



# The Canadian League

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# President's Message

**Anne-Marie Gorman**

National President and Chairperson of International Relations



It has been a long year, a year that I am counting as having begun in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic began to interrupt the important workings of the League. Now it is Winter 2021, and major decisions have been made to keep the organization running, while continuing to complete the work of faith and social justice. Parish councils' important service work, that ranks so high among members, was curtailed in many places until councils could make a new and creative plan for how to serve parishioners and the greater community. God is good and has perhaps interrupted members' lives in order for them to take stock. Parish councils are "figuring it out" and learning what is really important during this difficult time.

During the fall national executive/board teleconference, several significant decisions were made regarding the organization. The decisions were given serious consideration and prayerful discernment as board members considered how each recommendation would affect members at the local level. The resulting instructed voting package sent to all parish councils in December 2020 may be one of members' most important duties this year.

I have heard from members in every corner of this country that the pandemic has halted the League. Suggestions from closing the national office to discontinuing membership until a vaccine is readily available have been expressed. I have only to recall National President Bellelle Guerin's (1920-23) words at the first national convention, which have inspired members for 100 years. Imagine having just gone through the bloodiest war in the world from 1914-18 and being concerned about the upheaval in the world of 1920, when the Catholic Women's League was formed nationally. How could this be possible unless the providence of the Lord and the intercession of Mary inspired women of faith to come together? And come together they did, from every corner of Canada, cobbling together the 10 cent per capita fee that is a pittance today but was money from every Catholic family treasury during very hard times. Members did it then because they saw a cause greater than themselves or their individual communities, small or large, rural or urban.



So, how important is it to have a national organization? Why would a woman wish to belong to the League today amid this pandemic? Simply put, for the same reasons as in 1920. If members had no national voice, they would not be heard in Ottawa, and they would not be joined by sisters from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and Labrador to work together "For God and Canada." Parish councils would be in their silos. God's work requires solidarity and community, not piecemeal activity. If members are to evangelize, they need common words that speak to the hearts of all across Canada. Beyond the borders, if the League were not a national organization, it would not belong to a worldwide organization of Catholic women who are also in solidarity, promoting peace, helping the poor and caring for creation (World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations).

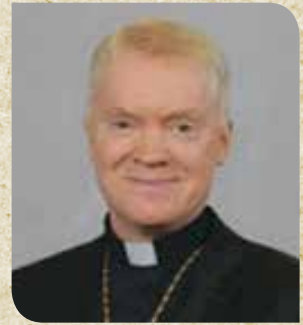
The League provides a voice for the voiceless. Every tiny bit counts while doing God's work. From prayer to telephone calls to e-mail messages to letters to briefs to advocacy efforts, here at home and also abroad, this organization is vital. No price can be placed on the need to belong. Whatever it takes, now as in 1920, the League will continue to do, in prayer, sweat equity and dollars.

The question is not whether members should belong or continue to belong—it is what will be lost if they do not belong. Canada needs each member; the world needs the League. I may be reiterating the same ideas that have been circulating for a century, but they remain current. As Bellelle said, the League mobilizes "feminine energy," courageously going into the deep with fear and trepidation, but going nonetheless, confident that it has the hearts of more than 70,000 women behind every move. Again, no price can be placed on this, God's work. Bellelle said it well in 1921, but it remains as pertinent today. "We have before us some days of serious and strenuous work. Let us approach it with all the zeal and good will that is in our souls... Shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart... bound by a solidarity that nothing can break, gentlewomen, but brave soldiers..." (Address to the First National Convention, 1921).

Be not afraid. †

# From the National Spiritual Advisor

**Most Rev. Stephen Jensen, Bishop of Prince George**  
National Spiritual Advisor



*Fratelli Tutti* (On Fraternity and Social Friendship), the encyclical letter of Pope Francis released last October, names several moral issues that have been the subject of the League’s activities in education and consultation with government over many years.

In number 6 of the encyclical, the pope speaks of “present-day attempts to eliminate or ignore others.” Does that not describe exactly the relentless campaign in this culture of death, to dismiss the rights of the unborn child, to “deconstruct” the institution of marriage, even to attack the nature of human life itself through radical gender ideologies that deny the biological fact that people are made male or female?

The logical last step in this pernicious campaign is to view those facing the end of life in this world as “problems” to be solved through the use of medical assistance in dying. Catholics recall that this was first proposed as a voluntary response to unbearable suffering in those recognized by doctors as being close to death. Yet, it has inevitably and quickly morphed into a “solution” for all manner of emotional or psychological distress. In documented cases from other countries, it is now imposed without the consent of the victims.

As I write, Bill C-7 *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying)*, has already passed second reading in the House of Commons. The bill will allow people who are not dying—i.e., for whom imminent death is not foreseeable—to be euthanized. Anyone living with a disability, a non-fatal illness or a psychological condition that can actually be treated and cured, will have access to medical assistance in dying. The mandatory 10-day waiting period will be eliminated in many cases so that people can obtain euthanasia on the spot, with no chance to reconsider a rash decision made in a moment of despair.



Barring a miracle, Bill C-7 will be the law of the land when you read this in the Winter issue of *The Canadian League*.

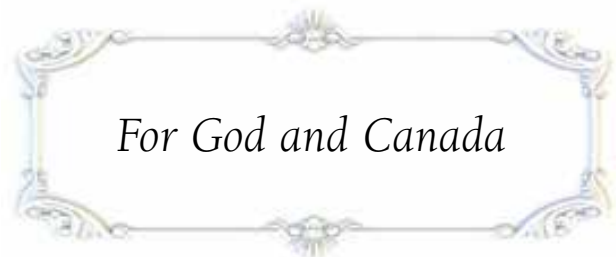
The pope’s encyclical letter identifies what is usually not acknowledged in a utilitarian society that produces such unjust laws. “Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still ‘illiterate’ when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies”.

In her address to the League’s first national convention, National President Bellelle Guerin (1920-23) said, “we must rather come in contact with the reality of the present state of things, for, it is on this condition

only that we can exercise the part that has been assigned us by Providence in the Divine economy that presides over human destinies.” The League has shown consistent leadership by addressing life issues through education of its members and engagement with politicians and government officials to express concern and suggest improvements to

poor policy and legislation.

That work must continue now so that evil can be checked and a new culture of life can grow in Canadian society. This is people’s “part assigned by Providence,” but members’ efforts are always a cooperation in faith with God’s power working in them and around them. Every member’s prayer and penance can help obtain this conversion of minds and hearts and civic life. †



# Sisters and Brothers

## Shari Quinta

National First Vice-President and Chairperson of Spiritual Development



*Fratelli Tutti* (*On Fraternity and Social Friendship*), the title of Pope Francis' latest encyclical, is also the phrase of St. Francis of Assisi when he "addressed his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel". This encyclical is informative and gospel-like in its instruction for love and social experience.

*Laudato Si'* (*On Care for Our Common Home*), the pope's previous encyclical and the basis of the League's theme these past two years, was also inspired by St. Francis. It is simple yet profound in its direction for love of the earth and God's people.

People have been through so much over the past year—world turmoil, wars, radical elections and the COVID-19 pandemic. With all of that comes chaos, poverty, hunger, illness and death, and perhaps even apathy. The question is, have people learned from it and can they possibly be sisters and brothers who love each other and the earth, and move forward positively? The pope refers to being "capable of a new vision of fraternity and social friendship that will not remain at the level of words." Members, then, are being called to action.

In its mission statement, the League calls its members to action, "...to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service." This is not a call to isolate; it is a call to serve.



It has been difficult with the pandemic restrictions, to be sure, but councils across Canada have found ways to keep in touch with members and their community, get together, and continue the work of the church in unique ways. In the pope's latest encyclical, he says,

"It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women. 'Here we have a splendid secret that shows us how to dream and to turn our life into a wonderful adventure. No one can face life in isolation....We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead. How important it is to dream together.... By ourselves, we risk seeing mirages, things that are not there. Dreams, on the other hand, are built together.' Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all".

As members go in a new direction with planning strategically for the League, they must do it together, experiencing that same dream for the good of all. Members are not just in it for themselves or even for the League—they are in it for the church, for service to their sisters and brothers. †

## Mission Statement

The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.

# Making an Impact

## Cathy Bouchard

National Chairperson of Resolutions

## Betty Colaneri

National Chairperson of Legislation



A League delegation has met annually with the federal government since 1974. National President Mary Matthews (1974-76) had a fresh presence about her. She knew Canada would benefit from hearing members' thoughts, and so the annual federal government visits began. Each year that followed, the privilege and honour of bringing members' voices to government continued until March 2020. Arrangements had been made for a delegation from the national resolutions committee to meet with members of parliament. With documents prepared, bags packed and ready to go, the delegation received the alarming news that everything had come to a halt. Yet, amid the uncertainty, legislation continued, and bills were introduced to assist Canadians.

