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The CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE of CANADA

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MEMO

To: Parish Council Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Parish, Diocesan and Provincial Presidents and Life Members (on request)
From: Anne Gorman, National President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization
Date: October 31, 2016

"For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28).

I extend greetings to all parish council presidents and chairpersons of organization. While I have written Communiqué 1, this is my first opportunity to be in direct contact with my parish sisters. The preceding biblical quote from the New Revised Standard Version reminds each of us we are equals in striving to bring the Good News of Christ to the world, beginning at home.

By way of a brief introduction, I am a retired educator, the widowed mother of eight children—four birth children and four spouses—and eight delightful grandchildren. I have been a member of a small rural parish council for more than 40 years and am confident the Holy Spirit is equally at work in parishes large and small. We work "For God and Canada" with no exceptions. I have worked at the diocesan and provincial levels in several standing committees before being privileged to be elected to the national executive, serving as resolutions, legislation, spiritual development and now organization chairperson. One learns a great deal about the structure of the League by reading and serving in different capacities. Be not afraid.

Membership

The most important entity in the League has always been and continues to be the parish council. First of all, this unit works towards collective and personal spiritual development. The great vision and gift of our founders was to connect us east to west and north to south so that each of us is part of a voice more than 83,000 women strong. The need is, therefore, obvious to welcome and maintain members, and encourage all Catholic women 16 years of age to "come and see". If we keep this uppermost in our minds and seek the intercession of Mary and the Holy Spirit, we will succeed. I cannot imagine a local church without the presence of the League. Perhaps this year is the one when your council will hold a new special event for all women of the parish. During this time, your most animated selves are able to simply demonstrate by your presence and enthusiasm how pleased you are to belong. Have you sent any ideas, events or photo depictions with *Be League?* I look forward to reading about what is happening in your parishes and how you are keeping the League alive.

Leadership Development

There are leaders and potential leaders among all members at the parish level, and by hosting development days, who knows how the Holy Spirit will speak to them?

The National Development Fund is available to all parishes, dioceses and provinces. As stated in the National Development Fund criteria, "Councils at all levels may apply for assistance once in a calendar year. Requests for funding should be submitted to assist in the organization of parish councils, assist parish, diocesan and provincial councils to promote League leadership training and other development workshops, [and] promote League development through spiritual development". Please consider a development day for your region. Application forms are available to download and print from the national website at cwl.ca.

League Resource Material

There are a myriad of resources on the national website, as you are undoubtedly aware. Please feel free to use one small piece at each meeting. As chairpersons of organization, we are constantly learning and always looking for new ideas to share with members. Sometimes we are so intent on the work we do in the parish and the local community, we forget to do something for ourselves. Keep the three equal parts of the meeting in mind—one-third spiritual development, one-third business and one-third social.

Annual Reports

Included in this package is the new annual report survey for each standing committee, directions and a tutorial. I look forward to hearing of your experience with completing the survey. As this is the first year, be confident in knowing you have only to contact national office at (888) 656-4040 for support.

Life Membership

There are life members throughout the country. These women continue to serve in all capacities in the organization. Make use of them in your council—invite one or more to present on a subject of interest to members.

Let us continue to be confident in knowing that we are special and the graces we receive from individual and communal work "For God and Canada" will motivate us to be "One heart - filled with mercy, compassion and holiness; One voice - united in harmony to speak the truth with courage and zeal; One mission - witnessing the Good News of the gospel through personal encounter and joyful service."

May Our Lady of Good Counsel guide you and may the God of mercy bless all your good works.

Your sister in the League,



Anne-Marie Gorman
National President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization