**Community Life Standing Committee Chair’s Report**

**97th Annual Diocesan Convention April 27, 2019**

**St. Anthony, Lloydminster**

Madame President,

It is impressive to see all the work being done by the Community Life Standing Committee Chairs in the Edmonton Diocese. I want to add that many councils who do not have a Community Life Standing Chair continue to do the work and for this you are to be commended.

The federal government has presented Bill C-97, the Budget Implementation Bill. Deep inside this bill is an amendment to the Immigration and Refugee Act. Currently Refugee claimants under the protection of Canadian law cannot be deported without having their case heard before an independent tribunal. This is a recognition of the serious, possibly fatal consequences of sending a genuine refugee, with a "well-founded fear of prosecution" back to his country of origin. Under the new policy the best that those affected could hope for would be an interview with an immigration official as part of a "pre-removal risk assessment". We need to remain diligent in this dangerous amendment and let the government know we cannot approve of this amendment. I encourage you to write letters to your MP's and the Prime Minister, letting him know that this change cannot and should not happen.

In a Communique from Marie Rackley, the National chairperson of Community Life, she states that the Catholic Women's League of Canada continues to withhold the monies collected for Development and Peace until the audit has been completed. Archbishop Richard Smith announced in December that the Edmonton Diocese would forward money collected to Development and Peace with the understanding that Development and Peace would not fund the 52 partners under review. Even though lent is over, any money collected can be submitted to Development and Peace. Make sure you specify that the money submitted is not to be forwarded to the partners under review. Please see my display table for copies of her Communique.

In November, 1912 Katherine Hughes formed the first CWL council in Canada. It was formed with the intention of supporting immigrant women and girls seeking

work in Edmonton, and supporting spiritual and temporal good works. Over the years, many councils in the Edmonton area have provided Refugee Welcome Bags for immigrants arriving in Edmonton. The latest council from St. Charles Parish is no longer able to continue this ministry. They have been performing it for many years. In March I sent an e-mail to all the parish presidents in Zone 9 and to councils in the Edmonton area. To date, I have not heard back from one council. I implore you to consider taking on this great ministry. At this time I would like to call someone from St. Charles Council to come forward.

This concludes my report. Are there any questions?

Respectfully submitted,

For God and Canada

Patti Heck

Community Life Standing Committee Chair

Edmonton Diocesan Council