

**Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Nova Scotia Provincial Council  
Legislation Annual Report 2020**

Sisters in the League, the year 2020 has certainly been a challenge. With the appearance of COVID-19 and the State of Emergency being declared in Nova Scotia on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2020, our world felt like it had come to a standstill. There was certainly some comfort listening to our Premier Stephen McNeil and Chief Medical Officer Dr Robert Strang give daily updates as well as our Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. For the Legislation Standing Committee it was certainly a challenge on several levels. The House of Commons met only as necessary and the Nova Scotia Legislature was empty for 11 months. Even when these levels met, not all members were allowed to sit. Acting upon bills was a challenge and parishes needed to be creative in making members aware and encouraging them to act upon them.

I received annual reports from both dioceses. The Antigonish Diocese reported 11 out of 39 councils (28%) submitted reports. In these reports, they indicated that out of the 11 councils reporting, 5 did not have a legislation chairperson and 4 of those 5 were appointed. Halifax/Yarmouth Diocese received 5 reports from the 24 councils (21%). With 5 councils reporting, 4 positions were filled and 75% of those filled were appointed.

Both diocese noted that the councils indicated a high degree of awareness of their representatives at the Municipal, Provincial and National levels. Some councils were aware of how to contact these representatives and ways to access current legislative information. Councils were asked about the following bills:

**Bill C-7: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Medical Assistance in Dying)**

**Bill C-13: COVID-19 Emergency Response Act**

**Bill C-14: COVID-19 Emergency Response Act No. 2**

**Bill C-15: Canada Emergency Student Benefit Act**

**Bill C-71: An Act to Amend Certain Acts and Regulations in Relation to Firearms**

Councils reported a high level of awareness of Bill C-7 and participated in signing petitions relating to the Bill. Councils also suggested that summarizing main points of any new legislation would help to better understand it and therefore enable councils to better communicate this information to parish members.

Some of the challenges councils faced during the year 2020 were:

- Due to COVID-19, meetings were limited
- Difficulty finding information on bills and researching the facts surrounding them
- Finding members interested in becoming chairpersons

- For older members, it is the lack of computer experience which discourages them from joining an executive
- Difficulty completing annual reports
- The pandemic itself resulted in the lack of activity at the parish level

Upon reading these challenges that councils face, it is important for us within the League to reach out to our members and offer assistance to those who need it. Whether it be a shoulder to lean on or helping with computer needs. WE NEED EACH OTHER! No one stands alone. I believe that despite all the hardship that has come with this pandemic, I really feel that some good has come from it as well. We can learn to live with less. It has required us to slow down. Despite, in the beginning, we were unable to celebrate the Eucharist together, parishes came together and used modern technology to allow us to watch mass being celebrated. Whether it was on television with Mass For Shut Ins or on the computer watching daily mass. Where there is a will, there is a way.

I was sure upon writing my annual report for 2019 that it was my last one as my term was to be completed in 2020. Apparently God felt otherwise. Despite the complications of the pandemic, work was still being done in Legislation. Bill C-7 certainly came to the forefront. I was happy to read that both Dioceses reported awareness and action on this bill. Since writing my annual report for 2019, I sent out 3 communiques from the provincial level and forwarded communications from National. Thank you to Patty Dorian, Halifax/Yarmouth Diocese, and Jolene MacLellan, Antigonish Diocese, for their work as Chairs of Legislation and the wonderful job in keeping parishes up to date on Legislation and their excellent annual reports. This year has been a challenge but I truly feel “The best is yet to come” and with the strategic planning in place and continuing to evolve, we will start to grow again and lead “it's members to holiness through service to the people of God.”

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary ten Brinke  
Nova Scotia Provincial Legislation Chairperson