
Some of our key achievements in alignment with our 2018-2019 Strategic Priorities include:

- Collaboration with the Father Dowd Foundation, Catholic Action Montreal and Seniors Action Quebec in the provision of training workshops for staff and volunteers of organizations serving the English-speaking senior population (September 2018 to June 2019)
- ESCC participation at the launch of Parish Vitality Conference (September 2018)
- Lecture by Ray Pennings of Cardus and Launch of ESCC Parish Survey (October 2018)
- Rally, Bishop Crowley Memorial Award (Daniel and Jacqueline Cere, for exceptional service to family life) and PVC (November 2018)
- ESCC Christmas Reception (December 2018)
- Official Languages Action Plan (January 2019)
- ESCC English-speaking Newcomers’ Parish Survey, visits to English parishes in Montreal (November 2018 to June 2019)
- English Elected School Boards, ESCC becomes a Supporting Organization of APPELE-Quebec (March and April 2019)
- CAQ & Religious Symbols, Presentation of ESCC STATEMENT ON BILL 21 (May 2019)
- AGM, Survey Results and the Future (June 2019)

The ESCC remains deeply committed to its mission to act as a catalyst, convener and facilitator of community life and collective action for the English-speaking Catholic Community of Greater Montreal!

I would like to thank the members of the Board for their participation, commitment and valuable contribution over the year. It has made my role and experience as President so rich. I am truly grateful.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication, hard work and exceptional contribution of our Executive Director Anna Farrow and Executive Assistant Suzanne Brown. I personally thank you for your help and guidance in making 2018-2019 a very successful year.

It has been an honour for me to be the President of ESCC and to work with these exceptional individuals, the Board, Anna and Suzanne!

With gratitude,

Paula Celani
The Council was pleased to be able to welcome William Floch, the head of the newly formed Secretariat for English speaking Quebecers, as guest speaker at the ESCC AGM held on June 13, 2018. Mr. Floch spoke about the formation of the Secretariat and the opportunities provided to the English-speaking community of Quebec in having an office within the provincial government dedicated to establishing clear lines of communication between the government and the ESCQ. Inviting Mr. Floch to the AGM allowed members of our English-speaking Catholic community to ask questions about the role, scope and mandate of this new government initiative. The AGM was well attended and provided a good opportunity for our constituency to intersect with some of the government and community representatives with whom the Council interacts.

William Floch, the head of the newly formed Secretariat at 2018 AGM

On October 27, 2018, the ESCC hosted a public lecture on the topic of faith and immigration. The lecture was given by Ray Pennings, Executive Vice-President and Co-Founder of Cardus, a non-partisan, faith-based Canadian think tank, and was based on the findings of a 2018 poll implemented by Cardus and Angus-Reid. This survey sought to answer a number of questions including: What is the role of faith communities in the integration of new Canadians? What is the attitude of new Canadians to faith in the public square?

The Council used the lecture as an opportunity to launch its own survey, Parishes & Newcomers. The purpose of the survey is to obtain a snapshot of the demographics of our English-speaking parishes, to learn more of how parishes welcome newcomers and how they might better meet the needs of new immigrants. The Council has distributed the digital survey in the parishes through the ESCC Facebook page and website as well as through the Grapevine, the weekly e-newsletter compiled and will be able to report on its findings at the ESCC AGM. The Council intends to use the information gathered to help English-speaking parishes to better assist their parishioners who are newcomers to Quebec. It is currently investigating and establishing networks within the parish communities to accomplish this goal.

The 2018 Rally took place at Loyola High School on the evening of November 16, 2018, with many groups opting to stay for the second day of the conference. The Rally was both well attended and well received with 92% of kiosk respondents evaluating the event as either very good or excellent.

Through the medium of the Bishop Crowley Memorial Award, the Council has been able to focus a spotlight on those members or organizations of the English-speaking Catholic community of Greater Montreal who have provided outstanding service, who have gone above and beyond their normal responsibilities in that service.

The 2018 Award was announced at the conclusion of the Rally. Daniel and Jacqueline Cere (pictured left) were the recipients of the Bishop Crowley Memorial Award, which they received for their 20-years of labor given by Ray Pennings, Executive Vice-President and Co-Founder of Cardus, a non-partisan, faith-based Canadian think tank, and was based on the findings of a 2018 poll implemented by Cardus and Angus-Reid.

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The ESCC Christmas gathering for the English-speaking parishes of the Archdiocese was held on November 30, 2018, at St. Monica’s Parish in N.D.G. At this event, the priests, wardens, staff, catechists, employees of the Archdiocese and Board members from the various organizations active in our community were able to socialize and enjoy a wine and cheese reception. This is a relatively new initiative of the Council and it has been pleased to note the positive response of the community and the gradual increase in the number of people attending this event.

The 2018 Award was announced at the conclusion of the Rally. Daniel and Jacqueline Cere (pictured left) were the recipients of the Bishop Crowley Memorial Award, which they received for their 20-years of labor in the re-creation of the Orelda Marion campsite into the Dominus Vobiscum Family Retreat Center. The Center has become a source of renewal to over 120 families and it continues to explore new ways of ministering to the community. For the past 3 years, DV has run a weekend in June ministering to single mothers and their families. The concluding sentence of the supporting letter perfectly sums up the quality of their service.

Daniel and Jacqueline Cere receive the BCMA
The Council has been assisting Catholic Action Montreal in the organization and financial management of a series of workshops designed to assist the employees of the senior centers which serve the English-speaking population, particularly in their work with isolated seniors. The first of these workshops was held on September 7, 2018. The topic was Listening & Grief. The Council and CA solicited feedback on the workshop via an online survey. The responses were universally positive. A second training workshop was held at St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish on November 30, 2018. The second and third sessions, held November 30, 2018 and January 24, 2019 were animated by Michael Udy, President of Seniors Action Quebec. A follow-up session to these training workshops was held April 4, 2019 and on May 8th, at the Catholic Centre, CAM and the ESCC co-hosted a workshop on grant writing and funding. One of the ESCC’s longstanding partners, Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN) participated in the event and new collaborative relationships were established.

In that statement the Council expressed its opinion that, “The debate over religious symbols and accommodation has been a near constant in the public square for the past number of years and as noted, this is not the first or even the second iteration of legislation which has been tabled to address this issue. Unfortunately, the Council sees nothing in Bill 21 which inspires confidence that it will put an end to that debate. In fact, it foresees that the enactment of the current legislation virtually ensures a continued stress upon the body politic, and unfortunately those stresses will fall unduly hard on those parts of the population struggling to find a path towards inclusion and integration in Quebec society.”

Since its inception, the Council has been actively engaged in representing and advocating for the rights and interests of the English-speaking Catholic community of Quebec and the past year has been no different.

Bill 21

The Council submitted a statement on Bill 21 (An Act respecting the Laicity of the State) to the public hearings organised by Coalition Inclusion, one of the organizations invited to speak before the Committee on Institutions at the National Assembly. The Council’s statement received coverage in both the Catholic Register and Convivium.

In the early part of 2019, the ESCC was approached to join a coalition being formed to oppose the CAQ’s plans to eliminate elected school boards in favor of the minority language community’s ability to govern board management, the Council also understands that issues surrounding both the election process and service centers. Whilst recognizing that there are plans to eliminate elected school boards in favor of the body politic, and unfortunately those stresses will fall unduly hard on those parts of the population struggling to find a path towards inclusion and integration in Quebec society.”

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

Advocating for a Community

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

ESCC and APPELE

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES

ESCC 2018-19 Annual Report

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