

Social Justice Communique December 4, 2024

2023-2025/06

Fall's vibrant harvest of colour has become winter's crisp, freshness and in many areas of the province, blankets of snow cover the ground. As we prepare for the blessed Christmas season through Advent, let us always keep Jesus as our priority and not focus on the commercialization of our Saviour's birth. I am still recovering from a bad fall in October which caused a dislocation and break in my right shoulder; recovery has been slow and painful. I was immobilized with a sling for 5 weeks and am currently undertaking physiotherapy to regain range of motion. I was so thankful for the prayers and wishes for a quick recovery from my CWL family; the support was an amazing gift.

Initiative on Human Trafficking

Many Canadians still believe human trafficking is not an issue in Canada, but this is an issue which happens in our own backyard. Defend Dignity recently shared an article on an offender being charged in Cochrane, Alberta for offenses which took place between 2004 and 2007. One of the victims, who was lured online, was brave enough to come forward earlier in the year, prompting an investigation. As there is no statute of limitations on sexual crime in Canada, criminal charges can still be brought even if substantial time has passed.

Human trafficking in any form violates the dignity and freedom of the victims, and as members of the Catholic Women's League, we are united in a mission to protect those most vulnerable in society. I have included a poster which details a League initiative to educate members on the issue, through a webinar which is planned for January 21st, 2025. Three expert speakers will enlighten members on the many issues surrounding human trafficking: Barbara Renaud, past Vancouver Diocesan President and passionate advocate, Glendyne Gerrard from Defend Dignity, and Trisha Baptie, a survivor. The winter issue of the League magazine will also include 2 articles highlighting the current state of human trafficking in Canada, and exploring the issue from the perspective of Canadian youth. Please review the attached poster and upcoming winter publication of the magazine.

Resolution Resources

Our national chair of Social Justice, Glenda Carson, recently shared a memo noting that national office has focused on providing updated materials and resources to assist in drafting resolutions. Educational materials are updated "to encourage resolution initiatives" and is "an ongoing effort to work towards current and effective resources." Both the Resolutions Handbook and Guide are currently being updated and will include a resource for Modern Language Association (MLA) citations. The planned changes and enhancements are largely in part a response to member concerns. Revisions and new resources should be available by the end of December, and new educational materials are planned for a spring release. The proposed changes should equip members with effective tools and resources when exploring the development of new resolutions.

Bill S-210

Protecting Young Persons from Exposure to Pornography Act is a senate bill which was introduced in 2021. The bill was passed in the Senate on April 18th, 2023, and referred to the first reading in the House of Commons. After its second reading, the bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security for study in

the spring of 2024. While the bill has the support of the Conservatives, the NDP, the Green Party and the Bloc, the Liberals have opposed the bill due to privacy concerns. This should not override the need to protect young people from being exposed to potentially harmful, sexually explicit material. The bill's consideration before committee was completed on June 7th, 2024, but there has been no activity in the report stage. Please continue to monitor the progress of this important piece of legislation, and encourage our MPs to support its passage, in keeping with Resolution 2017.02 Mandatory Age Verification Mechanisms for Adult Pornographic Websites.

Some upcoming dates to remember, as noted in the Calendar of Social Justice Events:

- January 1st - World Day of Peace (Vatican)
- January 27th - International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust
- February 2nd - World Wetlands Day
- February 8th - International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking
- March 8th – World Day of Prayer
- March 22nd – World Water Day
- April 22nd – Earth Day

As we approach this most holy season, I wish you all the joys and blessings of Advent and Christmas and may you enjoy this special time with family and friends.

“For it is good to be children sometimes and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty founder was a child Himself.” Charles Dickens

Blessings, Angelina Stiglich