



The Catholic Women's League of Canada Edmonton Diocesan Council

CATHOLIC
and LIVING IT!

TO: All Parish Council Presidents
All Diocesan Officers
Life Members

FROM: Susan Casey, Chairperson, Community Life

SUBJECT: Winter is Coming – Let Your Light Shine

The daylight is getting shorter and the darkness of winter is descending. There are ways we can avoid feeling down during the dark days. These include prayer and good deeds – letting your light shine.

Pope Francis says “The life of the Church is a contamination of light.” “In the future, when the story of our days is written, what will be said about us? That we were capable of hope, or that we put our light under a bushel? If we remain faithful to our baptism, we will spread the light of hope in God and transmit reasons to live to future generations.”

How can you spread the light of hope in God? How about focusing on social justice issues? There are many and it may be hard to choose so I will provide a few that you and your Council can discuss then choose which to act upon.

1. **Resolution 2022.01 Enact Federal Legislation to Reduce Food Loss and Waste** - review the resolution and action plan to develop a strategy of action. Remember, resolutions of today can be the laws of tomorrow.

The resolution can be found at cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Resolution-2022.01-Enact-Federal-Legislation-to-Reduce-Food-Loss-Waste-Final.pdf.

2. **Compassionate Community Care** – According to the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition's September 2022 Newsletter, there is an indication that “Canadians are now dying by euthanasia for reasons of poverty, disability and mental illness.” Perhaps we can recognize that these people may change their minds if there was a compassionate caring community around them.

There are opportunities for members of your Council to take the free Being With Volunteer Training workshops offered by <http://www.compassionatecommunitycare.org/new-events-1>. The next workshop is November 8 and 9. Each workshop consists of two 2 hour sessions.

3. **Development and Peace** – Since the Catholic Women's League has a longstanding relationship with Development and Peace – Caritas Canada, perhaps your council can consider supporting the **1% National Voluntary Fund** by putting aside 1% of the cost of all personal items they purchase and of funds raised by councils, to support Development and Peace and its partners. These partners work to improve the status of women in the Global South, and collectively, the funds are having a real impact on the lives of thousands of women striving for a better future.

You can learn more at <https://cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/352-DP-Brochure-2022-DP.pdf>

- 4. Prayer Warriors for IWIN Initiative** – This is an initiative that supports survivors of human trafficking and is working with the Edmonton Diocesan CWL to provide backpacks of essential clothing and toiletries to these women, through CEASE Edmonton <https://ceasenow.org>.

We are now represented on the Board of IWIN Initiative and help coordinate the delivery of the backpacks. We are also responsible for recruiting Prayer Warriors to pray for these survivors. All that means is that with each backpack the prayer warrior and the survivor each get a matching bracelet. The prayer warrior is asked to pray for the survivor and the survivor know that there is a person praying for her. The next backpack delivery will be in November so we are asking for prayer warrior volunteers. If you are interested please drop and email to edmontoncwl.communitylife@gmail.com.

IWIN also supports the Red Sand Awareness Campaign Prayer Service. If you would like to participate in a Red Sand Prayer Service, please contact IWIN at iwincalgary@gmail.com. We will provide you with a prayer service to read out loud with your participants and the red sand to form your sidewalk art.

- 5. Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples** – This parish started a sandwich outreach program just as the pandemic began. The program has grown from 20 - 30 bagged lunches a day, to anyone who arrived at their door seeking food, to between 250 & 300 bagged lunches a day! The lunches contain an individually wrapped sandwich, a sweet (etc cookies or granola bar) & a bottle of water and sometimes fruit, if donated.

If your council decides to donate, contact **Carol or Michele at Sacred Heart, 780-422-3052** to arrange when you wish to drop off and how many you will be donating. It can be a one-time donation. They also collect canned goods for food hampers. Every donation helps them.

They are also currently organizing a Warm Clothing Drive and are looking for donations of coats, socks, gloves, hats, belts, hoodies, long sleeved shirts, underwear (mostly medium) and small backpacks for both men and women.

If you decide to donate, please let me know at edmontoncwl.communitylife@gmail.com as we are trying to keep track of which councils decide to help.

- 6. Domestic Violence in Canada - November is Domestic Violence Awareness Month** in Canada. For further information on family violence, please refer to justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/fv-vf/. There are several webinars on domestic (family) violence in November. The webinar will be open to everyone, so please share and promote the information when received.
- 7. Immigration and Refugees** – The 2022-2024 Immigration Levels Plan of Canada aims to welcome from 360,000 to 445,000 new permanent residents in 2022, from 380,000 to 465,000 in 2023, and 390,000 to 475,000 in 2024. Newcomers are brought to Canada to drive economic growth and recovery.

These newcomers may need support to adjust and be comfortable in their new way of life. In August and September our Refugee Bag Project, which is coordinated by St. Joseph's Basilica CWL, provided 33 Welcome Bags for 89 people. Thank you so much for your generous and continuing donations to this project.

8. **Other Ideas** – Several resources have been developed by the implementation committee working groups and are available on the national website cwl.ca. Please refer to and use the following documents to help you find a focus for your council:
- a. #622 *Calendar of Social Justice/Catholic Social Teaching in the Church*
 - b. #624 *Catholic Social Teaching Resources*
 - c. #629 *Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers*

Remember that “Through the darkness of today's conflicts, every one of us can become a bright candle, a reminder that light will overcome darkness.”

Susan Casey, Community Life Chair