

**Ontario Provincial Council of
The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Legislation Oral Report for Convention
July 10, 2017**

Madam President:

Through the **gift of knowledge**, the Holy Spirit guides our judgement, so that we can recognize and respond to circumstances, facts and ideas, within the context of our Catholic faith.

Responding to God's call, legislation chairs across the province unwrapped the gift of knowledge, and in so doing were motivated to study, research, and investigate the many serious issues affecting society today.

We were inspired by the knowledge gained to defend our Christian values and to work towards achieving a just and caring society.

It has now been one year since the passing of legislation legalizing medical assistance in dying. Since then, we have become acutely aware of the sad realities of assisted death, particularly those associated with conscience rights for health care providers, and the need for readily accessible, fully funded and truly compassionate end-of-life palliative/hospice care as a viable alternative to euthanasia. Recognizing the impact of these two overlapping areas, we have endeavoured to use the gifts bestowed upon us by the Holy Spirit to confront these and other areas of concern.

Acting as agents for change, legislation chairs have initiated and supported letter writing campaigns. Members have been encouraged to make calls to and visit with members of parliament. Many have supported petitions, marches and protests. Promotion and support of the *12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care* has been strong. We have campaigned against all forms of injustice and discrimination. And we have always made our concerns known in an informed, dignified and peaceful manner.

Issues including those relating to aboriginal rights, pornography, and the action plans of both provincial and national resolutions have also been addressed by legislation committees, resulting in some positive actions by governments, although we recognize that much work remains to be done in many areas.

Legislation chairs have been encouraged to continue to emulate St. Laura of St. Catharine of Sienna. As she did in her day, we have continued to work to influence governments and to bring about changes to those things in our society that are unfair, unjust and unchristian.

We know that not everything we faced has changed, but we also understand that nothing can be changed unless we face it! Our successes over the years have proven that action changes things, and so we must continue to act on behalf of all those who cannot act for themselves.

May you be inspired by the Spirit to continue to respond to God's call, and, as Pope Francis has reminded us, "Let us not underestimate the power of so many voices united in prayer".

I sincerely thank each and every one of you for your continued commitment to the work of this standing committee, and for the encouragement, support and acts of kindness you have shown me during my term as provincial legislation chairperson.

This concludes my report.