

Pembroke Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada
Spring Meeting March 16, 2024 Zoom
Education and Health Louise Rockburn

Madam President,

Spring is coming! Yes, it is so invigorating to welcome in the next few weeks, the arrival of spring with day light saving time giving us longer days and of course, Easter. New life is about to start so what an opportune time to focus on environmental issues and God's creation. **March 22nd**, that is, next Friday is World Water Day. Water is life! Did you now that 2.2 billion people still live without safely manage drinking water? (WHO/UNICEF,2023). We must protect and manage our water. Here are a few simple tips to preserve our precious resource:

1. Save water in obvious ways: shorter showers, turn off tap when brushing our teeth and we can use a dish basin instead of filling the sink.
2. Keep pollutants out of our water: We must not pour pollutants such as oils, medicines or chemicals down the drain or into your toilet.
3. Shop locally for in-season products; they are usually grown with less water.
4. Protect nature: use natural solutions to reduce flooding and to store water for future use; plant a tree, use a rain barrel to water the garden and flowers
5. Clean up the planet: engage or organize a local clean up of our community's river, lake, wetland or beach.
6. Shop for sustainable (not fast) fashion

Another important date to remember is Saturday **March 23rd** (the following day). It is the day we bring awareness on nature loss and the climate crisis. It is Earth Hour and it is observed between 8:30 pm – 9:30 pm. This is when the world turns off all electrical non-essential lights and it serves as a reminder that small individual actions, when taken collectively can have a significant impact on the environment. When we participate, it is a sign of commitment to our planet.

The last important date I wish to mention is Monday **April 22nd**, Earth Day. This year, Earth Day Network's theme Planet vs Plastic calls to advocate for

- 1) widespread awareness on the health risk of plastics,
- 2) rapidly phase out all single use plastics,
- 3) urgently push for a strong UN Treaty on Plastic Pollution, and 4) demand an end to fast fashion.

So, let's celebrate World Water Day, Earth Hour and Earth Day since it is asking us to "be a humming bird". Consider this story: "One day in the forest, a fire broke out. All the animals ran for their lives. They stood at the edge of the blaze, looking at the flames with terror and sadness. Up above their heads, what a humming bird flying back and forth to the fire, over and over again. The bigger animals asked the humming bird what she was doing. "I'm flying to the lake to get water to put out the fire". The animals laughed at her and said, "You can't put out this fire". The humming bird replied "I'm doing what I can". Let us all take after this humming bird and do what we can!

Finally, I would encourage you to read the article on Nutrition Month in March's online On-Newsletter.

Respectively submitted,