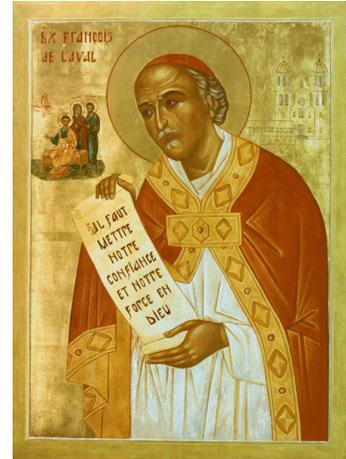


## Education and Health Standing Committee

Saint Francois de Laval was the first Roman Catholic bishop of Quebec, Appointed when he was just 36 years old by Pope Alexander VII. He was beatified in 1980 and canonized in 2014 by Pope Francis. Although his faith was austere and self-denying he was charitable and practical. This charity and practicality resulted in new churches and schools. Laval, in his old age, watched his young successor tear down much of what he had built in his 14 years as bishop of the diocese. Twelve years later, when the new bishop got detained in France, Saint Francoise took over the diocese and lead relentlessly until his death in 1708. The Seminary de Quebec still stands in his name and pays homage to his steadfast conviction to education and the poor. He was known to have gone many days without food and water in order that the poor in the streets may have some.



It is this steadfast conviction that brought to mind the beatitude "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God". Despite many setbacks in his life Saint Francoise persisted and achieved a great many blessings for his community and his diocese at large.

**We must learn from that persistence. We must thrive on that persistence. The need is great.**

Cardinal Collins, in his statement on the passing of Bill C-14 – legalisation of euthanasia/assisted suicide on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, gave us an action plan. He asked that we do three things:

First, we need to make available for all Canadians real medical assistance in dying: palliative care, where people who are dying are surrounded with love, and where any pain they experience is countered with the most advanced medical care available.

Second, we need to speak forthrightly. When people feel compelled to use language in a way that does not reveal what is actually happening, but instead conceals it, it is a sign that something is radically wrong (and they know it). The now officially accepted terminology, such as "Medical Assistance in Dying" does not describe medical assistance in dying; it describes killing. Let us say what we mean, and mean what we say.

Finally, we need to assure that those individuals who have dedicated their lives to healing will not be pressured into either directly causing the death of

their patients, or into arranging for this to happen. Similarly, we must assure that those health care institutions which are havens of hope, in a tradition whose noble roots long predate Confederation, will in no way be forced to violate their conscience (known as their "mission").

We must make our views known to our legislators even though the law is passed. We must pray that our legislators are guided by our merciful and loving God.

**We must thrive on that persistence. The need is so great.**

This quiet persistence must continue in order to maintain Catholic Education in this province. We must be supportive of the programs in place. Brochures are available for all in attendance called "***A Parent's Guide to Understanding Family Life Education in Catholic Schools***". We must offer our help wherever we can, from volunteering in the classroom to running as a trustee in your region and everything in between. We must educate our members in order that all can participate.

**We must thrive on that persistence. The need is great.**

We must learn to live with and assist those who are suffering from mental health issues by educating ourselves on the programs available locally and offering our assistance.

Prayer is a very powerful tool we all can use. Pray daily for all of God's children as they become peacemakers in this troubled world. Reach out, as Jesus did, to all his children. See the face of Jesus in everyone... if you don't then look back at yourself and ask God for his mercy and guidance.

Colleen Randall,  
Education and Health Committee Chairperson