



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

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February 17, 2018

Most Rev. Lionel Gendron
President, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
2500 Don Reid Drive
Ottawa, ON K1H 2J2

The Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) has received concerns from many of its members regarding the Fanm Deside project in Haiti. This volunteer project chosen by the League upon recommendation of the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) has been reported to advocate for reproductive rights for women that would include abortion and sterilization.

Clarification was sought from both CCODP and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) to allay the concerns of members that their donations would be directed to support a project that was not consistent with Catholic moral values and teaching. CCODP was contacted and was notified that "The CWL must hear from the CCCB that Fanm Deside adheres to the teaching of the Catholic Church or the national executive has no alternative but to withhold funding."

After many months a letter was received from Serge Langlois at CCODP with a response to our inquiry. However, the League has not received formal confirmation from the CCCB that would support the response of CCODP.

The League is officially recognized by the CCCB as a national private lay association of the faithful. It relies on the expertise and guidance of the CCCB in matters of faith and morals. Until a formal confirmation is received from the CCCB, the CWL will continue to withhold funds from CCODP and therefore we will not formally and or officially distribute materials of CCODP until we receive this direction from the CCCB.

We desire to support the CCODP but in conformity with the CCCB and in witness to the Church's teaching on faith and moral through our social justice tradition. Please be assured of our prayers for the witness and support that you give to the most vulnerable in the developing regions of our world.

Sincerely,

Margaret Ann Jacobs
National President

MAJ/ks

Cc: Serge Langlois, Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace
Msg. Fran Leo, CCCB General Secretary
Bishop William McGrattan, National Spiritual Advisor
Betty Colaneri, National Chairperson of Community Life

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