



## **The Kingston Diocesan Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada**

***One Heart, One Voice, One Mission***

### **Directive#1**

**Date:** October 24, 2015

**To:** Parish Council Communications Standing Committee Chairs

**From:** Jean Mulvihill, Diocesan Communications Standing Committee Chair

**CC:** Diocesan Executive, Provincial Communications Standing Committee Chair

**Enc:** Ten points to Create Safe Environments for Children

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*"My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: Words without thoughts, never to heaven go."*  
William Shakespeare, Hamlet. Act III. Sc. 3

My name is Jean Mulvihill; I am the newly appointed Communications Standing Committee Chairperson. I am also the past president at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Kingston. I joined the Catholic Women's League in 2002 and soon took on the position of treasurer in Blessed Sacrament Parish in Amherstview. I also held a position responsible to have items posted to the OLOL webpage before taking over as president. I have been an active member of the various parishes I belonged to assisting in the planning of refreshments for retreat days, helping at dinners sponsored by the CWL as well as funeral lunches, and setting up a CWL display for the vocations fair. A brief biography will be placed on the Archdiocese website at [www.kingston.cwl.on.ca](http://www.kingston.cwl.on.ca).

### **Online Newsletter**

Kingston Diocese has been selected to submit articles for the Nov 2015 edition of the provincial online newsletter, "Pauline's Ponderings". Articles must follow the guidelines outlined below. All submissions are forwarded to the president and cc'd to me.

- Items must be about CWL events, how the CWL was involved?
- Items should be new and innovative and able to be replicated by councils.
- Council title and location must be mentioned.
- Each article will be typed and not to exceed 100 words.
- Only one photograph should accompany each article.
- All persons in photographs must be identified, unless it is a crowd scene. Permission to publish must be sought from those being identified.
- Photographs must be cropped and send in jpg format.

### **Be League**

To ensure a standard sized electronic newsletter it was decided by the national executive to highlight certain provinces each month but all submissions will be accepted. Ontario is scheduled to submit articles for the Jan 2016 edition. Guidelines for submissions are:

- Each submission shall be typed and not exceed 50 words.

- Each submission is limited to one topic and one photograph of high resolution.
- Identify all persons in photograph and include permission.
- Councils may send more than one submission.

## **Pornography Hurts Campaign**

This campaign replaces the white ribbon campaign and as such the postcards should be distributed to parishioners to complete yearly. Ontario is asked to send the postcards to members of parliament in January 2016. If you require additional cards please let me know, I will have some available at the president's meeting as well as at the annual retreat.

## **Sub-Committee Chairpersons**

As the duties of this position are numerous and can be very time consuming I will gladly welcome anyone who would like to become involved as a sub-committee member to work alongside me in this very important committee. Together we will ensure all members are aware and become educated about controversial events or policies being discussed that could have a negative effect on the sanctity of the Catholic Church and the Catholic Women's League.

During my term as communications chairperson I will do my best to keep all councils informed of recent events that the National and Provincial Catholic Women's League have chosen to pursue to preserve the teachings of the Catholic Church as well as the goals of the Catholic Women's League. If you see any items pertaining to this committee in a magazine, newspaper or while surfing the net feel free to forward it to me so all members can be educated on the matter and we can collectively decide if or what action should be taken as The Catholic Women's League for God and Canada.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jean Mulvihill

## **Ten Points To Create Safe Environments For Children**

### **Sexual molestation is about the victim**

Many people are affected when a priest abuses a minor, but the individual most impacted is the victim who has suffered a violation of trust that can affect his or her entire life. The abuser, the family of the abused, and the parish community are all affected by this sin and crime, but the primary person of concern must be the victim.

### **No one has the right to have access to children**

If people wish to volunteer for the church, for example, in a parish or school, they must follow diocesan guidelines on background checks, safe environment training, policies and procedures, and codes of conduct. No one, no matter who they are, has an automatic right to be around children or young people who are in the care of the church without proper screening and without following the rules.

### **Common sense is not all that common**

It is naive to presume that people automatically know boundaries so organizations and families have to spell them out. For example, no youth minister, cleric or other adult leader should be in a child's bedroom, alone with the child.

### **Child sexual abuse can be prevented**

Awareness that child sexual abuse exists and can exist anywhere is a start. It is then critical to build safety barriers around children and young people to keep them from harm. These barriers come in the form of protective guardians, codes of conduct, background evaluations, policies and procedures, and safety training programs.

### **The residual effects of having been abused can last a lifetime**

Those who have been abused seldom just get over it. The sense of violation goes deep into a person's psyche and feelings of anger, shame, hurt and betrayal can build long after the abuse has taken place. Some have even described the feeling as if it has scarred their soul.

### **Feeling heard leads toward healing**

Relief from hurt and anger often comes when one feels heard, when one's pain and concerns are taken seriously, and a victim/survivor's appropriate sense of rage and indignation are acknowledged. Not being acknowledged contributes to a victim's sense of being invisible, unimportant and unworthy; they are in some way re-victimized.

### **You cannot always predict who will be an abuser**

Experience shows that most abuse is at the hands of someone who has gained the trust of a victim/survivor and his/her family. Most abuse also occurs in the family setting. Sometimes the nicest person in the world is an abuser, and this niceness enables a false sense of trust to be created between abuser and abused.

### **There are behavioural warning signs of child abusers**

Training and education help adults recognize grooming techniques that are precursors to abuse. Some abusers isolate a potential victim by giving him or her undue attention or lavish gifts. Another common grooming technique is to allow young people to participate in activities which their parents or guardians would not approve, such as watching pornography, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and excessive touching, which includes wrestling and tickling. It is also critical to be wary of age-inappropriate relationships, seen, for example, in the adult who is more comfortable with children than fellow adults. Parishes can set up rules to guide interaction between adults and children.

### **People can be taught to identify grooming behaviour**

These are the actions which abusers take to project the image that they are kind, generous, caring people, while their intent is to lure a minor into an inappropriate relationship. An abuser may develop a relationship with the family to increase his credibility. Abusers might show attention to the child by talking to him/her, being friendly, sharing alcohol with a minor and giving the child status by insinuating that the child is their favorite or special person. Offenders can be patient and may groom their victim, his or her family, or community for years.

### **Background checks work.**

Background checks in churches, schools and other organizations keep predators away from children both because they scare off some predators and because they uncover past actions which should ban an adult from working or volunteering with children. If an adult has had difficulty with some boundaries that society sets, such as not driving while intoxicated or not disturbing the public peace, he or she may have difficulties with other boundaries, such as not hurting a child. Never forget that offenders lie.

*Teresa M. Kettelkamp  
Executive Director  
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United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

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