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August 16, 2017

The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

On behalf of the 938 registered attendees at the 97th annual national convention of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, representing the membership of over 82,000 members across Canada, I express our deep concern about the passage of Bill C-16 *An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code*.

The *Criminal Code* which now extends protection to members or groups distinguished by gender identity or expression from hate crimes provides for a protection that in a peaceable and respectful society should never have been necessary to articulate. That this measure was contemplated as being necessary by the federal government makes us wonder if a lack of faith exists in the actions and behaviours of citizens of Canada.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops recently put out a statement that says, "The Catholic Church sees all people, regardless of how they identify themselves or the manner in which they choose to live their lives, as possessing equally an inherent dignity bestowed on them by God our Creator. For this reason, unjust discrimination or violence against a person or community or class of persons is always morally wrong. From the moment of conception onward, every human being has the innate dignity of bearing the image of God. All persons, including those who identify as 'transgender,' must always be treated with compassion, respect, and love."

Members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada are concerned that the passage of Bill C-16 will not allow Canadian citizens, a proportionately large segment of which are Catholic, to live out their faith and peaceably disagree with current gender theory without fear of reprisal. The League will always stand in support of any and all efforts to support and uphold the inherent dignity of persons, their right to live in peaceful co-existence with others, and the right of all persons to speak their own truth in love. Respectfully, we request a face-to-face meeting with you and with the minister of justice to discuss the passage of this bill and the fears that Catholic lay faithful have in regard to its enforcement.

Sincerely,

Margaret Ann Jacobs
National President
KS/maj

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