

Community Life Oral Report
Nova Scotia Provincial Convention
June 8-10, 2018
Convention Host: St. John the Baptist, New Glasgow

Madam President,

I would like to thank the councils that submitted their annual reports. These reports are your story. Each council that reports give another a chance to learn, share, and discuss topics that are important to us all. A summary can be found in your Convention book.

I would like to welcome Ethel Jack as the new Halifax/Yarmouth Diocesan Community Life Chairperson. Thank you to Dina Samson for your dedication and commitment to this committee for the past two years.

The CNEWA is the Holy Father's special agency serving the Middle East. The Catholic Women's League has partnered with this group to help Christian's in the Holy Land. Velma's Dream is an example of one of the programs. A new campaign was unveiled in May of this year. 'Christians Can't Survive Without You', aims to help the displaced in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Israel. In the past 15 years more than 2.5 million Middle East Christians have been forced out of their homes. From 2014 to 2017, CNEWA worldwide contributed over 47 million in emergency, humanitarian and pastoral projects to the Middle East.

Development and Peace is an organization dedicated to help those in developing countries. Currently, funds that are being sent to the National office are being held until a clarification on some of the projects. Clarification has been asked from both the CCCB and Development and Peace.

Betty Colaneri's article in the spring issue of the Canadian League "What Did You Do?" sheds some light on homeless crisis in Canada. The statistics given from a 2013 report are staggering. On any given night it is estimated that 30,000 people can be experiencing homelessness. The article states that families with children are the fastest growing homeless demographic. Over 10% of Canadian families currently live below the low income cut-off, unable to meet even the most basic needs. In 2016, over one third of food bank users in Canada were children. What can we do? The article ends with a quote from "With Open Heart", "Tomorrow God isn't going to ask 'What did you Dream? What did you plan? What did you preach? He's going to ask What did you do?'" So, what can we do? Action is needed, if each of us here this weekend could put this song in your heart and 'think of your fellow man, lend him a helping hand', the world could be a better place!

We always think of those in need during the holidays, but their issues are year round. Continue to help with food banks, St Vincent DePaul, homeless shelters, seniors living alone, families struggling to make ends meet. Continue to voice concerns to local, provincial, and federal politicians stressing the need for programs to help all Canadians to have access to basic necessities.

Last year I asked members to continue the lap quilt project. I hope that some councils were able to complete some lap quilts throughout the winter. This project was initiated by the centenary committee. I am sure that these gifts were done and given to others to enjoy and cherish. Unfortunately, I did not

receive any photos to showcase the talent of your beautiful work, but I am sure that the recipients will treasure them.

Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and, wonder, all gifts of the Holy Spirit. Community Life embodies all these attributes. The Holy Spirit continues to guide us and give us the wings to help us on our journey. May he continue to bless us and bestow his wondrous gifts on us!

Respectively Submitted

Sandra O'Connell
Community Life Chairperson
Nova Scotia Provincial Council