

The Theological Commission of the CRC

History

The Theological Reflection Committee was established by the Administrative Council of the CRC in September 1999. It was given a twofold mission: to deepen the meaning of consecrated life using a theological approach that integrates the contributions of human and social sciences; and to propose future venues that will actualise religious life in a creative and prophetic way.

Committee members, representing all the current regions of Canada, opted for the "See, Judge, Act" method inspired by Catholic Action. Well rooted in the reality of Canada, this approach helped them to explore, in particular, that which was written in Canada for the *Synod on Consecrated Life*, and attempted to answer the question that concerned them: "*What are the challenges, what are the opportunities for religious life today in the Church and in Canadian society?*" Convinced of the importance of presenting a reflection from a Canadian perspective, the committee members explored these topics and published the "fruits" in three booklets: *Religious Life in a Changing World*, *Religious Life in a Changing Church* and *The Changing Face of Religious Life*.

These booklets were intended to help women and men religious of Canada to better understand the context in which they live their vocation and to encourage them to enter into dialogue with the Theological Reflection Committee. These few years of reflection culminated in a forum bringing together nearly 600 people in Montreal in June 2005.

The forum did not only meet with enthusiastic supporters, but one thing is clear, the joy in meeting women and men religious of all ages coming from all corners of the country and the openness of heart and spirit which resulted belong to the "fruits" that we do not cease gathering. Following this event, the committee found itself at the beginning of a new cycle of engagement. The CRC Administrative Council asked the committee to propose a program that took into account the work already done and the 2006 General Assembly Declaration.

The proposal to hold regional forums was eventually abandoned. Henceforth, the committee will put all its efforts into the publication of a CRC Bulletin; this publication was chosen in preference to a booklet because it is less costly in time and money. The themes are related more or less with the CRC Declaration: *Dialogue*, *Breaking the Bread of our Differences*, *Hope*, etc. Every effort is made by the office to ensure the dissemination of the newsletter. We can say that the reactions of readers are very positive even if the members continue to wish for greater interaction. There is still a lot of reluctance to enter into dialogue with the authors of articles. We also know that many readers use the articles as starting point for discussions within the community or elsewhere.

In 2009, the *Theological Reflection Committee* officially became the *CRC Theological Commission* and, as such, is renewing its commitment to serve religious life in Canada. Its nine members represent different regions of Canada and belong to different disciplines: theology, biblical exegesis, sociology, etc. They meet twice a year in Montreal. Travel expenses are paid for by the CRC, but members volunteer their time and put their expertise in service of religious life in Canada.

Adopted by the members of the Theological Commission

On September 16, 2011