

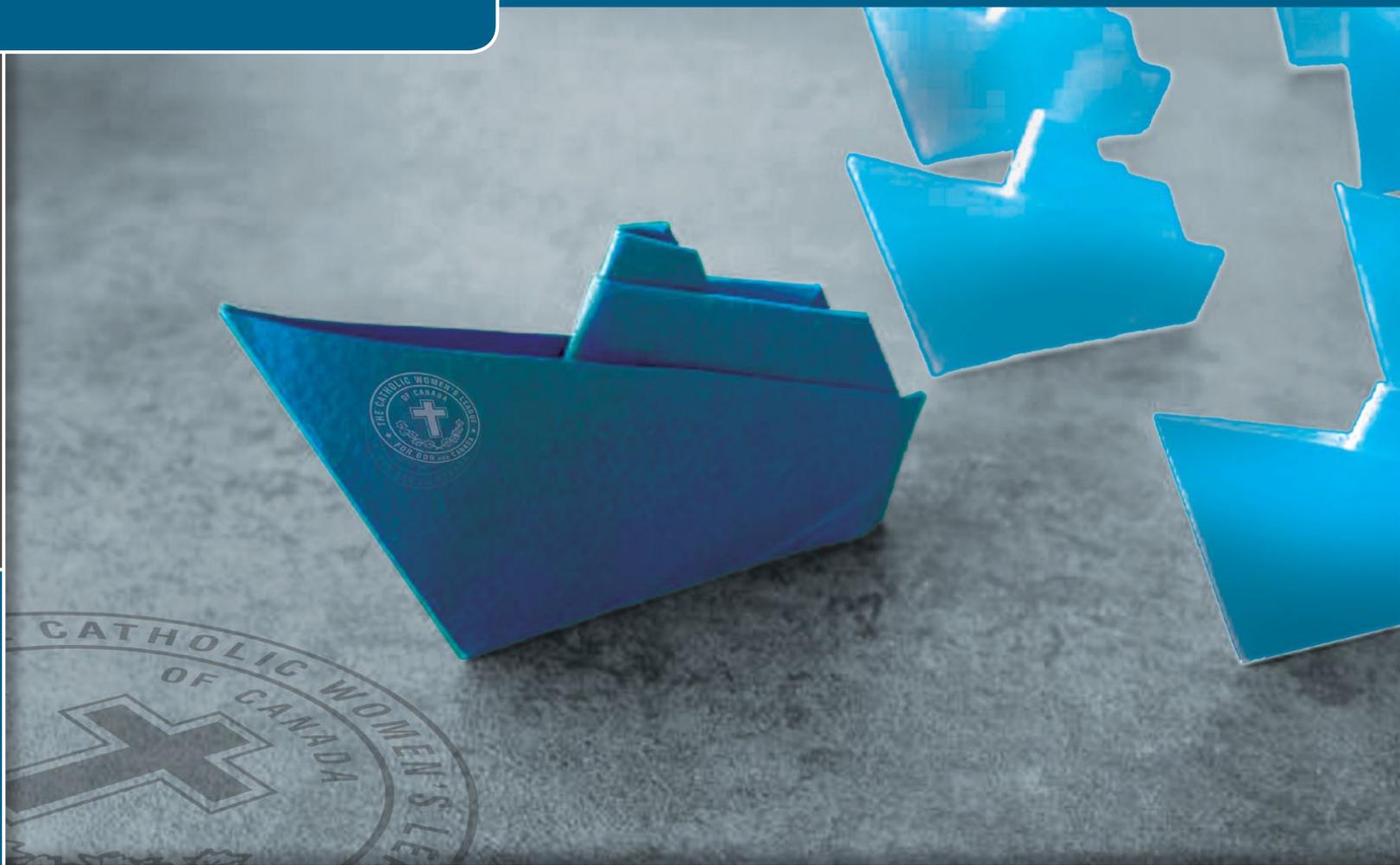
Toolkit for Service

Toolkit Working Group



GOAL:

Through outreach and service, members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada foster a culture where all life is valued with dignity and respect.



STRATEGIES: Create ready-made adaptable toolkits for use in parishes.



