

NPCD Highlights

JANUARY 2009

NPCD Executive Committee Meets with NCCL in Chicago

In November, parishes across the country focus on renewing their commitment to stewardship as a necessary component of building up the Body of Christ. But during difficult economic times, there is a temptation to concentrate solely on the fiscal bottom line. Responsible stewardship of treasure is essential, but so is wise stewardship of human creativity, caring, and community. The Religious Education office showed leadership in this regard by providing an opportunity for the NPCD Executive Committee and the NCEA Religious Education Committee to meet in Chicago, and then, with NCCL, to bring together representatives of NPCD and NCCL for the first time in an informal setting.



NCEA President Meets with Executive Committee

Thursday, November 13, 2008, the NPCD Executive Committee welcomed Cathy McGuire, the new representative for the Mid-Atlantic Region of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Then, during the combined meeting of the RE Committee and NPCD Executive Committees, Karen Ristau, president of NCEA, gave an update of current events and invited us to identify speakers “for whom we’d cross the burning desert” to attend the annual convention in Minneapolis in 2010. We agreed that a good working relationship is based on the ability to listen and to respond thoughtfully and honestly.



We started our day on Friday morning, November 13, with a prayer inviting us to offer our many gifts in one Spirit to the benefit of the membership. The introduction of Dr. Robert Brancatelli as new Assistant Executive Director for the Religious Education Department of NCEA provided the opportunity to clarify roles and responsibilities in the RE Department, its service to the broad organization and its relationship to NPCD. The Executive Committee agreed that we need to continue to educate ourselves, our membership and NCEA at large about NPCD’s unique role as the membership arm of the RE Department. (See *Highlights* of the June 2008 meeting)



NPCD’s Strategic Plan

NPCD’s strategic plan reflects the organizational structure of NCEA and flows directly from its mission, which guides and focuses its work. NCEA’s seven goals are “translated” into seven goals for the RE Department, with each goal having several objectives. In our discussions, we considered action steps that would help us achieve the objectives and evaluated the effectiveness of steps already taken.

Committee Reports

A great deal of our work as members of the Executive Committee is accomplished between meetings by adhoc committees working through teleconferencing and by e-mail. The following updates were given at the Chicago meeting.

The **Awards Committee** proposed the following changes, which were approved by the Executive Committee:

- Align the timing of the Mustard Seed and Religious Education Excellence Awards by having both in the fall,
- clarify criteria for the awards,
- standardize the evaluation process for applications.

Accordingly, brochures, NPCD handbook and Web site information will be updated.

- The **Elections Committee** reported that Pat Manuli was re-elected as representative for New York. Elections in the Southwest region are under way.
- The **Membership Campaign** evaluation surfaced the need to adjust the timing of future campaigns from fall to February and to offer incentives to campaign workers as well as new members. The details need to be worked out with the appropriate NCEA departments. The next full-scale campaign is planned for February 2010.

Convocation Update Anaheim 2009

The NPCD leadership is very excited to offer a Convocation designed to meet our membership's needs for professional development, spiritual enrichment and networking opportunities. On Tuesday, April 14th at 9 AM Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas will address the convention during the Opening Ceremonies. By all accounts, he is a speaker not to be missed.



Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas

NPCD Regional Meetings at 1:15 PM will gather and prepare us for the Convocation: an e-mail from your regional representative will detail the topic and questions to consider in preparation. Please make every attempt to be part of this meeting as we continue to work on the Strategic Plan.

NPCD Convocation Opening Ceremonies will weave together prayer and the Emmaus keynote by Dr. Joseph Sinwell.

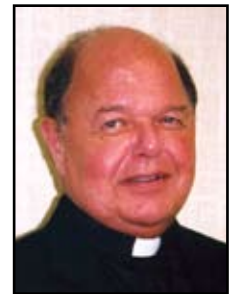
The **Religion Publishers' Showcase** offers a chance for parish catechetical leaders to examine new materials from the publishers while at the same time acknowledge their generous support of the NPCD Convocation.

Throughout the Convocation, liturgical prayer will structure our days. Evening and Morning Prayer with musicians like Tony Alonso and Christ de Silva, and Taizé prayer with David Anderson will take place at the Anaheim Hilton Hotel. On Wednesday, April 15, Morning Prayer will be held at the Anaheim Convention Center.

Wednesday, April 15 is designated as our Day of Spiritual Deepening with Rev. Phil Cover, Barbara Hughes and Msgr. John Kozar of Pontifical Mission Societies. They will base their sessions on the presentation of Immaculée Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. If you have a chance, read her book, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*.

The annual **Business Meeting and Luncheon** will take place on Thursday, April 16, followed by the **Issues Forum on Adolescent Catechesis**. The Convocation will close with the **NPCD Awards Banquet** and concert.

Don't forget to register for the post-convocation **Symposium on Friday, April 17** entitled, "Who Comes Behind Us?" Dr. Tom Walters has done extensive research on generational trends among catechists, and Dr. Michael Horan, an expert in youth and young adult ministry, has a special interest in the preparation of lay ministers for leadership in the Church.



Rev. Phil Cover



Barbara Hughes



Msgr. John Kozar

Election of President and Vice President

The NPCD Executive Committee re-elected Colleen Gerke as President and elected Kevin Cody, Mid-West regional representative, as Vice President for 2009-10. Congratulations to both!