



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

ALBERTA MACKENZIE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL



**Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Convention
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
June 5th, 6th, 7th, 2015**

COMMUNITY LIFE ORAL REPORT

Madam President:

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE is the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada and the Canadian member of Caritas Internationalis.

The Nepal earthquakes took place on April 25th and May 12th, 2015. In order to bring urgent relief to victims of the earthquakes that occurred, emergency funding to the efforts is being organized by Caritas partners working in Nepal. DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE is currently working in collaboration with Caritas Nepal, which is supported locally by other member organizations of the Caritas network. With a strong partnership network and volunteer outreach, Caritas members, including DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, are well-placed to deliver an immediate response on a large scale.

DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE shares the concerns of the Church in relation to climate change. Climate change is the single greatest threat to people in poverty. Climate-related disasters are a reality both for poor countries on the margins of the modern economy and for those at its heart. There have been devastating droughts from California to Syria to Africa. Over-consumption combined with political inaction on global warming are fueling extreme weather events and are leading to long-term damage to the environment and to the livelihoods of poor communities in the Global South.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

An interesting article entitled "Healing Begins With A Little Heart," which appeared in the *Edmonton Journal* several weeks ago, mentioned human trafficking and it started like this: "*It wasn't the lotion, lip balm, or shampoo that made her cry, those small things that most take for granted. It was a small heart stitched in a corner of the cloth bag. This means somebody loves me, the sex-trade worker told a lady when she got the bag a few years ago.*" The heart stitching has since become a trademark of the handmade cloth bags, now made by a church community in St. Albert. The organization has been involved with Metis Child and Family Services, the agency that helps sex-trade workers get off the street and into a new life. This church has found its way helping sex-trade workers, victims of homicide and families of missing and murdered indigenous people.

On May 16th, 2015 an event entitled the “Spero Gala” was held at the ATB Financial Arts Barn. This event was sponsored by ACT Alberta which protects victims and prevents human trafficking. ACT means Action Coalition On Human Trafficking. What does “Spero” mean? Spero means HOPE. Human trafficking is one of the greatest human rights challenges of the century, both in North America and around the world. As individuals, it can be hard to know how to help, where to start. Spero Gala was conceived from a sense of compassion and a desire for action. When compassion and action meet, **HOPE** results.

LIVES OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Again, an article which appeared in the local newspaper focused on aboriginal people and the conference was entitled “The Walrus Talks Aboriginal City” and it was presented by Enterprise Edmonton. The title of the conference was fitting for Edmonton as it has the second largest urban aboriginal population across Canada. The organizers mentioned that people are more willing to share, learn and listen since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s visit. Ginger Gosnell-Meyers, an aboriginal planner for the City of Vancouver, emphasized that when people think about the urban aboriginal community, they think about the negative outcomes that aboriginal people face because of the history of residential schools. She also mentioned that they, the aboriginal people, have changed. They are learning about themselves and are in the process of growing stronger and taking charge of growing in their community.

Sisters of the League, it is time to meet our sisters who are new to our country and our community, to be welcoming and hospitable. Every woman must feel accepted, valued, affirmed and empowered to reach their full potential. Women hunger for these and they can best be acquired in the secure and nurturing atmosphere of the parish councils.

May you all continue serving joyfully with One Heart, One Voice and One Mission.

This concludes my report.

Gladys B.

Community Life Standing Committee Chairperson

--