centralize production with a net loss of 300 jobs. The plant in Toronto will be closed, killing 680 UFCW jobs in our city. The hypocrisy is stunning.

The Conservatives have said nothing about the sale by Bombardier of all of its Downsview land, followed by the sale of the Q-400 series to Viking Air in B.C. There is a real danger that Toronto could lose its largest manufacturing facility within two years if there is no pressure to maintain an aerospace footprint in the region. There are other closures as well – Campbell Soups and Bulova are shutting their doors, without a peep from Ford Nation. These changes will no doubt trigger a new round of attempts to rezone employment land by residential developers. Labour will have to work hard to defend this land for future jobs, as we did only a few years ago when Nestles and other workplaces were threatened. Ironically, the industrial vacancy rate in Toronto is now at 2% as all available space is being taken up for job creation.

Celebrating 55 Years and looking Back

This year the York Unit - OECTA is celebrating its 55th Anniversary. In each edition of the Sentinel published this year we will be republishing articles and photos from archived editions. Take a close look. Can you see anyone you know?



Sentinel December 2001

Sentinel December 2001

Dear Santa:

I have tried to be a good teacher this past year but it seems to be getting increasingly more difficult to do my job. I sense that this is a common feeling amongst my colleagues, so I was wondering if you could bring the following items to the York Catholic Teachers:

- ✓ *A respect for our profession*
- ✓ *The de-politicization of education*
- ✓ *An acceptance that teaching is an Art not a Science*
- ✓ *The primacy of people over paper*
- ✓ *An understanding that there is a fundamental difference between teaching and testing children*
- ✓ *The resources to actually implement the "new and improved" curriculum*
- ✓ *The realization that decreased funding does not mean greater efficiency*
- ✓ *Control of our profession, (College of Teachers), so that life long learning can be inclusive, broad based and reflective of personal professional growth*

Thank you Santa

A Tired Teacher



TEACHERS ARE OVERPAID

I'm fed up with these teachers and their hefty salary grids. What we need here is a little perspective. If I had it my way, I'd pay these teachers myself. I'd pay them babysitting wages. That's right, instead of paying outrageous taxes, I'd give them \$3.00 an hour out of my own pocket. I'd only pay them for 5 hours a day - no coffee breaks, preparation time, correcting papers, etc. That would be \$15.00 a day. Each parent should pay \$15.00 a day to these teachers to babysit their child. Even if they have more than one child, it's a lot cheaper than private day care. Now, how many children do they teach every day - maybe 30 in a class? That's \$15.00 x 30 = \$450.00 a day. But remember, they only work 194 days a year. I'm not going to pay them for all those vacations! Let's see now, \$450.00 x 194 = \$87,300. JUST A MINUTE! I THINK MY CALCULATOR NEEDS NEW BATTERIES!!

Some teachers will say "What about those who have ten years experience and a Master's Degree?" Well, maybe, to be fair, they should get a minimum wage and instead of just babysitting, they could read the kids a story or do a little math. We can round the minimum wage off to about \$5.00 an hour times 5 hours a day times 30 children times 194, which is \$145,000.....HUH???????????

Wait a minute. Let's get a little perspective here. Babysitting wages are too good for these teachers. Did anyone see a salary grid around here?

Sentinel December 2001



Reflections on the Municipal Election 2018: When the Electorate does not Vote

Karen Ebanks, Councillor & Co-Chair of Political Action Committee

Truth be told - the results of the municipal election were not what I thought they would be. As I investigated the election results, I realized how few people had actually voted. I found myself wondering - how can we convey to voters how important it is to vote? This is my second year serving on the Political Action Committee (PAC), and my first year as co-chair. For someone who never participated in an election beyond casting my vote prior to joining PAC, I could not believe how deeply I was feeling these election results.

I always vote. I remind the non-voting among our eligible voters that there are people around the world who would die and have died for the right to be able to elect their leaders: yet here in Canada, too many of us treat this right quite recklessly and abandon it without thought. To protests of “but I don’t respect any of the candidates” I respond “then go run yourself, get someone you respect to run, or lean one way and vote for the one you dislike slightly less.” A vote should be cast, for each position, in every election, by all eligible voters.

The most important lesson I learned from the results of the provincial election was that devastation can happen when the electorate does not vote. In June, we celebrated the highest voter

turnout in 20 years at 58%¹ - a slight majority of voters elected a resounding majority PC government. What would Ontario’s landscape look like today if the remaining 42% had voted? Perhaps we would not be living in the age of loss - of cap and trade, of truth and reconciliation curriculum, of access to the Ontario Autism Program, much more, and likely much more to come. The second most important lesson I learned was that it is not enough to just vote - discussing the election with voters, and canvassing by dropping off literature and knocking on doors is required. It is the only way to effect real change in our communities.

