



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: September 24, 2021

FROM: Dorothy Johansen, national chairperson of Christian family life

TO: Parish chairpersons of Christian family life

CC: Parish presidents, provincial presidents, diocesan presidents, life members (upon request)

I recently recalled that in my first year in the League, I was appointed to this standing committee on my parish executive. I did not understand the League, the structure, the bylaws, or the need to speak in public at meetings. With the support and friendship of the executive and the members, I recall the first assigned task was to read a memo just like this and inform the membership about just one or two of its topics at the general meeting.

Therefore, as the national chairperson of Christian family life, I am focused on providing information to you that might be helpful. In return, I would also like to hear about ideas and activities you have done within your council to move members forward in Christian family life.

Marriage and Family:

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) has established a standing committee for family and life. Two of the purposes of this committee are to assist the CCCB in responding to the pastoral needs of married couples and families and assisting them to affirm and strengthen the domestic church in every household, and proclaim the Christian teachings on marriage and the family.

There are resources available to assist you in preparing or participating in events during the National Week for Life and Family, which coincides with the United Nations' International Day of Families on May 15th of each year.

Sanctity of Life:

The other purposes of the CCCB's family and life committee are to assist the conference as a whole in responding to new questions raised by contemporary ethical debates, such as medical assistance in dying (MAiD), palliative care and gender issues, encouraging the ethical and moral development of new biotechnologies with respect to life and what it means to be human and promoting the dignity and sacredness of human life at all stages of life, from conception to natural death. The CCCB website (ccb.ca) has many resources that identify government legislation on life issues and responses from the church.

40 Days for Life began on September 22nd and will end on October 31st. Check 40daysforlife.com to see if there is a vigil planned in your diocese.

The National March for Life, organized by Campaign Life Coalition, will be held on May 12, 2022.

Support for Euthanasia Prevention Coalition was affirmed through a motion to extend it as a temporary national voluntary fund. Consider informing members about this fund and direct them to the resources available at epcc.ca to enhance their knowledge about preventing euthanasia.

Ministry to...

Youth: World Youth Day is an international gathering of young people with the pope. It will be held in August 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal. Councils are encouraged to support the youth in their parish to attend this gathering.

Disabled: Many people have disabilities, and it would be prudent to think of some common things that can be done to make meetings and events better for all members. Do members need transportation to get to and from the event? Does your council need a sound system such as a microphone and speakers so members can hear better? Perhaps a bit more room around the tables and chairs so members can use their walkers and not have to sit at the edge?

Seniors: National Seniors Day (October 1st) is an occasion where members can join in celebrating older adults. Encourage members and councils to acknowledge seniors and their contributions to society and show seniors how much they are appreciated.

Widowed: Does your parish host sessions for grief counselling such as The Centre for the Grief Journey (griefjourney.com)? Are there other programs your parish uses that you could share?

Separated, Divorced: An *Annulments Today, Merciful and Just* brochure, written in plain language, is available from the national website (cwl.ca) for distribution to members and possibly in your parish with the approval of your spiritual advisor.

Vocations: Each council is encouraged to ask their spiritual advisor if there are any specific ways to support vocations to ordained ministry and consecrated life in their parish. Also, look for World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life resources in February and resources for vocations in May.