

## **ACBO Meeting 2021 Report**

On October 5, 2021 the Plenary of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) met via ZOOM. President Colleen Perry and President-Elect Linda Squarzolo were invited to make a brief presentation.

OPC President Colleen Perry explained that all 2021 diocesan, provincial and national conventions were conducted partial virtually due to COVID-19. Business from 2020 and 2021 were reviewed at the 2020 and 2021 AGMs that took place in 2021.

She stated that at the national annual meeting of members, a new executive was elected and Fran Lucas is the new president. Her term will have the theme "Catholic and Living It" which will be in effect January 2022 until December 2023. The provincial theme of "loneliness" will continue until the July 2022. Members are also being asked to focus on truth and reconciliation. An initial working group has been established and are working towards a common goals of awareness through education, inclusivity in the present (local support groups) and striving for a better future.

Although the OPC were unable to meet with the provincial government, letters were sent supporting improvements in long-term care and support for front line workers. There is, currently, a national "gratitude" project that encourages all members to offer a card, a smile or a gesture of support to those who face the virus every day.

President-Elect Linda Squarzolo explained that since the CWL provincial council were only able to hold partially virtual annual meetings of members, resolutions could not be presented, debated and approved. Resolutions can be only be adopted at in-person meetings.

Resolution topics currently being studied by parish and diocesan councils include:

- vaping products containing cannabis
- the development of a holistic, parish-based program on the "Theology of the Body and Procreation"
- the development of a national government strategy to address loneliness
- to have stillborn human remains defined as human remains in the criminal code of Canada
- to have Indigenous history to be taught in schools
- advocating for improvements to long-term care
- that priests and deacons be educated about Indigenous history

When the resolutions have been drafted, they will be evaluated by the provincial resolutions reading committee and may be presented to the annual meeting of members in July 2022.

Colleen invited questions from the bishops and expressed gratitude for the bishops' support for the Catholic Women's League. Archbishop Fabbro expressed thanks on behalf of the bishops for the League's work.

