**Ontario Provincial Council**

**The Catholic Women’s League of Canada**

**Education and Health Standing Committee**

***Care for our Common Home***

Directive #17 Pages: 1 May 9, 2019

 Attachments:1

To: Diocesan Education and Health Committee Chairpersons

From: Wilma Vanderzwaag, Ontario Provincial Council, Sub Committee Chairs: Mary Lou Watson and Heather Sisk

cc: Diocesan Presidents, Archbishop O’Brien, Ontario Provincial Council Executive, National Health and Education Standing Committee Chairperson

On April 3, 2019, I attended the Courage for Caregivers Retreat, that was presented in partnership by Catholic School Chaplains of Ontario and the Henri Nouwen Society at the All Saints Parish in Etobicoke. The facilitator, Susan Morgan is a community chaplain with Saint Elizabeth Care. Susan’s work focuses primarily on palliative care. Some of the themes discussed were the mutuality of dignity and care, care versus cure, the challenges of caring, the gifts of caring, self-care, releasing guilt and addressing burnout. Each person attending received workbook and a leader’s guide for retreat and small groups. There was also a spiritual book on caregiving that was available for purchase, all resources were from the Henry Nouwen Society. I have attached my report of this retreat. I would recommend if it is offered in your area to attend, even if you are not a caregiver at the time, it is very beneficial.

The Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute has two articles that are very timely and educational. One is called **Genetic “Knowing” Part II: The Meaning of Procreation, Marriage and the Family** by Julia Bolzon, B. Arts Sc., M.T.S. and **Born This Way: Not Borne Out** by Moira McQueen, LLB, MDiv, PhD. Julia Bolzon is a graduate of McMaster University’s Arts and Science Program. She is a doctoral student at the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies in Marriage and Family in Washington, D.C. Dr. Moira McQueen is the Director of the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute. She teaches moral theology in the Faculty of Theology, University of St. Michael’s College. In September 2014, Pope Francis appointed her to the International Theological Commission. She is also the Roman Catholic representative on the Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group of the Canadian Council of Churches. Both articles can be found on [www.ccbi-utoronto.ca](http://www.ccbi-utoronto.ca) and bioethics.usmc@utoronto.ca. Please log on and request that you receive future articles on the Church’s teachings about issues in bioethics. All Diocesan and Parish Education and Health Standing Chairs are strongly encouraged to sign up.

Sub-Committee Chair, Mary Lou Watson attended a course on Memory and Aging. The course used, **A Practical Guide to Managing your Memory,** prepared by Dr. Angela K. Troyer and Dr. Susan Vandermorris of Baycrest Centre in Toronto. The course is given over 5 days, 2 hours each day. The course addresses the 4 types of memory, talks about diseases and disorders that can have an impact on memory. It also discussed the importance of a good diet, regular exercise, frequent Cognitive engagement (such as bridge, chess or reading complicated books) and reducing stress. Strategies were taught to help memory. Participants found it reassuring to see a whole class of adults from a variety of backgrounds struggling with similar annoying memory problems like remembering people’s names, where they parked their car at the mall or why they went into the basement. Mary Lou stated that the course she attended was provided by the Alzheimer Society—see if they offer it in your area.

The national theme *Care for Our Common Home* has a focus on water for 2019. Here are a few resolutions relating to water:

--2018.02 Setting a Standard for Products Marketed as Flushable

--2004.07 Water Use in Canada

--2001.04 Water Quality in Canada

Review these resolutions and do the action plans with your council.

A reminder that the application deadline for the National Bursary Fund is May 31, 2019. Criteria and guidelines are available at cwl.ca. These funds are available for members pursuing their education in a variety of ministries—encourage members that are taking courses to apply.

A book I am planning to read this summer is “Love Your Life to Death”. It is a book on how to plan and prepare for the end of life so you can live fully now. The author is Yvonne Heath and her email is yvonne@loveyourlifetodeath.com. Do your loved ones know your wishes and will they respect them?

At my parish we used the following prayer for our 12 hours of palliative care:

Prayer for the Protection of Human Life

Heavenly Father, Lord and Maker of all that is good,

fill our hearts with joy before the wonders of Your creation.

Open our eyes to the presence of Your beloved Son, Jesus in all those we

encounter and especially in the weakest and most vulnerable among us.

Where we see life threatened, at its beginning or at its end or by poverty and deprivation,

inspire us with love and mercy, so that, empowered by Your Holy Spirit,

we may work together to defend human dignity.

Help us build a culture of life: A culture in which each and every person

is loved and valued as Your child, from conception to natural death,

and in every circumstance of life. Amen.

Mary, Mother of the living, pray for us.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to all the Diocesan Council Education and Health Chairs. You have been amazing at creating wonderful newsletters for your Diocese. You were also generous and caring in sharing information with me that was important for all members across Ontario to be aware of. With all the changes and events in both education and health over this term, it really took your help to stay on top of everything. I appreciate you all. I hope to see you at the Provincial Convention in Kingston!

Blessings and hugs,

Wilma

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