



ASSOCIATION CATHOLIQUE
CANADIENNE DE LA SANTÉ

CATHOLIC HEALTH
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

COMMUNIQUE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CULTIVATING COMMITMENT FOR THE BUILDING OF A HEALTHY AND JUST SOCIETY

Ottawa — Members and stakeholders of the Catholic Health Association of Canada (CHAC) will have an opportunity to renew and strengthen their commitment to social justice during the Association's annual convention in Saint John NB, May 3 to 5, 1997. They will discuss the impact of social justice on the health of individuals, institutions and communities.

"We all share the responsibility of finding effective, just and equitable solutions to the challenges facing us — be they individual, organizational, social or economic. This convention will afford us an excellent occasion to better understand and define what we can do to meet the test of social justice in our lives and in the lives of our organizations and communities," said Raymond Lafond, Chairperson.

Veronica O'Reilly, CSJ, prominent lecturer, researcher and writer, and former General Superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Peterborough ON, will facilitate the convention and weave the theme through the following presentations:

A Health Care Spirituality Rooted in Biblical Justice

Walter Burghardt, SJ, Senior Fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center in Washington DC will argue that to achieve holistic healing in health care, we need to be driven by a profound spirituality rooted in the biblical vision of justice.

Justice and Mercy in Health Care

What is social justice? What does social justice mean for us, for our organizations and for society? Gregory Baum, Professor Emeritus at McGill University and Officer of the Order of Canada, will stress the link between faith and justice and highlight the messages of prophetic voices.

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- ***Personal Commitment to Collective Justice***

Mary Boyd, Director of MacKillop Centre for Social Justice in Charlottetown, Pam Coates, President of the National Anti-Poverty Organization, and Michael McBane, National Co-ordinator of the Canadian Health Coalition, will participate in this panel discussion about their commitment to change and justice. They will discuss with participants ways to find the skills and inspiration necessary to work for justice in our society.

Challenges, Changes and Strategies

Gerald Vandezande, National Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public Justice and author of *Let Justice Flow!*, will call participants to action and discuss the importance of affirming core values in promoting social justice in our lives and in society.

- ***Called to Be Reign-Builders Work as Ministry***

Diane Bisson, CSJ, Director of Mission and Philosophy at Providence Hospital in Scarborough ON, will lead this workshop on the meaning of work. With participants, she will identify practical actions we can take to see the work we do as meaningful.

Doing "Justice" to the Right to Health

Why have our economy and current economic and social policies restored the precariousness of the 19th century instead of bringing the promised progress? Michel Beaudin, Professor of Political and Socio-Economic Ethics at the University of Montreal, will address how we can restore hope and guarantee a place for all in our society in the face of these macro-economic trends.

God's Dream of Wellness and Justice for All

Using biblical and contemporary experiences, as well as the Creation story and the Gospel of Mark, Michel Côté, OP, a community organizer and retreat and workshop facilitator, will provide motivation and models of wellness-seeking and justice-making in today's world.

- ***Social Justice and Institutional Imperatives Can they Be Reconciled?***

In such areas as human resources, decisions about equipment and technology, target clientele and community outreach, there is a risk that institutional imperatives will prevail over the desire of individuals for social justice. Guy Paiement, analyst and facilitator with the *Saint-Pierre Centre* in Montreal, will argue that if we are to do more than simply have good intentions, it is essential that we learn how to identify these imperatives.

- ***Justice for Staff in Times of Budget Reductions***

John Breen, CEO of the Eastern Regional Health Board in North Sydney, NS, and David Curtis, President of the Newfoundland Association of Public Employees, will discuss alternative strategies for the just treatment of staff in times of restructuring and downsizing.

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Note: A copy of the convention program entitled *Social Justice: A "Yes" to the World!* is available upon request.

The Catholic Health Association of Canada is a national Christian association supportive of health care in the tradition of the Roman Catholic church. Its members include eight provincial/regional associations; 127 hospitals and homes; 106 associates comprised of religious orders, dioceses, physicians, etc.; 34 owner members of health care institutions; eight corporate members; and 276 individual members. The CHAC, the national voice for Catholic health care, strives to have a concern for health in all its aspects: physical, emotional, spiritual and social.

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