



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA  
TORONTO DIOCESAN COUNCIL  
**103rd Convention Oral Report**  
**April 29 and 30, 2024**  
**Ajax Convention Centre**  
**550 Beck Road**  
**"Called To Serve"**

Name: Elizabeth P. Joseph

Standing Committee: Community Life

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**Faith** is a "personal and dynamic encounter with Jesus that requires freedom, love, generosity and even doubt" (Pope Francis, 2015).

My Community Life journey was not limited to the Diocesan council but included my Parish Council, Liturgical Ministry, and surrounding communities. Reliance on my Faith and the saints has sustained me. Specifically, St. Francis de Sales, who inspired my writing, relieved my writer's block, when submitting to the TDC Newsletter. Prayer has helped me to understand and recognize the issues in communities that affect the Dignity and Rights of Persons, Social and Economic Justice, and the Environment. The Principles of Catholic Social Teaching have guided and illuminated my thinking on moral issues that affect society.

My facilitation of the Unity Outreach Project reinforced actions members have taken for Community Life. Attendance at the Elder Abuse, Truth and Reconciliation and Food Insecurity webinars increased my understanding of the vulnerability of seniors, Indigenous peoples, and families.

Transition to the new structure by my Parish council allowed me to discern, crystallize my understanding of the three pillars, and align my Community Life duties where applicable to Service and my parish Social Justice position.

Soon I became aware of the influx of refugees and immigrants to Canada who became victims of homelessness; and international students who were displaced by lack of housing. Many communities including Ajax were affected by the events of hundreds of individuals arriving and needing Emergency shelter. I recognized this situation had superimposed on the existing homelessness crisis and was curious about its' management. So, I attended local council meetings that informed citizens of how they can assist and what was being done to accommodate the homeless and newcomers.

Hence, I informed my Pastor of the new Homeless Shelter in Ajax and asked how the parish can support it. With his blessing I advocated by informing the Parish Ministries of St. Vincent de Paul and Knights of Columbus. I raised awareness and



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kept council members informed through my reports of the shelter's progress and operations.

Consequently, 500lbs of grocery items from the Parish Food drive and funding were donated to the Shelter's Food bank by the Knights of Columbus. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and parish members also donated clothing.

The (un)affordability housing crisis in Canada and lack of funding in municipalities to improve the housing situation, had not only inspired my Parish Social Justice reports, but also influenced my Community Life action of writing a brief: "Canadian Municipalities Need Sustainable Federally Funded Social Housing that includes Low - Income Rental units," for a possible Resolution. My research revealed there is more to homelessness, and a lack of affordable housing, and informed initiating a resolution on relevant issues.

Despite challenges in my Community Life journey, my Faith and prayer life helped me to fulfill my goal of informing members and advocating for the vulnerable in society.

My written report can be found on pages 21 and 22 of the 2023 Annual Report Book.

This concludes my report.