



**Hamilton Diocesan Council**  
Of  
**The Catholic Women's League of Canada**  
*Catholic & Living It!*  
*Sharing His Promise, Love and Hope!*

In Hamilton Diocese, eight workshops on the Impacts of Colonization in Canada were offered to strengthen and further develop the understanding of Indigenous issues in Canada and to explore the League's role in truth and reconciliation.

These workshops were facilitated by Amanda DiFalco in consultation with an Indigenous advisor Elder Wilamina McGrimmond, a member of the Frog Clan, Tl'az'ten Nation. Elder Wilamina shared her life experiences, heritage and personal feelings. We admired her courage and strength for fighting against stereotyping and racism.

Learning and understanding Indigenous issues has been an eye opening experience from the myths and misconceptions about the Indian status, taxes and post-secondary education, to the history of colonization and the ramifications of the Indian Act. Members were taught to suspend their own views and to respect the differences in Indigenous and Western worldviews.

It was difficult to listen to the heart wrenching history of children forcibly separated from their families, stripped of their identity, culture, home and placed in residential schools where they were malnourished, abused, segregated, and used for medical experiments. An estimated 6,000 children are believed to have died at the residential schools and the discovery of more than 1,100 graves gives rise to this evidence of genocide.

Through this awareness, members learnt that in order to "help" the Indigenous community we need to understand "Truth" before "Reconciliation", education before action and walking beside and supporting the Indigenous community not leading the way on a white horse.

Building a relationship and forming an allyship with Indigenous communities where mutual respect, honesty, open communication are present should be our focus. Showing up by being present, engaged and committed are actions members can take.

I see hope and a great partnership of advocacy with the Catholic Women's League of Canada and the Indigenous community. It will take planning and time but we are prepared to fight for social justice and pray for the healing of Indigenous Peoples.

Madame President this ends my report.