



**Ontario Provincial Council  
Community Life – Communiqué #7  
Care for our Common Home  
February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

To: Diocesan Community Life Standing Chairpersons  
From: Mary Capobianco, Ontario Provincial Council, Community Life Chairperson  
cc: Diocesan Presidents, Provincial Officers,  
National Community Life Chairperson

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Dear Sisters in the League,

Thank you to all who completed their annual reports. I look forward to reading through your many accomplishments over the past year. This communiqué contains a few items I wanted to bring to your attention.

**Resources:**

I recommend that you if you have not yet had an opportunity to do so, you take a moment to visit the national website for the new resources available. The strategic planning working groups have produced a number of new items. I especially want to draw your attention to the 600 series – MANUALS and the 800 series WORKSHOPS under the ORGANIZE tab found on [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca).

Manual #622 - *Calendar of Social Justice/ Catholic Social Teaching in the Church*

This document contains a calendar for the entire year and provides links to information and important dates to remember. Councils are encouraged to use this calendar in planning yearly League activities. Note that this calendar may not contain all important dates but it is still a good tool to start your council planning discussions.

Notable dates for March are listed below. Be sure to access the information and links associated with each date on the website.

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** – World Day of Prayer

**March 21<sup>st</sup>** – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>** – **Diversity Thunder Bay Presents - Jody Wilson-Raybould**  
***Taking Steps to Advance True Reconciliation***

This event is virtual and registration is free. Details can be found on the OPC website under *Truth and Reconciliation – Upcoming Events*.

**Development and Peace**

For those of you not already familiar with the CWL Development and Peace 1% program, I've attached a power point presentation available on the national website, [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca). Although this presentation is dated 2015, it helps to explain some of the very important work the D&P does throughout the world.

In addition to the 1% program, D&P recently announced that all donations made between March 2<sup>nd</sup> (Ash Wednesday) and June 5<sup>th</sup> (Pentecost Sunday) will be matched by another donor. As well members are encouraged to consider making individual donations (minimum \$10) so they can be recognized as a member of D&P and increase their numbers for discussions with government.

## **Truth and Reconciliation**

The Truth and Reconciliation Bulletin was discussed at the recent OPC Executive Winter Meeting. The 1<sup>st</sup> issue was well received with very positive feedback. However, it was felt that instead of having a stand-alone Bulletin issue, going forward, we will be including a Truth and Reconciliation section in the monthly OPC on-line newsletter effective with the March issue. Please continue to send me information, event photos, articles, titles of books you've read etc. Sharing our resources is key to educating ourselves, gaining a better understanding of our past so we can do better in the future.

The OPC Truth and Reconciliation working group continues to focus on the journey towards healing and reconciliation. To that end, an important announcement will be made at the upcoming OPC Convention in July. Stay tuned!

Peace and Blessings to all,

Mary Capobianco  
Ontario Provincial Community Life Chairperson.



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## The Afghan Women's Resource Centre (AWRC)

The AWRC is supporting women in Sherhankhail village in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, a region where poverty is pervasive. The organization is providing Afghan women with start up capital for small businesses, vocational, literacy and other training, and support needed to ensure a better future for themselves and their families.



*With their skills women are starting small businesses.*



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## Economic development and vocational training

In a period of just six months:

- 22 women started their own businesses after receiving loans.
- 27 women graduated from vocational training.
- A cooperative store was launched in the AWRC training centre, where products made by the women can be sold.
- Women were provided with hens and training in poultry-raising to boost their incomes. One woman reported an increase of 36% to her monthly income.



*Shirts made by women that are sold in the cooperative store.*



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## Literacy and education

- AWRC's schooling program provides education facility to hundreds of girls in the communities where there is no government school.
- In a six-month period, 50 women attended literacy classes for 1.5 hours per day, six days a week.
- 344 men and women participated in awareness workshops on human rights.



*"Before, as I couldn't read and write, I had to sign using my thumbprint without reading or understanding the documents. After attending the AWRC literacy classes, now, I am able to read the documents and then sign."*

**Roya, member of AWRC who couldn't go to school due to Taliban restrictions .**





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## The Development Exchange Center (DEC) Northern Nigeria

With support from the CWL, the DEC is working to empower Hausa women in Northern Nigeria with a multi-faceted program that aims to enhance their education, living conditions, political involvement, capacities and ultimately their status in society.



*Women are receiving training on using alternative energy.*



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### The work of DEC

- The work of DEC has been greatly challenged by violence and actions ~~Burko~~ Haram in Northern Nigeria where the organization is based. Despite the risks posed by this group, DEC is courageous in continuing its programs to help women and girls receive an education and improve their conditions and status within the society.
- DEC works on governance (to counter corruption in Nigerian and promote women participation in politics); civic education; literacy; water & sanitation; peacebuilding & conflict resolution; microfinance and more.
- Some of their innovative practices include sensitizing religious leaders on the role of women in politics; producing radio jingles about peace; and tree planting.



*Women are learning about re-planting trees.*



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*"DEC has assisted me in so many ways. They have brought from nowhere to somewhere."*

Maijinya Musa Yunusa, who today sits on the DEC board of Directors.



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## Fanm Deside Haiti

Founded in 1988 by the Montreal-based Institut des Soeurs de Notre-Dame du Bon-Conseil, Fanm Deside works mainly in Jacmel, Haiti to sensitize women and the community-at-large on issues of violence against women. It also seeks to provide women with economic opportunities so they can care for their families.







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## Helping women escape domestic violence

- **Raising awareness on women's rights:** Organizing campaigns on gender issues; working in schools and shelters to promote women's rights; meetings to discuss the role of women in the development and reconstruction of the country; meetings with authorities to ensure the comprehension and application of laws related to women's rights; etc.
- **Training:** Continuing education for staff members in community organizing, psychological support for victims of violence, etc.; training for affiliated groups on issues of violence against women; capacitybuilding within the organization; etc.
- **Accompaniment of female victims of violence:** Being a point of reference for women who have been victims of violence; helping women receive medical and psychological services; supporting women in the judicial process; etc.



*Women at a Fanm Deside awareness workshop*



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## Helping women earn an income

Fanm Deside has put in place several income-generating activities for women, including the following:

- Tending to nurseries, where the fruits from the trees can be used to feed their families and the surplus can be sold at market.
- Pig farming. For women, having a pig provides a certain level of economic security since the pig can be sold if they have a financial emergency, such as a sick child.
- The organization recently launched a poultry-farming program.





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## ACTION PLAN

1. Do you as a CWL member donate 1% of the cost of **ALL** luxury and personal items that you purchase towards the CWL 1% program?
2. Does your CWL parish council donate 1% of **ALL** funds raised to the 1% program? As a CWL member, will you ask your parish council to donate 1% of **ALL** funds raised to the 1% program?
3. Now that you see the importance of the 1% program will you ask your CWL parish council or community life chair to have a bowl, or a jar at each CWL meeting for the members to donate to the 1% program?
4. On an annual basis each parish council treasurer is to send their 1% donation to the National Office marked 1% program for Development and Peace!



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**Thank you for  
your generous support!**