

## Editor's Foreword

After having the opportunity to serve as editor-in-chief for volume 60 and volume 61 of the *Canadian Catholic Historical Association Historical Studies*, there are few observations that I want to point out about the status of the history, or more appropriately the many histories, of English-speaking Canadian Catholicism and the state of the historiography of Englishspeaking Canadian Roman Catholics.

“Perhaps no religious group is as understudied as English-speaking Catholics” was the comment of an editor of a Canadian journal in the fall of 1993.<sup>1</sup> The papers from the annual meetings of the English Section of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association published in *Historical Studies* are a way of addressing that need for more information and interpretations of the history of Roman Catholics in Canada. In fact, the contributions to this journal, especially since the late 1980s, signal a noteworthy increase in the interest and the expertise in the research and writing of the history of our “understudied” group. As a result, these articles constitute a growing body of historical data and insights which forms the basis for a better understanding of our historical experiences as Canadian Roman Catholics. Significantly, they illuminate the “good news” as well as the “not so good news” of Canadian Catholic history.

It is instructive to review some of the major themes in the historiography of English-speaking Canadian Roman Catholics evident in the pages of *Historical Studies* in the past two years. Not surprisingly, there is the quintessential Canadian theme of the differences between English-speaking and French-speaking Canadian Roman Catholics. In a variety of contexts, that topic is discussed with its implications in Sanfilippo's piece on Roman Archives, revealing the struggle within the Canadian Church over the provision of services to “New Canadians” of Roman Catholic backgrounds in the Canadian West; McGahan's case study of female religious which touches on the internal struggles between anglophones and francophones within the Sisters of Charity in New Brunswick; and Cottrell's study of John Joseph Leddy and the establishment of a Catholic College, St. Thomas More College, at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

The clash of cultures between aboriginals and Canadian Roman Catholics is the second theme evident in two articles studying the system of

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<sup>1</sup> See “Book Notes” *Labour/Le Travail* 32 Fall, 1993, p. 379

Indian Residential Schools. The articles by Fay and Carney note the painful but also positive sides to these schools. Interestingly, they point to the hitherto overlooked input from aboriginal communities that is bringing about changes in the schools.

A third theme is the role of female and male religious orders in the development of Catholic educational and medical institutions. A variety of articles by Smyth, McGahan, McKenna, and Fay detail and examine the contributions of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Sisters of Charity in New Brunswick, the Sister of Charity of Halifax, the Jesuits, the Oblates and the Basilians in the founding and operating of Catholic schools, native residential schools, orphanages, hospitals and post-secondary institutions like the University of St. Michael's College. These studies of sisters clearly identify the key but often neglected recognition of the contributions of women in the life of communities that make up the church. In light of the realities of falling vocations in the post-Vatican II period, these articles also raise, but cannot answer, the question of whether there are any types of lay Roman Catholic structures to replace the traditional place of priests, and sisters in Canadian Catholic communities.

A "paradigm shift," a revolutionary new way of thinking about old problems, is the fourth theme. Changes, and the response to these changes in religious structures and roles runs through most, if not all, of the articles in this edition of *Historical Studies*. McKenna regards "paradigm shifts" as key to an understanding of the evolution of her religious community, the Sisters of Charity, Halifax and their reorientation since Vatican II. Marshall's article on secularization in volume 60 identifies many of the forces behind the paradigm shift in the role of religion in Canada. Similarly, Fay refers to a paradigm shift as a useful way of approaching the controversial issue of residential schools for aboriginals in Canada. What appeared to be so right for so long, is now almost universally rejected as culturally insensitive and wrong. Another type of paradigm shift took place in modifying the status of religious orders in Catholic post-secondary institutions such as St. Michael's College in Toronto and St. Thomas More College in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

These four themes reveal some of the major struggles in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in English-speaking Canada. The fourteen articles in volumes 60 and 61, are, I hope, an indication of the efforts of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association and its members to respond to the challenge of addressing the "understudied" histories of English-speaking Canadian Roman Catholics.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most of the accomplishments of the past two years are the results of the generosity of a number of individuals. Unlike so many academic enterprises, the preparation, editing and production of this journal is a testament to what can be accomplished by a community of men and women from various academic and vocational backgrounds, working together and sharing certain religious values. It is these people who have made the editing of *Historical Studies* truly a team effort.

I must thank my associate editor, Jeanne Beck, for her dedication and input. I want to also state my gratitude to Professor Mark McGowan, University of St. Michael's College for his willingness to help without hesitation despite carrying many other burdens. I am grateful to Marie Daly, historical assistant in the Historical Department, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, for her copy editing of Volume 61. I also want to express my appreciation to the following historians for their contributions: Michael Power, historical editor and researcher, Welland, Ontario; Professor Brian Hogan, Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael's College; Professor Elizabeth Smyth of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Northwestern Centre in Thunder Bay, Ontario; Glenn Wright, staff historian, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Ottawa, Ontario; Professor John Webster Grant, Emmanuel College, Victoria University, University of Toronto; Fred McEvoy of Ottawa, Ontario; Professor Jim Miller of the University of Saskatchewan; Professor Roberto Perin, Atkinson College, York University; Professor Raymond Huel of the University of Lethbridge; and Professor Donald Smith of the University of Calgary.

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Paul Adolphus Bator

“Feast of Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicity”