



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: April 11, 2023
FROM: Rolande Chernichan, national chairperson of resolutions
TO: Parish chairpersons of resolutions
THROUGH: Parish presidents and secretaries
CC: Diocesan and provincial presidents and secretaries and life members (on request)

I have fondly referred to parish councils as “the heartbeat of the League” since my time as a diocesan president. Members give life to the body of Christ—they are called upon to be the hands, feet and voice of Christ in society. Through membership, members have several opportunities to live out the League’s mission through faith, service and social justice. Resolutions give voice to the voiceless. They give voice to injustices and issues affecting society. They are used to influence government and organizations in how they are worded and in the action they request. Has the voice of your council become faint?

I take this opportunity to thank and affirm councils for having completed the 2022 annual report survey regarding resolutions despite the challenges of filling this role. Six hundred and fifty-seven respondents completed the questionnaire despite 80% reporting the position was vacant. Thank you for your feedback! Your responses provided names of several members interested in receiving specialized training in resolution development to continue the League’s advocacy through resolutions. Those interested members give me hope on which the League can build future resolution advocacy teams. Going forward, those members can become the “foundational stones” on which the League can layer the “building stones” of mentorship, workshop training and resources to provide confidence and support in developing resolution teams across Canada. In this age of virtual meetings, it is possible for regional or provincial resolution teams to be formed by partnering those interested and training them to work together in resolution development.

Until this future ambitious goal of resolution teams can be implemented, chairpersons are encouraged to seek out one or two members willing to serve as a subcommittee of the social justice standing committee. The subcommittee could monitor local, regional and national news and report at your council’s monthly general meeting about at least one newsworthy topic that may be the basis for a resolution. This simple exercise of gathering information and reporting to members can help generate ideas, and it should help raise awareness among members that developing a resolution to address social issues is another valuable form of service.

While in Ottawa (February 13-15), the League's delegation comprised of National President Fran Lucas, National President-Elect Shari Guinta, National Chairperson of Legislation Glenda Carson and I had the honour to present several resolutions to policy advisors of ministerial departments of the federal government. The delegation also met with the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the apostolic nuncio. You are encouraged to read the report about those meetings in the spring issue of *The Canadian League*. Be on the lookout for communiqués from national standing committee chairpersons as they report to you in more detail regarding the information received at those meetings.

After great demand from members, I am excited to report that soon to be available on the national website are new resources for developing resolutions: *Resolutions Workshop PowerPoint*, *Resolutions Workshop PowerPoint Speaker Notes* and a *Resolutions Guide*. These resources help enable inexperienced and experienced members to create a resolution from start to finish successfully. These resources are particularly important as the organization transitions to incorporating resolutions development within the responsibilities of the social justice standing committee.

The League is in the final stages of implementing its strategic plan. The revision to its organizational structure and its rebranding holds great promise for the future. Resolutions must remain an agenda item of council meetings. The League depends on councils to be the grassroots initiators of social justice advocacy through resolutions. That advocacy is multiplied when members write letters or sign petitions in support of League resolutions. Will the voice of your members continue to be heard? Understanding the important role and purpose of resolutions has the potential to fulfill many of the League's objectives. Being involved in developing resolutions or writing letters in response to resolutions provide members with opportunities for holy moments, to voice concerns and to live out their baptismal calling by being *Catholic and Living It!*