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CORE PURPOSE

Uniting Catholic women to grow in faith, and to promote social justice through service to the church, Canada and the world

CORE VALUES

FAITH – following Catholic teaching

SERVICE – local, national and international

SOCIAL JUSTICE – actively involved in society

MISSION STATEMENT

The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.

ENVISIONED FUTURE

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is an inclusive and engaged community of Catholic women inspired by faith. It is:

A vital participant in the church;

A valued partner for social justice;

A respected advocate at all government levels;

Connected to the world.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise person who built their house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish person who built their house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash"

(Matthew 7:24-27).

Introduction

The activity of The Catholic Women's League of Canada has broadened and deepened from its original purpose of aiding immigrants. The emphasis now focuses on a range of issues and concerns relevant to human dignity, social justice and the sanctity of life from conception to natural death, with attention also paid to community wellness and the preservation of Christian family life.

The League's updated Mission Statement (2018), "The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service" echoes the words of Pope Francis, "We must live the faith, not only with our words, but with our actions." The strategic plan identifies three foundational pillars—faith, service and social justice—to help the League fulfill this mission.

This toolkit uses the works of mercy in Matthew 25:35-36 as its cornerstone and inspiration:

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Following Pope Francis' instruction on September 1, 2016, care of creation has been added to the traditional set of works of mercy. This new work of mercy is meant to inspire Catholics to take concrete action toward changing how they care for the world.

This toolkit provides guidance for setting service goals and developing council resources, programming ideas, and suggestions for activities and projects. The content is designed to be flexible and adaptable to meet the diversity of skills, talents, numbers and backgrounds of members in councils across Canada.

It is hoped that by using the works of mercy as the basis for the service component of League programming, you will find a broad range of service opportunities to live your faith through action, to practice the great law of charity, and to connect with each other and those in need. Building sisterhood among members and ministering through service to each other and the community, locally and globally, are worthy works for members to aspire to.

A brainstorming activity is included to help determine a focus. It can be repeated when it is time to select a new focus. Brainstorming is an important tool to promote unity and inclusiveness.

Works of Mercy Prayer Service

Things you will need:

- a leader
- eight people to talk a speaker's part
- copies of the prayer service for each participant

Adaptation: If this is too many speakers for the group, use four people and have them each take two voices, alternating parts. Make it work for the council!

Purpose of Prayer Service

This prayer service is designed to call to mind the works of mercy as listed in St. Matthew's gospel and to reflect on them in today's society. It should also help prepare participants for the brainstorming activity to follow.

The prayer service is set up in such a way as to include many members with speaking roles and encourage full participation. However, it can easily be adjusted to the needs of the council. This prayer service is a practical way to introduce the topics of service and can be used as an introduction to choosing a service topic to work on, but it is an excellent service to use at any time.

As in most services, hymns are an inspirational addition. Base the selection of which to use on the council and the available hymnals.

Works of Mercy Prayer Service

Adapted with help from Loyola Press Prayer Service

ALL: In the name the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader: Lord Jesus, You have called us to holiness through service to others. Help us understand how we can be Your hands and do the work You have called us to. It is through acts of kindness that we show our love and gratitude for all You have given us.

Voice 1: “And the crowds asked him, ‘What then should we do?’ In reply He said to them, ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise’” (Lk 3:10–11).

Leader: I was hungry and You gave me food.

ALL: Lord, when do I see You hungry?

Voice 2: So many people in our world do not have enough food to eat. We can help in many ways—donating to food banks, helping at a soup kitchen and donating food items to shelters. Many cities have special projects focusing on the additional needs of babies and families with small children. We can support these projects with formula, diapers and baby care items.

We must teach our children and grandchildren to be generous and willing to share with others. We ask our Father in heaven to help us find ways to correct the injustices that lead to so many having so little.

Lord, fill the hungry with Your love and mercy.

Leader: I was thirsty and You gave me drink.

ALL: Lord, when do I see You thirsty?

