

Timmins Diocesan Council
The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Community Life Standing Committee

Directive #1

October 16,2017

To: Parish Community Life Standing Committee Chairpersons,
cc: Diocesan President, Parish Presidents, Diocesan Standing Committee
Chairpersons, Provincial Community Life Chairperson

From: Diocesan Community Life Standing Committee Chairperson, Frances Freeman

“The most terrible poverty is loneliness, and the feeling of being unloved.”
— **Mother Teresa**

*Provincial President, Anne Madden, has challenged all councils to focus on
HOMELESSNESS.*

*We are asked to spend time learning and discussing about homeless people in our
area. What help is in our community? Is there something we can do?*

*Someone may have a roof but no support. Are we aware of “hidden” or “concealed”
homeless people?*

*-youth: a couch surfer who had to temporarily live with family or friends, in their car or
anywhere else because they had no where to live.*

-women, families , women with children, may be staying in shelters.

-seniors, veterans or foster children, who are lonely because they feel no one cares

-indigenous peoples

Some causes may be:

*- addictions, abuse, mental illness, broken relationships, unemployment, low income.
Even with these setbacks, even if there are resources, the absence of an adequate
support network may leave a person devastated and homeless.*

*Individuals we see on the street represent less than 20% of the homeless population. A
great many more make up “hidden” homeless individuals, who temporarily stay with
family or friends because they have no where to go. Families with children are the
fastest growing homeless demographic, as over 10% of Canadian families currently live
below the income cut-off, unable to meet basic needs.*

There is Hope:

Help can start with a meal. Food banks are supplying the most basic need.

The federal government is aware of the Homeless problem. They are focusing on "Housing First"

In the 2017 Federal Government's budgets for over the next 11 years the following:

- a \$3.2 billion investment to help Provinces and Territories build or renovate affordable housing and support geared rent programs*
- a new National Housing Fund of \$5 billion that will be administered through the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation in support of affordable housing.*
- \$202 million to make surplus federal lands and buildings available to housing providers.*

IN THE NORTH

- \$300 million to support housing in Northern and Inuit communities where cost of construction is higher.*
- \$225 million to provide financial support to housing providers serving indigenous peoples off reserve, facing cultural obstacles to access adequate housing.*

These are difficult times to be homeless. They are also difficult times to find ways to get involved and help the needy, with privacy laws and "hidden" homelessness. We can offer our support through prayer, awareness, and continuing to support our food banks, and community programs. Perhaps our councils can do even more.

The Catholic Women's League is a strong voice in our country. Together we can make a difference.