



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: April 18, 2017

FROM: Betty Colaneri, National chairperson of community life

TO: Parish council chairpersons of community life

CC: Parish council presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents and life members (on request)

My dear sisters in the League,

"That in every country of the world, women may be honoured and respected and that their essential contribution to society may be highly esteemed" (Pope Francis).

Spring will soon be upon us with the promise of rebirth and revitalization. This time of year reminds us that we are an Easter people. Lent gave us the opportunity for reflection and to strive to renew the Spirit within to strengthen us as we journey.

Canada is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. This is a wonderful opportunity to encourage your councils to venture out into the community and participate in the many activities being initiated nationwide. I would love to hear of the creative ways your councils are participating in this exciting celebration and will create a list of 150 ways the League has made a difference.

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) will also mark its 50th anniversary this year. It has chosen *Women at the Heart of Change* as the theme for its Lenten campaign. The reasoning for putting women in the forefront is something that members can relate to. The role of women holds a very special part in every aspect of social, environment or economic development of society. "Development and Peace's funding was announced by the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development and La Francophonie on Monday, February 27, as part of the Government's commitment to providing \$239.5 million in humanitarian and development assistance in the Middle East" (devp.org/en/sharelent2017/materials). There are still millions of people that have left their homes due to the conflict in Syria and Iraq that need help to uphold their dignity by speaking out for the vulnerable and most severely affected by this tragedy.

"Over the past 50 years, Development and Peace has invested \$600 million in more than 15,000 projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East." On March 3rd, CCODP announced it could continue its support of Global Affairs Canada for humanitarian and sustainability efforts in the Middle East. "The three-year funding of \$28.5 million will bring relief and hope to nearly 2000,000 people is allocated to Development and Peace as follows: ...see over

- **Syria**—\$8.5 million to assist conflict-affected Syrians via psychosocial services and support in earning a livelihood; rural conflict-affected women will also receive training on how to create household vegetable gardens and sustain productive animals. (36,800 people)
- **Jordan**—\$12 million to provide emergency health assistance, including psychosocial services and maternal/neonatal care. (160,000 people)
- **Lebanon**—\$8 million to support the delivery of emergency health care, psychosocial assistance and vocational training. (41,000 people)” (devp.org/en/sharelent2017/materials)

This year’s Share Lent campaign theme is also an opportunity to celebrate the enormous contribution the women’s movement has made here in Canada, as well as the steadfast commitment of Catholic sisters who have long been fighting for justice and human dignity around the world for decades.

Remember to order the CCODP 1% brochures from national office to distribute to members. One percent of all purchases for luxury items will go a long way to improve the status of women in the Global South.

The Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) is the Holy Father’s special agency supporting the Eastern Catholic churches. “Founded by Pope Pius XI in 1926, and under the guidance of Pope Francis, CNEWA works for, through and with the Eastern Catholic churches to identify needs and implement solutions” (cnewa.ca). CNEWA provides an opportunity to “build up the church, affirm human dignity, alleviate poverty, encourage dialogue — and inspire hope.”

On February 21, 2017, Pope Francis spoke to the participants of the International Forum on Migration and Peace. The theme this year was *Integration and development: from reaction to action*.

The shared responses were combined to form four important issues. To welcome, to protect, to promote and to integrate.

- ❖ *To welcome*: Those that are forced to flee their homes due to conflicts or terrible persecutions. It is important that we extend a dignified welcome to our brothers and sisters by offering and providing them decent and appropriate shelter.
- ❖ *To protect*: Migrant workers, both male and female with particularly irregular situations of exile, seeking asylum, and those who are victims of trafficking.
- ❖ *To promote*: Protecting is not enough. What is required is the promotion of an integral human development of migrants, exiles and refugees.
- ❖ *To integrate*: Integration that is not intended to assimilate or incorporate. It is essential to recognize the other’s cultural richness and not superimpose one culture over another.

Pope Francis encourages women to be the ones to make things happen.



Betty Colaneri