



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



**Christian Family Life Chair
Communiqué # 5
August 10th, 2020**

TO: Diocesan Christian Family Life Chairpersons, Diocesan Presidents
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Christian Family Life (for information)
FROM: Celine Berlinguette, Provincial Chairperson of Christian Family Life

**‘In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you;
for this is the law and the prophets.’ - Matthew 7:12**

My dear sisters in Christ,

Being that we are created in God’s image, the human person is the clearest reflection of God’s presence in the world. How do we portray God through our actions?

Throughout our lives our behaviors are scrutinized and analyzed.

Throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood, we’ve learnt and lived by a code of conduct (ethics) practiced from our birth. Our parents and family members, church and clergy, teachers, friends and all human contacts we have had in our lives, have had major influence on the development of our characters, on who we are and how we conduct ourselves. Our Christian moral values, is the standard of right and wrong that was established by Jesus Christ and then taught by his disciples. It is based on two foundations: loving God and loving our neighbours (all peoples) as ourselves.

Catholic social teaching has a long and rich story. It is both old, in that it presents timeless values within the Church's two thousand years of history, and new, as it constantly reflects on the world around us.

Ethics is a topic we have heard a lot about. We’ve heard of medical ethics, business ethic, political ethics etc. etc. Ethics is not something you think about very much as we live our daily lives doing what is right. The only time we hear about ethics is when someone contravenes one of its rules. Social media in today’s society has become a big influence on behaviors.

From the earliest days of the Church, Catholics have performed works of mercy to help those who are in need, but the Church's current involvement in social justice issues really took form in 1891 with Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical “Rerum novarum (Of Revolutionary Change)”. In it, Pope Leo called for workers to be treated with dignity and respect, protected by the state from exploitation, and allowing the formation of unions. Pope Leo’s encyclical touched off a flowering of social encyclicals that have become central to the Church's work in the world.

Catholic social teaching focuses on the dignity of the person as “key” for all discussions of ethics, politics, and justice. It is central for the fair treatment of workers, for political systems that recognize individual rights, for responsible scientific research, for an end to attacks on human life in the form of abortion, euthanasia and the death penalty, and many other teachings as well.

Pope Francis’ encyclical “Laudato Si (Care for our Common Home)” celebrated its fifth anniversary in May this year. Taking care of God’s creation is also our responsibility as identified by Catholic Social

Teachings. We have a long journey ahead, one from being abusers and polluters of our earth to one of preservation and protection of our home, our common home – “Mother Earth”.

Every day when we listen to the news, we are bombarded with news casts reporting fraud, embezzlement, murder, home invasions, abortion, euthanasia, human right issues and much more. We are horrified by the actions of our politicians, police forces, legal system and health system. In the last few months, Human Rights and Systemic Discrimination issues have dominated the news. In retaliation, many demonstrations have taken place and the destruction of historical figures has been on the up rise. We get regular reports on global warming, air quality, the destruction of the rain forests and wild life.

In 1967 a song entitled “Skip a Rope”, written by Jack Moran and Glenn Douglas Tubb, and recorded by American country music artist Henson Cargill was released. This song addressed issues of concern present at that time. The socially conscious tune held parents accountable for teaching their children immoral behavior, from verbal abuse to tax evasion, hating their neighbour for the color of his skin to total disregard of the “Golden Rule” as given to us in Matthew 7:12. Have we listened to our children lately?

It has been fifty plus years since this song was written, became number one on the charts and won a Country Music Award. Obviously the message was out there! What has been done to make our world a better place? If we look at events that have taken place since 1967, it seems as if our populous has ignored the teachings of the Church.

Points to Ponder:

Our Christian ethics are under attack –
Satan is at work undermining the value of families, communities and countries –
Lives are being destroyed by hatred, lack of concern for our neighbor or just plain selfishness –

What can I do to promote our Catholic values?
What can we do as a National/Provincial/Diocesan or Parish Catholic Women’s League Councils to promote our ethical values?

Let us not forget -

“Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.” — Teresa of Avila

Yours in Christ,

Celine