

**OPC Convention 2019, Kingston**

**Care for our Common Home**

**Report**

**Term: Abatement**

**St. Catharines Diocesan Council**

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Most of us, if not all of us are familiar with and know the song the 12 Days of Christmas... yes...( Thumbs up if you do, thumbs down if you don't and thumbs in the middle if you think you do but are not sure) Let's just take a moment to review it, we can sing the first line together... "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me a Partridge in a pear tree..." ( wonderful, fabulous I am going to put a twist on things and change the words so that they reflect on the Story of Creation, so rather than the 12 days of Christmas, we have the 7 days of Creation, specifically focusing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Creation. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Creation, God created Earth and God saw that it was good...and it was good, this gift of the earth which includes the oceans and waters, the trees, fish and birds, and the animals of the ground then last of all, the best of all, God made you and me.

The Holy Father Pope Francis has called out to everyone living on the planet to actively engage in caring for our common home. "*The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good...*"  
*Pope Francis, Laudato Si' #201.*

The Catholic Women's League of Canada has adhered to the call. Our Theme Care for Our Common Home, calls all members of the League to grow in faith and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.

The St. Catharines Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada has participated in various initiatives to reduce the degree or intensity of or eliminating pollution, implementing and successfully carrying out the appropriate abatement plans.

On or about 10 years ago, our Diocesan Council took the pledge to ban plastic water bottles at meetings and events, taking it one step further by asking parish councils to ban the use of plastic water bottles at their parish council meetings and events they host. To date 22 Councils have joined with the Diocesan Council and have taken the pledge.

At our last meeting we also discussed bringing our own plates and utensils to our Diocesan meetings; thereby reducing the use of paper plates and plastic cutlery and cups. We also avoid the use of Styrofoam

In addition to dealing with any environmental/ ecological problems , we must also have to face the issue of what can happen to a **polluted mind**

Just as pollution has an adverse effect on our climate and our common home, mind pollution has a demoralizing effect on our mental, moral and spiritual health. Another powerful abatement tool is prayer. Each month within our Diocese we spent time in silent adoration with our Lord at holy hour held at various parishes throughout the Diocese preparing the ground of our heart in prayer; fostering the growth of and deepening our relationship with God through the Blessed Sacrament.

At the beginning of my report I had mentioned that last of all, the best of all God made you and He made me. Therefore, how can we effectively care for our common home if we do not care for each other first and foremost? As members of the Catholic Women's League of Canada we must be constantly ready to care for each other, all members, active and non. Our members are essential to the league as they are a source of inspiration and they bring forth their creativity and vision keeping our councils alive, living as women of faith. Membership... more than numbers was the theme of an Annual League development workshop in our Diocese, the goal of the workshop was to emphasize the member in membership, that people count more than numbers. We are all created in the image of God

As we embark on our new theme, care for our common home, we need to cultivate new habits. The most successful way to do this is start with a tiny habit, much like how Scriptures say the first vegetation to turn up was "tender herbs", i.e. small plants. Taking care of small plants will lead to bigger ones, and eventually they're bear the fruit of our dreams. Taking care of each other as members of the CWL will lead to a thriving prosperous future... Just a thought... Respectfully submitted.