

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



Fax: (204) 927-2321  
Toll Free: (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

---

To: Parish Council Chairpersons of Organization  
CC: Parish Council Presidents, Diocesan Presidents, Provincial Presidents and Life Members  
From: Margaret Ann Jacobs, National President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization  
Date: October 27, 2015

---

We have many responsibilities as chairpersons of organization at the parish level. Foremost in our mandate is the recruitment of members. While this is really important (congratulations if you have planned your activities for your 2016 blitz), how we treat current members is even more important because if we can encourage, affirm and empower the members we have, more women will want to join our ranks. So, at this time, my challenge is to focus on the retention of current members.

As members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, "We are the voice of Catholic women united in faith, promoting Christian values in the home and in the world," and "We offer hospitality, friendship, sisterhood, support and affirmation that empowers women to reach their full potential" (*CWL handbill*).

The feedback received from the hospitality survey included in the spring 2015 issue of *The Canadian League* magazine is encouraging but also reveals we have much to do if we are to be true to who we are and what we offer. This work must start at parish level, the root of all the work we do.

Please consider some of the suggestions on the reverse of this page to rekindle the true spirit of the League as we continue to embrace the theme *One Heart, One Voice, One Mission*. With every activity, embrace it as an opportunity to respond to the Holy Father's wish for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy to be **a true moment of encounter with the mercy of God**.

"It is indeed my wish that the Jubilee be a living experience of the closeness of the Father, whose tenderness is almost tangible, so that the faith of every believer may be strengthened and thus testimony to it be ever more effective" (*Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis According to Which an Indulgence is Granted to the Faithful on the Occasion of the Extraordinary Jubilee Of Mercy*).

## Suggestions

1. Provide copies of the BINGO card to each member, with an incentive for completion of all the challenges you set.
2. Dedicate one meeting to remembering or affirming a fellow member by writing a message on the gratitude cards we shared with you through the magazine. (More are available for sale at national office.)
3. Download the “CWL Council Hospitality Survey” (now available on the national website) and have all members complete it (honestly) for your use. Evaluate and prioritize what could be done each month to elevate the sense of hospitality, friendship, sisterhood, support and affirmation. Focus each month on one activity that could strengthen and empower morale in your parish council.
4. Consider presenting “*On Being Kinder to Each Other*” A Short Workshop prepared by Honorary Life Member Agnes Bedard. It is available on the national website and will encourage participation and feedback from members.
5. Work with your chairperson of spiritual development to prepare and conduct a reconciliation para-liturgy at your meeting. This might be a good follow up activity after the workshop mentioned above. It would also provide an aim for this jubilee year with the focus on mercy.
6. Consider acquiring a copy of a phenomenal video by Ronald Rolheiser entitled *Blessings*. He addresses the need that each of us has to be blessed. In order to bless each other, Rolheiser outlines three things that are most necessary for us to do:  
See: Look deeply into the eyes of the other; attend to them as they speak; recognize their presence.  
Speak: Speak to their giftedness; tell them how valued and appreciated they are.  
Give life: Empower them to be alive/fully contributing influences in our world; freely pass on wisdom, insight and power to do good, woman to woman.

I can only imagine how much more inspired the parish councils would be if we blessed each other so humbly, so sincerely and so powerfully.

There is such a need in parish councils, churches and communities for us to reach out in love and compassion. Let it not be said that we have not responded to this call of the gospel. As chairpersons of organization, let us do everything in our power to sustain and maintain members. Nurture them, encourage them, and fulfil them.

“Before all else, the Gospel invites us to respond to the God of love who saves us, to see God in others and to go forth from ourselves to seek the good of others” (*Evangelii Gaudium*).

God bless,



Margaret Ann Jacobs  
National President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization