



Nova Scotia Provincial Council
Catholic Women's League of Canada
Education and Health Communique # 3
Care for Our Common Home

To: Earlene Landry, Antigonish Diocesan Education and Health Chairperson,
Jeanette Lidstone, Halifax-Yarmouth Diocesan Education and Health
Chairperson
(For distribution to all parish councils)

From: RoseAnn Hetherington, Nova Scotia
Provincial Chairperson, Education and Health

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Copied: Provincial President, Glenda Carson and Executive (for information)
National Chairperson, Faith Anderson (for information)

Greetings to all as the final weeks of winter are starting to come to a close and we look forward to the beautiful signs of spring.

National Chairperson Faith Anderson has provided important and timely initiatives in her Communiques posted on the National CWL website. Some of the highlights are as follows:

World Water Day – March 22nd

World Water Day will take place on March 22nd. World Water Day is sponsored by the United Nations focusing on the importance of freshwater. The 2020 theme is Water and Climate Change. World Water Day celebrates water, the importance of water in climate change and raises the awareness that many people are living in the world without access to safe water.

The key messages of the 2020 campaign are:

- We cannot afford to wait – climate policy makers must put water at the centre of government policy. Governments, business and citizens must work together to fight climate change and protect our water systems.
- Water can help fight climate change – rainwater can be stored for dry periods through rain barrels, wastewater can be reused, and vegetation can protect against flooding and erosion.
- Everyone can do something to fight climate change – small changes can make a big difference such as 5 minute showers, bring your bag, drive less, turn technology and lights off when not using them, buy local produce, recycle, refill and reuse, unplug when possible and shop sustainably.

Posters and resource information promoting World Water Day 2020 are available at worldwaterday.org/2020-home/share/campaign-posters/#english. On World Water Day, March 22, 2020, WATER – A Multimedia Art Show will take place at 1313 Hollis St from 1-4 pm. Explore what water means to you. Nova Scotians will come together to explore WATER. Water for survival, water as a recreation, water as a sacred right and much more.

There are many charities working on water issues in Nova Scotia. Some of these organizations include Ecology Action Centre, Nova Scotia Nature Trust, Nature Conservancy of Nova Scotia, Clean Nova Scotia, ACAP Cape Breton, Clean Annapolis River project and the Coastal Action Centre to name just a few. These charities provide valuable information on the important work they are undertaking and may provide opportunities for Councils to consider becoming involved with.

There are several national resolutions for Councils to continue to review and act on:

- 2004.07 Water Use in Canada
- 2001.04 Water Quality in Canada
- 1999.09 Bulk Fresh Water Resources
- 1990.07 Environmental Concerns (the pollution of our oceans, rivers and lakes)

See worldwaterday.org, worldwaterday.ca

Earth Day – April 22nd

The theme for Earth Day 2020 is **Climate Action**. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day which was introduced on April 22, 1970. It is hard to believe that Earth Day was introduced fifty years ago to be a time for education and activism about the environment. The issues of the day at that time were oil spills, smog and pollution. That first Earth Day is credited with being the launch of the modern-day environmental movement. So much progress has been made however so much more needs to be done! Simple things we can do to protect the earth and make a difference everyday:

- reduce, reuse and recycle to conserve natural resources and landfill space
- conserve water
- shop wisely buying items with less plastic and take along reusable shopping bags
- plant a tree which provides food and oxygen to the air helping to combat climate change
- educate yourself and others on the importance and value of our natural resources
- recycle electronics such as e-book readers, cell phones, printers, countertop microwaves

The next Fridays for Future Canada, the movement Greta Thunberg began in August 2018, will take place on April 3, 2020. There was great support in our province during the September strike. It is hoped that Canadians will participate in these strikes and in the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

Councils are encouraged to organize a Council event or participate in events scheduled in your communities. See www.earthday.ca, www.earthday.org, fridaysforfuture.ca, recyclemyelectronics.ca

