

## **Ontario Provincial Convention**

### **Kingston Diocesan Council - Oral Report 2015**

Kingston Diocesan Council, in response to Resolution ON.13.01, continued our focus on mental health issues as our Social Justice Project.

At our Annual Convention, speakers from Providence Care, Kingston Mental Health provided us with insight into the three "Geriatric Giants", depression, delirium, and dementia.

Depression in the elderly is often missed but not hard to diagnose when specifically looking for it. It is often severe and recurrent, yet highly treatable. Some symptoms include feelings of fatigue, guilt, or worthlessness, loss of interest, loss of appetite, or suicidal thoughts.

We learned the normal process for aging often leaves us with momentary forgetfulness, absentmindedness, and a mixing up of facts. We should be concerned however, if one's daily routine is challenged by memory loss, language loss, distortion of time and place, impaired judgment, difficulty with abstract thinking and very noticeable changes in mood, behaviour, personality or initiative.

To reduce the stigma associated with these illnesses, we must treat people with respect and dignity, not assume but learn the facts, and be sensitive to our language (avoiding terms like 'old-timer's disease', or 'lost her marbles' etc).

A list of Community Support Services and of programs available at our local Alzheimer Society was provided.

We were cautioned to watch for signs of caregiver stress, whether our own or of someone we know, and learned of ways to reduce that stress.

Earlier at our convention, our National President, Barbara Dowding, gave us insight into her chosen theme, One Heart, One Voice, One Mission. "We must hear God's voice," she advised, "in our call to holiness; listen to and embrace our daily encounters."

Should our daily encounters include sharing a moment with those suffering these illnesses or those caring for the sufferers, may we hear God's voice calling us to holiness and respond accordingly.

Respectively submitted,

Margie Royle,

Kingston Diocesan President

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