

CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE WORKSHOP - June 6, 2009 –

Welcome to this Christian Family Life Workshop. My name is Sheila H., and presently (June 2009) I am the ABMK Provincial Council Christian Family Life Chairperson.

I am delighted to be here today. I hope that we can share some ways and means of making the Christian Family Life Standing Committee ‘come to life’ for all of us. Together we pray:

The League Prayer

We humbly pray you, O God our Father
to bless the Catholic Women’s League of Canada.

Bless our beloved country,
our homes and families.

Send your Holy Spirit upon us
to give light to our minds
and strength to our wills

That we may know and fulfill
your great law of charity.

Teach us to share with others
at home and abroad

the good things you have given us.

This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ
and the intercession of our patroness,

Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Amen

“The work of the Christian Family Life Standing committee is our love story in action” Christian Family Life Study Kit 2004 page1

“I have loved you just as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my own joy may be in you and your joy complete. This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.” “You did not choose me, no, I chose you; and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last; so that the Father will give you anything that you ask him in my name. My command to you is to love one another.” John 15:9-13, 16-17

Let us all take a moment to focus ourselves as we pray silently to the Holy Spirit -- ask Him to help us prepare ourselves to receive the gifts and benefits resulting from participation in this workshop.

Please join me as we recite

‘Convener’s Prayer’

Dear Lord, make me appreciative of the dignity
of my standing committee and its many responsibilities.
Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness,
unkindness or impatience.

Please bear with my faults, looking only to my intention,
which is to serve You in the person of each member
of the Catholic Women’s League.

Increase my faith, bless my efforts and work
for God and Canada. Amen

The Christian Family Life Standing Committee is a very important part of the League’s mandate and mission. Object #3 of the CWL in our Constitution & Bylaws (2000) Article IV, directs us “**to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life.**”

This standing committee is all encompassing - from conception to natural death.

Please divide into small groups; after reading your assigned section, write your answers to the questions &/or challenges on the paper provided.

- a) marriage and family *The family is the basic cell of society. It is the cradle of life and love, the place in which the individual is ‘born’ and ‘grows’.* (Christifidelis Laici)
 - Can you name the different kinds family?
 - What are some of the challenges faced? How can we help?
 - Pro-active or re-active
 - How does the Rosary help parents?
- b) sanctity of life *It is the belief of the League that the right to life is sacred from the moment of conception to natural death.*
 - Why is human life so precious?
 - What does our Church say about euthanasia? embryonic stem cell research?
 - Can we recognize the signs of contemplated suicide?
 - What is the Back Porch Ministry?
- c) ministry to:
 - youth: *Young people are the future of the church and society. Youth today have much to share; and exchange of ideas between generations is a source of growth and renewal for all.*

Children:

- a) How can we welcome children in our parish community?
- b) Are everyday needs being met? If not, can we help?
- c) What can we do about mental, physical, or sexual abuse?

Adolescents 10 - 19:

- a) How do we relate to the youth of today and their challenges? Do we provide a listening non-judgmental ear?
- b) Does our parish have an active youth group? How can we help?

disabled: *The aim of each council is to create an attitude which regards disabled individuals not only as people to be loved and served, but as responsible partners in the church's mission.*

- a) How are the disabled welcomed in our homes/parishes?
- b) Do the disabled feel a part of the liturgical family?
- c) Can we help those families who are coping with mental disability?

seniors: *Seniors provide a gift to society of traditions and heritage acquired through a lifetime of experience.*

- a) How 'senior friendly' is your meeting place? Parish??
- b) Do we realize that seniors enjoy their independence, but need someone to 'walk with them, and be their friend.'

widowed: *By the sharing of their gifts in church and society, the widowed may find their personal fulfilment in reaching out to others.*

- a) Grief takes many shapes. Are we familiar with them?
- b) Do we avoid those grieving because we don't know what to say, or how to comfort them?
- c) Do you know of a survivor group to recommend to others?

separated & divorced: *Many single and divorced people face the responsibility of raising children alone. The need to express the message of hope by offering assistance can be very beneficial.*

- a) How do we treat those of our sisters/fellow parishioners who struggle with divorce or separation?
- b) What programs are available to these sufferers?

d) vocations: *Vocations 'are a gift of God' and 'they are born in*

basic cell of society cradle of life and love
threats to the family role in education proper to the family
safe guard the role of family family identity
rights of the family civilizations depend on the quality of families
incomparable social value

Would someone volunteer to write these words/phrases on the flip chart, please.

Take note of all the words and phrases we have written. This information can be used to formulate a specific 'aim/goal' for Christian Family Life. What do you see? Can you make it into a single statement?

