

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Kingston Diocesan Council
Education and Health Standing Committee

Directive #4

September 27, 2014

Chairperson: Maureen Vincentine

As committee chair for Education and Health for the Kingston Diocese, I welcome all parish chairpersons who are new to the position as well as those coming back!

In this directive I am presenting you with many requests for action and prayer. I hope that you will choose two or three that you will bring to the attention of your council.

Carol Richer is our Education and Health Chairperson on Provincial council. I will be including information from her directive to all of us.

- **Voting for school trustees...** Every Catholic who values Catholic education should ensure that the people who sit around the table and provide good stewardship to Catholic education are the best and most faithful that our community can put forward. As you go to the polls on **October 27th**, keep this in mind, and **vote** for the candidate who you think will be the best person to oversee our Catholic education system.
- **Catholic Education** must never be taken for granted. Last year there were several polls asking whether we support Catholic Education funding in Ontario. Members of The Catholic Women's League across the province were quick to respond to these polls. We may see more this year, so organize and be prepared to have your members and their families ready to respond as these polls are not usually presented for more than a few days. This might mean collecting e mails from willing members so that if you are notified of such a poll, you can act quickly.
- I encourage you to maintain regular contact with the Catholic schools in your area. Now would be a good time to contact school principals and discuss possibilities of working together. You might ask a staff member to attend one of your meetings to talk about the Religion programs in the school. This might be very informative. Perhaps a member of the school council might attend parish council meetings to help build a stronger bond between the parish and school communities.
- Provincial Sub-committee member Suzanne Mullins has recommended a book by Johann Christoph Arnold, "Their Name Is Today", for reading by parents and teachers. His books have helped more than a million readers through the

challenges of education and family life. In "Their Name Is Today", he highlights drastic changes in the way our society treats children. But he also brings together the voices of dedicated parents and educators who are finding creative ways to give children the time and space they need to grow. Cutting through the noise of conflicting opinions, Arnold takes us to the heart of education and parenting by defending every child's right to the joy and wonder of childhood. For reviews of this book and how to purchase, Google "*Their Name Is Today*" *Johann Arnold*. Carol says this is highly recommended reading!

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: It is the responsibility of the whole faith community to welcome new Catholics. The difficulty is that we often do not recognize someone new among us. Could you speak to the parish priest or coordinator of RCIA and ask if a few ladies could assist? Perhaps the coordinator would suggest a topic for you to present. The important thing is to have an opportunity to meet and dialogue with these catechumens. Then remember to say hello when you see them at Mass and be sure they are included in events. A free CWL membership might be well received. Carol has recommended another book for anyone working with RCIA and especially if there are persons with special needs. The book is "Handbook for Adaptive Catechesis – Serving Those with Special Needs" by Michael E Chronister. It is published by Novalis.

Development and Peace: The Catholic Women's League has always been a strong supporter of Development and Peace. Fran Lucas, second vice president of National council, accompanied a group from D&P to the Philippines. Watch for her article in the next magazine. The launch of the education campaign is scheduled for the morning of October 18. It will be held at Providence Centre, Kingston. It would be great if we had more representation from the parishes. Has your parish downloaded the poster? Also, ask if materials for the campaign have been ordered in your parish. Materials can be ordered easily online or with a phone call. Can you assist with the distribution of those materials? Talk to your parish D&P representative or parish priest.

Health Issues:

Our focus on **Mental Health** will continue. Discussing mental illness has been the crucial first step in removing the stigma attached to this destructive disease, but won't have lasting value unless it is followed by better and more readily available mental health services. Encourage members to continue to write and/or call their local MP/MPP, urging governments at all levels to work together on this issue, and to ensure that receiving needed help is not dependent on a family's ability to pay! Contact Mental Health Services in your area or have someone on your council research what services are available (or are not available) in your area and discuss

this at a meeting. Perhaps follow this up with a speaker. For further information, refer to the Education and Health article in the latest Trillium Newsletter.

Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide and Palliative Care:

Given the current movements to legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide, it is extremely important that we work to educate the public and our members. In doing so we must also provide and support viable and dignified alternatives. It is recommended that we revisit *Resolution 2007.03 Hospice Palliative Care: An Integral Component of the Canadian Health Care System; Resolution 1998.05 Palliative Care: An Essential Service; and Resolution 2004.06 National Strategy for Suicide Prevention*. October is Hospice month. Someone from Hospice in your area would be happy I am sure, to attend your October meeting. I know we learned a great deal from such a presentation. There might be Hospice events in your area that you could support financially or otherwise. If we want people to choose life, we must ensure dignified palliative care is available to all.

In closing, I remind you that we cannot follow up on every initiative presented! However if each Education and Health chairperson were to choose two or three suggestions to work on during the course of the year, much can be accomplished.

May God continue to bless us and guide us in all that we do.

Maureen Vincentine