12 Hours of Palliative Care

National Hospice Palliative Care Week will take place **May 3-9th**. Councils are encouraged to participate in the **12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care** initiative during this important week to pray that hospice and palliative care will be available to all Canadians. A **Palliative Care Kit** will be available on the national website (cwl.ca) to download and be used by Councils. The League has developed a **palliative care postcard** to address the issue of palliative care in Canada. The postcard can be found under the 100 series with printing instructions. These postcards can be used within Councils for family and friends as well be distributed after Masses during National Palliative Care week. There is an article in the Catholic Register (catholicregister.org) “Palliative care doctors draw the line” which is an excellent read on the topic of palliative care and medically induced death. I would encourage Councils to read this informative article.

National Bursary

The National Bursary Fund is used to provide financial assistance to members pursuing studies, courses, seminars, conferences, workshops and diploma/degree programs in the areas of spiritual growth, adult faith formation, youth ministry, ministry to patients in palliative care, ministry to shut-ins, parliamentary procedure and literacy tutoring. The National Bursary brochure has a new look and can be found on the national website (cwl.ca) under Promotional Material – (312). The National Bursary application can be found under Forms - The National Bursary application (552) This is a great opportunity for members to enrich their knowledge and spiritual growth through attending courses and programs. **The deadline for applications is May 15th, 2020.**

Also, we are coming into the time of year when many Councils award Bursaries to high school students furthering their education. A new Bursary Certificate is available through the national website (cwl.ca) Certificates – (209) which provides an acknowledgement of the student's academic accomplishment. These certificates can be requested electronically, or hard copies can be purchased.

Mental Health

Mental Health Week will take place May 4 –10th. Councils are encouraged to use the **Mental Health Postcard** found on the national website (CWL.ca) under the 100 series. These can be downloaded for use by Councils. These cards can be sent to the Prime Minister, Premier and members of both the federal and provincial legislative assembly.

In May 2012, the Province of Nova Scotia launched a five-year strategy called “Together We Can: The plan to improve mental health and addictions care for Nova Scotians” which addressed the issues in the care provided to Nova Scotians facing mental health and addictions issues. This was Nova Scotia's first Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. The Provincial Government has identified the following three key areas for improvement in mental health and addictions planning over the next here years: access to services, integration and continuum of care.

A great summary of actions that have taken place and are planned in these categories can be found on pages 23 and 24 in Appendix A: Summary of Actions in this document. The Provincial Government has made Mental Health and Addictions a priority. Although the

provision of services is not perfect, there have been definite improvements. See novascotia.ca (Blueprint for Mental Health and Addictions)

There are several resource articles available on the Canadian Mental Health website of topics which may be useful to be discussed as part of the promotion of Mental Health Week. See cmha.ca.

Speakers can be requested for an information session from the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia. Information can be found at mentalhealthns.ca.

Heart and Stroke

As February comes to a close, I thought it might be useful to share some important information on heart disease and strokes in women. The biggest health problem facing women is heart disease and stroke. Heart disease and stroke kills more than seven times as many women as breast cancer. Heart disease and stroke kills 31,000 women in Canada annually but most women are unaware of the threat.

Most Canadian women have at least one risk factor. Women need to know what their individual risk factors are while recognizing the signs of heart disease and stroke.

(heartandstroke.ca) There is resource information including a risk assessment that you can take to look at ways to improve your heart health. See “HeartSmart™ Women A guide to living with and preventing heart disease and stroke” for excellent information on all aspects of heart disease and stroke in women.

(heartandstroke.ca)

Ways to reduce risk factors include eating well, physical activity, maintain a healthy weight, stop smoking, manage stress and moderation in drinking alcoholic beverages.

See heartandstroke.ca for further information.

Let us remember during World Water Day and on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day:

“When we exploit creation, we destroy that sign of God’s love.” Pope Francis

RoseAnn Hetherington
Provincial Chairperson Education and Health