

Community Life Annual Report  
Province of Nova Scotia  
January 1 – December 31, 2016  
Committee Chairperson: Sandra O'Connell

I would like to thank Janice MacDougall (Antigonish) and Dina Samson (Halifax/Yarmouth) for submitting their Diocesan Reports summarizing the work being done throughout the province under the community Life committee. In total 27 out of 72 councils submitted reports electronically by the deadline of December 15, 2016. This number is lower than other years, but as with anything new, there is always a learning curve. I am confident that our completed reports will increase. Below is a summary of what was submitted.

The questionnaire for this committee was detailed. One council has identified some projects that may be part of their 2017 endeavours! Some councils were a little overwhelmed with the number of questions. The important thing to remember is that each council is unique, a project that is done in one part of the Country may not be viable in another area. The goal is to get as much information as possible of the work being done throughout Canada.

**Councils contribute** to Development and Peace. From the reports received, \$1,867.30 was given through the 1% program. Parishes use the 1% program and the Share Lent resources. Chalice, Red Cross, Mass For Shut-ins, and Catholic Missions are other programs supported by CWL. Donations made to those suffering from Incarceration, Bullying, Domestic violence, Homelessness, Poverty, Affirmative Action, Indigenous Peoples, Youth Centre, Loaves & Fishes/Soup Kitchen/Food Banks, Under One Umbrella, Adopt a Family, Palliative Care, Men's Shelter, Scholarships, Cancer Patient Care Fund, Transition House, Food for Children, Syrian Refugees, Eye Glasses, Stamps, Hearing Aids, Canadian Red Cross, Fire Disaster Fund Fort McMurray, Flood Disaster in Cape Breton, Tri-Heart Society, Clothing and Supplies for shelters, Right to Life, Opportunity Shop, Lunch Programs, Inter-Church weekly events, Save A Family, Somebody Cares Day, Newborns, Community Garden, Parish Social Action, CNIB/Black Watch Dinner, Affordable Housing, Clothing Drives, Anti-Poverty Foundations/Campaigns, Programs supporting School Children, Drop In Centres, Emergency Shelters, Domestic Abuse Shelters, Violence Prevention Programs & Wish Foundation.

Members continue **to volunteer** in a number of ways. Help was given to those incarcerated, bullied, domestic violence, homelessness, poverty, elder abuse, restorative justice for young offenders, youth centre, Loaves & Fishes/Soup Kitchens/Food Banks, Under One Umbrella, Adopt a Family, Palliative Care, Men's Shelter, Transition House, Food 4 Children, Syrian Refugee (provide transportation to classes, appointments, tutor sessions for English, Math, etc.), Prison Ministries, Right to Life, Opportunity Shop, Lunch Programs, Inter-Church weekly events, Safe A Family, Somebody Cares Day, Good Shepherd Luncheon Program, Affordable Housing, Anti-Poverty Foundations/Campaigns, Programs for school children, Clothing Drives, Drop In Centres, Emergency Shelters, Restorative Justice & Violence Prevention Programs. One council reported that a former President of their group was voted Volunteer of Year for her town.

**Many programs are supported** by councils. The top projects that were supported, with 4 or more councils responding in the survey are: Operation Christmas Child, Chalice, Canadian Red Cross, Catholics Near East Welfare Assoc, Operation Eyesight, Samaritans Purse and Save A Family....along with several others with 3 to 1 councils participating. L'Arche and Grandmothers in Africa were also listed, but not in the questionnaire.

**Letter writing** still continues to be an important method for reaching out to engage with political figures. Councils wrote to their member of government on the following issues: elder abuse, affirmative action, anti-bullying programs, Global Accountability for Registered Canadian Mining Companies, and Water in Developing Countries, Councils throughout the province continue to **form better relationships with our Indigenous Peoples**, participating in events sponsored by communities, such as sisters in the Spirit. Some councils subscribe to **newsletters** to become more informed. **Prayer shawls** have been knitted for victims of residential schools.

One council in the province has an action plan for Resolution 2016.01: *Equal Access to Permanent Resident Status, An amendment to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*

A letter writing campaign will take place asking parliament to amend the Refugee Protection Act so foreign workers can apply for permanent resident status regardless of occupational classification, along with inviting a guest speaker involved in advocacy on behalf of foreign workers to speak at a meeting.

As a Country, Canada has welcomed refugees from Syria. These families are sponsored by groups in each province. Parishes throughout the province have provided assistance with housing, financial assistance, education, and acclimating to Canadian weather. Friendships have formed, knowledge gained and a sense of peace has been given to refugees. These families have been given a new way of life and are being helped by many CWL women.

The power of prayer can never be underestimated. Members continue to pray for their parishes and community. Prayers were also offered for refugees, homeless shelters, emergency shelters, food banks, violence prevention programs, anti-poverty programs, and restorative justice were the most reported. Members continue to pray for fellow members and for our deceased members and families.

The Community Life committee is an in-depth, multi-dimensional aspect of the Catholic Women's League. The women of Nova Scotia continue to participate in all aspects of this committee. I am extremely proud to be a member of this incredible group! Thank you for all the work you do and for the ideas and projects that you initiate and complete. By using our new theme as a guide "***Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call***", I am sure that we will continue to be inspired and become empowered to work for ***God and Canada***.

Respectively Submitted  
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Community Life Chairp