

Edmonton Diocesan Convention

April 22-24, 2016

Community Life Committee Oral Report

Madame President.

Just this week, I received several very interesting items from our National Community Life Chair, via our Provincial Community Life Chair.

**Human Trafficking**

Pope Francis announced there is a new app that informs us if the clothing we are purchasing complies with worker’s rights.  Each one of us can make an effort to help the victims of human trafficking by using this app.  As Pope Francis stated “many of these modern slaves are people who make clothes.” The app analyzes more than 3,000 brands of clothing, footwear, and accessories, and reveals if the companies protect worker’s rights and if they have been accused of employing children. It also provides information on factories and whether they care for the environment.  Australian malls are being categorized, but creators hope the idea spreads.  Go online to goodonyou.org.au and sign up to receive information when the app will be available in North America. There is a short anti-trafficking video called *I am Miriam.*Google *I am Miriam (*against-humanity.org/watch)

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission**

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has released two documents to help us move forward with recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.  The following website [www.cccb.ca/site/eng/media-room/statements-a-letters/4446-catholic-responses-to-truth-and-reconciliation-commission](http://www.cccb.ca/site/eng/media-room/statements-a-letters/4446-catholic-responses-to-truth-and-reconciliation-commission) has more information.

**Follow-up to resolutions:**

**Resolution 2011.02 Children of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women**

Members have an excellent opportunity to reach out and assist First Nations peoples, especially now that the federal government has called for an inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women. 50% of First Nations children do not live with their parents.  Contact a friendship centre in your area and see if there is some way your council can take on a project of helping the children who may have lost their mother.

**Resolution 2013.01 Building Relationships and Partnerships with Canada’s Indigenous Peoples**

As 50% of indigenous peoples live off-reserve, members may be interested in volunteering at friendship centres funded by the federal government.  The centres assist with wellness and outreach for those with addictions or in the sex trade.

**Resolution 2014.01 – Restoration of Health Care for Refugee Claimants**

The federal government has announced they will restore all refugee health care benefits to pre-2012 levels by April 1. It has said that refugees from any country of origin will be covered once again and, in addition, both the federal ministers of immigration and health announced that starting April 1, 2017, additional coverage will be offered to refugees before their departure for Canada

**Development and Peace**

We continue to assist with the Syrian Refugee project, at many levels.

With the recent earthquakes and other calamities of nature, we may be called upon for temporary assistance in the affected areas.

We received Community Life reports from 49 of our 68 Councils. In my annual report I attempted to capture all of the incredible works, projects, campaigns and life changing events, which our ladies participated in over the year. If I missed any of the many, varied and relevant activities, I do apologize. Several of the councils requested specific information on where our 1% donations to Development and Peace actually go. This is what I received, covering the last several years:

2008 Brochure

         East Timor Women’s Network in East Timor

         CRIPDES (Concertacion de Mujeres) in El Salvador

         CADD (Cercle d’autopromotion pour le développement durable which means Self-Help Circle for Sustainable Development) in Benin

2011 Brochure

         The Afghan Women’s Resource Center (AWRC) in Afghanistan

         The Development Exchange Centre (DEC) in Nigeria

         La Federación Nacional de Trabajadoras Asalariadas del Hogar de Bolivia (FENATRAHOB) in Bolivia.

CWL 1 % Program for 2013-2015 (brochure updated in Sept 2013)

         The Afghan Women’s Resource Center (AWRC) in Afghanistan

         The Development Exchange Centre (DEC) in Nigeria

         Famn Deside in Haiti.

**Alberta Women’s Shelters**

Would like everyone to be aware of their guiding principles:

* In empowerment for women & equal worth of all persons
* In strength of numbers together for a common mission
* That the issues of violence and abuse are the responsibilities of the entire community
* In a world free from violence and abuse

These may help us when we are planning projects.

**Information**

Unfortunately, it appears in these difficult times that lawbreakers are about. There has been a warning posted on the YESS Youth Empowerment & Support Services website, warning residents of Edmonton and surrounding areas, after receiving a number of calls from the public reporting individuals using fake door-to-door fundraising schemes soliciting funds on behalf of the agency. These individuals are selling food products in packaging branded with YESS’ logo and colors and had debit machines to process debit and credit card payments. These individuals do not represent YESS nor does the YESS receive any benefit from their activities.

YESS does not raise money by conducting any kind of door-to-door or telephone solicitation. Individuals, groups or businesses that are organizing fundraisers or donation drives on behalf of YESS are encouraged to register their initiative with YESS at [www.YESS.org](http://www.YESS.org). Suspicious fundraising activity should be reported to police by calling 780-423-4567 or #377 from a mobile phone.  Also on the Alberta Food Banks website there was a warning which indicates that Alberta Food Banks raises funds through public donations, special events, corporate donations and legacy gifts/planned giving. Neither Alberta Food Banks nor any of its members or partners solicits funds through door-to-door canvassing or through telemarketing. Funds raised go to support programs, services and local & provincial research projects.

Respectfully submitted

Gloria Ducharme