Voice 3: Being thirsty is not just about wanting a drink! It is also about having clean water that is safe to drink and to use for cooking and cleaning. We can donate to clean water projects throughout the world and be aware of the water we waste daily. Help us become advocates for our environment and support sustainable and just practices.

Lord, we pray for all those who thirst, especially newborn babies in need of nourishment and young mothers with small children. We pray that they find a way through their pain.

Leader: I was a stranger and You welcomed me.

ALL: Lord, when were You a stranger and I welcomed You?

Voice 4: Being a stranger takes on many images. The stranger can be anyone we encounter in our community and beyond, in the larger community, working in stores, providing services, asking for directions on the street, on the telephone or workplace. We must develop an attitude of kindness in all our encounters, seeing Christ in all we meet.

Lord, we pray for guidance and support. Help us to let Your light shine through us to brighten the day for all those we meet and bring kindness to all our relationships.

Leader: I was naked and You clothed me.

ALL: Lord, when do I see You naked?

Voice 5: Help the poor! We are so blessed, and we have so much that we can share with those in need. Help us find ways to meet the needs of the struggling poor. Support clothing drives with gifts of warm hats, coats and mittens, and socks. We can make a difference in so many small ways by simply sharing the bounty of our lives. Guide us in our journey, open our eyes and hearts so that we become a source of comfort to all those in need.

Leader: I was sick and You visited me.

ALL: Lord, when do I see You sick?

Voice 6: It is not hard to find the sick! Take time to be kind to those who are ill. Phone them, visit them or send them a card, gift or message of hope. Let them know you are thinking of them, help ease the loneliness and isolation. A visit to a sick or shut-in neighbour can bring much comfort. Teach me patience and wisdom, and guide me in ways to offer comfort and care for those in my own family and beyond who need support.

Lord, the sick and elderly are a gift to our generation. Help me value them, love them and care for them. Comfort them as they prepare to spend eternity with You.

Leader: I was in prison and You came to me.

ALL: Lord, when do I see You in prison?

Voice 7: There are prison ministries that do wonderful work with the imprisoned and offer help and assistance to people facing this struggle. Not everyone can visit prisons, but we can all pray for those in prison and ask the Lord to guide them through life and help them with their struggles. Prison walls come in many forms. There are so many lost and forlorn people in our communities imprisoned by bad decisions, addictions and loneliness. Help us see You, Father, in the lost and suffering and offer comfort and care in their struggles.

Lord, show Your mercy to prisoners. Help them find freedom and the courage to change their ways in Your unending love.

Leader: “...Lord, when was it that we saw You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of You?” Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me’” (Mt 25:44-45).

ALL: Dear Lord, we understand and believe that You are present, in hidden form, in the weakest of the weak, the poorest of the poor and in the sinner in our midst. Help us to diligently seek You out in each and every person we encounter, especially those in most need. As we find You, may we love and serve You with our whole heart. Jesus, we trust in You and seek to know and do your will. Help us to put our word into action and live the great law of charity. Amen.

Leader: In keeping with the instruction of Pope Francis, we have included care of creation in the traditional set of works of mercy. This new work of mercy is meant to inspire us to take concrete action toward changing the way we look at the world and become stewards of creation.

Voice 8: We embrace our responsibility to act in ways to conserve our world’s bounty, to till and keep the earth in a balanced and respectful way and dedicate ourselves to sustainable practices and environmentally friendly activities.

Lord, we pray that our leaders and society may be motivated to protect the common good and accept the challenge of caring for our common home. May our personal actions reflect our own commitment to this end. Amen.

Getting Started: Brainstorming for an Issue to Support

Brainstorming is a good way to choose a new project area, as it can create many ideas for discussion. It is best if you have a clear question in mind to help guide the exercise. Keep the question posted as a reminder to all.

Questions

1. What acts of service are currently part of the program?

Once this topic has been exhausted, a second question may be asked. For clarity, a different coloured felt pen may be used to record responses.

2. What other areas of service could be considered?

Materials Needed

- poster of “Basic Rules”
- flip chart paper
- two or more different coloured marker pens
- large wall or board
- coloured stickers (small post-its or large dots) in enough quantity for all participants, about four or five of each.