While the national resolutions committee has been "on pause", it has used the time to examine the resolutions process with a renewed appreciation. Legislation has been monitored more than ever as the concern for Canadians' livelihood has risen with each passing day.

At the local level, many parish councils have spoken with electoral candidates before an election. Once elected, these representatives rely on constituents to continue interacting with them—after all, they represent people, the constituents. Elected representatives currently have more time for a visit. In regions where gatherings are allowed, parish councils might consider a visit, sending a group of members. When visiting, members should go with the attitude that the League is a strong, organized group of women with more than

100 years of history and expertise on the subjects members bring to the representative's attention.

Elected representatives from opposition parties are also eager to meet with members. These meetings allow the representatives to speak out at their respective assemblies and hold the governing party to account for what was promised during the election campaign.

On an individual level, the League strongly promotes using a personal letter with a follow-up telephone call as the most effective means of expressing one's concerns to governments. It is something that can be done safely at home.

When considering signing a League initiated petition, the League ensures that a supportive member of parliament will present it on the League's behalf. More information on this can be found in the *Resolutions Supplement to the Executive Handbook*.

In a publication from Novalis (2019), by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto, *For Heaven's Sake, Vote!: Your Guide to Catholic Social Teaching and the Federal Election* members are reminded that,

"The fundamental message of the Gospels and Catholic Social Teaching is this: We are responsible for one another, especially for the most vulnerable and the poor.

"Our actions matter... because [they] can turn our country's government towards greater justice. Our [actions] can lead to greater economic security and opportunity, or marginalization and hopelessness—for the peoples of Canada and for our brothers and sisters in need around the world...Economic security and opportunity are not automatic in any democracy. We must take seriously our commitments as citizens."

While voting is one of the most basic rights in a free and democratic society, the action of researching and creating a resolution as well as meeting with government officials to express personal concerns and those of the League may be considered as one of the most basic responsibilities of citizens.

Members have asked if resolutions have had an impact on changing or affecting laws in Canada. A quick look at the League's current and archived resolutions show that members have made a difference.



- |         |   |         |  |
|---------|---|---------|--|
| 2018.01 | Attestation Requirement on Canada Summer Jobs Program                                     | 2005.07 | Illegal Manufacture and Trafficking of Crystal Methamphetamine                             |
| 2017.02 | Mandatory Age Verification Mechanisms for Adult Pornographic Websites (now in the Senate) | 2005.10 | Reduce Polybrominated Diphenyl Ether Flame Retardants                                      |
| 2016.02 | <i>Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide</i>   | 2004.05 | End Trafficking of Children  |
| 2016.03 | Warning Labels on Food and Drug Products for all Inactive Substances and Additives        | 2004.10 | Effective Participation in Application of the <i>Canadian Environmental Assessment Act</i> |
| 2015.02 | Ban Plastic Microbeads in Personal Care Products  | 2003.03 | Use of Antimicrobials and their Impact   |
| 2015.03 | Banning the Use of Neonicotinoid Pesticides (partially banned)                            | 2003.06 | Health Danger from Exposure to Lead in Consumer Products                                   |
| 2015.05 | Re-instatement of the Long Form Census  | 2002.02 | The Prohibition of the Sale of Human Embryonic or Foetal Tissue or Reproductive Services   |
| 2014.01 | Restoration of Health Care for Refugee Claimants  | 2002.03 | Accessibility of the Workplace for Persons with Disabilities                               |
| 2014.02 | Electronic Cigarettes   | 2003.08 | National Strategy to Eliminate Computer-Based Child Pornography                            |
| 2012.01 | Criminalization of the Purchasing of Sexual Services                                      | 2000.09 | National registry of convicted, dangerous, high-risk sex offenders                         |
| 2011.02 | Children of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women   | 1999.06 | Unrelated Bone Marrow Donor Registry Program   |
| 2011.03 | National Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Registry                           | 1999.02 | Childhood Abuse in Institutions  |
| 2011.04 | Caffeine in Energy Drinks   | 1993.05 | Canadian Immigration Policy to Protect Women at Risk of Gender-Related Persecution         |
| 2010.01 | Use of Chrysotile Asbestos  | 1985.06 | Pornography  |
| 2010.02 | Income Tax Credit for Children's Participation in Arts and Cultural Activities            |         |  |
| 2009.02 | Protection and Support Services for Foreign Victims of Human Trafficking                  |         |  |
| 2009.01 | Exit Strategies for Prostituted Persons   |         |  |
| 2009.03 | Hate Messages   |         |  |
| 2008.01 | Preventing Human Trafficking at 2010 Olympics   |         |  |
| 2008.03 | Toxic Substances in Household Products  |         |  |
| 2008.05 | Transportation Tax Credit for Rural Post-Secondary Students                               |         |  |
| 2005.01 | Nativity-related Postage Stamps   |         |  |

