



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Winnipeg, Manitoba—February 24, 2019—The national executive of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, with almost 80,000 members across the country, met February 22-23 for its annual winter executive meeting. Every Canadian province and territory was represented at the national table, including the Military Ordinariate.

On the heels of the meeting of the episcopal conference presidents on the protection of minors called by the Holy Father held in Rome from February 21-24, the national executive applauds the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops for its efforts to address the crisis of faith that is occurring in the Church as a result of the sexual abuse of minors by the clergy. The national executive has formed an ad hoc committee to explore *Protecting Minors from Sexual Abuse: A Call to the Catholic Faithful in Canada for Healing, Reconciliation and Transformation*. The committee will review and examine the guidelines contained within the report and make recommendations to the national executive at its next meeting on how the lay faithful can support the Holy Father and the Church as it seeks to protect minors from sexual abuse and heal past hurts to victims and the wider community impacted by the scandal.

The national executive reaffirms its endorsement of the mission of Development and Peace – Caritas Canada as the Canadian bishops' agency which supports partners in the Global South that address unjust social, political and economic structures. The investigation into the projects partners being conducted by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has not yet reached a conclusion. The national executive awaits the results of the investigation before determining when the 1% Program national voluntary fund will be reestablished. Recognizing that the 2019 ShareLent Campaign will begin on March 6th, the national executive advises League members and councils inquiring about participating to contact their diocesan chancery office as each bishop has made his own decision in regard to participation in the 2019 campaign in his diocese.

Long-term planning has begun in earnest. Three working groups have been approved to begin transforming the League. The first working group is tasked with increasing awareness of the League within the church, and marketing and positioning the League that supports Catholic women to assume their role and responsibility within the church, and has an anticipated five year timeline. The second working group is tasked with including, affirming and validating all members and has an anticipated time line of 18 months. The final working group is tasked with structural reorganization and simplification of processes and procedures, with a timeline of 30 months. Members are invited to follow the progress on the national website, *The Canadian League* magazine and on Facebook. Diocesan, provincial and national conventions will also be opportunities to hear more and participate.

The national executive thanks outgoing provincial presidents June Fuller (Alberta Mackenzie), Rolande Chernichan (Manitoba), Barbara McGrath (Newfoundland and Labrador), Anne Madden (Ontario), Linda Chisholm (Quebec), and Margaret Schwab (Saskatchewan) for their devoted service to the League over the past two years.

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