



Telling Our Story

Sponsor Board Formation Workshop

Thursday, March 3, 2022, 1400-1500 EST (Virtual Zoom)

Background

The Catholic church and its mission are in the midst of a crucial time of truth and reconciliation in Canada, responding to difficult questions among the faithful and the public about the Church's position on issues, its moral authority and its modern relevance. At the same time, Canada is facing increasingly complex and challenging social issues—poverty, addiction, an aging population, homelessness, mental illness—affecting the health and wellbeing of the country.

Our mission calls us to engage fully in the pain and brokenness of our world, to care for each other with love, and to work towards healing, bringing the courageous gift of Catholic social teaching and Catholic health care. To fully engage in these activities of truth, reconciliation and healing requires champions and leaders who have open hearts, astute and courageous voices and a willingness to learn from and work with others.



The Challenge

As Catholic leaders, we may wrestle with the call to be effective ambassadors in an increasingly polarized world and to bridge what might divide us through shared understanding, purpose and action. In addressing this challenge, there are several questions we can ask ourselves:

- How do we proudly engage others in the story of Catholic health without sounding defensive?
- How might we reframe the Church's involvement in health care as a mission imperative to address a shared concern about society's most pressing issues, rather than a focus on issues that polarize us?
- How might we begin the conversation by defining the problems we are trying to solve and help people understand and connect to the relatable face of Catholic social teaching?
- How might we use "Catholic" as a verb, rather than an adjective/label?
- As Pope Francis has encouraged, how might we "cross the street" and engage others, equipped with insights and facts *and* a willingness to learn, even with people who don't fully understand or agree with what we do?
- What is a core common narrative we can use, that includes key messages we authentically believe and examples of Catholic health care in action today?

Telling Our Story

As leaders in Catholic health care we need a common understanding of our “why”—our purpose—and a relatable, authentic way to share this with Canadians and decision-makers. This is key to helping us all be confident, key ambassadors—sharing our own authentic, confident and impactful narratives.

Telling our story helps us begin important conversations about the societal problems that concern us all as Canadians and the vision and gifts we bring as Catholic health care organizations. Most importantly, sharing our story helps us to open up and meet others where they are, with the ultimate goal of learning and working together in humility and humanity.

Our effectiveness as champions of Catholic health care begins with our shared “why” as Catholic health care providers. This narrative is foundational. However, it comes to life and makes connections with others as we personalize the narrative with our own experience, passion, and local stories.

And as we continue to learn more about our national, local issues and contributions as Catholic health care, our narrative is enriched and helps us make relevant points of connection with our communities.

This will be a facilitated working session. Pre-reading will be provided; please come prepared to participate.

Workshop Session Goals

1. To explore our potential as Directors of Catholic health sponsor boards to be ambassadors for Catholic health care in our current context.
2. To engage in discussion with peer Directors and provide feedback on a draft common narrative approach for Catholic health care in Canada.
3. To begin thinking about the elements of your own narrative as a foundation for ambassadorship.

Session Agenda

1. Overview of the current landscape and ambassadorship in Catholic health care
2. Interactive session to review and provide feedback on a suggested common narrative for Catholic health care
3. Report back and discussion

Guest Speaker



John Milloy
Assistant Professor of Public Ethics; Director, Centre for Public Ethics, Wilfrid Laurier University

John Milloy is the author of *Politics and Faith in a Polarized World* (Novalis, 2021), an exploration of the Catholic faith and political discourse in Canada. The book examines how Catholicism can make an important contribution to society’s healing as well as addressing the deep polarization that is gripping our nation. John is a former MPP for Kitchener Centre (2003-2014) and served in five cabinet positions. He has also worked on Parliament Hill as a political advisor and senior staff member in the Prime Minister’s office. He currently is on faculty at Martin Luther University College at Wilfrid Laurier University.

To Register

There is no cost to register. Sponsors are asked to identify who from their organization will be attending and to provide a single list of names and email addresses to Cheryl Spencer at cheryl.spencer@chac.ca.

Deadline for registration is February 28, 2022