As the League's founding members have done, it is important to keep a finger on society's pulse, bring awareness to important issues in Canadian communities and be the educated voice that demands to be heard.

"Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13). †

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# Pornography Hurts

## Doreen Gowans

National Second Vice-President and Chairperson of Communications



On November 14, 2019, Associated Press reported, “Pope Francis called... for Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, Google and other tech companies to urgently take measures to remove child [pornography] from the web and prevent children from accessing pornography online. [Pope] Francis told a Vatican conference of religious leaders and high-tech representatives that it’s no longer acceptable to merely follow the law in monitoring online content, because technology is fast outpacing regulation. He said tech and computer software companies should assume a moral responsibility to protect young people from what he said were the ruinous effects of pornography on their emotional and sexual development”.

Currently, Canada has no national regulatory framework regarding pornography. Only voluntary self-regulation and labelling by individuals and organizations is recommended.

In a February 7, 2017 submission by Janet Zacharias, RN, BN, to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health, entitled *Pornography—A Public Health Issue: A Review of the Literature and Recommendations*, Ms. Zacharias shares:

“The internet has exponentially increased the platforms and ease of access to sexually explicit material, making pornography accessible to everyone, including children and adolescents. Research is suggestive of adverse health effects as well as a negative social impact.

“Hardcore pornography is now mainstream (Dines, 2010). This has generated a sense of acceptance of pornography and its varying forms of sexual expression,



normalizing sexual behaviors that were not socially acceptable before the internet (Riemersma & Sytsma, 2013).

“[Three] key factors for the increase of pornography (Negash, Sheppard, Lambert & Fincham, 2016; Perrin *et al.*, 2008): 1) Ease of access 2) Privacy 3) Amount of the free and/or cheap pornographic material available.

“Pornography is a multi-Billion Dollar Industry (Arthur, 2013; TopTenReviews, n.d.)

- 97 Billion Dollars in sales annually (Maes & Levinson, 2013).
- More money is spent on porn every year than movie tickets and all other forms of performance related entertainment combined.
- 420 million web pages contain pornographic content.
- 700 million DVDs rented out yearly.
- 13,000 hardcore videos produced every year.

“Exposure

- 42.3% of all internet consumers access pornography (TopTenReviews, n.d.).
- 25% of all daily search requests are for pornography.
- 11 years is the average age a child is exposed to pornography. Oftentimes, first exposure is accidental, as children grow up in the digital world (Riemersma & Sytsma, 2013).”

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, League members have more time at home and may wish to use the time to encourage Canada to change for the better.

Members, if your time allows, I appeal to you to consider sending the League’s Pornography Hurts postcard to your member of parliament. It is as simple as accessing the postcard from the national website, visit [cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca) by following the steps below:

- Click on “Resources.”
- Click on “100 Series: Crests, Stationery and Other Council Supplies.”
- Scroll and click on “#178 Pornography Hurts Postcard” (including printing instructions).
- Scroll and click on “#179 Mandatory Age Verification for Adult Pornographic Websites.” ↑



# The Gift of The Sabbath

## The Gift of Rest



**Fran Lucas**

National President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization

Canadians are in a pandemic; they should be at home the majority of the time. So why am I still so busy or even busier than before the pandemic? Catholics know Sundays are meant to be a day of rest, and they try to ensure that is the case. Although League work will creep into some of my Sundays, I will not do work involving any labour as that was the rule instilled in me from a young age. But what about the other six days of the week? In reading an article by Christine Way Skinner in the September 2020 issue of *Living with Christ*, I had cause to reflect on my level of activity during those six days. I suspect all leaders (and that is all members), find themselves in a similar reflection occasionally. Ms. Skinner says, “Slowing down is essential to keeping [your] sanity—as well as [your] faith—in this culture. [People] live in a world that has an unhealthy, maybe even idolatrous, love of busyness, efficiency and action. Human beings have never been so averse to stillness as they are in today’s dominant culture. The high level of stress-related illnesses (both physical and psychological) shows that this busy-ness affects us negatively”.



