



## Iona Academy Catholic School

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association announced the finalists for the Community Builders video contest at the OCSTA Annual Catholic Trustees Seminar on January 20. The contest challenged Ontario Catholic schools to demonstrate how their Catholic school community helps and supports those in need.

Iona Academy Catholic School placed second in the province in the elementary category out of over 100 submissions. The video was shown to Board members at the February 19 meeting. Iona Academy principal David McLeod, teacher Donna Sturkenboom-Poirier attended the meeting to speak about the project, along with students Chad Watson and Annie Bacchiochi. This is the second year the school has won the OCSTA province-wide contest.

"It began as a contest and a media literacy project in our class, and we were asked to make a video," began Annie Bacchiochi. "Once the videos were complete, the teachers got together and chose the winning video."

"The teachers thought that two of the videos were exceptional, and so the two winning groups came together to create this winning video," explained Chad Watson.

Board Chair, and OCSTA Regional Director Todd Lalonde noted, "It is apparent that a great amount of work ethic and effort went into producing this video, and we are so proud of the accomplishments of this school, and for again being recognized provincially for all of their hard work."

Vice-Chair Ron Eamer expressed his gratitude, "The first time we saw this video we were 300 people in a hall in Toronto at the OCSTA conference, and we were pretty proud! It's an amazing job that you do, and to win two years in a row is outstanding."

The winning submission by Iona Academy Catholic School can be viewed at:  
[http://www.togetherinfaith.ca/winners\\_2018\\_short\\_video\\_contest](http://www.togetherinfaith.ca/winners_2018_short_video_contest)

## Synod of Bishops

The Synod of Bishops is an advisory body for the Pope, which brings together a cross-section of bishops from around the world to discuss various themes, from which the Pope then makes decisions based on the Synod deliberations. The Synod of Bishops was established in September 1965 as a permanent council in Rome, by Pope Paul VI.



At the February 19 Board Meeting, Emilie Callan shared her experiences of her participation in the Synod of Bishops with the Board of Trustees. She had also presented to the Student Senate earlier in the day.

The Pre-Synodal meeting, which was held in Rome in March 2018, invited 300 young people from around the globe to participate in discussions around the challenges and experiences of young people in today's society. The ideas generated, along with other ideas garnered from some other 15,000 young people via Facebook groups, as well as through Catholic dioceses, were summarized into the Pre-Synodal meeting final document – a reflection to contribute to the *Instrumentum Laboris* for the Synod of Bishops 2018. The Pre-Synod took place over a two year consultation period.

On October 3, 2018, the 15<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment began in Rome and continued until October 28. Thirty-six young auditors, who are participants without voting rights, were also invited to take part in the discussion. Emilie Callan, a producer with Salt + Light Catholic Media, was one of two Canadians who participated as an auditor to address the bishops during the Synod. Callan was also part of the initial discussion group which met for the Pre-Synodal Meeting in March.

"The discussions really gave people an opportunity to express ideas about the gifts, as well as various challenges young people are dealing with in their respective countries," noted Callan.

"This is the first time in the history of Synods that the church has ever invited that many young people to consult at such a high level."

Every week at the Synod in October, the discussion would look at one of three topics: the challenges and opportunities for young people, faith and vocation, and the Church's formative and pastoral activity.

Callan also had an opportunity to meet Pope Francis during her time participating in the Synod. Pope Francis was also in attendance at all meetings, except when the attendees met in their small groups for discussion.

"In the Synod Hall, every bishop had an opportunity to speak, and we spent three days every week listening to a four minute speech from every bishop and religious who wished to speak, as well as any of the auditors in attendance. Hearing someone's testimony or story of faith is very powerful, and everyone has a unique story, and hearing how people were moved in their faith journey was very impactful," noted Callan.

Chair Lalonde thanked Emilie Callan for her presentation, "Thank you so much for sharing your story with us today. It is clear that what you are saying, what you are doing, and what you believe in, is everything that we represent. We truly appreciate you sharing your extraordinary experiences."



## Interim Financial Report

Manager of Finance Ashley Hutchinson, provided the interim financial report covering the period from September 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018 with comparative figures for 2017. Mrs. Hutchinson shared a summary of the financial results, including a description of key variances along with details of accumulated surplus. The report also highlighted the non-financial indicators, including summary of enrolment and summary of staffing. Enrolment changes indicate total board enrolment increased by 1.4 per cent over the original budget estimates, and an overall enrolment increase of 56 FTE from the 2017-2018 actual enrolment. In addition, the revised budget includes a 17.7 FTE increase in teachers and other school staff to address increased enrolment, primary class size regulations, and local priorities.