



London Diocesan Council
The Catholic Women's League of Canada



To: All Parish Presidents, Legislation Chairpersons

CC: London Diocesan Council; OPC Legislation Chairperson Margie Royle

From: Helga Stuermer, Legislation Chairperson

Date: September 2019

Directive #9

The greatest achievements are those that benefit others

What a wonderful summer. So much family time and gatherings with friends, but now we must remember to write and inform our sisters of information we received.

In my Sep 18 and May 19 directives, I wrote about the **Scavenger Hunt**: At the Legislation Homeless Project. Here is some excerpt of the summary of the Scavenger Hunt Project: send to me by Karen McDonald.

Each committee was asked to develop a small project, or suggest to members in Ontario on how to assist the homeless. Members were asked to discover what programs & services are available in their communities for the homelessness. It certainly was a huge topic to find what legislation is in place provincially & federally.

We hoped for 3 scenarios, to answer specific questions, and accomplish certain tasks, Here are 3 scenarios:

1. Marcie living in an abusive relationship, she is frightened for her children;
2. Ben a sole provider for his family must take leave of absence from work after an accident.
3. Sara's options are limited as she is evicted from her apartment due to a psychotic or schizophrenic episode.

The info they gathered, would discover the need for programs & services in their areas. The exercise was to bring about changes, introduce Legislation, and perhaps resolutions to be written up to identify and address a need.

Twenty-eight teams from 7 of the 13 dioceses in Ontario (and Quebec-Pembroke diocese) completed the Scavenger Hunt including Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Pembroke, St. Catharines, Sault St. Marie, and Toronto.

Some of the teams that participated were: The 4 D's – Disadvantaged, Destitute, Depressed and Deprived; "Becoming More Aware" ; the Factioneers; Holy Trinity Helping Hands; St. Michaels Moms for Marcy; Fall Leaves; St. Peter's Female Apostles; The Corbell Trio; Burlington Busy

Ladies; Soo Snoop Sisters; Second Beginnings; Peace of Mind Care; St. George's Homelessness Awareness & Action Team; St. Tim's CWL Legislation; Lucan CWL Detective Team; Dedicated to Eradicating Homelessness's; Mercy for Marcy; St. Francis Xavier CWL Legislation Committee; St. Gerard's CWL Agents; St. Anne's CWL; and St. Martin of Tours Parish CWL.

Karen's team was thrilled with the fantastic response, as members, parishioners, friends, and even a few spiritual advisors participated.

All those who went on the Hunt expressed to be glad for the opportunity to participate as they discovered services offered in their own Cities –Towns. In reading the 28 surveys the following was noted:

A tremendous amount of info was gathered, and existing Legislation & Resolutions were extremely well researched. Following is a direct copy of the letter: In order not to miss a single quote I just copied and pasted from the provincial Team.

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□ Members reported learning about programs/services offered they never knew existed including: food banks in their own neighborhood; nutrition services; "We Scare Hunger" campaign; addiction assessment and referral centers; housing programs; centers for mental health; crisis center phone lines; counselling and victim services, shelters for women experiencing violence, legal clinics, Ontario Disability Support Program, 211 Ontario, Bell Let's Talk campaign; Women in Crisis; seniors at home programs, emergency shelters, geriatric programs, caregiver support services; what long-term care homes are designed for; how to watch for signs of crisis; Indigenous Friendship Centers; connecting businesses that have surplus food; pilot project in four Ontario cities to rescue surplus foods; policies of grocery stores regarding disposal of food; Catholic family services and parish outreach; Red Cross transportation and March of Dimes Canada Assistive Devices Program (to name a few).

□ Members reported learning: about places that help you apply for a housing subsidy; there is no affordable housing in their community; about long waiting lists for affordable housing and high costs of apartment rents; homelessness hits all demographics; people of all ages experience homelessness and stay with relatives or friends; in some countries it is against the law to throw out food; there are many degrees of homelessness in greater numbers than we imagine; there are many resources but they are difficult to access if you don't know where to start; homelessness can quickly become a reality; they are now better equipped to listen, support, and guide people in difficult situations.

• Teams did extensive research on legislation (and resolutions) relating to the following topics: foodbanks; food or water waste; affordable or low-income housing; mental health; health care; developing programs for seniors; housing; child and family services; family responsibility and support arrears enforcement; Ontario Disability Support Program; Ontario Works; divorce; pensions; human rights; old age security; abuse of vulnerable persons; United Nations declarations; national housing strategy; nutrition in the north; violence on television; responsible internet use for children; Canada's Food Guide; safe potable water for First Nations communities; strategy to end child poverty; caffeine in energy drinks; children of mothers in prison; farmer tax credit; street kids; food and organic waste policy statement; domestic violence; spousal abuse; safe food for Canadians (to name a few).

The teams reported that they will continue to follow up on the information gathered. It was submitted by Provincial Legislation Team: Karen McDonald, Carol Richer, and Sue Lubowithz.

It is such a tremendous report that really took allot of hard work & time involvement. Please dear CWL sisters read this and re-read it, it is that interesting and important. I am so proud to be a member of THIS ORGANIZATION.

Some of these ladies have now moved on to different position:
Karen McDonald is now Education & Health Provincial Standing Committee;
Margie Royle is now the Provincial Legislation. I am looking forward to working with her.

As always many Blessings to each and every one of you.

Yours Helga Stuermer, London Diocesan Legislation