



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: October 3, 2022
FROM: Cathy Bouchard, national chairperson of spiritual development
TO: Parish council chairpersons of spiritual development
CC: Parish presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents, life members (on request)

When we remember that our faith life is what attracts members as compared to so many other women's groups we could belong to, it is important to feed that in each other. As one of our wise provincial presidents says, "It will be through prayerful time that we will discern what God is calling us, as a council, to do." Even Jesus went to prayer first before the tough decisions.

One of the goals in the strategic plan is that members grow in faith through spiritual development opportunities provided for them. New documents can be found on the national website titled:

- "What We Do" (#325 - bookmark, 326 - poster, 327 - postcard)
- *Retreat Centres for Spiritual Development* (#328a – bulletin, 328b - brochure)

A new pamphlet called *The Catholic Women's League of Canada: Faith - Service - Social Justice – Sisterhood* (#627) focuses on the social aspects of the sisterhood of the League. *Prayer Service Planning Workshop* (#628) focuses on the spiritual and social aspects in councils to foster a culture where all life is valued with dignity and respect.

The faith life of members involves acting on social justice. The *Calendar of Social Justice/Catholic Social Teaching in the Church* (#622) module provides links to important dates to remember, while the resource *Care for God's Creation Resources* (#625) gives scripture and bible resources along with exams, prayers and quotes.

Another resource that may come in handy is *Gifts of Love*, a prayer service for adult communities that has been developed and published by the York Catholic District School Board. It may be found at <http://www.ycdsb.ca/programs-services/religion-family-life/adult-faith/gifts-of-love/>.

FAITH, SERVICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

As you know the League has undergone a strategic renewal. The existing standing committees were reduced to three to align with the core values of faith, service and social justice.

The League's core purpose is "uniting Catholic women to grow in faith, and to promote social justice through service to the church, Canada and the world." Through the core values members

are called to live the Mission Statement to “grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.”

The envisioned future of the League is that, through the work of these three standing committees, “The Catholic Women’s League of Canada will become an inclusive and engaged community of Catholic women inspired by faith.” The members will be vital participants in the church, valued partners for social justice, respected advocates at all government levels and connected to the world.

Faith (Hearts in Prayer)

“Uniting Catholic Women to Grow in Faith”



Spiritual development is the essence of the League. The core value of faith is what sets it apart from all other women’s organizations. The League was established in 1920 as a lay organization of Catholic women who worked and advocated for social justice but who also valued their spiritual development. The League was officially recognized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as a lay association of women in 1948.

Members honour Mary, Our Lady of Good Counsel, as their patroness. Mary responded to the Lord’s call despite doubts. Her faith is an example for all members. Through their baptism women are inspired by the Spirit to respond to God’s call and to be a transforming force in wider society (*Lumen Gentium*).

Councils at all levels are encouraged to provide opportunities for members to experience spiritual growth through prayer, recognizing the sanctity of life, study of Catholic teachings, awareness of the role of women in the church, encouraging vocations, ecumenism and interfaith endeavours, studying and implementing action plans of adopted resolutions that pertain to faith and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (pro-life legislation, reproductive technology, euthanasia), and circulating information that enhances the Church’s teachings.

We are now transitioning from the different standing committees to three main committees. The new faith standing committee will be responsible for spiritual growth of members, study of Catholic teachings, role of women in the church, ecumenism and inter-faith endeavours, as well as sanctity of life and vocations which were previously part of the Christian family life standing committee.

I encourage you to continue your spiritual growth individually and through the League, “For God and Canada”.

Cathy