**Education and Health Oral Report**

**Midwinter Meeting**

**February 3, 2018**

Madame President;

National First Vice-President and Chairperson of Education and Health, Fran Lucas stated in her November Communique that the national executive decided that the focus for the next 12 months would be mental health. Euthanasia and assisted suicide will remain active with support for "12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care". Councils are invited to educate members about the seriousness of mental health and its effect on all ages.

In addition, Mary Hunt, Provincial Chairperson for Education and Health recommended that I present to-day based on her Communique # 5 whereby we strengthen our resolve to be informed and, to make a start within our communities in the areas of Health and Education. Therefore, I’ve chosen two of most important excerpts from her communique for your consideration.

**Health**

# Physician Assisted Dying & Euthanasia - In Manitoba, Bill 34 was passed that protects medical professionals who choose not to participate in medical assistance in dying. Over 4,400 letters were sent from the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. Is this an initiative that Albertans should look at doing as well? You are strongly encouraged to contact Alberta Mackenzie Education and Health Chair Mary Hunt if you would like to work on such an initiative in our province. We would be sure to gather support from other faith communities.

**Education**

It is extremely important that we continue to promote, protect and preserve Catholic education by supporting your Catholic schools in your Council district in providing exceptional Catholic education opportunities to Alberta families.

Thank you to the councils who hosted successful election forums aimed at providing information to voters in October 2017 so that they were able to make informed choices when choosing their candidates.

In the most recent census it was reported that almost one third of Albertans indicated their faith as Catholic which certainly makes us a significant portion of the electorate.  We are encouraged to be an informed, united voice in the support of Catholic Education in our communities.

Lastly, I trust you have visited our Displays for handouts to take back to your Council. On the Health and Education Display table, there is a handout on resolutions recently passed at the 2017 National Convention outlining an Action Plan for your consideration.

As well, thank you for forwarding our Poster/Essay Contest information to all Elementary schools in your Council, any feedback would be greatly appreciated so that we know should continue this contest next year.

Also, may I remind you that we are available to assist your Council by providing a workshop based a topic to meet your needs or specific training to your Council; and, would only too happy to do so.

This concludes my report.

Are there any questions?

Mary Pat O’Neill

Education and Health Chair

Edmonton Diocesan Council