

**Ontario Provincial Council
The Catholic Women's League of Canada
72nd Provincial Convention – July 14 to 17, 2019
Oral Report**

Submitted by: Karen McDonald, Chairperson of Legislation

Legislation is social justice in action. We act on adopted resolutions and monitor legislation. The term I chose is 'fertilizer', a substance (such as manure) used to make soil fertile. I chose fertilizer, not because some legislation 'stinks' but because its purpose is similar to what we do as a legislation committee.

Fertilizer helps prepare a garden to make plants grow, which is important for the environment. Members plant seeds by writing resolutions and action plans. The legislation committee fertilizes and nurtures the action plans to make the resolutions grow. If the soil is not fertile, it will not yield results. We must act on our resolutions to yield results. Otherwise, they remain well-written words on a page.

Almost daily, members were compelled to act on legislative changes that are contrary to our Christian beliefs. We signed petitions to: exclude medical assistance in dying in hospice/palliative care facilities; re-unite spouses in long-term care; change Canada Summer Jobs Application requirements; have a minimum 4 hours/day of nursing care; protect freedom of conscience; have timely mental health care for children. We kept tabs on legislation concerning trafficking/transplanting of human organs, vaping, fairer workplaces, improved seniors health care, and keeping students safe on buses. Following the provincial election, members were called to action on *Income Security – A Roadmap for Change for Ontarians with a Disability*. Last November, I was part of the provincial delegation that visited the Legislature. We discussed issues of concern with the critics for health care and children/youth services and a senior policy advisor with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The League is respected and they listened. Following the visit, members were called to action regarding changes to Office of the Child Advocate.

Our homelessness project asked members to choose one scenario (shelter, food, housing) and go on a *Scavenger Hunt* answering questions to educate themselves about services available in their communities. It worked, as 28 teams from councils across Ontario had fun participating and appreciated the opportunity to discover services they never knew existed in their backyard.

Regarding the national theme, legislation chairpersons were advised of the provincial focus on water conservation. I reviewed resolutions pertaining to the environment and highlighted the Action Plans for *ON.18.01 - Develop National Standards for Levels of Pharmaceuticals in Canada's Drinking Water* and *2018.02 - Setting a Standard for Products Marketed as "Flushable"*. Members were encouraged to become informed about *The Cannabis Act* and were invited to give input on the *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*, the government's vision for a more sustainable Canada.

As I throw seeds in my vegetable garden, I say, "Grow with God"! That is what we are called to do. As provincial legislation chairperson, I have learned that our voices do make a difference. The list is endless but we must continue to fertilize the soil!