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The CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE of CANADA

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MEMO

To: Parish Council Chairpersons of Community Life

From: Doreen Gowans, National Chairperson of Community Life

Date: October 23, 2014

Welcome to the beautiful season of fall with all of its rich colour! Fall is a time to take stock of all we have and to offer thanksgiving to God, the creator, for providing us with the necessities of life. In Canada, we are so fortunate to have an abundance of food, wealth, love and resources, yet there are so many that go hungry every day. We need to reach out and share our wealth with those less fortunate and those children who go to sleep without proper food in Canada, a country blessed with everything we need to survive comfortably. Thanks be to God!

As Pope Francis stated:

“Poverty calls us to sow hope.... Poverty is the flesh of the poor Jesus, in that child who is hungry, in the one who is sick, in those unjust social structures” (Meeting with students of Jesuit Schools – Q & A).

“Today, the thought that a great many children do not have food to eat is not news. This is serious, this is serious! We cannot put up with this! Yet that is how things are” (Address at St. Peter’s Square).

“The times talk to us of so much poverty in the world and this is a scandal. Poverty in the world is a scandal. In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons. Poverty today is a cry” (Meeting with students of Jesuit schools – Q & A).

Keep the Promise.

Facts:

- 25 years ago, the Parliament of Canada voted unanimously to end child poverty by the year 2000!
- Today there are 979,000 children, nearly one in seven, who live at or below the poverty line (Canada Without Poverty).
- One in four indigenous children lives in poverty (Keep the Promise).
- Poverty severely limits a child’s chances of good health, education and a decent job (Canadian Women’s Foundation).

What is Keep the Promise?

- It is a bold, new campaign that started in January 2014 and will continue to December 2015. It is a campaign to re-ignite the commitment of Canadians and the federal government to end child poverty. The program will bring selected students together from 25 schools across Canada where children in Grades 5 – 8 will develop activities to support the “End Child Poverty” initiative. Social media will engage youth nationally.
- It is an awareness campaign to educate children on poverty and enlist their ideas to help eliminate child poverty in Canada.
- With the 2015 federal election fast approaching, we need to ask members of parliament (MPs) where they stand on child poverty. Today, children in the classroom describe poverty as:
 - “Children are cold
 - Families are hungry
 - Dads are overworked
 - Mothers are crying
 - Nothing is done
 - Society is broken” (Poverty, What Is It?, The Canadian Teachers’ Federation).

Our children will become adults and vote in future elections. Our MPs need to listen to these students and act on their requests.

Would you like to get involved? For more information go to the Keep the Promise website at <http://www.keepthepromise.ca/>

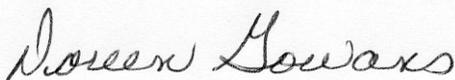
Resolutions dealing with poverty in Canada are:

- 2001.03 Hunger in Canada
“...Resolved, That the national council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, in 81st annual national convention assembled, urge the federal government to implement the recommendations of the Canadian Association of Food Banks in order to eliminate the national crisis of hunger in Canada; and be it further

Resolved, That the national council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, in 81st annual national convention assembled, encourage provincial councils to urge their provincial/territorial governments to implement the recommendations of the Canadian Association of Food Banks.”

- 2003.01 Affordable Housing for Low-Income Canadians
“...Resolved, That the national council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, in 83rd annual national convention assembled, urge the minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to further increase funding for adequate, affordable housing for low-income persons; and, be it further

Resolved, That the national council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, in 83rd annual national convention assembled, encourage provincial and diocesan councils to urge provincial/territorial and municipal governments to further increase funding for adequate, affordable housing for low-income persons.”



Doreen Gowans
National Chairperson of Community Life