



# The Catholic Women's League of Canada

## MEMO

**DATE:** March 25, 2019

**FROM:** Betty Colaneri, national chairperson of legislation

**TO:** Parish chairpersons of legislation

**CC:** Parish presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents, and life members (on request)

Greetings to my sisters in the League!

"...Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start..." (Pope Francis).

The new year brought the gift of a new national theme for the League. *Care for Our Common Home* provides the perfect opportunity for members to raise self-awareness in taking steps to protect the environment and the world we live in. Pope Francis asks a very profound question, "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us,..."? The Holy Father recently addressed participants gathered at the Vatican for a two-day international conference called "Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Listening to the cry of the earth and of the poor." He stated, "When we speak of sustainability, we cannot overlook how important it is to include and to listen to all voices, especially those usually excluded from this type of discussion, such as the voices of the poor, migrants, indigenous people and the young." Pope Francis stressed that what was needed was a commitment to "promoting and implementing the development goals that are supported by our deepest religious and ethical values." In addressing such a large religious group, Pope Francis made a point of saying that "those of us who are religious need to open up the treasures of our best traditions in order to engage in a true and respectful dialogue on how to build the future of our planet." In the address he also quoted from his encyclical *Laudato Si* and informed the participants that, "three and a half years since the adoption of the sustainable development goals, we must be even more acutely aware of the importance of accelerating and adapting our actions in responding adequately to both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor."

On February 29, 2019, Bill C-57 *An Act to Amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act* received royal assent. "Following the 1983 World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, a 1987 report named 'Our Common Future' was published, defining Sustainable Development as: 'development that meets the needs of the present without

compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’’. Sustainable development has three main pillars: economic, environmental, and social, informally referred to as people, planet and profits. It is essential that human beings have access to basic resources for the protection of health and to enjoy a good quality of life with a sustainable environment.

The draft *2019 to 2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy* may be read or downloaded at [canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/sustainability/federal-sustainable-development-strategy.html](https://canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/sustainability/federal-sustainable-development-strategy.html) along with the *2018 Progress Report on the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*. The later document details the efforts and progress of 41 federal government departments and agencies in implementing the strategy for sustainability, in achieving its targets and areas where additional work is needed. The website offers information, goals and suggestions on how members can do their part to help the environment.

Encourage members to monitor the law and pending regulations. Get in touch with local political representatives and discuss what can be done to work together for a sustainable world.

“I encourage you to continue the fight for that change which present circumstances demand, because the injustice that brings tears to our world and to its poor is not invincible” (Pope Francis).

May our Lord journey with us as we work together for the *Care of Our Common Home*.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty Colaneri".

Betty Colaneri  
Legislation Chairperson