

Christian Catholic Church Canada

The **Christian Catholic Church** (CCC), also called *Christian Catholic Rite of Community Churches* is a religious body in the Community Church tradition with ministries in Canada and the United States. It is affiliated with the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC) based in Frankfort, Illinois, near Chicago. The Most Rev. Serge A. Theriault of Ottawa, Ontario, is its Bishop Ordinary.

History

The CCC comes from a reform originating in the French Canadian parish of St. Anne (Kankakee), Illinois, U.S.A. in the middle of the 19th century. Michel Drolet, Moise Langelier, Joseph Martin, Louis Mercier, Abraham Pelletier, Anselme Robillard and the priest Charles Chiniquy (1809-1899) directed the first society, registered 13 September 1859 at the District Court of Kankakee. In 1885, parishes were founded among the French-speaking colonists of Wisconsin, by the Reverend Rene Vilatte sent from St. Anne, IL, by Father Chiniquy and ordained priest by the Old Catholics. The ministry was extended to the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec, where it took its present form in the 1970s. Its centre is in Ottawa-Gatineau. The work was organized into an Incorporated Synod under the Reverend Vilatte, elected as bishop. He was consecrated in 1892, by an Independent Catholic Church in Sri Lanka, attached to the Syriac Patriarchate of Antioch. He was followed by Bishops Casimir Durand (1879-1957) and O'Neill Côté (1939-1986).

Faith & Order

Under Father Vilatte's leadership, a general assembly was held in St. Mary's Church, Duvall (Kewaunee), Wisconsin, on November 16, 1889. Clergy and lay delegates made the following faith and order declaration which is still observed today: We are a covenanted community of persons (Art. 1) based on the Holy Scripture (Art. 2), the Nicene & St. Athanasius Creeds (Art. 3) and the definitions of the accepted General Councils of the Undivided Church (Art. 4). We celebrate the seven sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Holy Eucharist, Holy Matrimony, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sicks (Art. 5). We are a society of believers who has Christ our Lord as its Leader and Source of its sanctity (Art. 6). We see the historic Episcopate as necessary for our church life. Minister of the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders, the Bishop is also the centre of unity, the guardian of the deposit of the faith and the defender of the catholic tradition (Art. 7). Holy pictures and statues can be used for devotion but not for worship. This practice is not necessary for justification nor for salvation (Art. 8). The saints are venerable and can be invoked for inspiration and wisdom, but our Lord Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and humankind (Art. 9). Committing to the Church of Christ Uniting will erase our divisions and rebuild the undivided church (Art. 10).

The public official service of the Church is done according to the *Christian Catholic Prayer Book*, revised edition of 1992.

Institutions

Seminary

The church has its own seminary, *Bishop Côté Memorial*, which prepares candidates for Holy Orders. The minimum requirement for admission is a Bachelor of Arts degree from a recognized university, although special consideration is given to mature students of suitable background.

Society of the Precious Blood (SPB)

The SPB is a religious community founded on July 1, 1888 in Gardner, Wisconsin, U.S.A. It was reorganized under its present form on July 1, 1993 in Gatineau, Quebec, Canada. Its goals are the socio-personal development and religious growth of its members, coupled with an earnest desire to contribute to the Church of Christ Uniting. This, through individual and corporate prayer and worship, pastoral counseling and works of mercy.

Relations with other churches

The CCC is a constituency of the ICCC which is a member communion of the World Council of Churches. The ICCC is also a member of the National Council of Churches USA, Churches Uniting in Christ and Christian Churches Together. Through these conciliar bodies, the Council witnesses and works for Christian unity. ICCC churches and centers are given a national and international voice in bodies which seek to shape the Church and human society.

Current status

The church has the following parishes/ministries:

- Greater Montreal (St. Stephen's);
- Marriage & Family Services;
- Northern Ontario (North Bay Pastorate);
- Ottawa-Gatineau (St. Bernard & St. Gregory);
- Tennessee U.S.A. (Military Chaplaincy; Hope Chapel, Nashville).

Reference

1. S.A. Theriault, Msgr. Rene Vilatte, Community Organizer of Religion, *Apocryphile Press*, Berkeley, California, 2006, updated in 2012.

External links

- <http://ccrcc.ca>
- <http://icccusa.com>