My mom played a role in my ill-perceived need to stay busy. As a farmer’s wife, hard work for long hours was the norm, whether she was in the kitchen, on the field, or at church. Even after retiring from the farm into an urban setting, she felt sitting down with Dad at 8:00 p.m. to watch television was a waste of precious time.

The League affords many opportunities to be busy. Members need to keep Ms. Skinner’s message front and centre as they decide what is most important for them to produce meaningful results. I am not suggesting members pull away from their League work, but rather try to balance it with what they need for themselves. As leaders, members need to take care of themselves and be that balanced model for others.

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest” (Mt. 11:28). The Sabbath is a day Catholics recognize and follow, as best as possible, as a day to show gratitude and have a rest. How do members do that at other times when day after day, long hours of work drain them? Is it looking out a sunny window and admiring slow moving clouds, watching big fluffy

snowflakes falling gently, or enjoying a tiny bird sitting on a branch invisible to all but one?

What one, two or three things are on members’ to-do lists today that can be scheduled for another time or crossed off altogether, giving them some new-found quiet time that will refresh them and provide greater energy for the things they really need to do? Will they pick up a reflections book, watch a movie, try a new recipe, or reminisce flipping through a photograph album? Repeat in 24 hours, and again in 48 hours, and by the seventh day of giving themselves that time for rest and refreshment, it should have become a gift to be enjoyed. Daily? Weekly? How often?

If crossing things off the list is not doable, then members should at least take time between those tasks for themselves, for greater efficiency, for positive mental health, for themselves! If required, there are many resources available on how to achieve balance, including online applications and books. One of my favourite books on this topic is *The Art of Life: Monastic Wisdom for Every Day* by Joan Chittister.

And for those things that cannot be crossed off, perhaps creative and more efficient ways of tackling them can be found. Brainstorm with a friend or with the parish council on what needs doing and how to get those things done. What are the things members most enjoy doing and find most refreshing and reviving? Can they spend more of their time on them, less of their time on other tasks, and free up a bit more time for themselves? If you have not yet filled out a membership renewal form, part of the new *Welcome Program*, call your parish council president today for a copy. That will give you the opportunity to revisit the talents you possess and the types of activities you love and help you flourish.

Saskatchewan Provincial President-Elect Connie Crichton has kindly agreed to share her real-life situation of “taking time.” The provincial presidents-elect and I were having a virtual meeting, and Connie signed in an hour late. “I was babysitting my 15-month-old grandson and he was in his sweetest disposition for the occasion, so the hour was well spent with him.” Her reason was not one any of the presidents-elect could fault her for and likely very much wished that it was their reason for being late for anything! 🙏

# Caring For Our Common Home

## Faith Anderson

National Chairperson of Education and Health



“If not now, when? If not you, who?” (Hillel the Elder).

This quote by Hillel the Elder (Hillel Hazaken), born around the year 110 BCE, has been steeping in my head for some time. He was one of the most influential rabbis in Jewish history. In light of the worldwide pandemic, it makes one think that “now” is the time to take action, not “when” and the “who” is “you,” the members. During her Summer Speaker Series presentation, Dr. Donna Orsuto, co-founder and director of The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas (Rome) stated that members could not leave it to someone else to save the planet—they need to make a personal connection. In dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, members have been constantly reminded that they do not need regulations to take action and make a difference. They can each start today to change the ways they *Care for Our Common Home* and consciously take steps to reduce, reuse and recycle.

Five years ago, Pope Francis gifted Catholics with the encyclical *Laudato Si’ (On Care for Our Common Home)*. A special year of celebration for the pope’s encyclical has been designated from May 24, 2020, to May 24, 2021. It is a call to action. It is noted that the fifth anniversary of the encyclical coincides with another critical moment—COVID-19—and makes the message of *Laudato Si’* as prophetic today as it was in 2015. The pope reminds Catholics, “[they] can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents”.

