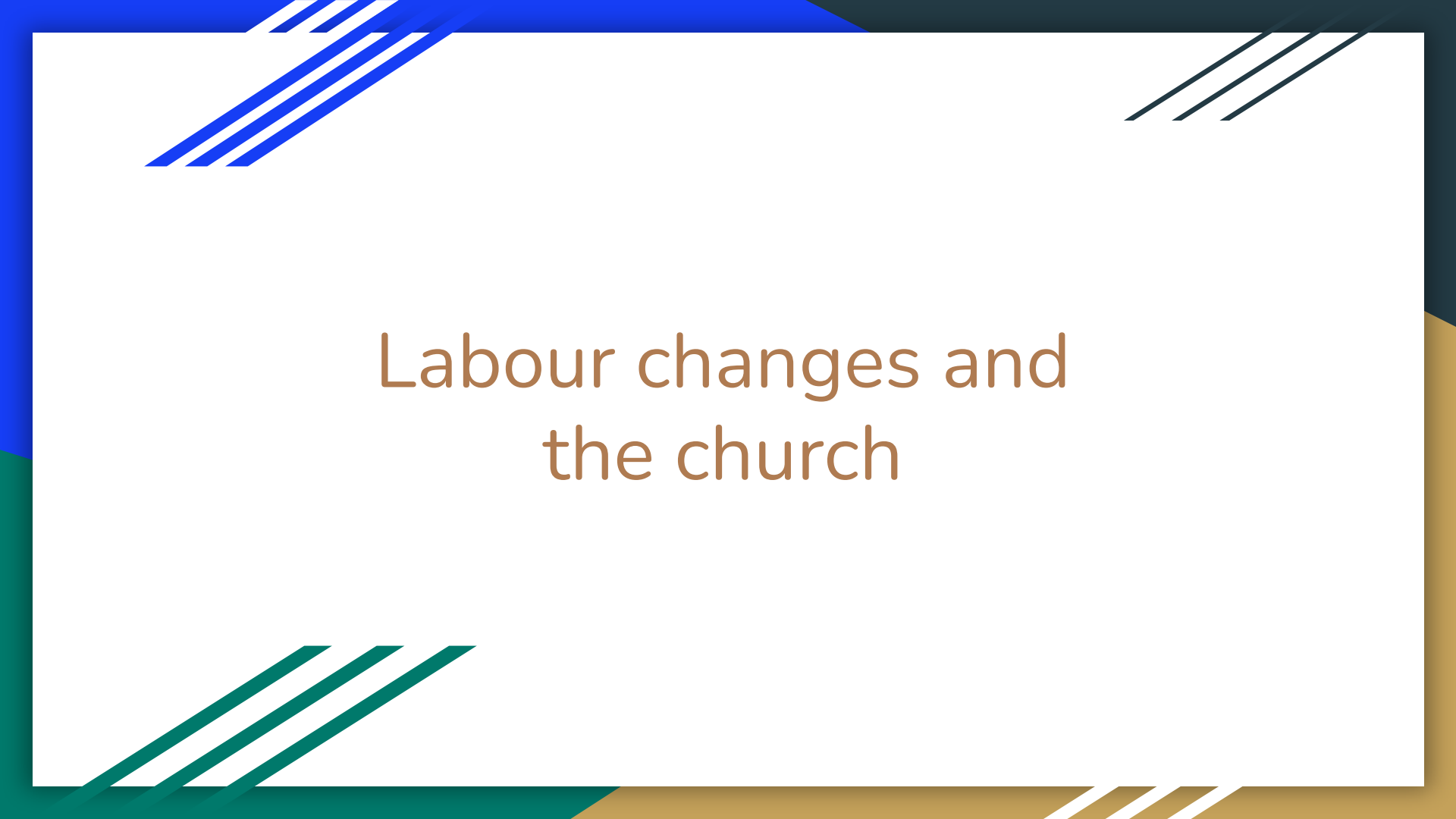




Labour changes and the church



**How did the first labour
unions emerge in Quebec
and Canada?**



American Unions

Industrialization and urbanization at the beginning of the 20th century led to a major increase in the working-class population

Associations such as the Knights of Labor encouraged workers to stand up for their rights through the creation of unions



American unions

Different unions were established and **addressed a variety of workplace issues**

The **American Federation of Labor (AFL)**, a powerful union in the United States also ran unions in Canada