Eg. "To awaken within the parish community the vision of family as the basic cell of society, the path to the future."

Now, I would like you to return to your smaller groups and discuss what **you** can do as members of the parish or diocesan council to ensure that your Christian Family Life Standing Committee fulfills its aims/goals? Have your recorder list all your suggestions and ideas - see if you can develop a plan of action for implementing these ideas and thus bring the message to your parish and community.

Come back to the larger group and share your plan of action with the rest. Our goal is to develop a plan that is simple, yet workable and effective - so that all councils, (whether large or small, composed of young and energetic members or more senior and experienced members) will see its merit and be willing to implement our findings.

There is something **NEW** and **EXCITING** in the CWL!! How many of you are familiar with the Catholic Girls' League - more familiarly known as "CGL"?

This group is part of the League's commitment to evangelization – the local parish council of The Catholic Women's League shall be the sponsoring body of the Catholic Girls' League.

While these CGL groups will remain under the ministry of youth, reporting will be done through the parish council's Christian Family Life chairperson. CGLs exist only at the parish council level.

There are 11 active CGL councils across Canada, and six of them are in the Edmonton Archdiocese; 3 in Ontario, 1 in QC, and 1 in BC. The inactive councils: 1 in PEI, 1 in BC, 4 in ON, and 7 interested in ON (but not yet active).

These special young ladies perform many of the same activities as our CWL members – spirituality is a very important part of their meetings. Some of them have made rosaries and cards for First Communicants. All offer special prayers to our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. One council held a “Penny War” and raised over \$500.00 which they used to purchase items (school-bags, uniforms, and mosquito netting) for third world countries. How fortunate are their CGL Councils, and how fortunate the CWL council will be that receives these young ladies as members.

They have their own Administration Manual; their motto is: “Faith, Friendship, Fun, and Formation”; and their patroness is Our Lady of Good Counsel. This CGL Administration Manual must be obtained from National Office so that National receives the organizational information for all CGL councils formed.

The established trademarks of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, i.e., crest and stylized Madonna, cannot be used in CGL material.

There are several ‘guidelines’ for organizing a CGL: the girls must be between the ages of 10 - 15, there must be at least two counselors who are parish council members and a religious leader. Officers are elected from among the girls, and ‘Mary’s Leaders’ (four) for Faith, Friendship, Fun, and Formation committees.

The Ethical Guidelines for the Catholic Women’s League of Canada must be carefully followed in order to ensure that there is a moral environment that will protect the well-being of these young people. (National Manual of Policy and Procedure, 2008 Article VII.)

How about a challenge to see which CWL council sponsors the first new CGL?
Good Luck!!

Overview of Workshop - Questions?

This afternoon I hope that we have all learned some new ideas about serving God and Canada by our work for the Christian Family Life standing committee. I encourage you to take this information and the plans we have formulated back to your councils so they will be put into action.

The handout you received today will contain:

- a) National Ethical Guidelines – National Manual of Policy and Procedure (pages 37-40)
- b) An enlarged ‘postcard’ from www.AbortioninCanada.ca
- c) List of Resolutions relating to CFL
- d) A copy of Resolution 1993.01
- e) “Prayer for Canada” prayer card.

Look at the list of resolutions presented at a National Convention by Provincial Christian Family Life committees. Those with the blue coloured year and number at the beginning of the line are available on the National site online. Many are still open to actions by members – I encourage you to study them and have your members work on the ‘resolved’ clauses at the end of each resolution. We **CAN** make a difference!!

As an example, you have a copy of “Resolution - 93.01” to read. This resolution was presented as the first resolution at the National Convention in 1993 - hence 1993.01. We have been praying and working for the ‘personhood and the rights of the unborn child’ for many years, and we must continue to do so.

Have reference materials available for viewing.

Please take a few moments to complete the evaluation and return it before you leave.

Thank you all for participating in this workshop on Christian Family Life. Together we have seen the far reaching aspects of this standing committee, and we know that there is still a lot of work to be done.

We will close with the Prayer for Canada, which you received as you came in and then we will sing the Hymn “Service”. Just as an aside - we received this special prayer card at the National Convention in Winnipeg last year. I believe that it speaks to the Christian Family Life Committee, and our work for God and Canada.

CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE

- [2009.01](#) > Exit Strategies for Prostituted Persons
- [2006.02](#) > Legal Protection for All Those Who Object to the Solemnization of Civil Marriage for Same-sex Partners
- [2005.09](#) > Support for Families Experiencing Perinatal Loss
- [2004.01](#) > Protection of Human Life
- [2002.09](#) > Human Stem Cell Research
- [2000.02](#) > The Prohibition of the Sale of Human Embryonic or Foetal Tissue or Reproductive Services
- [1999.01](#) > Elder Abuse/Assault Awareness [share with CL & EH]
- 1997.03 > Capital Punishment
- 1996.05 > Same Sex Marriages
- [1996.03](#) > Advance Directives for Health Care (shared with EH)
- [1996.02](#) > Natural Family Planning
- [1995.02](#) > Abortion Funding
- [1995.01](#) > Prevention of Spousal Abuse - Marriage Preparation
- 1994.01 > International Year of the Family
- [1993.01](#) > The Personhood and the Rights of the Unborn Child
- [1992.05](#) > Support Services for Pregnant Women
- [1992.02](#) > Protection of the Pre-Born Child
- [1991.01](#) > Ministry to Persons with a Mental Disability
- [1990.01](#) > Support for Single Mothers
- 1989.14 > Family Violence - Governmental Programs
- 1989.07 > League Action to Protect the Pre-Born Child
- 1989.06 > Protection of the Pre-Born Child

Resolution - 93.01
The Personhood and the Rights of the Unborn Child

Whereas, Section 206(1) of The Criminal Code of Canada states that a child becomes a human being when it has completely proceeded, in a living state, from the body of the mother; and

Whereas, with modern technology, scientific evidence confirms that life begins at conception/fertilization; and

Whereas, the 1969 amendments to Section 251 of The Criminal Code of Canada began twenty-four years of rampant abortion violence against innocent human beings; and

Whereas, The Catholic Women's League of Canada has repeatedly requested the Government of Canada to amend the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and The Criminal Code of Canada to recognize, value, respect and protect human life from the time of conception/fertilization to natural death; therefore be it

Resolved, that the national council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, in 73th annual national convention assembled, again petition the Government of Canada to guarantee that the Canadian Charter of Right and Freedoms is extended to protect the rights of the unborn child; and be it further

Resolved, that the national council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, in 73th annual national convention assembled, urge the Government of Canada to accept modern scientific data and amend Section 206 and 206(1) of The Criminal Code of Canada to recognize the unborn child as a human being which must be protected; and be it further

Resolved, that the national council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, in 73th annual national convention assembled, recommend members plan suitable programs to recognize the lives lost and the harm done to women, men, families and society since the 1969 amendment to The Criminal Code of Canada.

PRAYER FOR CANADA

O Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, at this most critical time, we entrust our country to your loving care.

Most Holy Mother, we beg you to reclaim this land for the glory of your Son. Overwhelmed with the burden of the sins of our nation we cry to you from the depths of our hearts and seek refuge in your motherly protection.

Look down with mercy upon us and touch the hearts of our people. Open our minds to the great worth of human life and to the responsibilities that accompany human freedom.

Free us from the falsehoods that lead to the evil of abortion and the breakdown of family life. Grant us the wisdom to know and proclaim that this nation was founded on God's law and that He alone is the True Source of our cherished rights and freedoms.

Guide and protect this land from every evil and from the attacks of the powers of darkness.

O Merciful Mother, give us the courage to reject the culture of death and the strength to build a new culture of life. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Imprimatur + Bishop Roman Danyluk, DD Dec. 12, 2004

Hymn: Service

We are made for service to care for each other;
we are made to love each sister and brother
with love that will last through sorrow and pain
a love that will never die with strain.

God sent His Son to show us the way,
who shared His love ev'ry minute of the day,
one who gave His life that we might live
and His Spirit to help us through the years.

Life can be so lonely when nobody cares;
life can be so empty when nobody shares;
but if we give ourselves both time and again
the happiness of Christ will love within.

REFERENCES:

1. National CWL website: www.cwl.ca ; click on link; click on vatican for encyclicals
2. Catholic Girls' League Administration Manual
3. Christian Family Life Study Kit from National
4. Bioethics Matters A Guide for Concerned Parents; Moira McQueen; Novalis
ISBN 978-2-89507-897-5
5. The Rosary: Worry Beads for Anxious Parents; Patricia Robertson; St. Anthony
Messenger Press ISBN 0-86716-518-9
6. ALIES and the Back Porch www.thebackporch.info
7. Compendium of the Catholic Church 348-349
8. Catechism of the Catholic Church 2384, 1651
9. COLF www.colf.ca
10. Euthanasia Prevention Coalition Canada www.epcc.ca
11. Alex Schadenberg - Pres. Of Euthanasia Coalition blog site:
<http://alexschadenberg.blogspot.com/>