It is helpful to be able to gather the chart paper at the end of the session for further study, especially if doing the activity in two separate parts.



Facilitator

Select the facilitator carefully. A friendly, non-intimidating person familiar with the group works well for this role. She must be able to spell, think fast and write legibly. It is helpful if the person is knowledgeable about the possibilities. A good facilitator will go back to the question(s) throughout the brainstorming activity to inspire thought and keep people focused.

The facilitator explains the rules, poses the question(s) and records the responses on the flipchart paper. The facilitator also explains that once the brainstorming ends, members will have an opportunity to choose areas and topics on which they wish to focus. Once the activities already being done have been listed, go to a second coloured pen and add new ideas or things that could be done!

Basic Rules

- 1. There are no dumb ideas.** It is a brainstorming session and should encourage thinking outside the box and more profound thoughts. Remember, allow the imagination to inspire and keep the entire team involved!
- 2. Do not criticize other people's ideas.** It is not a debate, discussion or forum for one person to display superiority over another. Avoid discussion at the brainstorming level.
- 3. Build on other people's ideas.** Often an idea suggested by one person can trigger an even bigger idea by another. Or a variation of an idea on the board could be the next “velcro” idea. This building of ideas leads to out-of-the-box thinking and fantastic ideas. The experienced facilitator can group ideas and, in that way, inspire thought.
- 4. Reverse the thought of quality over quantity.** Here you want quantity—the more creative ideas, the better. As a facilitator, you can make it a challenge to come up with as many ideas as possible, such as, “Let’s see if we can manage a few more thoughts!”
- 5. Keep ideas coming.** When generating ideas is slow or seems to be coming to an end, the facilitator can review what has already been stated, for example, “We have xxx—anything else?” Doing so often stimulates more ideas or gives the hesitant person a chance to speak up.

Once this section is completed and ideas have been exhausted, stand back and look at the lists! Ask if there are any questions or comments, for example, “Does anyone want clarification or discussion of any suggestions?” Avoid criticism—it is likely the impossible will not get selected during the next process!

Selection Activity

1. Before breaking to do the activity, ask if there are any further questions or comments.
2. Encourage everyone to participate, as it is important to get the involvement of all to ensure the membership feels they are being heard.
3. Explain the use of stickers to select activities to consider. Explain that a sticker means “YES! I would like us to do something in this area!” This would include activities from things already in process and new activities. At this point, do not limit the number of stickers each person can use.
4. Explain that a refreshment break will be held while the sticker activity is happening. Ask members to walk through the posted charts, chat with their colleagues, seek clarification and add stickers to the areas/issues they want to support.
5. Give a warning when the time is nearly up.
6. Once this stage is complete, you will have the tools to plan your service projects for the year ahead! You will be able to see:
 - what service projects are still popular and what areas no longer interest the membership
 - what service area the council would like to move into

It will be your decision how many stickers a project needs to continue. If there is little interest in new projects, you may choose just the most popular new idea.

This information should be passed on to a planning committee that will gather information and ideas for the next step—planning a project or activity on which to focus. Ideally, the committee could attend a later meeting with a project plan to concentrate on. It could be a simple short-term project that might attach itself to work being done by other groups or a larger standalone project that might be ongoing over time.

Planning Committee

This committee should include the chairperson of service, secretary and a few interested volunteers. Its work is to take the issue or topic from the brainstorming session and create a feasible project for the council’s consideration. Many simple project ideas are presented in this document, but the best choices will come from members who know the community.

The project selected can be large or small as long as it will appeal to the membership, be achievable and meet a need in the parish or community.



Some Suggestions/Ideas for Service Projects

Although your membership will likely have many ideas for good service projects, here are a few to help the council get started. These are only suggestions and are not meant to be prescriptive or even the best projects. They are merely jumping off points for your council's ideas!

