

## **Prince Edward Island President Karen Rossiter**

As 2023 rolled in, Prince Edward Island Catholic Women's League began to see the province "open up." Members are excited to meet each other in person and bring back the fellowship that is such an integral part of the Catholic Women's League.

Regular meetings are in full swing, and events are being booked. Prince Edward Island's 29 parish councils and over 1,700 members are eager to contribute to their parishes through the ministries of faith, service and social justice.

Many parish councils, including provincial, continue to use video conferencing for meetings, educational sessions, workshops and prayer groups.

The provincial council would usually host area meetings in February; however, those were postponed for this year as officers were out visiting the local parishes doing Unity Outreach work, and officers and members volunteered for the Canada Winter Games that were held in Prince Edward Island from February 17<sup>th</sup> to March 6<sup>th</sup>. The provincial council felt the spring would be quite busy.

As of mid-June, Prince Edward Island has completed the first phase of the Unity Outreach program with our 29 parish councils.

March and April were busy for the provincial council getting ready for its 102<sup>nd</sup> Annual Provincial Convention that was held May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in Summerside. As all restrictions had been lifted, Prince Edward Island was able to hold a full convention open to all members and saw 154 members from across the province registered. Several speakers spoke to our theme, *Catholic and Living It!*; these included Provincial Spiritual Advisor Fr. Danny Wilson, Sr. Libby Osgood, and one of our parish council presidents, Dianne Gaudet.

This year's annual convention saw a resolution presented on lyme disease, which was passed and adopted by provincial council.

The convention ended with the installation of the new provincial executive. Prince Edward Island Provincial Council still needs a social justice convenor and was actively seeking to fill this vacant position; however, before I left on Thursday, the position was filled. The new officers were sworn in under the new Catholic Women's League structure.

Five outgoing provincial council members completed their term as provincial officers. We wish them well and are grateful for their service to the League.

CWL members participated in many meaningful activities: 12 Hours of Palliative Care Week, the Horizons of Hope Webinar, and a virtual rosary. Members were encouraged to involve their parish and communities in the "Kindness Rock Project."

Members continue to send letters and emails to members of parliament and local members of the legislative assembly on such issues as euthanasia and assisted suicide, medical aid in dying, abortion and the rights of the unborn, among other issues. Prince Edward Island parish councils are very active in prayer.

Emails, letters and communiqués continue to be sent regularly to provincial officers, local presidents and members on current initiatives, critical events, and changes happening at the national and provincial level since the Catholic Women's League is in a year of transition into the new structure. Prince Edward Island parish councils are encouraged to reach out to provincial officers with any questions or concerns during this time as they adjust and fit into the new structure.

Prince Edward Island has one provincial officer currently involved in one of the strategic plan working groups.

The new Prince Edward Island Provincial Council met on June 10<sup>th</sup>, and officers were presented with an outline of meeting and event dates for the upcoming year.

Members attended the Virtual Rosary of Reconciliation as part of National Indigenous Peoples Day. One parish council reads some of the national Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at meetings; this council also made two quilts and gave them to an Indigenous sister and brother. Some councils are including one reason a week for joining their local council. Prince Edward Island councils hosted World Day of Prayer and retreats. The Catholic Women's League Provincial Subsidy has seven applications for planned events.

Many parish council anniversaries are being planned. One council has celebrated its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a mass and distribution of pins that ranged from five years up to a pioneer member who received her 65-year pin.

June 29<sup>th</sup> saw the installation of the new bishop of the Diocese of Charlottetown for Prince Edward Island. Bishop Joseph Dabrowski was the auxiliary bishop of London and will be the 14<sup>th</sup> bishop of Charlottetown. More than 1,600 faithful, including many Catholic Women's League members, packed St. Dunstan's Basilica for the ceremony.

During my two-year term as provincial president, there are several things which I would like to accomplish. My wish is to bring the Catholic Women's League of Prince Edward Island closer together with fellowship and outreach, and I hope to continue the good work of education and leadership training via workshops, meetings and conferences.

My wish is that the Catholic Women's League be reinvigorated and reunited in faith, service and social justice in our parishes, communities and province. The timing is right to let everyone know that the Catholic Women's League is resilient, thriving, and open to Catholic women of all ethnicities and ages as we work "For God and Country." †