



Ontario Provincial Council
Of The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Education and Health Standing Committee

Directive #6

Page: 3

January 12, 2018

To: Diocesan Education and Health Committee Chairpersons
From: Wilma Vanderzwaag, Ontario Provincial Council, Education and Health Standing Committee Chairperson, Sub Committee Chairs: Mary Lou Watson and Heather Sisk
cc: Diocesan Presidents, Provincial Officers, National Health and Education Standing Committee Chairperson

And you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you shall be my witness.

Acts 1:8

Homeless Initiative-

Save the date, Saturday, February 24, 2018 is the date for **The Coldest Night of the Year** initiative. The Coldest Night of the Year is a fun, family-friendly fundraiser that raises money for local charities serving hungry, homeless and hurting families and takes place in over 120 communities across Canada. There are 2, 5 or 10km walks for registered participants. For more information go to cnoy.org to find out about the walk in your area, which local charity you would be supporting and how to sign up as a council or individual to participate.

Health

12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care:

Anne Madden, Ontario Provincial President sent the following:

"This year all councils have been asked by national to organize their own 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care. I am suggesting we keep **May 4th** as the day as the day we all reserve. We are asking to follow this message from the previous year as a guide--"all League members find some way to support this day of prayer. The prayer can take place within a parish church, a house of worship, a home or elsewhere. Participation may include a large congregation, a few friends or solitary prayer at home. It is recommended that parishioners, members of neighbouring churches and other faith groups be invited to participate. Where possible, it would be ideal to include the Knights of Columbus and any ecclesial movements or associations in your parish or diocese. The twelve hours can be designed around local schedules."

Suggestions for planning parish council events:

Extend your invitation to neighbouring faith communities, family and friends.

Plan your event in concert with National Hospice and Palliative Care Week-May 6-12, 2018. For more information go to Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association website-www.chpca.net. Supply brochures on palliative care facilities and services.

Encourage participation in the 12 Hours of Prayer petition.

Offer refreshments and a time for fellowship and information sharing.

Welcome and support those who wish to share their own experiences of giving and receiving care.

Take a free will offering for a local palliative care facility.

Discuss ways that your council can assist in this important work.

Any prayers, prayer services or spiritual presentations your council has composed for this event, please send to me so I can compile and distribute to all Diocesan Presidents for use in future palliative care initiatives.

On the National website cwl.ca is Communiqué 7 from Fran Lucas, National Education and Health Chair. In the communiqué there are “7 C’s Model of Resilience” that can help children and teens develop resilience. Resilience is one of the key words used in the promotion of mental health today. The 7 C’s are confidence, competence, connection, character, contribution, coping and control. Share this information with your council.

The opioid crisis has devastated many communities across Canada. There is no single solution to addressing the opioid crisis, but important steps have been taken in addressing long-term solutions. To find out more visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada>. Please pray for the many people and families that are living with this crisis as well as the health care providers that are dealing with the addicted individuals on a day to day basis.

Resolutions make a difference! In December our Resolution ON 17.3 **Inclusion of Registered Nurses in Provincial Bill 163, Supporting Ontario’s First Responders Act 2016** passed. Congratulations to the London Diocese.

On December 18, 2017, Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced funding for a new four-bed hospice for the homeless population, with another six beds to be added over the next two years. The new hospice, which will open soon in downtown Toronto, will provide high-quality care to 40-50 people in need each year. The Ontario government is partnering with Hospice Toronto, Saint Elizabeth Foundation and Inner City Health Association on this project. The new hospice, named Journey Home Hospice, will offer flexible care suited to the unique and complex needs of homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless.

Education

The group One Public Education Now plans to file a lawsuit to ensure the province’s Catholic school boards no longer receive public funds, based on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As of Oct. 19, 2017, the group had raised \$13,000.00 but need \$100,000.00 to start the proceedings. They are hoping to raise this amount before the next provincial election. Do you know where the candidates in your riding stand on Catholic Education? Find out and be sure to let them know how important this issue is to you. Without voicing our support of Catholic Education, it can be lost in this province as has happened in Quebec and Newfoundland.

The Auditor General 2017 Annual Report found that the Ministry of Education had failed to follow through on a key recommendation from an independent task force appointed by the government in 2002. The Education Equality Task Force called for comprehensive reviews of the education funding formula every five years. According to the Auditor, there have been no such reviews, and current funding is based on out-of-date information. The report found that:

- benchmarks in the funding formula are out of date
- the Ministry of Education does not assess whether students with similar needs receive the same level of support no matter where they live in the province.
- the Ministry does not confirm that special purpose funding is spend as intended, does not allocate funding based on actual needs, and does not analyze whether additional funding provided for some students is actually achieving the intended results.
- almost 80% of school boards spent at least \$100,000 more than their allocated amount for special education, with one board spending as much as \$81 million more than allocated.

According to the report, the Ministry of Education updates benchmarks connected to labour costs regularly, but other benchmarks related to things like socio-economic and demographic factors, or hard costs such as computers, are not updated on a regular basis.

The Auditor also followed up on recommendations made in a 2013 report focused on Ontario's Healthy Schools Strategy. While the follow-up report outlined some progress on improving communications with parents "to encourage healthier eating and increased physical activity," and on the implementation of the province's School Food and Beverage Policy, the report says that the Ministry has not achieved much progress on the recommendations to set goals and targets for school boards to increase physical activity in schools and monitor progress made.

Also of importance to schools in Ontario, Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education has put a hold on school closings in the province. The Education Minister plans to overhaul the process around school closings after hearing from hard-hit rural and northern communities. Her announcement means boards cannot start any new reviews that would lead to school closings, except in cases where two boards are proposing shared space. She stated that the new process, which will include the input of boards and communities, will have to be over a longer period of time and mean better and more open communication, and consider options beyond closing-such as community hubs-and to take student well-being into account, not just cost savings. Hunter also announced a \$20 million fund for rural and remote boards to use as they see fit, for anything from more busing to better special education supports to improved Wi-Fi.

Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education and David Zimmer, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation announced the province is supporting teachers to deliver a new curriculum, which has been developed with Indigenous partners, and focuses on residential schools, treaties and Indigenous people's historical and contemporary contributions to Canada. Ontario is revising the curriculum in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The revised curriculum includes grade-appropriate learning opportunities. The most recent changes to curriculum support mandatory learning on the impact of colonialism and the rights and responsibilities we have to understand our shared history. Promoting greater awareness of Indigenous histories and cultures is one of many steps to healing and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Mitzie Hunter states, "Education is central to moving forward on our shared path towards reconciliation. This new mandatory curriculum means that every Ontario student will build a greater awareness and understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures and perspectives. That shared understanding is essential as we move forward together."

The new curriculum is supported by Metis Nation of Ontario, Tungasuvvingat Inuit and Indigenous Trustees Council, Ontario Public School Boards' Association. They all agree that education is crucial in advancing Reconciliation.

Blessings,

Wilma Vanderzwaag