Helping Others

- collect food for a local food bank
- sponsor a collection event for a local food bank
- organize a community garden
- send cards to the sick and shut-ins
- hold a bake sale for your favourite charity
- read books or letters to a person who is visually impaired
- participate in a charity event
- host and organize an event for a local favourite charity
- volunteer at a charity event
- organize Christmas trees for nursing homes or hospitals
- collect unused makeup and other toiletries to donate to a women's shelter
- help deliver meals and gifts to shut-ins

Helping Children and Schools

- knit or crochet blankets to be donated to pro-life groups
- collect baby clothes and supplies to donate to new parents
- collect used sports equipment to donate to families and after-school programs
- sponsor a child through Chalice or a similar organization, either individually or as part of the council

Help the Elderly

- deliver groceries and meals to elderly neighbours
- accompany seniors to doctor appointments
- mow an elderly neighbour's lawn
- host a holiday meal or event for senior citizens
- make seasonal cards and send them to seniors/shut-ins in the parish
- schedule regular visits with shut-ins
- deliver cookies to a homebound senior citizen

Helping the Hungry and/or Homeless

- support a local organization for affordable housing
- donate clothes in good condition to local charities or shelters
- volunteer at a soup kitchen
- donate old eyeglasses to an organization that collects and distributes them to people in need
- donate non-perishable food to a food bank
- donate blankets to a homeless shelter
- host a holiday dinner for people who may not be able to afford their own
- make “care kits” with shampoo, toothbrushes, combs, etc., to donate to homeless shelters
- prepare a home-cooked meal for a bereaved family
- collect grocery coupons to give to a local food bank
- help repair or paint a local homeless shelter
- help organize and sort donations at a homeless shelter
- bake a batch of cookies or loaf of bread and deliver it to a soup kitchen
- organize a winter clothes drive to collect coats, hats, scarves and gloves
- make first aid/health care kits for homeless

Promoting Community Enrichment

- create a newcomers’ group in the church community to help welcome new families
- petition town leaders to build more drinking fountains and public restrooms
- volunteer to clean up trash after a community event
- adopt a local highway or road and clean up accumulated trash
- help fix or raise funds to repair a run-down playground
- clean up after a natural disaster
- support the work of the Canadian Red Cross and other service organizations (local, national and international)

Sample Service Projects

The following two projects are samples of developed service projects that may interest your council. You can adapt these materials to your council and community needs. They are meant to assist in planning.

Project One: Helping the Bereaved and Grieving

Setting Up a Grief Group

There is a great need among the bereaved to connect with others, to learn to cope with loss and, in time, to find ways to move forward. Among the League, many members might benefit from such a project. A “Social Group for the Widowed” is a formed group that meets regularly and has a fluid membership—people attend when they can.

The purpose of this group is to:

- help widows accept and adjust to their new lifestyle
- make new friends and gain confidence
- take the steps needed to move forward

This kind of group is social in nature, with discussion time and a fun activity as part of its agenda. These groups may meet monthly or weekly, based on the group’s decision.

Below is a sample agenda.

Meeting area should be set up with chairs in a circle.

1. **Opening Prayer** (five minutes)
2. **Welcoming remarks and Introductions** (eight to 10 minutes)

Members should introduce themselves, including names and something about themselves. If any members brought a guest, they should introduce the guest.

Welcome and thank each person for attending.

3. **Icebreaker: A Fun Activity** (10-15 minutes)

Example: Have everyone write a unique, strange or unexpected fact about themselves on a small piece of paper. Then, put the papers into a hat and mix them around. The leader or designate will pull from the hat and read each fact one by one. Allow everyone to try and guess who wrote it. After they guess, ask the person who wrote the fact to identify herself and give any further context if she wishes. It is a great, non-threatening way to get to know things about each other!

Many easy and fun icebreakers can be found online. Visit sessionlab.com/blog/icebreaker-games/ for this and more ideas.

4. **News/ Updates/Announcements**

5. **Circle Discussion** (10-15 minutes) Topic can be chosen ahead or by the group.

Example: “Be Kind to Yourself” (see Self-Care Tips when Grieving for other suggestions)

Keeping the circle format, invite participants to share their thoughts on the selected topic. Thoughts might include:

- What does it look like?
- How does it feel?
- How will this help the grieving process?
- Why is it important?

6. **Activity** (30-40 minutes)

Choose a fun, non-threatening activity that everyone can participate in and enjoy, such as a craft demonstration or simple activity like learning a line dance. Other activity suggestions include card games, charades, listening to a guest speaker or watching a video. Choosing the activity can be assigned to a committee or a member once the group is established.

7. **Coffee Break and Socializing** (30-40 minutes)

Ask members to sign up for the next month’s goodies. Have sign-up sheets near the beverage station.

8. **Closing Prayer**

Suggested online prayer resources:

lords-prayer-words.com/

prayerscapes.com/prayers/prayers.html

calgarycwl.ca/members/standing-committees/sd/prayer-corner

Prayer for Comfort in Difficult Times

Lord, You are beside me, stay close today.

Surround me with Your love.

Help me to remember Your goodness and trust in Your saving grace.

May my tears turn to joy

And may Your light flood this soul.

For surely You are my saviour,

My friend, and my guide.

Amen.

Used with permission: prayerscapes.com/prayers/petitions/prayers_for_strength.html#ixzz6khYXNxPy

Self-Care Tips when Grieving

Breathe	Let yourself cry	Ground yourself
Write	Sleep	Go outside
Touch the earth	Move your body	Eat
Avoid caffeine	Listen to your body	Shower
Switch off	Be still	Identify your triggers
Trust your intuition	Create	Be angry
Read	Meditate	Pray
Let go of “shoulds”	Make achievable lists	Find your mantra
Recognize distorted thoughts	Spend time with animals	
Talk to people you trust	Ask for love as well as help	
Look for happy moments	Set boundaries and say no	
Clean, clear, reorganize	Remind yourself you are loved	
	Know that this is only temporary	

Suggested online resources for self-care:

- floratheexplorer.com/
- griefhelp.org/
- newhope-grief.org/

Project Two: Helping Hands

Introduction

This project aims to respond to the call of the gospel, in particular to the works of mercy, by offering short-term help and support to members, parishioners and neighbours in an organized and systematic way.

The larger the parish or community, the greater the need to have a system to ensure that people are not missed, and help is available and easily mobilized. This help can take the form of regular telephone calls, visits, outings, accompaniment, social gatherings, bereavement support or any other service that needs to be considered.

The project is not meant to take the place of government and public health support but rather to supplement it and fill the short-term gaps during transition periods.

Getting Started

You will need the following:

- program coordinator
- volunteer registration forms
- training session for volunteers
- process for accessing the service
- tools to promote the program—brochure, posters, bulletin announcement

Program Coordinator

The coordinator is responsible for ensuring volunteers meet all program requirements (described below), creating regular service schedules, adding and removing the names and contact details of people receiving the services, and protecting all personal information collected from volunteers and people receiving services.

Volunteer Registration Forms

All members interested in volunteering with the Helping Hands program will provide the necessary contact, availability and areas of interest details on a Volunteer Registration Form.

Training

The coordinator is responsible for organizing and presenting volunteer training sessions, on a regular schedule or as required. In addition, the coordinator will have documents for the Safe Environment Policy and screening documents available at the sessions.

Volunteers are trained on program elements for personal visits, keeping records of the visits and the requirements of diocesan safe environment/code of conduct policies. Volunteers are required to meet the policy requirements before beginning service.

Safe Environment/Code of Conduct Policy

All Canadian dioceses have an established safe environment/code of conduct to be used with all ministries. The coordinator must confirm with the relevant diocesan office that the League's Helping Hands program meets the requirements of the diocesan policies for volunteer screening and conduct. Whenever possible, use your diocesan code of conduct materials.

Process for Accessing the Service

The coordinator is responsible for establishing the process to be used by people who wish to access one or more of the Helping Hand services.

Tools for promoting Helping Hands

The coordinator is responsible for developing promotional tools, such as pamphlets, posters and bulletin announcements. The tools are of two types, recruitment of volunteers and informing people who would use the services.

Helping Hands Volunteer Registration Form

Name of Parish Council: _____

This form should be filled in by all members signing up for the Helping Hands Project. It should be updated each year when membership renewals are processed.

Please print clearly and fill in all areas.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

This information will be used by coordinators for contact use only.

