

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council**

CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE

Communiqué # 9

Inspired by the Spirit...Women Respond to God's Call

Date: October 10, 2018
To: Diocesan Chairpersons of Christian Family Life
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
National Chairperson of Christian Family Life (for information)
From: Carol Schlachter, Provincial Chairperson of Christian Family Life

PRAYER TRIUMPHS OVER MAID (Medical Assistance in Dying)

(True story told with permission)

In September a friend emailed to say that her Grandmother had chosen to end her life with the assistance of a physician. This was a terrible shock and having only a few short hours of notification before the assisted death was to take place, the Grand- daughter responded in the best way she knew how – Prayer!

MAID was set for 6:30 pm. that very day. At 5:00 pm a group of people gathered at the local church to pray for Grandmother and her soul. Christ was asked to intervene in convincing Grandmother and others that dying a natural death allows God's grace and mercy to be poured out upon all people involved. Hymns were sung, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy was prayed, Christ was adored in the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Mass was celebrated together.

At 9:00 pm Grand-daughter noticed that her parents had been trying to reach her. Miracle 1: Right after the praying of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy in the church, the 97 year old Grandmother unexpectedly refused physician assisted suicide. God had answered the prayers.

The next day, Miracle 2: Grandmother announced to her daughter that she would not seek physician assisted suicide again. Instead, she would be trying to get out of her room more often and would plan on attending more special events so she would not be so depressed. The family immediately started to arrange for daily female visitors with Grandmother's permission; family started discerning how they could visit more often; cards and letters of support would be arranged and Grandmother would be given a cell phone for daily calls.

We were asked to continue to pray for Grandmother to accept natural death as a gift to her and to the family. Also pray for ways that we may influence society to understand the graces poured out upon us when we visit the suffering and care for them as we would want to be cared for ourselves. Increased personal support and prayer support for those in poor health will reduce the chances of people seeking physician assisted suicide.

Reaching out in small ways can be vitally important as a possible preventative. The previous true story proves the need for sharing our love to our family, friends and neighbors. Many councils report that they keep in touch with the lonely and the vulnerable. It does not have to be as a council but we as individuals can also make that call or that visit.

Euthanasia

Once again, the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition continues to encourage Canadians to sign *The Declaration of Hope*. Councils are reminded and encouraged to purchase the *Fatal Flaws* DVD and arrange screenings in the parishes. Consider a guest speaker from the Coalition to answer questions.

There was a concern recently from an elderly member who posed the question: "What can we/she do if she finds out that her GP performs euthanasia?"

A Catholic family physician responded that we should make a clearly written Personal Directive based on Euthanasia Prevention Coalition handbook wording and advise her/our doctor of her/our disappointment.

If interested, one may purchase the ***Life-Protecting Power of Attorney for Personal Care*** from the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition by calling 1-877-439-3348. The EPC welcomes any questions you may have on this document. An important point in this document is the Summary of the Statement of Special Provisions, Directions and Limitations

"My Power of Attorney for Personal Care (POA) has been instructed to represent me. I want treatment that benefits me, but when the burden is significant, the decision is to be made by my POA. If I am approaching death, I do not want euthanasia or assisted suicide (Medical Aid in Dying) and I do not want my life to be intentionally hastened by overdosing me or dehydrating me to death.

I want good pain and symptom management. I also require the provision of hydration and nutrition, unless my death is truly imminent and the provision of (H & N) is futile and I am unable to assimilate (H & N). Decisions are to be made by my POA. I reject any court or authority that refuses to recognize my POA." (Life-Protecting Power of Attorney for Personal Care p. 5)

If you have any questions or concerns, contact the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition at 1-877-439-3348, Fax: (519) 439-7053 or email: info@epcc.ca

Palliative Care

A resolution passed at National Convention **2018.03 was to Legislate Designation of Hospice/Palliative Care Services in Facilities to Exclude Medical Assistance in Dying**. We are encouraged to write letters to the Prime Minister, Ministers of Health and members of Parliament and the Legislature.

In July of this year, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops released a letter in response to the passage of Bill C-277, An Act providing for the development of a framework on palliative care in Canada. The letter provides a history of Catholic health care in Canada and goes on to say “There are many reasons to promote palliative care and many opportunities to improve its quality and delivery in Canada. At the same time, palliative care faces various hurdles and even barriers both in Canada and abroad. Some of the obstacles are concrete, such as a lack of funding, while others are attitudinal. When palliative care is reduced to a science, for example, it loses its potential to treat the human person in a holistic manner: the spiritual, psychological, and material needs of the ailing person, as well as those of the patient-identified caregivers (often close family and friends), go unacknowledged and unmet. Such was one of the many observations echoed in different quarters and diverse parts of the globe during a gathering of experts on palliative care organized in Rome earlier this year by the Pontifical Academy for Life.”

Our work continues ladies.

Blessings,
Carol