Armed with these lessons, I catapulted into the municipal election fired up and ready to amp up my efforts. As important as the provincial election was for education in Ontario, the municipal election was a chance for teachers to shape our immediate working conditions by participating in the trustee election. Who doesn’t love a fresh new start? Here we were, with an increase in the number of trustee candidates and no trustee acclaimed. This was going to be an interesting race!

Many of us felt motivated to canvass for our endorsed trustee candidates who could represent the concerns of their constituents, understand the inner workings of our schools and bring a finance

background to the budget-setting table. Off we went - bright-eyed and bushy-tailed - to canvass and connect with voters.

After celebrating mass one Sunday, I decided to distribute campaign literature on behalf of a trustee candidate. I remember the priest announcing that some of our trustee candidates were present and hearing a nearby parishioner mutter angrily - “Great. More politicians in church.” I wanted to remind that parishioner that there are Christians around the world living in non-Christian countries who have faced persecution, would die and have died for the right to be able to worship as Christians. For them - the right to worship as a Christian is political. I sincerely thank all teachers who not only voted but actively canvassed for trustee candidates during the election. There was a strong sense of solidarity among us when canvassing with our colleagues. Your participation in the elections process is very much appreciated.

I applaud all trustee candidates who had the courage to put their names forward in this election and congratulate all elected trustees. I sincerely wish those elected the very best, as they venture forth to serve our YCDSB community, informed by our gospel values. I just cannot help but wonder - what would the results have been if more of us had canvassed, everyone had voted and there had been a fair playing field?

¹ https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/06/08/ontario-voter-turnout-2018-election_a_23454169/

In York Region, Markham had online voting. 91% of the ballots cast in Markham were cast online, which represented a voter turnout of only 38.26%². What strikes me about these numbers is when voting is as convenient as the click of a button, why are the majority of voters still not voting? (Please oh please let our own upcoming YCT elections via online voting boast superior numbers!) The most impressive voter turnout I could find for York Region belonged to Whitchurch-Stouffville at 47.63%³. Did I get that right? Best voter turnout in York Region comes in at less than 50%?

The question must be put: what is it going to take for 100% of voters to recognize they have a civic duty and an obligation to vote? I am wondering if our non-voting among our eligible voters should be fined for not voting or if they should be sent to live in a country with reduced voter rights and/or under a dictatorship for an election cycle - say for about 4 years - #on-dictatingdemocracy.

When the electorate does not vote, we discourage meaningful change. When the electorate does not vote, our elected leaders cannot truly represent us.

When the electorate does not vote, the integrity and foundation of our entire democratic process is called into question.

² <https://www.markhamvotes.ca/en/index.aspx>

³ <https://whitchurch.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/128435>



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MARRIAGE

Maggie Ieraci, teacher at St. Charles Garnier, on her marriage to Daniel Alonzi in July 2018.

BIRTHS AND ADOPTIONS

Danielle Botelho, teacher at St. Patrick-Markham, on the birth of her son Marcus.

Bianca de Caria Quaranta, teacher at St. Edward, on the birth of her daughter Lia Michelle.

Daniela Frisoni, teacher at OLL CCS, on the birth of her daughter Alessia.

Angela Marcantonio, teacher at Light of Christ, on the birth of her son Adamo.

Doborah Marchesini, teacher at St. John Bosco, on the birth of her son James.

Monica Parisi, teacher at St. Bernadette, on the birth of her son Leonardo.

Diana Ruberto-Saggiorato, teacher at St. Michael the Archangel, on the birth of her son Mateo.

CONDOLENCES & SYMPATHY

Diana Busato, teacher at St. John Paul II, on the death of her father.

Angie Cabraja, Coordinator in Student Services at the CEC, on the death of her father.

Sandra Castriota, teacher at St. Rene Goupil, on the death of her niece.

Linda d'Eon, teacher at Blessed Scalabrini, on the death of her mother.

Crocifissa Evola, teacher at St. Margaret Mary, on the death of her mother-in-law.

Jennifer Ferlisi, teacher at Fr. Bressani CHS, on the death of her father.

Steven Ferracane, teacher at St. Raphael the Archangel, on the death of his grandfather.

Lena Hastings, teacher at St. Bernadette, on the death of her grandfather.

Christina Leo, teacher at St. Veronica, on the death of her grandmother.

Michael Mansell, teacher at Cardinal Carter CHS on the death of his father and father-in-law of Stacey



Mansell, teacher at St. Elizabeth CHS.

Joanne Marchesan, teacher at Our Lady of Grace, on the death of her mother.

Christina Mazzuca, teacher at St. Marguerite d'Youville, **AND** Adam Perzia, teacher at Immaculate Conception & St. Clare, on the death of their grandfather.

Natalie Pagura, teacher at St. Padre Pio, on the death of her grandfather.

Carmela Paolozzi, teacher at St. Gabriel, on the death of her mother-in-law.

Jessica Rea, teacher at St. Veronica, on the death of her grandmother.

Andrea Toohey, teacher at St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS, on the death of her grandmother.

