

The Catholic Women's League of Canada



Antigonish Diocesan Council

Here I am Lord, send me!

TO: Parish Council Service Chair
FROM: Diocesan Service Chair Rita Wojtyniak
DATE: April 26, 2025
SUBJECT: Acts of Service
MEMO: # 2 (2024-2026)
CC: Parish Council Presidents, Diocesan Officers, Life Members, Provincial Secretary (for distribution to provincial counterpart)

Sisters in the League:

In our League Prayer we are called to Holiness through service to others. *"We may know and fulfill your great law of charity"*. It is through acts of kindness that we show our love and gratitude for all we have been given—*"share with one another at home and abroad"*.

In the WORKS OF MERCY Matthew 25:35-36 states: *"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."* and, recently added by Pope Francis, (Sept. 1, 2016) *"care of creation, to inspire Catholics to take concrete action towards changing how they care for the world"*. The Works of Mercy are used as the basis for the service component of League.

I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME FOOD

The Government and provinces of Canada made a decree to eradicate CHILD POVERTY by the year 2000. How we have failed! Child poverty rates in Nova Scotia (2022) were up to 23.8 %. Therefore 1:5 children are living in poverty. 50% of single-parent families live in poverty. Child poverty rates throughout the Diocese of Antigonish are Antigonish (20%), Cape Breton/Victoria (32.4%), Guysborough (28.1%), Inverness (24.4%), and Richmond (26.4%) counties. For Indigenous children poverty rates are 43.5%. Families are suffering food and housing insecurity all over province. So many with so little!

Suggested Acts of Service: donate to foodbanks and soup kitchens; provide meals to the lonely and isolated in the community; celebrate anniversaries and holidays with dinners; volunteer at soup kitchens, food banks, St. Vincent de Paul, and homeless shelters; support One Plane Away for Nunavut (St Louis Council) with collections of formula, diapers, baby care items and clothing; adopt a Family; provide food for those grieving after funerals; support Lazarus Society; advocate for better social supports for the poor and marginalized.

I WAS THIRSTY AND YOU GAVE ME DRINK

Suggested Acts of Service: use less water; support clean safe water in other countries through D&P; advocate for the environment; become more aware of the effects of climate change and fracking which cause changes in water tables and purity. For those thirsting for knowledge: provide scholarships to high schools/universities and volunteer as catechists; invite guest speakers to meetings; educate members; collect books for children; For those thirsting for what is right and just: provide advocacy and service for those suffering from homelessness, human trafficking, poverty, bullying, racism, mental illness, etc.

Encourage members to donate blood. View pertinent resolutions and act on them. Use letter-writing or postcard campaigns for Youth Mental Health (2015:01); Pharmacare to include Drug Coverage for those with Mental Illnesses (2024:02); and Increased Housing Support for Homeless People with Mental Illnesses (2024:01). Promote education sessions on MAiD and support conscience rights of healthcare workers.

I WAS A STRANGER and YOU WELCOMED ME

Suggested Acts of Service: develop an attitude of kindness in all encounters and treat people with respect; welcome newcomers to our parishes and CWL meetings and social events; donate food and small household appliances and furniture; learn about diverse cultures through guest speakers; support humanitarian efforts after disasters through D&P, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association or the Red Cross; support a child through Chalice or Operation Christmas Child.

I WAS NAKED AND YOU CLOTHED ME

Suggested Acts of Service: help the poor through clothing drives for winter clothing, socks and underwear; provide blankets, linens, personal care items and baby supplies to homeless shelters and transition houses; make dresses for missionary work; collect eye glasses and hearing aids; support affordable housing projects like the Pallet Shelter Village in Sydney (houses 35 residents who are getting support services to treat mental health issues or addictions); implement a postcard campaign or letter writing campaign for Resolution 2024:01 to support affordable housing for those with homelessness and mental health issues.

I WAS SICK AND YOU VISITED ME

Suggested Acts of Service: provide support with phone calls, cards, visits, prayer; assist seniors to appointments; bring the Eucharist to the isolated or homebound; support Mass for Shut-Ins (attend and support tapings); assist with Meals on Wheels; hold social events for seniors; knit and distribute prayer blankets or prayer shawls; participate in 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative care; donate to/ volunteer with palliative care and hospices.

I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU CAME TO ME

Suggested Acts of Service: be aware that imprisonment can result from bad decisions, addictions and loneliness; become aware of sex-trafficking or intimate partner violence; educate and learn to recognize the signs of controlling and grooming behaviors; support Transition Houses (intimate partner violence abuse) and Willow house (trafficked), homeless shelters and addiction services (Ally Centre and Pallet shelter program); pray for people in prison and jails.

CARE OF CREATION

Suggested Acts of Service: strive for sustainable practices by stopping the use of Styrofoam products; decrease dependence on paper products; reduce, reuse, recycle and repair; participate in cleanup projects on earth day (Adopt a Hwy.); encourage community gardens (Glace Bay Food Bank); teach backyard gardening and share the abundance with others; conserve our world resources; buy less; donate gently used clothing, linens and supplies to shelters; keep aware of government policy to reintroduce fracking and uranium exploration in Nova Scotia (maybe future resolutions?).

Lord, help us to be Your hands and feet and help us to do the work You have called us to do.

Your sister in the League, Rita Wojtyniak,
Antigonish Diocesan Service Chair

Attachment: Resource Handout: Speakers List, Resources, Services Re Mental Health and Mental Illness