



# **COMMUNICATOR**

**THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE  
OF CANADA**

**BC AND YUKON PROVINCIAL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER**

**Inspired By the Spirit: Women Respond to God's Call**

**Leading With Courage**

**Spring 2017 Issue 34**

**Theme**

**Our Response to God's Call**

Communicator, the BC & Yukon Newsletter, is printed twice a year and relies on submissions from parish, diocesan, and provincial council members, and spiritual advisors. Articles may be submitted electronically to [communications@bcyukoncwlc.ca](mailto:communications@bcyukoncwlc.ca) or mailed to [lauraesposito@citywest.ca](mailto:lauraesposito@citywest.ca). Contact your Diocesan president for information or check the website. The deadline for the Fall Issue #35 is October 20, 2017. The Newsletter will be sent to you by e-mail upon request. It is also available on-line at our website [www.bcyukoncwlc.ca](http://www.bcyukoncwlc.ca). This newsletter is not meant to replace communiqués and reports but to help us to get to know each other better and to share our stories with members throughout British Columbia and the Yukon

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Pope Francis Quotes – Our Response to God’s Call.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Answering God’s Call – by Laura Esposito .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>My Response to God’s Call – by Sherray Duran .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2017 – World Day of Prayer in Armstrong, BC – by Ria Wanner .....</b>	<b>6 – 7</b>
<b>Salmon Arm Honours Their Seniors on Valentine’s Day</b>	
<b>World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations – by Pat Deppiesse .</b>	<b>9 - 10</b>
<b>Church of the Ascension Baby Shower by Carmen Tellier.....</b>	<b>10 - 11</b>
<b>Filling the Empty Hole in our Soul With God - Sandi Digras.....</b>	<b>11 – 13</b>
<b>The Feast of the Annunciation by Agnes Geiger.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Victoria (Vicki) Bisaro by Grae DeBiasio.....</b>	<b>14 – 15</b>
<b>Responding to the Refugee Fund Raising Concert Committee - Sherray Duran.....</b>	<b>15 -16</b>
<b>Women of Peace and Hope – by Christa Grillmair .....</b>	<b>16 –17</b>
<b>Responding for 80 Years – Laura Anselmo by Grace DeBiasio .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>North Vancouver Councils Come Together to Support Provincial Petitions for Hospice and Palliative Care by Anita Park .....</b>	<b>19 – 20</b>
<b>Next Communicator Theme .....</b>	<b>21</b>

## **Pope Francis' Quotes - Our Response to God's Call**

We now consider the Gospel account of the calling of Saint Matthew. Jesus not only invites a tax-collector, a public sinner, to be his disciple, but also sits at table with him, thus scandalizing the Pharisees. The Lord then explains that he has come to call not the righteous but sinners. The calling of Matthew reminds us that when Christ makes us his disciples, he does not look to our past but to the future. We need but respond to his call with a humble and sincere heart. Jesus invites us to sit with him at the table of the Eucharist, in which he purifies us by the power of his word and by the sacrament unites us ever more deeply to himself. (04/13/2016)

Serving and accompanying means defending, it means taking the side of the weakest. How often do we raise our voice to defend our own rights, but how often we are indifferent to the rights of others! How many times we either don't know or don't want to give voice to the voice of those — like you — who have suffered and are suffering, of those who've seen their own rights trampled upon, of those who have experienced so much violence that it has even stifled their desire to have justice done! (9/10/13)

What we are called to respect in each person is first of all his life, his physical integrity, his dignity and the rights deriving from that dignity, his reputation, his property, his ethnic and cultural identity, his ideas and his political choices. We are therefore called to think, speak and write respectfully of the other, not only in his presence, but always and everywhere, avoiding unfair criticism or defamation. Families, schools, religious teaching and all forms of media have a role to play in achieving this goal. (7/10/13)

In the broad context of human social relations, when we look to crime and punishment, we cannot help but think of the inhumane conditions in so many prisons, where those in custody are often reduced to a subhuman status in violation of their human dignity and stunted in their hope and desire for rehabilitation. The Church does much in these environments, mostly in silence. I exhort and I encourage everyone to do more, in the hope that the efforts being made in this area by so many courageous men and women will be increasingly supported, fairly and honestly, by the civil authorities as well. (12/8/13)