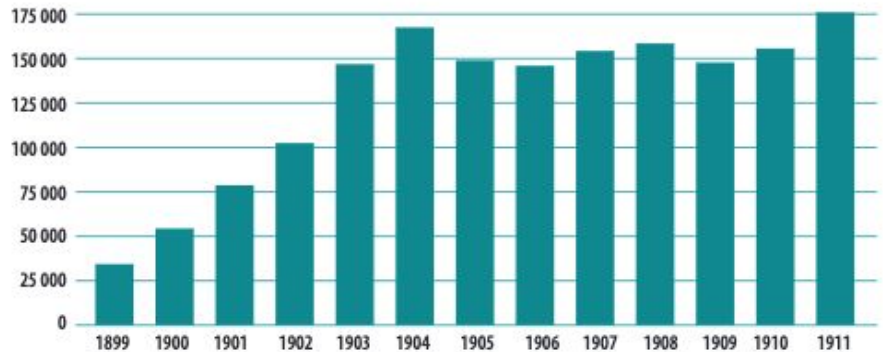
- One of these was the **Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLCC)** which was able to increase its influence
- International unions were **not able to establish themselves** in Quebec mainly due to language barriers

2.44

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL) IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES



Number
of members



Catholic Unions

To improve conditions for workers, limit American influence and prevent union dues from being used by non Catholics, the Catholic clergy decided to create **Catholic unions** with chaplains (member of clergy) to supervise the members

- In 1921, the **Canadian Catholic Confederation of Labour (CCCL)** was established
- Soon the CCCL represented one-quarter of unionized workers in Canada

FOCUS on...

**CANADIAN CATHOLIC
CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR
(CCCL)**

In 1960, the CCCL abandoned its religious identity and became the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU, or *Confédération des syndicats nationaux*, CSN). In 2016, the CNTU represented more than 325 000 workers.



2.45 Union delegates present for the establishment of the CCCL in 1921.

Canadian Catholic Confederation of Labour (CCCL)

The CCCL had many of the same objectives as other union federations but had some specific reasons it stood out

- **Its religious nature**
- **Its denunciation of communism**
- **Its reservations about the use of striking as a pressure tactic**
- **Its opposition to American unions**

Workers' demands

In the 1920s workers continued to face **difficult conditions** including

- **Low salaries even though they were working six days a week and 10 hours a day**
- **Abuse by foremen**
- **Lack of job security**
- **Child labour**
- **Unsanitary and unsafe work sites**

Unions attempted to find solutions to these problems: in Quebec, labour organizations pushed the government to improve social welfare



Strikes

One way workers fought back against bad conditions was through striking.

Tensions between employers and workers resulted in strikes

- **Employers had the advantage** during strikes because they could **fire their employees** and call in **strikebreakers** to replace them
- Strikes often ended in violence and required intervention by the police called in by employers



Strikes

In the textile sector, **employees unionized** in 1906

- This **displeased the owners** of Dominion Textile in Montreal who announced they would decrease salaries by 10% on May 4, 1908
- On that day, 6000 Dominion Textile **factory workers went on strike**
- After a month of striking, the **government intervened on the employers** side saying the reduction was due to the economic depression
- Workers returned to their jobs losing a month of wages





WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE AND "BLOODY SATURDAY"

On May 15, 1919 more than 25 000 Winnipeg workers went on strike. One month later, on June 21, soldiers occupied the streets, injuring several and killing two persons. Following this violent repression, workers ended the strike.



Labour legislation

In 1900, the Government of Canada created the Department of Labour to legislate labour relations which slowly led to other acts:

- In 1907 the ***Industrial Disputes Investigation Act*** was passed which gave workers the right to strike
- In 1944 the ***Labour Relations Act*** was passed which forced employers to negotiate in good faith if 60% or more of their employees wanted to unionize
- The government became stricter about the ***Trade Unions Act of 1872*** to keep employers from tricking people

These measures gave unions more **organizational and financial stability**

45 A few measures concerning labour regulations
in Québec

Year	Act adopted	Description
1909	<i>Workmen's Compensation Act</i>	This act provided for, among other things, compensation to employees in the event of an accident of up to 50% of their wages.
1910	<i>Employment Bureau Act</i>	This act was intended to help workers find a job through the creation of employment bureaus.
1926	Amendments to the <i>Workmen's Compensation Act</i>	These amendments: • required the employer to be insured so that it could compensate workers even if the company shut down • increased compensation to employees of up to two-thirds of their wages



Solidarity, June 30, 1917. The Hand That Will Rule the World—One Big Union.



49 The Catholic clergy and religious communities in Québec, 1901 and 1931

Year	Total number of priests and members of religious communities	Number of followers for each priest and member of a religious community
1901	8 612	166
1931	25 332	97

Data from: Paul-André Linteau et al., *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, vol. 1, *De la Confédération à la crise (1867–1929)*, 1979.

