



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: April 18, 2017

FROM: Jacqueline Nogier, National chairperson of spiritual development

TO: Parish chairpersons of spiritual development

CC: Parish presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents and life members (on request)

Funeral and Honour Guard Protocol

"When a member of a parish council dies, all members share in the loss. Members should console mourners and support them with appropriate acts of kindness.....If invited or requested, members of the parish council may assist the priest and family with the organization of the funeral.....During these preparations and in consultation with the parish priest, family and funeral director, the council president (or her designate) may request that members be permitted to form an honour guard at the funeral." (*National Manual of Policy and Procedure*, page 38)

It is always difficult when a parish member dies and the desire to help in any way possible is strong. In the 2016 revision of the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* (P&P), a funeral and honour guard protocol was added (pages 38, 39). This protocol has many suggestions for ways that sisters in the league may give assistance when a member has passed away. There are many parishes where an honour guard at the funeral mass of parish members is the norm but that is but one way to show respect and be of service to the family. Members of the parish council may offer support and if requested assist in the organization and preparation of the funeral. If an honour guard is requested and permitted very clear guidelines are set out in the protocol. At all times the family and priest must be consulted and their wishes be respected.

While the P&P does not explicitly state that a League honour guard is to occur only at the funeral of a member, it is implied with the fact that the P&P dictates the actions of all members when representing the League at events.

Supporting Seminarians

In this era of falling numbers entering religious vocations members can offer support to all seminarians, whether enrolled in local programs or those in other schools across Canada. That support can be financial, but it can also manifest through prayer. If you have a seminarian from your parish reach out and see how

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you can be of assistance. If you have a seminary close to you, reach out to the institution itself and see what its needs are. If you live in a small parish, do some research and ask where your diocese sends those who feel a calling to the priesthood. Support for these institutions is always needed and always welcome.

We are all given our vocations from God and all fill an important role, no matter if our path leads us towards a role in the church as laity or as those destined for religious service. We all need support. We can help those destined for the priesthood in a very tangible way.

Prayer Tool Belt

During this season of Easter it is important not to lose our prayerful habits of Lent, but to continue taking time out of our day to spend it with God. The essence of prayer has not changed over the centuries of the church's existence but prayer has made the jump to digital in many ways. There are many excellent apps that have been created so that prayers can come with us wherever we carry our phones. Here are three that I have found useful:

- *Living with Christ* (Novalis): This app has the daily readings as well as some prayers and images for meditation. There is no cost for downloading this app.
- *Jesuit Prayer* (Society of Jesus): This app includes a daily reading and reflection, the daily examen and virtual prayer cards. There is no cost for downloading this app.
- *Magnificat*: This app contains the daily mass prayers and scripture readings, Daily morning and evening prayer, as well as a spiritual reflection for each day. There is a cost for downloading this app unless you are a subscriber of the printed version.

I wish for you a joyful Easter season. Remember to continue to take time for God each day in your prayers, however that may look for you. Support each other and those around you in many ways.



Jacqueline Nogier