We are all called to be saints," he said. But holiness is not "granted only to those who have the opportunity to break away from the ordinary tasks, to devote themselves to prayer." Rather, everyone is called to holiness in their own state of life. "Indeed," he said, "it is by living with love and offering Christian witness in our daily tasks that we are called to become saints... Always and everywhere you can become a saint, that is, by being receptive to the grace that is working in us and leads us to holiness." (11/19/2014)

## Answering God's Call

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of workings, but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-1)

Have you ever felt a nudge on the shoulder, only to turn around and find no one there? Have you ever felt something brush up against you, but on inspection you are the only person in the room? I have!!

I have had many similar experiences throughout my life. Each time, I was trying to make a serious decision. Weighing all the pros and cons, not seeing the answer, days and sometimes weeks would go by without a clear picture. Each perspective would turn out to have some disadvantage, no matter which way I looked at it. Could it possibly be because I was not really looking at all the angles? Could it be because whatever I chose in regards to the topic would ultimately turn out to not be a good experience for me?

We sometimes rely too much on ourselves, on our wants instead of asking God what his purpose is for us. We, too often, need to be in control, instead of trusting God to lead us in the right path. What can we do to trust God more?

When something is completely right for us, and it is in God's plan for us, have you not found that everything falls into place perfectly? At these times, everything seems to be going right, and nothing seems to get in our way. When we put our trust in God, and truly believe, then we do not have to work at making decisions, for they seem to work themselves out quickly and perfectly.

We can often be asked to do something that we do not feel capable of doing. Could this be God asking us to take a risk and trust Him? Of course discernment is necessary. Of course, prayer is necessary. Of course, wisdom is necessary.

When you are next approached to lead a project, organize an activity, or perhaps take on an executive position in the Catholic Women's League, what will your answer be? Perhaps God is calling you to share your God-given gifts and talents for the greater common good. Will your answer be “No”, or will it be a resounding “Yes, with God's help?!”

Laura Esposito, Communications Chair, BC & Yukon Provincial Council

## My Response to God's Call - by Sherray Duran

Family and friends ask me, "When are you going to retire?" For the past four years my answer has been "On my eightieth birthday!" I love my vocation. I am a nurse.

How quickly my life took a turn, by circumference measurement 180 degrees. There is this thirty inch tall, twenty two pound up right smiling creature who threw a monkey wrench into my plans. She loves tortillas with eggs, green grapes and cheese is her favorite snack and she does not understand that my milk factory has been closed for more than 35 years. She loves Tropical Latin music and is learning to move her feet with the salsa beat.

I first met this precious gift from God with my gloved hands, as the midwife stood at my side while this baby girl slipped into my hands. Tears blinded my vision as I grasped a very wet Isabel!

Seventeen months later, Isabel and her parents moved to Abbotsford. Each day I have Isabel, I pin her fine hair up in curls with pink, green, blue or yellow hair clips. I tell her she is beautiful. I want to teach her to love herself. We share so many warm hugs and sticky kisses. I ask Isabel, "Do you want to go to church?" She nods in affirmation. She drags her long legged pink monkey to church, the monkey has no say. Upon entering the church, Isabel focuses her eyes on the crucifix above the altar, with a waist bend, she bows to our Lord. Isabel grips the large coin in her little hand, trots over to the votive candles, attentively using her newly learned finger dexterity, slips the coin in the slot, hears the coin drop & looks up at me. It is my cue to lift her up to light the candles. As we light each candle, I whisper in her ear, "God Bless Mommy, God Bless Daddy, God Bless Isabel" and there is always another name added, sometimes Jesus.

As we take our seat, this little toddler wants to read every book in the pew, no matter if they are all the same. As for the Missals, she searches for all the pages which have a picture of Jesus. She plants a kiss on Him. No food, no drink only a soother calms Isabel. Her pink monkey is left sprawled on the pew to be picked up after mass, no comfort there. As father prays, I softly whisper in Isabel's ear, "There is Father. Listen. Put your hands together." Attentively, her tiny hands delicately touch each other while her eyes are focused on Father. Within ten seconds another gentle reminder to look at Father.

Isabel's favorite part of the mass is shaking everyone's hand – The Sign of Peace.

During communion, she watches as her Tita receives the Body of Christ, (Tita is the short form for grandmother in Spanish, similar to granny.) Isabel eyes Father as he blesses her forehead. No Host for the little one. Isabel waves her right hand in the air more in a circular fashion rather than a cross. With time, she will master this most beautiful Christian motion of faith. My love of Christ and the Catholic Church has been accentuated through my granddaughter's active participation at mass. I know she brings smiles, joy and love to many, especially the aged who are sharing the gospel message of the day. I notice more grandparents are bringing their grandchildren to daily mass. What a blessing! Isabel means: Gift from God, God is my Oath, Devoted to God. Yes, retirement is here!



## 2017 World Day of Prayer in Armstrong, BC

Hosted by St. Joseph's C.W.L. a very successful ecumenical service which highlighted the Philippine country, its people, customs & foods was held in Armstrong on World Day of Prayer.. Approximately 60 people attended. Participating in the program were members of the Filipino community and parishioners of the Anglican, United, Baptist, 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist & Catholic congregations.

The program was well prepared, the ethnic costumes were beautiful and the food was exceptional. One mother brought her teenaged daughter & son to share in the fun. Many cultural items were displayed (flags, toys, historical & artistic).

Interesting & delicious Filipino dishes were sampled (empanadas, spring rolls, pancit , sticky rice and several desserts) We prayed, sang & danced.....and learned to say: **"Mabuhay!"**



St. Joseph's planning group who worked to make it so successful



Linda and Jennifer welcoming visitors to St. Joseph's with a program and complimentary rice packets.



The display table in front of the altar, draped with the Filipino flag, artwork and a basket holding the offering taken was taken up (total \$546.75)

Submitted by Ria Wanner, Communications Chair, St. Joseph's Parish, Armstrong



## Salmon Arm Honours Their Seniors on Valentine's Day

The Catholic Women's League of St. Joseph's parish in Salmon Arm had a lovely Valentine's Day party for our senior members who, unfortunately, are seldom able to attend our meetings any more. We transported them from their Seniors' homes to our party and return. They were overjoyed to be able to attend the party, renew old acquaintances and to feel loved and welcomed. It is so nice to be remembered!



What a lovely spread!!

Submitted by Diane Nadeau



**WORLD UNION OF CATHOLIC WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS**  
**OR as we know it WUCWO – W-U-C-W-O**

As you all know, we are experiencing difficulties in recruiting new members, and getting members involved in taking positions. I have found that it sometimes helps to inform those potential new members about the fact that they would be joining a world-wide organization.

It is important our members realize our connection with Catholic women throughout the world. This is seldom pointed out, and should be shared. I hope that there is time at all conventions to let the members know just what is WUCWO.

The organization was founded in 1910 and now represents 100 Catholic women's organizations worldwide divided into 5 world regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America representing over 5 million Catholic women from every walk of life, and celebrates a century of service by women for the Church and society.

The Catholic Women's League is one of its members and our former National CWL President & Life Member Velma Harasen is on the WUCWO Executive Committee as Vice President for North America, representing CWL Canada for the term of 2014 to 2018.

'WUCWO'S aim is to promote the presence, participation and co-responsibility of Catholic women in society and the Church, in order to enable them to fulfil their mission of evangelization and to work for human development'.

'WUCWO has consultative status with among other groups, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (New York), the Human Rights Council (Geneva), participatory status at the Council of Europe (Strasbourg) and is an official partner of UNESCO (Paris).'

WUCWO has been involved in working against Human Trafficking, along with Talitha Kuum. They dialogue and take action to develop a culture of peace and reconciliation by taking part in a Panafrican meeting of Catholic women's movements in Nairobi, Kenya, and help provide access to drinking water to marginalized populations using solar energy in Fiji.

Also the WUCWO Secretariat has tried to be at the side of those women who have suffered as a result of terrorism, extreme poverty, internal conflicts and all forms of violence including members from Burundi, France, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Venezuela and Mali through communication and prayer.

Violence, indifference to justice, loss of consciousness of sin, worldliness and hypocrisy, the 'throw away' culture of human beings, and the lack of creative and honest dialogue are some of the evils that the Holy Father often points out and for which he says mercy is the best 'medicine'. This brief description of some of

WUCWO's recent activities can serve as a reflection on how mercy is the answer to the dramatic signs of the times in which we are living.

To stay current and to help support the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations I encourage you to take out a membership in WUCWO for \$20 US annually. Your membership includes three issues of Women's Voice magazine, (show) which contains information on the WUCWO resolutions and it keeps us up to date on the women's issues throughout the world. To take out your membership go on line to [www.wucwo.org/](http://www.wucwo.org/)

I would ask presidents to please speak about WUCWO at your conventions. Feel free to use this short message and you can have your past president's read it out if you wish.

Pat Deppiesse  
Past BC & Yukon Provincial President

### **Church of the Ascension Baby Shower**



President, Gail Olyniuk with Carmen Tellier, Coordinator of event the event



Gifts brought for the babies and their families

Once again this year, the ladies of the CWL from Church of the Ascension in Parksville hosted a baby shower benefitting the Crossroads Crisis Pregnancy Centre in Nanaimo. The centre serves all of the women who are in a crisis pregnancy situation from the mid-Island, as far north as Campbell River. The baby gifts and cash donations brought to this shower serve the centre's needs for baby layettes from January through August. Some one hundred and fifteen women were in attendance on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017, from twenty-two Christian Churches invited between Nanaimo and Campbell River, and as far west as Port Alberni. Kirsten Emmanuel, Executive Director of Crossroads attended, along with Karen Wells, the centre's Client Services Director. Karen spoke to our

gathering about the work they do there. As she spoke, we were so inspired by her love for God and her need to serve all of His people. The Holy Spirit is definitely working through Karen as evidenced in the tremendous number of women who choose to see their pregnancy through to term. Many of them had initially come to Crossroads with the idea of terminating their pregnancies, but through their work chose life instead, and have been forever changed with the help of women like Karen and Kirsten. They not only provide their clients with spiritual counselling, but help with baby needs, parenting skills, and a place in which they receive unconditional love, support and acceptance. A large number of volunteers also work together at the centre to achieve all of this. Of course, they can also use more volunteers.

I'm overwhelmed at how much support I received from my CWL sisters to organize this event. Our loving kitchen angels put together a delicious and appealing lunch for all those in attendance, those who are creative and generous provided decorations and flowers, a team of greeters welcomed each person who came to our door and carefully displayed all the beautiful baby things. Our President served as Emcee for the event, our Spiritual chairperson led us in prayer before we commenced and then said Grace prior to lunch. Several of our members generously donated door prizes. We even had our own photographer! All our guests had a great time visiting with one another and playing word games, and at the end of it all, many of our sisters stayed back until every last thing had been cleaned up and put away! God bless each and every one of you. What a TEAM! What a spirit of love and service, all done in His name.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmen Tellier (Church of the Ascension CWL)

### **Filling the empty hole in our soul with God**

What do we define the hole in our life? In Mathew Kelly's Lenten messages\*, he asks us to examine all the material things we feel we need and wonder why they don't fill that "hole" in our lives. He suggests that hole is called a "God Hole" and only God can fill it.

That message is not new, we have heard versions of it since we were little children. Do you remember at Christmas how we waited anxiously for the Sears or Eaton's catalog, cutting out all the things we felt would fulfill our dreams? Our parents always reminded us about the "real meaning of Christmas" to give rather than receive. We listened but we still hoped on Christmas day all those gifts would somehow be there.

Nothing has changed except nowadays those things have gotten more expensive - Cars, houses, electronic devices all the devil's tools to tempt us. And **tempt** is the action word. The Devil always gives us the most compelling temptations. Ones we are most often unable to resist.

In the **First Sunday of Lent** readings we started with the allegorical story of Adam and Eve and the temptation of the tree of life. The cunning devil in the form of the serpent uses Eve to beguile Adam into sin.

In the Gospel, we see the devil at work again this time with the new Adam, Jesus. After forty days in the desert Jesus was offered three temptations:

**Food, Power and Eternity.** In each case Jesus had a wonderful rebuke for the temptation. His human side may have been hungry but that hunger was not for bread alone. Jesus let the devil try to tempt his human side but he did so to give us a role model to follow when we faced our battles with the devil.

But how do we avoid those worldly temptations that seem to be everywhere all the time. Are we looking seriously at how we can really fill that emptiness?

If you are like me, a long-time shopaholic, this has been a life- long battle.

When we feel the most lost is the time we try even harder to fill that empty hole. My favourite saying "When the going gets tough the tough go shopping" was a mantra during my troubled early years.

This Lent I have vowed not to give up but to take up my biggest challenge: cleaning out my overstuffed closet of the unused clothing and accessories.

That closet has become a metaphor for my life. Each day I open that door and try to find what I am looking for all that "stuff" looms scary and overwhelming. I know this is an ongoing challenge because I have gone through this exercise many times in my long life always with the same results. After the clutter is removed there is peace and order and I know where my things are. This lasts until the next Sale and little by little I start filling the hangers and drawers again. We do the same with possessions of all kinds. Grandma's favourite tablecloth, sets of china and crystal, beautiful items kept locked away for a once a year holiday dinner.

Purging things from our life seems to be brought on sometimes by momentous changes; moving and downsizing, death of a loved one, financial challenges something that pushes us in a new direction.

To see what a big business this purging of clutter is just go onto Etsy, Craigslist and dozens of other re-sale websites dedicated to the recycling others excesses.

But sometimes things happen in our lives that wake us abruptly. 10 years ago, I had a major fall that left me crippled and unable to walk. For the six months, I sat in a wheelchair I asked God, if it is your will I want to be able to walk again, without crutches, canes or walkers.

I found out God has a sense of humour. He knew I loved shoes. In fact, I had a beautiful collection of designer shoes that would have made Imelda Marcos proud. But after that accident I was told by the Doctor I would walk again but the lovely shoes had to go! No more high heels and fancy boots. I went from shoe fashionista to fitted orthotic shoes and a leg brace that to this day has allowed me to function in a new way. God granted me my prayer but he also showed me how unnecessary all those shoes were and how necessary it was to change my priorities.



When God is not at the centre of our souls to fill that feeling of emptiness we turn around and start buying again. That urge to stuff ourselves with food, goods and worldly treasures has produced a secular society so far from God it is frightening.

During the next forty days, we should ask ourselves; Is God filling our lives? Is he our treasure? Are we purging things from our souls and minds that clutter that worship? Are we placing the same value on our heavenly treasure as we do all the things we store in lockers, sheds and basements?

The three main forms of penance during lent are: **Fasting** from needing more goods, **Alms giving** of some of the monies we save from all that buying and a **God centred prayer life** that can take the form of private prayers and Community prayer at daily mass and services. Scientists say it takes about 40 days to change any habit. Let us hope by the end of our Lenten period we have found new ways to fill what \*Mathew Kelly calls our "God Hole" and start some new habits.

Blessings



Sandi Digras

Communication Chair-Catholic Women's League Victoria Diocesan Council

### March 25 – The Feast of the Annunciation

March 25, Feast of the Annunciation – "this feast is a joint celebration of Christ and the Blessed Virgin: of the Word who becomes the Son of Mary and of the virgin who becomes the Mother of God." Taken from *Living with Christ* Luke 1:26–28

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you."

While free to say no, her yes brought God closer to humanity than ever imagined. Mary became the first disciple. In her, we have a model of what entrusting our lives to God looks like.

What do I want to learn from Mary about being a disciple of her Son?

"Loving God, we honor Mary as the Mother of God and as our own mother. Help us to follow her example of complete trust in you." *3-Minute Retreat* "This feast is very important in the defense of the life of unborn children. Even with small children, this is a good day to begin teaching about the high value God places on human life. He loved us so much that he became one of us, took on our human nature and became an innocent, completely dependent infant."

*Catholicculture.org*

*Just as Mary said "Yes" to the Angel Gabrielle's request, so must we be willing to say "Yes" to God's call.*

Agnes Geiger Provincial Spiritual Development Chairperson

Victoria (Vicki) Bisaro  
Member Holy Trinity CWL Council, Trail, BC



Who would have imagined that little Victoria Colonello who was born in Posso, Udine, Italy on May 5, 1917 during the raging First World War, would live for 100 years? Oh, the changes she has seen! And the busy life she has lived!

