

Oral Report for Provincial Convention July 2019

The environmental term chosen for Education and Health is FLUSHABLE. This was very appropriate for this standing chair as there was the resolution in 2018 -- Resolution 2018.02 Setting a Standard for Products Marketed as "Flushable". This resolution was to create awareness and to urge the federal government to establish a national standard of testing and labelling of products marketed as "flushable". The majority of parish councils educated members about this resolution in 2018 and were surprised to find that many items marketed as "flushable" were not. A study tested 101 single use wipes and not one of them passed a flushability test. Cleansing and diaper wipes should not be flushed --even if they are labelled flushable because they clog sewer systems according to the first ever study reported in April 2019 by Ryerson University in Ontario. Members from across province not only educated themselves on this issue they wrote letters to local members of parliament as well as the department of environment and natural resources to establish a national standard of testing products to be marketed as flushable.

The term flushable also applies to our provincial initiative regarding homelessness. Seniors waiting for long term care or hospice care placement are a group of people that are in fact homeless and many feel discarded or flushable. They are unable to return to their home as they require care and must wait for a space to become available. If they are in a hospital there is great pressure put on the families to take a place so the hospital bed becomes available. A survey was created and distributed to Diocesan Council Education and Health Chairs to send out to their parish councils. These standing chairs embraced this survey and made sure to get responses from across the province--both urban and rural. The question posed was--List the top 3 things that were the most frustrating when dealing with getting a loved one into long term or palliative care. The number one frustration was that there was little or no direction or guidance in how or where to begin looking for a placement. Members also stated that there are not enough beds in **quality** nursing homes or hospice. Better communication and co-ordination between agencies and family members is desperately needed. Another concern was the lack of dignity in the treatment of palliative care. Families were not given the opportunity to have a private room for their final good-bye and felt that staff both medical professionals and nursing home staff treated end of life as a business rather than focus on residents and making a home-like setting. Many also noted that if they had received extra assistance from CCAC their family member would have been able to stay in their home in the final stages of life ---the preferred choice of many. This survey was given to our Provincial Council President, Anne Madden to present at their government visit in 2018. I continue to urge each member to keep applying pressure to their elected representatives to help this vulnerable group of our society not feel "homeless and flushable".