I am interested in helping with the following parts of this program: *(Please check all that apply)*

- accompanying to appointments telephone ministry
- bereavement support visiting shut-ins
- preparing/delivering meals welcoming new members
- supporting new Moms other: _____
- _____

Please list additional ideas for activities on the back.

Please indicate your anticipated availability:

Preferred Days: _____

Preferred Time: 10:00 am-noon 12:00-2:00 p.m. 2:00-4:00 p.m.

- I am willing to use my car and have liability insurance coverage.

I understand I will have to take the training course and follow the guidelines of this program. My participation will be evaluated from time to time.

Signature

Date

Training Program

Introduction

Medical personnel, caregivers, family members and shut-ins themselves tell us that visitors make a difference in their lives. A short visit can light up the day, calm anxiety and ease loneliness. It is a reminder that they are special and are loved.

1. Personal Visits

1. Call first and arrange a time to visit.
2. Be on time, dress pleasantly for a visit, and wear your League name tag and a smile. Avoid wearing scented products, as some people can be affected by perfumes.
3. When you enter the room, greet the person by name, and introduce yourself, adding something like, “We haven’t met, but I am from _____ parish council. So many people there speak about you that I feel I already know you.”
4. Avoid “How are you?” by saying something like, “I came to be with you for a while.” You will not open the discussion to the negativity associated with the question about wellness.
5. Sit down close by so you can be seen and heard. Try and find positive things to say about the day, the room, the photographs etc. Find something about her appearance to compliment!
6. Express love and genuine interest. Shut-ins will generally like to discuss any sickness and other needs if asked. It will help if you listen more than speak. You want to express some empathy but be careful not to share all your “war stories”. Don’t belittle her feelings, but rather validate them with understanding, such as, “That must be very difficult for you”, “I will keep you in my prayers”, and similar expressions.
7. Share happy memories from the past, if possible.
8. Ask about hobbies she has or things she enjoys and try and incorporate that into the next visit—a magazine to look at together, a photograph, a small project to do together, etc.
9. Sometimes, a short visit is twice as helpful as a long one. Leave with the hope of another visit using phrases such as “Goodbye for now”, “It’s always good to see you”, or “I will call you and we can plan another visit. It’s been so good to see you!”
10. When possible, leave something behind as a reminder of your visit—a small bouquet, a card with a pretty picture, some grapes or a few cookies. Of course, it is always best to find out if there are any dietary restrictions or allergies to be concerned about.
11. Offer to say a short prayer together. Ask if there is anything that you or the parish can do for them.
12. Watch for signs of fatigue.

2. Your Responsibilities

Personal Notes

- Please keep a notebook of your contacts and visits.
- Record the date of contact, name and address of person visited and date and time of visit.

Make a few simple notes of how the visit went, what went well and how long you stayed. Make note of anything that might help with the next visit and anything that you might have been concerned about. Make a note about the next planned contact and any commitments you may have made.

Monthly reports

Each month send a report to the Helping Hands program coordinator, listing the name of person contacted, follow up information on the visit, date and any comments that might be helpful.

3. Safe Environment Policy

At this meeting, you must review carefully the Safe Environment Policy for your parish and/or diocese. Be sure to follow the policy and instructions.

If your parish or diocese does not have a policy, one is included here. It has been adapted from the Archdiocese of Vancouver and adjusted for this program. It must be reviewed, signed and kept on file by the program coordinator, along with a criminal record check and a letter of reference. No volunteer can begin work until these documents are in order.



Volunteer Code of Conduct (Sample)

This code available is adapted from that used by the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

Volunteers working with vulnerable persons must review the code and sign it in the presence of a designated witness. These signed documents must be on file and renewed every five years.

Volunteers are required to:

- Act at all times in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic church.
- Be competent, reliable and ethical.
- Avoid being alone with vulnerable adults. In the case of visiting shut-ins, it is likely that this cannot be avoided, so make certain that you take all precautions to remain visible throughout the visit.
- Be aware of the possibility of elder abuse. Directly report suspected abuse of vulnerable persons to the coordinator and make note of your suspicions. Sometimes, a person's job responsibilities or professional code of conduct might require them to report. Victims, or anyone else who suspects elder abuse, can report their concerns to the police or to health or social services.
- Refrain from drinking or being under the influence of alcohol while performing your duties.
- Always wear appropriate and modest attire.