She came with her mother (and brother), who had been widowed and had remarried, to Canada and found herself in Trail, BC in 1924, (And it wasn't as nice as it is now!)

She describes herself as a tomboy when young and did not like the clothes her mother sewed for her, so at the age of 12, she began sewing her own clothes and hasn't stopped. She began her career in sewing by doing alterations and remembers getting \$15 and that was a lot of money! She became a well-known seamstress who had made outfits including wedding dresses and bridesmaids dresses but not her own! (Her own wedding dress cost her \$14.00) Vicki said sewing is her God given talent.

She fondly remembers her husband Alexandro Bisaro whom she married in 1937 in St Francis Church in Trail. They moved only once and Vicki still lives in the house that they moved into in 1944. In that house, they raised their 4 sons. Alex died in 1980. He did not live to see all of his grandchildren and none of his 12 great grandchildren, who are now living all over the world.

Vicki joined the Catholic Women's League at St. Anthony's in 1947. Over the years she held positions as president, secretary (for many years) treasurer and spiritual convenor. She was also 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, treasurer and spiritual chairperson at the diocesan level, as well as secretary for 2 conventions. Vicki still attends all CWL meetings and get-togethers. She says she hates to miss any of the fun and festivities! Any wonder why she was awarded the Maple Leaf Service pin?

Grade 2 students at St. Anthony benefitted from her instruction for 20 years as she prepared them for First Communion. In addition, she visited the sick and took them communion, and she did a service at Chateau Manor every Tuesday morning for about 8 years. She also served on the parish councils of St. Anthony's and Our Lady of Perpetual Help parishes. But the church and the CWL were not her only volunteer work. She has been a member of the Sisters of Colombo Lodge for 80 years where she held positions of president, secretary and treasurer and still serves on the Funeral committee. Many years ago she was an interpreter for young Italian mothers when they were in hospital. The Trail Hospital also used Vicki's services as she was on the Hospital Board for 10 years, many years a member of the Trail Hospital Auxiliary and served on the home Care Board for about 15 years. She was part of a team that was responsible to get the first chapel in the hospital. With all that, it's wonder that in 2008, she was chosen as Citizen of the year for Trail and Warfield.

Longevity runs in her family and Vicki handled the few illnesses she has (including cancer and a broken neck!) with grace and determination. She admits that she sometimes gets tired now but she still drives her car and wears reading glasses only sometimes. Dates and events are recalled as if they happened yesterday.

Prayer is very important to Vicki. When she was younger she attended daily Mass. Now she watches Mass on TV every day. She has a strict prayer routine and spends about 1 ½ - 2 hours in prayer every day. In the morning she does the Divine Mercy Prayer, her personal prayers and prayers for the world. In the evening, she recites the rosary and offers prayers of thanksgiving. She has read the Bible through 3 times...and that was hard. St. Anthony is her favorite saint and she usually can rely on him but he did not help find her lost tax receipt!

This interesting amazing lady even has her own funeral planned – including her favorite hymns (Gentle Woman and On Eagles Wings) scripture readings, readers and sacristan. However, it seems that God may not be ready for this energetic centenarian for a while yet!

Submitted by Grace DeBiasio, Holy Trinity CWL, Trail, B.C.

### **My response to the Refugee Fund Raising Concert Committee**

Our parish priest, Father Hien called requesting my participation on Parish Council. I declined. My volunteer plate was overflowing.

Feeling guilty, I visited Father Hien the next day to apologize. I offered to do a onetime project if he had one. Well, yes, in fact he did. He needed someone to head the Refugee Fund Raising Concert Committee presenting Father Rob Galea who was on X-Factor Australia.

The concert date of March 4<sup>th</sup> was just five weeks away. Oh yes, Father Hien was leaving for Vietnam in three days. He would be gone for three weeks. Oh dear Lord, give me insight, understanding, love and above all grace. I agreed!

Father Hien had plans formulated prior to his absence; his concert foundation was strong with different people already assigned to designated tasks.

The contract was reviewed, the Fire Marshal was contacted about the gym capacity and guidelines were received. The layout of the gym was designed by AutoCAD. Arrangements for extra chairs were made, concessions discussed, volunteers called and the list of things to do grew like *toilet paper rolling down the stairs*.

Then the dumping of snow began. It was like a test to see if our enthusiasm would be dampened or we would get cold feet. Parishioners were house bound. They could not even consider attending a concert. Snow banks seemed to grow in our church parking lot, occupying twenty one parking stalls. When would the **meltdown** begin?

Time flew by, the day of setup arrived. I have an image imprinted in my brain of two CWL members swinging their mops back and forth in unison, like prairie **harvesters** swathing grain, I felt like singing "Bringing in the Sheaves!"

The concert was a great success, we had over 550 attending! I believe our dear Lord carried me the entire distance as I was always praying for His guidance. He directed certain people to assist me and it was His doing in the success of our Syrian Refugee Fund Raiser. Not only did we raise money, we had entire families participating, our church community strengthened and above all **evangelisation** evolved. Father Hien called it a miracle!

With God's enduring love and blessing,  
Sherray Duran

### Women of Peace and Hope



The Victoria Diocesan CWL Day of Reflection on Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> held at St. Edward's in Duncan attracted 83 members and guests. Fr. Mel Bayron, our Diocesan Spiritual Director, launched the theme of Women of Peace and Hope by reminding us that peace is not the absence of war but a presence of harmony. He shared the story of the Princess and the Frog and challenged us to 'kiss a



frog' sometimes to bring out the 'prince' in people but to also allow ourselves to be 'kissed'. He also shared that hope is an attitude we adopt in God's silence.

Maureen Ingram, Diocesan Council President, lead a workshop on how we can best be advocates with the sick and dying, with family members going through a crisis, with the homeless, members of our parish or in the workplace.

After Mass, members had the opportunity to socialize over their bag lunch and the many treats provided by the host St. Edward's Council.

Pat Carew, Diocesan Spiritual Development, and her helpers, presented four burning candles representing faith, love, peace and hope. As one by one, the flames of the candles of peace, faith and love died because of the world's anger and fighting, the lack of faith and love for our neighbour, if we keep the candle of hope lit, it can re-light all the other candles. We were urged to always keep the flame of hope lit because with it, each of us can live with peace, faith and love.

Mary Nicholas, President of Christ the King Council in Courtenay, led us through a reflection on Peace and Hope reminding us to always show a gentle attitude towards everyone and to trust and let God work through us.

Agnes Geiger, Provincial Spiritual Development, ended the day by leading us through an Examination of Conscience by reflecting on the primary question: Am I a peacemaker in my family, my Council, as a neighbour, in my community, parish or world at large? In a world becoming divided, we are challenged as Women of Peace and Hope to listen to the call of love and say "I am here, Lord".

The day ended with the singing of "Peace is Flowing Like a River" and Fr. Mel's blessing for a safe journey home.



Father Mel Bayron, Spiritual Advisor with Gail Olyniuk, President of Ascension Parish Council

Written by Christa Grillmair, Victoria Diocesan 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

## Responding for 80 Years - Laura Anselmo



How many women do you know that have been in the Catholic Women's League for 80 years? We do. Holy Trinity CWL Council, Trail B.C., is proud that Laura Anselmo is one of those ladies!

Laura is a true British Colombian, having been born in Grand Forks, BC, in 1920. She went to Trail in 1936 and became a CWL member at St. Anthony's parish in 1937, later transferring to Our Lady of Perpetual Help council when she moved to Sunningdale. (Three councils later amalgamated to become Holy Trinity Council.). Laura did not hold any executive positions in the councils but she was in charge of the phoning committee for many years which was a big job before the days of email. She made certain that all members were notified of any and all activities. She baked for and worked at the funeral receptions for over 50 years! She doesn't bake anymore because her daughters keep her freezer full of baking for her! Until recently, she faithfully attended every CWL meeting. Now she still enjoys attending only the special luncheons and dinners.

