

Legislation Oral Report for provincial convention

Madam president,

Have you ever heard or read a story that sticks with you? I heard a story at a Sault Ste. Marie diocesan convention, I want to share it with all of you.

The story was about a man and whales. Nate's job was to evaluate the piers at a beach on Cape Cod for damage after a storm. This one morning as he reached the beach, he saw a 10-foot pilot whale coming towards shore.... He watched the graceful giant mammal for a moment in awe... Then he saw a second and a third whale coming quickly towards shore... Since it's not unusual for whales to beach themselves he was concerned and called the National Sea Shore Service.

The whales were coming so fast, he knew they would be on the beach before anyone got there. He threw off his shoes and socks and ran into the water. He caught up with the whale in waist deep water on a sand bar....by this time the whale is thrashing in distress, inflicting cuts on its tail and body with its constant batter with the sand.... He placed his hands on the whale.... The whale became completely still.... each trusting the other....in an encounter they had never experienced before.... Nate gently turned the whale around and pointed it away from shore. The whale wasted no time and swam back out to sea. He then approached the second whale and did the same. By this time help had arrived the team of national service did the same for the third whale.

You might be wondering what whales and legislation have in common right? Today we face whale size issues, such as mental health and addiction, homelessness, conscience rights for health care workers, euthanasia and assisted-dying, hospice/palliative care, rights of indigenous people, conversion therapy, enhancement of the Canada Health Care Act, abortion, food waste, catholic education, racism, organ and tissue donation, and the list goes on. These issues are like the beached whale, they need our love and compassion. They need social justice. Legislation is social justice in action. It is becoming informed, defending our Christian values, affecting change in our province and country through the carrying out of League resolutions to influence government policy. Last year members addressed all those issues listed above and more. They wrote letters, signed petitions, monitored legislation, contacted or visited MPs and MPPs, and prayed.

Nate's story is about connection and hope. Our national theme "Catholic and Living It" is a theme about connection and hope, to be inspired by our Christian values in all we do. Nate is an example of inspiration - running into the water and gently turning the whales away from the beach. We too, can be God's hands and God's voice to create change at all government levels through advancing our resolutions into legislation. Let's jump into the water and turn those whales around!

This concludes my report.