



Creating the 2019 CPCO Calendar

By Deirdre Kinsella Biss and Leslie Fountain

*“In **Renewing the Promise**, our bishops remind us that “the work of Catholic schools involves initiating, facilitating and maintaining trusting relationships with and among Catholic educational partners. A sense of respect for the unique expertise and strengths of each, and generous cooperation that acknowledges and celebrates the accomplishments of all is essential to develop the mutual trust that nurtures effective working relationships”.*

(RTP, p. 9)”

Creating the 2019 CPCO Calendar, *Catholic Partnerships Together in Trust*, was a unique process of collaboration that exemplified a true sharing of leadership. The calendar focuses on the importance of trust in our daily work and features the authentic thinking and voices of our Ontario Catholic partners. Artwork created by Catholic secondary students brings to life the ideas of our Catholic community.

Why the Topic of Trust?

Trust remains an ongoing issue in public systems, yet is a key ingredient to building successful operations and services. In education, relational trust is foundational to providing students with the opportunity to learn and grow. Relational trust begins with our Catholic faith and reflects itself in our thinking, our relationships, the way we lead, the way we teach and our daily interactions with others. Trust creates a way of building community. Trust develops in different ways and is a precursor to collaboration.

Gathering the Research

We reached out to our Catholic partners to discover their thoughts on the importance and impact of “trust” in their work. Representatives from the Archdiocese of Toronto, Institute of Catholic Education, university partners, directors of education, superintendents, principals, vice-principals, trustees, business officials, teachers, students and parents were all invited to participate in the project. We asked three simple questions: Where do we start with developing relational trust? What does trust look like, sound like and feel like to you? How do you know trust exists in a relationship? The answers were rich, reflective and thought provoking.

Making Sense of the Research

After the responses were received, CPCO sought the assistance of Michael Saver, a facilitator for the Center for Courage & Renewal, who has great expertise and knowledge in the area of trust. Michael analyzed the comments and established 14 big ideas about trust that are important to our Catholic communities. Authenticity, presence, transparency, patience, respect, compassion, forgiveness, vulnerability, courage, wonder, listening, confidentiality and honouring our differences were the common threads he identified.

Direct quotes from our Catholic partners were chosen to support these ideas. These were paired with reflective quotations from great thinkers to allow for contemplative consideration. CPCO senior designer Ania Czapajlo wove the artwork, the research and the reflections together to create this year’s calendar.

The collaboration involved in the creation of this unique and authentic piece was remarkable.

Creating the Artwork

Senior art students from John Cabot Catholic Secondary School, Dufferin Peel CDSB were responsible for the artistic facet of this multidimensional project. Led by teacher Leslie Fountain, students explored the meaning of our 14 big ideas and interpreted them into beautiful mixed media works of art. Careful consideration of subject matter and arrangement of composition was highlighted to provide visuals. Purpose fueled the student's motivation. The opportunity to showcase their artwork outside the walls of the school helped spark enthusiasm and perseverance. The project demonstrates a true example of Catholic students using their God given talents by being collaborative contributors to the common good (Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations).

What We Learned?

Shared leadership in a project yields amazing results, especially when all the partners involved are committed to the work and willing to share their expertise. As this project evolved, the collaboration and partnership between everyone allowed for a real richness to emerge. The calendar demonstrates the communal aspect of our Catholicity.





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