Laura is an honorary member of the Trail Hospital Auxiliary recognizing her many years as a member. She was known as the "Candy Lady" as she took candy and newspapers to the patients throughout the hospital.

Laura's husband, Joe, passed away in 2001 and she lives by herself in the home that she and Joe had built in the early sixties. In that house they raised their two daughters and the family that now include 4 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren – none of whom live close by. Without any outside help she keeps that home immaculate and herself meticulous. Since Laura is not driving anymore she is thankful that neighbours take her to Mass.

Submitted by Grace DeBiasio, Holy Trinity CWL, Trail, B.C.

## **North Vancouver Councils Come Together To Support Provincial Petition for Hospice & Palliative Care**

St. Pius X and St. Stephen's CWL Councils decided to combine their efforts to support the province-wide petition to the Provincial Legislature, since both councils share the same MLA, Jane Thornthwaite, and are under the same health authority, Vancouver Coastal Health. The two councils started collecting petition signatures in early December and continued until the petition closed on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016. In the meantime, St. Pius X Council arranged a meeting with MLA, Jane Thornthwaite for December 7<sup>th</sup>. Viviane Lacoste-Holsworth (President), Margaret Eldridge (Past-President) and Carol Landy (Council and Diocesan Education and Health Chairperson), attended the meeting. Jane Thornthwaite was very pleased to hear their views on this important matter and noted this was the first time anyone from her riding had contacted her regarding euthanasia and assisted suicide. Mrs. Thornthwaite stated that once the petition had closed, she would be happy to accept the signed copies and present them to the Legislature in February.



L to R: Margaret Eldridge, Viviane Lacoste-Holsworth, Jane Thornthwaite (MLA North Vancouver-Seymour) and Carol Landy

By the end of December, St. Pius X and St. Stephen's Councils had collected 450 signatures and another meeting with Jane Thornthwaite was arranged for February 7<sup>th</sup>. Pat Deppiesse, Provincial-Past President and member of St. Pius X Council attended the meeting with Anita Park, Legislation Chairperson for St.

Pius X Council. We were able to present Mrs. Thornthwaite with 450 signatures and assure her that other MLAs would be presenting these same petitions on or around February 15<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, Pat Deppiesse presented Mrs. Thornthwaite with a folder of related CWL background material.

1. BC & Yukon website notice: Rights of Conscience Motion (from the floor of the 2016 National Convention)
2. Resolution 2016.04: Amend the Canada Health Act to Identify Palliative Care as an Insured Health Service.
3. March 20, 2015 letter from the National President to Hon. Peter MacKay, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
4. CWL Position Paper on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide Reaffirmed Oct. 2014
5. Resolution 2007.03: Hospice Palliative Care: An Integral Component of the Canadian Health Care System
6. Resolution 1998.05: Palliative Care: An Essential Service
7. Euthanasia Prevention Coalition letter from Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director
8. Euthanasia Prevention Coalition "The Newsletter"



L to R: Anita Park, Jane Thornthwaite (MLA North Vancouver-Seymour) and Pat Deppiesse.

Jane Thornthwaite presented our petition on February 21<sup>st</sup>, along with five other MLA's from Abbotsford-Mission, Surrey-Whiterock, Parksville-Qualicum, Chilliwack-Hope and Richmond-Steveston. More petitions were presented in the following days by MLA's from Kitimat-Skeena, Campbell River (North Island), Port Coquitlam, Surrey and Cowichan.

Anita Park,  
St. Pius X North Vancouver



**Has the 'Communicator' fulfilled its Mission ?**

Thank you to all who have contributed and celebrated responding to God's call while joyfully serving the Lord. Your articles, tributes, and celebrations have helped educate, fulfill and give us food for reflection. If you have any articles, ideas or suggestions for the Communicator, please e-mail your suggestions to Laura at [lauraesposito@citywest.ca](mailto:lauraesposito@citywest.ca) or [communications@bcyukoncw.ca](mailto:communications@bcyukoncw.ca).

The *Communicator* is intended to be a teaching aid to educate members and to share ideas from the BC & Yukon Provincial Council and from our members to our sisters in the League

Deadline for the Fall Issue #35 is October 20, 2017.

2017 Fall Newsletter Theme is: The Spirit's Inspiration