

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Provincial Council of Newfoundland and Labrador



Communiqué # 5

September 15, 2011

I hope that everyone has had a restful and invigorating summer. While the good weather has been off and on in our province, we are richly blessed to live in a province so beautifully adorned with so many of God's great handiworks.

Before I begin this Communiqué # 5, it seems fitting that as Education and Health provincial representative, I ask everyone to keep Peggy Roche in their prayers as she undergoes major surgery. Likewise, I ask that we also keep Edie Rose in our prayers as she underwent major surgery last week. If anyone knows of any others that you would like to have included here in my future Education and Health communiqués in this way, then please let me know. These are, after all, health matters that really matter to us all!

Big News: Resolution from NL

At the last Provincial Convention, October 2010 in GFW, Lidwina Critch expressed an interest in putting forth a resolution at the National CWL Conference to be held in Toronto in August 2011. Lidwina invited anyone who was interested in working with her on this to contact her. As Education and Health representative I saw a good fit for Lidwina's proposed resolution around caffeine content in energy drinks, and so I volunteered to be part of the working group. At the end of the day, the team consisted of Lidwina Critch, Agnes Ebbs, Margaret Fitzpatrick and Rita Janes.

I was not only impressed with, but so often, energized by, the enthusiasm of each member of this team whenever we came together to work on the resolution. Adhering to the established CWL guidelines for putting forth a resolution, we were successful in getting a resolution to the floor for the National Convention. It was presented by Rita Janes. I had an e-mail from Rita saying that our resolution had been passed unanimously.



Education and Health

I anticipate that Lidwina will speak to this further at the Provincial Convention in GFW in October. For those of you who will not be there, I can tell you that the resolution 'urged Health Canada to engage in a program of public education focusing on the harmful effects of caffeine in children and to legislate stricter regulations making it mandatory for manufacturers to clearly identify, on its labels, all the caffeine additives in energy drinks'. Caffeine, when consumed in large quantities, can have detrimental effects on the body. Some of the effects may be immediate, and in some cases, the effects may be cumulative over time.

World Crisis

There are so many crises in the world. Our prayers are needed all over the world. The famine in the Horn of Africa is but one crisis that is gaining worldwide attention. What many of us don't see or hear about is the political roots of this crisis. You can read about this in a Globe and Mail [Saturday, September 3, 2011, Section F.] article entitled '*No famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy*' - Amartya Sen'. As we provide financial aid to countries such as Somalia, we must also seek to help by speaking out against the war that ravages the people and its lands. ***Perhaps a prayer group, dedicated to praying for a resolution to the root of the problem, might be do-able by some of your Councils.***

Back to School

This is the time of the year when, worldwide, schools will re-open. It's time for new learning and reinforcing of what has already been learned. We must support our children and youth in their educational endeavors. We can perhaps show our support for our children by organizing, within our respective Councils, collections of juice boxes and recess foods, such as nutritious fruit bars. These could be sent to the schools so that teachers can have on hand, foods for those days when there are children who come without anything to eat and believe me, there are those dark days. Hunger hurts. It not only impedes learning but suffocates love. ***Why not look at what your Council might do to address the nutritional health needs of the less fortunate children in our schools. Perhaps someone knows a nutritionist and a teacher who could be a guest speaker at one of your Council meetings to speak to nutrition in school aged children.***

Gospel Teachings

In the past two weekend Liturgies, September 3rd/ 4th and September 10th / 11th, the Gospels spoke to us about forgiveness. I was particularly attentive to these Gospels [Matthew 18] as they re-ignite my efforts to raise an awareness around the important role forgiveness plays in our physical health and spiritual well-being through a Forgiving Blanket project [see my Education and Health Communiqué #4]. My goal is to make the Forgiving Blanket a constant reminder of the need to give forgiveness and to ask for forgiveness. ***If there is sufficient interest in the Forgiving Blanket project in CWL Councils in and around the Avalon region, I hope to offer an information session and elaborate further on the project.*** Councils outside this area could register their interest via e-mail and we'd take it from there.

One's own physical and spiritual education and health

We need to be cognizant of ways to stay physically as well as spiritually healthy. This usually starts with a solid education around what it means to be physically healthy and what it means to be spiritually healthy. The Word of God is a great educational tool. It teaches us how to live in ways that provide physical and well as spiritual nourishment. I would suggest that at each of our weekend Liturgical celebration we reflect on how the Word of God speaks to us in this way. ***Maybe at a Council meeting, there could be a short reflection on how we see the Word of God as food for physical and spiritual well being.***

Periodically I go to one of the local bookstores and browse through the shelves on Religious material. There you can often find some interesting reading material. ***If your Council doesn't have a CWL library, then perhaps you could look at the feasibility of starting one as a way of sharing resources among members.*** This could be helpful to others who don't frequent bookstores [for whatever reason], or who are on a fixed income wherein buying books can be an added expense.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to guide us in our efforts to be women of action, women whose work is centered on Faith and Justice.

Kay Barrington

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NL Provincial Chairperson of Education and Health