

CONFERENCE PROGRAM*

SYNERGY
TORONTO 2026
CONFERENCE

ROOTED IN COMPASSION, BUILDING A MORE JUST WORLD

*All programming is subject to change

DAY ONE

Morning Plenary Session One

KINSHIP

Keynote Speaker: Fr. Greg Boyle, S.J.

Description: Fr. Greg defines kinship as a radical and mutual connection that dismantles the illusion of “us and them.” Grounded in unconditional compassion and the inherent dignity of every person, kinship moves beyond traditional notions of service. It calls us to stand alongside those who are marginalized in ways that foster mutual transformation, allowing their experiences and humanity to change us as profoundly as we hope to support them.

Concurrent Sessions One

Workshops:

- The History of Catholic Social Teaching
- The Ministry of Personal and Global Healing: Fostering Personal and Organizational Change
- Sacred Path of Leadership: Learning from Indigenous Perspectives
- Human Dignity at the Centre: Catholic Ethical Decision-Making in Service to Others

Paper Presentations:

- Just Remuneration for Employees of Ecclesiastical Institutions: Canon Law and CST
- Bonds of Solidarity: How Subsidiarity helps Canadians care for refugees
- The Angel Foundation – Bridges of Hope, Community and Service
- The Choice to Change Project: An Innovative, Trauma-Informed Stepped Care Model for Men's Healing, Accountability, and Survivorship
- Movement toward change: a collaboration between healthcare professionals and Deaf Services Canada
- Beyond Shelter: Addressing the Housing Crisis through "Progress in Place" and Research-Driven Innovation

Afternoon Plenary Session Two

CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP PANEL DISCUSSION

Featuring:

Honourable Graydon Nicholas, Shirlee Sharkey, and Sr. Donna Markham, O.P.

Concurrent Sessions Two

Panel Discussions:

- Building Mission-Centred Cultures Across Catholic Health, Education, and Social Services
- No One Beyond Care: Redemption, Healing, and Men Who Have Used Violence

Conversation Circles:

- Catholic Social Teaching in Practice Through the Arts
- Room at the Table: An Interactive Opportunity to Experience L'Arche Daybreak Community
- St. Gabriel Passionist Garden Ministry: Working to foster, develop and preserve the beauty and vitality of the unique garden spaces at St. Gabriel's Parish

Paper Presentations:

- Beyond Shelter: Addressing the Housing Crisis through "Progress in Place" and Research-Driven Innovation
- Society of St. Vincent de Paul: Practical Solutions to Canada's Housing Crisis

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DAY TWO

Morning Plenary Session Three

CONNECTING INDIGENOUS WISDOM TO CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Description: This session explores the Indigenous Grandfather Teachings and their connections to Catholic Social Teaching (CST). Drawing on the Indigenous Circle framework, participants will reflect on the teachings of respect, love, courage, and bravery, and consider how these values can guide personal and collective action

Concurrent Sessions Three

Workshops:

- Catholic Social Teaching and the Moral Imagination
- The History of Catholic Social Teaching
- Human Dignity at the Centre: Catholic Ethical Decision-Making in Service to Others

Paper Presentations:

- The Working Centre grassroots model for living Catholic social teachings
- Reconciliation as a Spiritual Gift and Social Task: Lessons for Catholic Social Teaching in Practice
- Recovering the Authentically Human in a Digitally Mediated Age: A Case Study in Catholic Higher Education

Afternoon Plenary Session Four

SYNODALITY IN ACTION

Featuring:

Linda Staudt, a voting lay participant in the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (2021-2024), and Sr. Gill Goulding, C.J., Professor of Systematic Theology at Regis College.
Moderated by Angela Townend, MSW, RSW

Concurrent Sessions Four

World Café - Collaborating and Building the Future Together

All conference participants are invited to join this interactive conversation following the plenary session on Synodality in Action. Using a World Café format, participants will engage in a series of small-group discussions designed to surface ideas, share experiences, and explore opportunities for collaboration. Together, we will discern priorities, identify possibilities for action, and consider how we can collectively build a more hopeful and vibrant future.

The World Café also offers a unique opportunity to connect with fellow participants from across ministries, sectors, and communities. Through conversation and attentive listening, participants will gain insights from those serving in a variety of contexts, including individuals and organizations working alongside people on the margins. These exchanges foster fellowship, strengthen relationships, and create new possibilities for learning and collaboration.

Every voice is welcome, and every perspective has something valuable to contribute.

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DAY THREE

Morning Plenary Session Five

Concurrent Sessions Five

Workshops:

- Continuing the Journey of Walking Forward Together: Learnings from Indigenous and non-indigenous Relations and Bridge-Building
- Catholic Social Teaching and the Moral Imagination

Paper Presentations

- St. Philip Neri's Table: A Client-Choice Parish Food Pantry Advancing Food Security through Catholic Social Teaching
- The Stage as Sanctuary: Participatory Drama, Family, and Belonging in the Rise Up Kids Model
- Building Social Bridges: Co-Creating Intergenerational Communities of Belonging

Closing Plenary Session

A CALL TO ACTION

The end of the conference is only the beginning. In this closing plenary, we will celebrate the ideas, relationships, and momentum generated over three days of discussion and learning. Participants will be invited to help shape the next phase of this work by identifying priorities for ongoing collaboration and collective action. Together, we will reaffirm our commitment to driving meaningful change and lay the foundation for a future gathering to continue the conversation

Closing Mass Celebrated by
His Eminence Frank
Cardinal Leo

Lunch and Learn Workshops For Those Who Choose to/registered to Participate

- Disability and Accessibility in the Workplace
- Palliative Care Best Practices and Lessons Learned on Collaboration and Shared Approaches to Health Care Delivery in the Margins
- Character-Based Leadership: A Framework to Think About Organizational Culture and Wellbeing
- Cybersecurity and AI
- Government Relations and Advocacy