

The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Grouard-McLennan Diocesan Council  
**Christian Family Life Communique #2014-3**

October 18, 2014

To: All Parish Council Christian Family Life Standing Committee Chairs  
From: Mary A., Grouard-McLennan Diocesan Christian Family Life Chairperson

Hello to my sisters in the League.

Welcome Back! Thank you to all who have accepted the position of Christian Family Life Chair on your executive. I am looking forward to a very successful year working together. Judy L. has been appointed as the new National Chairperson of Christian Family Life. She is a member of St. Paul's Parish in Summerside, P.E.I. and I am sure we will be hearing from her soon.

### **Sanctity of Life**

At the Alberta Mackenzie 2014 Provincial Annual Convention held June 6 – 7, 2014 in Grande Prairie, the membership in attendance passed Resolution 2014.01 "LIMITING DISCLOSURE OF THE SEX OF THE FETUS UNTIL AFTER AT LEAST 30 WEEKS OF PREGNANCY." The resolution was forwarded to National Council for consideration at the 94<sup>th</sup> annual national convention. Unfortunately only 5 resolutions were presented – this was not included among them. I am urging members to review this resolution and act upon it by following the action plan outlined in the resolution which suggests we "write letters to the Prime Minister and Members of Parliament including the Status of Women and Health Ministers urging the federal government to condemn discrimination against girls and women by enacting legislation to prevent sex selective pregnancy termination." Members are also encouraged to write to the College of Physicians and Surgeons requesting that they postpone the disclosure of medically irrelevant information to women until after at least 30 weeks of pregnancy.

When acting on these resolutions we should address the issues as individuals – we should not speak on behalf of The Catholic Women's League of Canada (*only the President is in the position to do that*) but we can say that we learned of the issue through a CWL resolution and we can say we are a member.

### **Euthanasia**

Unfortunately Bill 52 (which includes euthanasia referred to as "medical aid in dying" as part of the continuum of end-of-life care) did pass in the Quebec National Assembly on June 11, 2014. In response, the CSPCP (Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians) released a statement voicing their position on this matter and to clarify their mandate. *They also partnered with The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association, the Canadian Medical Association and Maclean's magazine in hosting "The End of Life Care National Dialogue" which took place in the first half of 2014. The results were published in June of 2014 and both documents are accessible on their website: <www.csppc.ca>.*

Our National Council has reviewed and reaffirmed "*The Catholic Women's League of Canada Position Paper on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide*" (Oct. 3, 2014), and in response to a case which is to begin October 15, 2014 ("*Carter vs. Canada*" – a case that seeks to legalize

*assisted suicide and euthanasia in Canada)* has issued a press release (Oct. 9, 2014 from Erica Johnson) and written the federal government commending them for preparing to defend its position to the Supreme Court of Canada (Oct. 10, 2014 letter to The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper from our National President, Barbara Dowding).

National Office has also issued an Urgent Need for National Prayer to oppose the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide in Canada and to pray for respect for life from conception until natural death.

*Pray for our country, our judges, our law makers, physicians, health care workers, those who are working to prevent the legalization of euthanasia/assisted suicide, the vulnerable sick and the dying, and for those who have been misguided into believing that suicide is something that should be endorsed by our society and our medical profession.*

*May the Holy Spirit grant us courage, wisdom, and strength for the days ahead as our nation grapples to address these issues. May the Spirit of Truth and Justice prevail.*

We are also encouraged to say a novena to St. Joseph. A copy can be accessed at <<https://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/prayers/stjoe2.htm>>.

### **Ministry to the Separated and Divorced**

The two-week Synod of Bishops on the "pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelization" is now in session. Pope Francis has said church law regarding marriage, divorce and separation is a topic that exemplifies a general need for mercy in the church today – because of this many are anticipating radical changes in church policy. It is of utmost importance that we pray that the Holy Spirit guide our bishops at this historic time.

*“We do not want a Church that will move with the world. We want a Church that will move the world.” – G.K. Chesterton.*

### **Ministry to Seniors**

*Independent Seniors' Advocate – **POSTPONED**\*\* pending outcome of new Seniors Ministry (Sept2014)*

At the 2014 Provincial Convention (June 6 – 7) the membership approved the provincial initiative “**Independent Seniors' Advocate**” which encouraged members to urge their MLA through petition to amend the Alberta Health Act to ensure that the Seniors' Advocate be an Officer of the Legislature and therefore independent. The change would ensure that the advocate would no longer be accountable to the Minister of Health and would be able to advocate for seniors not only with issues concerning health but also other areas such as housing, income support, seniors' services, non-personal health care trustee and guardian issues, transportation and senior abuse. *When our new Premier, Jim Prentice, took office, an announcement was made outlining a new position “Seniors Ministry”.*

**As a result this initiative has been put on hold pending the outcome of the creation of this new position.**

May God Bless You and Keep You as you continue your work for God & Canada.

*Mary*