

**SPEAKING NOTES  
THE HONOURABLE NOËL A. KINSELLA  
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF A RECEPTION IN HONOUR OF  
HIS EMINENCE THOMAS CARDINAL COLLINS**

**OTTAWA  
NOVEMBER 27, 2013**

Your Eminence,

Speaker Scheer,

Honourable Senators and Members of the House of Commons,

Distinguished guests:

Cardinal Collins, it is a pleasure to welcome you once again to Parliament. You graced us with your presence last year shortly after your elevation to the College of Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, the 16<sup>th</sup> Canadian to be so named, and we are honoured by your return.

You have a long connection to Rome, dating back to your studies at the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Gregorian University. My own studies were also in Rome, at St. Thomas Aquinas University and the Pontifical Lateran University, and there is no doubt that we share many fond memories of that great city.

Earlier this year, at the end of August and the beginning of September, I was able to renew my acquaintance with Italy while attending the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Catholic Legislators Network. Representatives were present from around the world and the seminars provided an opportunity to exchange views and give thoughtful consideration to issues of mutual interest.

Following the conference, His Holiness Pope Francis kindly received participants at the Apostolic Palace, including our own parliamentary delegation. In this context, it is interesting to note that Canada has had formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See for more than 40 years. It was just last year on November 16 that these bonds were further strengthened with the formation of the Canada – Holy See Parliamentary Friendship Group. This group has served as a forum for exchanging ideas, as well as helping to promote relations between Canada and the Holy See.

In addition to these relatively formal bodies, parliamentarians have a weekly Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast as well as an annual National Prayer Breakfast. The Parliamentary precinct also has a meditation room dedicated in the memory of Fr. Sean O’Sullivan, a Member of Parliament who left office to pursue the priesthood and wrote about his experiences in his book *My Two Houses*.

There are many and varied connections between Canada and the Holy See, with greater interaction between these sovereign states enjoying excellent support at all levels.

Thank you for joining us today and may God bless you and guide you in all your undertakings.