

## 2021 AGM Report

### Sacred Heart Parish Council

The Catholic Women's League National theme is "Care for our common home". The Ontario Provincial theme has included "Loneliness".

To address the theme of "Care for Our Common Home", I would like to draw attention to an article titled "Environmental Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic and Potential Strategies of Sustainability". The authors Rume and Didar-Ul Islam (2020) conducted a review of the literature exploring the positive and negative environmental effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To control the spread of the virus and reduce mortality rate, most countries placed the population on enforced lockdown and recommended the use of non-pharmaceutical measures such as wearing facemasks, hand washing and/or hand sanitization and maintaining physical distancing. Positive results of these measures included improved air quality in various cities and less water and noise pollution due to less travel. Negative consequences on the environment include an exponential increase of medical waste and haphazard use and disposal of masks, gloves and other personal protective equipment. The authors also raise concern about the use of micro plastic fibers and chemicals used to produce personal protective equipment (PPE) which may potentially persist for a long time and release dioxin and toxic elements to the environment.

The use of personal protective equipment clearly is necessary during the pandemic for the protection of citizens. It is hypothesized that these environmental consequences are short-term. It is critical, however, that environmental effects of waste are monitored and an awareness campaign be implemented concerning proper waste handling and disposal methods.

Measures to control the spread of viral infection through physical distance has had the unfortunate consequence of exacerbating loneliness, especially in those already separated by distance from family and friends. In order to keep our members safe, our traditional monthly luncheon meetings have been suspended until the end of the pandemic. To address this issue, members are encouraged to maintain contact and provide assistance to one another as required. Some members are grocery shopping and doing errands for those who are housebound. We will continue to encourage our call captains to make regular calls to our members as well as send a newsletter to keep members informed of league activities.

Respectfully submitted, Margaret Johns, President