The growth in the number of priests and members of religious communities at the beginning of the 20th century testifies to the importance of the Catholic Church in this period.

Moral and cultural influence

The Catholic church promoted a different causes including:

- Spreading the **Catholic faith**
- Preservation of **French-Canadian Identity and the French language**
- Protection of **traditional values**
- **Economic recovery** of French Canadians

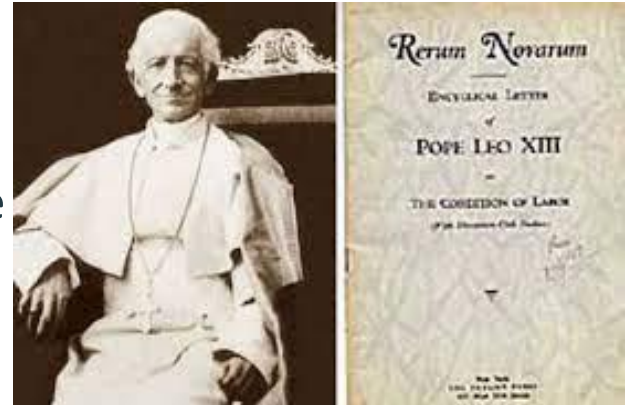


Involvement in society

The church was actively involved in Quebec society

In response to abuses by business owners and the rise of communism, **Pope Leo XIII issued a letter** that condemned:

- the **concentration of wealth** with the bourgeoisie
- **Inadequate wages** and poor working conditions
- Criticized the fact that **communists wanted to eliminate private property**



The letter motivated religious leaders to develop social doctrine and form **Catholic labour unions**

Involvement in politics

The church typically supported **conservative** parties that upheld **traditional values**

- Some priests used their sermons to promote a specific candidate at election time



Involvement in education

The **church** had a large influence in the school system since it had been **responsible for education in Quebec since 1875.**

- The clergy considered themselves the best group to provide quality education while also promoting catholic values



Influence in society

Religious leaders were involved in **colonizing new regions of Quebec** by promoting land cultivation and the notion that rural life was superior to urban life

The Church was also involved in helping the needy through **hospitals, orphanages and charitable organizations**



2.47 In his collection of songs, *La bonne chanson*, Catholic priest Charles-Émile Gadbois asserted that a family that sings is a happy family. His collection of songs promoted patriotism and Catholicism.

Religious personnel

55% of the religious workforce was involved in causes that were **outside the religious sphere**, while the rest looked after their parishes

Due to a **large increase in religious personnel between 1900 and 1906**, the Catholic Church was able to be present in so many areas of society

Between **1901-1917**, **2165 new men** were ordained as priests

2.48

NUMBER OF PRIESTS AND NUNS IN QUÉBEC
IN THE 20th CENTURY



Alphonse Desjardins

Desjardins created the first Caisse Populaire credit union in 1900, the clergy supported him and the Church encouraged priests to set up a Caisse Populaire in their own parish

Desjardins model based on

- The responsibility of the Caisse Populaire members is limited to the value of their investments
- The Caisse populaire provides savings and credit solutions
- The Caisse Populaire sphere of influence is limited to the parish in which it is located



Cooperatives

Pope Leo XIII's letter from 1891 encouraged the Church to promote cooperatives as a solution to the many social problems tied to industrialization

- **Cooperative:** Association where resources are jointly owned and profits are shared among all members
- The Church saw the cooperative model of saving and credit in a way that encouraged the communal life and values it promoted

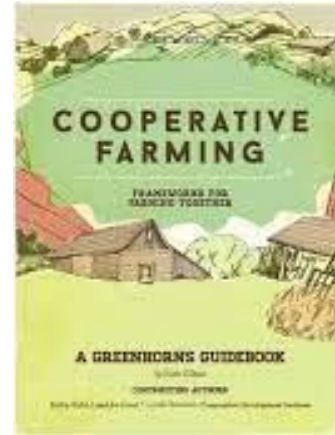
52 A maple syrup producers' cooperative, circa 1930



Cooperative

The cooperative model was also applied to the **agricultural and fishing sectors**

- Many producers were struggling to raise funds to purchase crucial equipment and were having difficulty getting good prices for their products
- Agricultural cooperatives allowed **producers to jointly purchase equipment and resources and determine their product prices**



Cooperatives

In 1908

- Quebec government introduced a law to better regulate agriculture, leading to an increase in the number of cooperatives

In 1922

- The *Cooperative fédérée de Québec* was created, bridging together the province's main agricultural cooperatives



2.49 The *Coopérative fédérée de Québec* had many branches and set up its headquarters in Montréal in 1923.

