

Telephone: (204) 927-2310  
Toll Free: 1 (888) 656-4040



Fax: (204) 927-2321  
Toll Free: 1 (888) 831-9507

## The CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE of CANADA

C-702 Scotland Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3M 1X5

Website: [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca) E-mail: [info@cwl.ca](mailto:info@cwl.ca)

# M E M O

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To: Parish Council Secretaries and Treasurers  
CC: Parish Council Presidents, Diocesan Presidents, Provincial Presidents and Life Members (on request)  
From: Shari Guinta, National Secretary-Treasurer  
Date: April 22, 2016

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Spring greetings to all secretaries and treasurers, whether new or “seasoned.” I have been encouraged by some of the comments and questions coming through from parish and diocesan councils regarding minutes and budgets. Over the past two years, I have written about both topics and both are important and useful tools. I hope members have read the articles I have submitted to *The Canadian League* magazine where I describe good minute-taking and preparation of budgets.

Minutes need not be tedious. They should, in fact, be clean and concise and a record of **action** taken at a meeting. Some secretaries feel it necessary to record everything that is said at a meeting in the minutes, including guest speakers and reports, and this is not necessary. Only the action taken at the meeting is necessary. If your council does not have a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order*, I encourage you to get one for the secretary position. This book is such a useful tool. You can also check out [www.rulesonline.com](http://www.rulesonline.com). This website describes order at meetings and will give you basic information.

Now, budgets! In the parish, we often think that the preparation and approval of a budget with members is not necessary, but it is an important exercise. It helps in forecasting expenses, it gives members a chance to give input, and it may help to plan and “control” fundraising. I have mentioned many times we should not get so caught up in fundraising that we forget to do the important League work such as writing letters and resolutions, and working for social justice.

So, a basic budget with income and expected expenditures should be prepared at the beginning of the year, and once the executive has looked at it and approved it for presentation, it should be shared with the membership at a general meeting. If you do not already have the *Guidelines for Treasurers* handbook, please go to [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca) and download it. It has excellent information, including a sample budget.

I do want to mention there are some national funds available for League development, and we have found the fund is underused. I might suggest you ask your diocesan president or counterpart for a League development day in your area and apply to the National Development Fund to cover the costs. Many topics could be covered, but something on minute-taking or basic budgets could be suggested!

“Let us abandon all fear and dread, for these do not befit men and women who are loved,” said Pope Francis. “Instead, let us live the joy of encounter with the grace that transforms all.”

Shari Guinta  
National Secretary-Treasurer