**EDUCATION AND HEALTH**

**Diocesan Standing Committee Chair- Ethel O’Brien**

**Subcommittee members**:

**HEALTH**

Good morning Father Richard, President Frances Murdaca, members of the CWL Diocesan Executive, and CWL presidents ... Today under the topic of health there are quite a few items. First in response to Ontario Provincial Council President Anne Madden’s request to focus on homelessness we successfully had Socktober happening in many of our parishes. These socks will hopefully be used in various shelters, such as Out of the Cold, St. Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army, and many more areas where the poor and homeless are found. The reason for socks is warm dry feet really help the body feel warm and stay healthy. Since winters can be extremely harsh in Canada it is vital to try and offer some protection to those in need. As Christ has said if we feed the hungry or dress the needy we are caring for Him!!

Another issue of great importance which impacts all of us is a need for clean water. Did you know that there are many areas in this country where water must be boiled before use? Did you know that the Government protection of lakes and rivers has dropped in the past few years?

What is the government doing to safe guard our drinking water from industrial waste pollution? Did you know that in Canada we have 20% of the world’s fresh water supply? Has the government taken into consideration that Canada has a great deal of water which needs national protection against harmful waste? For example what protection has been put in place along the rivers where there is oil and gas drilling, or hydro electric developments?

Then there is the problem that Euthanasia is not only wrong as it is taking a God given gift before it’s time. Life is precious it is a gift bestowed upon us by the good Lord and therefore should be treated with love and care. It seems that it is not just the elderly or extremely ill people that we are looking at, but Canadian paediatricians are prepared to extend its reach to include, newborns, minors, and teens a group of people who are defenceless, do not totally have the maturity or the ability to fully understand what they might be dealing with especially when talking about levels of pain and medication and hopes for the future. Instead of being given positive reinforcement they are being offered and easy way out. This doesn’t take into consideration how their family might feel nor do they realize the finality of their simple choice (simple being in their eyes due to their lack of worldly or spiritual knowledge). Suddenly legalized “assisted death” has taken on a life of its own. Instead of offering death why does someone not spend time explaining all the various ways people can seek help. There are many different forms of help if we make inquires. There is nursing assistance, many different apparatus that can help people with various diseases such as mobile wheelchairs for M.S. patients, specialized computers and wheelchairs for certain types of illnesses (Spina Bifida, Cerebral Palsy, etc.).

The information that comes to me is far reaching I could write a book but am just touching the surface of many of these problems. All I can do is ask each of you to please pick a topic and research it so that you may reach out and help someone in a positive manner.

**EDUCATION**

I would like to remind everyone here that education isn’t just going to school and learning. It is important that we educate ourselves daily by learning something new each day, so for example we could look at researching Euthanasia, safe drinking water, or reasons for homelessness.

Then we could look into the available resources our community has for aiding those who need assistance with daily life, whether it be physical, emotional, or spiritual.

Then there is the public system of education which states that Religion is not to be taught in schools. They do have classes at high school level that look at and learn about world major religions. But Toronto District School Board designates a number of heritage months throughout the school year. It seems that October was Islamic heritage month. This was not just an insight to the culture of Islam, but it was more of an indoctrination of the practice of the Islamic Religion. Although it introduced only the positive areas it failed to mention Sharia Law and what it means. The 170 page guidebook prepared for teachers left much to be concerned about as it was an indoctrination of the Islamic Faith, not a teaching of its culture. We need to question why such an in-depth study was prepared for a school board that does not teach religion per say.

Last of all I have application forms for anyone interested in The Catholic Women Leadership Foundation program.

After reading about and reporting on some of these health and education problems I can’t help but pray that the Lord gives each of us the guidance needed to help those less fortunate in our communities!!

“There but by the grace of God go I”