• While you want to keep the spiritual advisor informed and interested, you do not want him/her to make decisions for you or the council. Remember that the spiritual advisor’s responsibility lies mainly in spiritual matters and the members make decisions on other business.

• Should conflict arise, the Constitution & Bylaws indicates the direction to be followed. The president and officers should openly discuss the issue with the spiritual advisor in the context of the guidelines provided.

• Request the spiritual advisor’s help in promoting membership drives and other special projects.

• Familiarize the spiritual advisor with League protocol for deceased members: mass, honour guard, CWL stole, prayer services at funeral homes, luncheons, etc.

• Prepare the spiritual advisor for the installation of officers or the reaffirmation of officers. Provide an easy-to-read copy of the service with the spiritual advisor’s part highlighted and officers’ names filled in.

• In general, make the spiritual advisor feel welcome and wanted. Be receptive to his/her requests and make every effort to fulfill them. Create a good rapport between member and the spiritual advisor for a good working relationship.

Above all…..

The key to working successfully with your spiritual advisor is to…..

COMMUNICATE

COMMUNICATE

COMMUNICATE

And then COMMUNICATE SOME MORE!

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Need more information? Contact
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The Catholic Women’s League of Canada
2011

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Why Is It Important?
The ideal council executive is a team.
The president and officers working together with the spiritual advisor form the executive team to guide the members of the council in their work “For God and Canada”.
The spiritual advisor represents the official church and, as such, guides the spiritual programs of the council by working with the president and chairperson of spiritual development. Open communication with the spiritual advisor is vital to the life of the council. It must always be foremost in planning and carrying out any activity. It is in everybody’s best interest to maintain a friendly and open relationship with the spiritual advisor and the council.

The Official Word
The Constitution & Bylaws outlines the purpose and role of the spiritual advisor within the League.
Article VI – Spiritual Program
Article IX – The Spiritual Advisor’s role, appointment and term of service
Article XI – Duties of Officers

What Can the President Do?
• Have a meeting with the spiritual advisor to discuss the League in general terms. Find out the spiritual advisor’s feelings in terms of involvement in planning, method of communication and time availability. Let the spiritual advisor know the needs of the council.
• Provide material to assist the spiritual advisor in fulfilling his/her role. Update these when necessary:
  • Handbook for Spiritual Advisors
  • Constitution & Bylaws
  • National Manual of Policy and Procedure, along with provincial, diocesan and parish information
  • Subscription to The Canadian League magazine, provincial and diocesan newsletters and the annual report of the parish
  • Current spiritual development communiqués
• Meet with the spiritual advisor and the chairperson of spiritual development annually to develop a long-range plan for the spiritual program of the council.
• Draw up a calendar of the events planned in all areas for the year. Inform the spiritual advisor of the dates of all meetings, executive and general, and encourage attendance.
• Coordinate dates of League events with the spiritual advisor so they do not conflict with parish sponsored programs.
• The spiritual advisor should be informed in advance of diocesan meetings and conventions if applicable and encouraged to attend. Discuss financial arrangements for transportation, meals and other expenses to out-of-town meetings and conventions. Provide an agenda if possible.
• If the spiritual advisor misses a meeting, be sure to provide a copy of the minutes or otherwise update him/her on what took place.
• Be as flexible as possible in scheduling time involving the spiritual advisor – he may be the only priest in the parish and not always available at your convenience. Show consideration in the time commitment you are requesting.
• Invite the spiritual advisor to give a brief message each month, either the homily if the meeting is preceded by mass, or at the meeting itself. You should not expect a talk at both. Suggest a definite topic to coincide with the theme of the meeting or with some church or League event.
• Recognize the spiritual advisor’s presence at all meetings and functions. Show appreciation for support and encourage future participation. Affirming the spiritual advisor will build confidence and increase input, especially on spiritual matters.
• Always assume a positive response when approaching the spiritual advisor on any matter. If we are not confrontational the spiritual advisor is less likely to react negatively.