Boundaries

- Maintain appropriate boundaries in ministerial relationships and work within the limits of their position.
- Ensure visibility by others if it is necessary to be alone with a vulnerable adult, e.g., open doors, ensure visibility through windows.
- Obtain the approval of the coordinator and the permission of someone in charge when hosting an off site event involving vulnerable adults.

Communications

- Limit communications including verbal, handwritten and electronic means to those reasons pertaining to the volunteer's role.

Physical Contact

- Ensure physical contact is appropriate to the situation and following these guidelines:
- It does not cause disproportionate or unnecessary stress or anxiety to the participant.
- It is entirely and unambiguously non sexual.

Some examples of appropriate touch include shaking a participant's hand in greeting, holding hands to comfort or in a prayer or song and short hugs.

Assistance with Toileting/Dressing

Do not assist with toileting and/or dressing. If a situation arises (e.g., accident or emergency) and assistance is required, another person should be present. The situation should then be reported to the family and the coordinator and noted in your notebook for future reference.

Volunteer drivers

- Be a minimum of 19 years of age.
- Receive permission of the vulnerable adult's guardian.
- Ensure that the coordinator has knowledge of the driving arrangement. When possible, arrange to have a third person in the vehicle.

If required to drive vulnerable adults on a periodic basis, volunteers should submit a suitable driver's abstract and volunteer driver form to the program coordinator.

Harassment

Every individual has the right to be free from harassment. Harassment is defined as objectionable conduct or comment directed toward a specific person(s), which serves no legitimate work purpose, and has the effect of creating a humiliating, hostile or offensive environment.

If you are subject to such treatment by the person you are visiting, report it to the coordinator with the expectation that this person is not a good candidate for our program.

Confidentiality

Anything you learn or hear of a sensitive or personal nature during your visits must be kept confidential. You are in a trusted position and must not share any such information.

Confidentiality must be respected at all times unless disclosure is required for reasons of:

- participant safety
- professional intervention and guidance
- legal obligations

Review and Disclosure

If incidents of concern arise, volunteers should review the situation with the coordinator. Dealings between volunteers and participants must be open and transparent. If an unduly close or stressful relationship develops between a volunteer and participant, the situation must be disclosed to the coordinator and adjustments made.

Gifts

Expensive gifts from participants are inappropriate and should not be accepted. In some situations, it is appropriate to accept tokens of appreciation. The receipt of gifts from participants should be disclosed to coordinators and duly noted.

Use of Parish Name and Property

Speaking in the name of the parish shall be avoided unless specifically authorized by the pastor to do so. Parish resources (for example, keys/computers, etc.) are only to be used for their authorized/intended purposes. These resources must be adequately safeguarded and must not be shared without authorization.

I understand that a breach of any of the above may lead to disciplinary action. I acknowledge that I may be subject to a screening interview, reference checking, a police record check and vulnerable sector search if I am working with vulnerable adults.

Police Record Checks

Every volunteer who is working with vulnerable adults must undergo a criminal record check.

These letters must be kept on file by the program coordinator and renewed every five years.

I have read the code of conduct, understand what is expected of me and agree to act within these boundaries.

Printed name

Signature

Date

Signature of coordinator

Additional Resources

Heart House Hospice (hearthousehospice.com)

This webpage has helpful information about end-of-life issues and talking to someone at that stage of their illness. Under the heading “Resource Library,” select “Other Helpful Resources.” Then, click on “Running a Grief Group” to obtain the *How to Facilitate a Grief Group* guide. It is a very informative document and should be read through if you plan to host a social grief group. It explores some guiding principles and will prepare you for things that may come up in discussions.

The Catholic Women’s League of Canada’s National Website (cwl.ca)

The League’s national website offers many workshops and prayers to help develop the topic of service. Before starting any project, it is wise to look here first. Download them for free and make any needed adjustments to update or adapt to your group’s purposes.



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

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