In his October 10, 2020 address, the pope stated, “We are faced with the moral imperative, and the practical urgency, to rethink many things: the way we produce; the way we consume; our culture of waste; our short-term vision; the exploitation of the poor and our indifference towards them; the growing inequalities and our dependence on harmful energy sources. We need to think about all these challenges.”

He also said, “As the term Countdown suggests, we must act with urgency. Each one of us can play a valuable role, if we all begin our journey today—not tomorrow—today. Because the future is built today, and it is not built in isolation, but rather in community and in harmony.”

An October 7, 2020 news release from Environment and Climate Change Canada stated, “Plastic is polluting our rivers, lakes, and oceans, harming wildlife, and generating microplastics in the water we use and drink. Every year, Canadians throw away 3 million tonnes of plastic waste, only 9% of which is recycled, meaning the vast majority of plastics end up in landfills and about 29,000 tonnes finds its way into our natural environment.” The federal minister of environment and climate change also announced the next steps in the federal government’s plan to achieve zero plastic waste by 2030. The plan is “to ban harmful single-use plastic items where there is evidence that they are found in the environment, are often not recycled, and have readily available alternatives.” It includes a proposal to ban plastic checkout bags, straws, stir sticks, six-pack rings, cutlery and food ware made from hard-to-recycle plastics.

*Talking Trash: Canada’s Plastic Pollution Problem*, a report by Environmental Defence notes, “Currently, only about 10% per cent of the plastic used in Canada is recycled. That means nearly 90 per cent ends up in landfills, incinerators, or the environment, including the oceans and Great Lakes. In fact, an estimated 10,000 metric tonnes of plastic end up in the Great Lakes every year.” It also indicates 100,000 marine creatures die every year; about one million seabirds die, and marine litter is hurting more than 800 species.

Protecting the environment means recycling but also focusing more on reducing and reusing items. The pope has said it is a “throwaway culture.” Each member can change that mantra to a “reducing and reusing culture.” †



In keeping with the League’s theme *Care for Our Common Home*, along with the potential opportunity to reduce production costs, please note *The Canadian League* magazine is available online at [cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca).

Should you prefer to view the magazine online, kindly notify your council membership chairperson and your name will be deleted from the hard copy distribution list.

# Action in the Time of COVID-19



## Pat Deppiesse

National Chairperson of Christian Family Life

As I write this article in mid-November, members are still social distancing and cannot see the end in sight to the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides the horror of so many people contracting the disease, some are dying, and many people are depressed. It is leading to all sorts of problems such as loneliness and abuse. In many communities, Canadians cannot visit with their families. However, there is hope for a vaccine in the New Year.

God does not forget Catholics. In the bible, the phrase, "Be not afraid" is mentioned 365 times—one for each day. Spring is just around the corner! More hope!

Members always rise to the occasion with enthusiasm. I would like to challenge each member to use the technology available to her, such as the telephone, e-mails, Twitter, Facebook, etc., and reach out every day to one person in her immediate circle, whether it be parishioners, friends, neighbours and of course, family members. A telephone call makes such a difference to the day for people isolating.

Are there other things members could be doing? There is still much to act on. Here is a suggested list for parish councils:

- Send a newsletter to all members, by e-mail or by post.
- Let members know about "feel good" stories from within the council, e.g., making masks.
- Telephone seniors in the parish to see if they are okay

or, if they need help of some kind. Bring them some books or knitting materials. How about knitting a prayer shawl?

- Send out Pornography Hurts postcards.
- Write letters to the government regarding Bill C-7 *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in Canada)*.
- Act on resolutions (online at [cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca)) by writing letters.
- Ensure there are domestic abuse folders in the women's washroom of the church.
- Initiate virtual meetings, or, if the parish allows, meet in the church while isolating and wearing masks.
- Start a prayer group, pray for the protection of life, and especially pray for priests and new vocations.
- *Care for Our Common Home*—plant a tree or shrub!
- Adopt a northern parish through Catholic Missions In Canada. Visit its website to see how the council can get involved.
- Study the strategic planning documents online at [cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca).
- Re-write an old resolution that needs updating.
- Read the bible.
- Read all those Catholic publications that you were going to read sometime.

May God bless and keep all members until they can safely meet again. Remember to be kind. †

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# Mary's Meals "A Simple Solution To World Hunger"



## Marie Rackley

National Chairperson of Community Life

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow was born in 1968 in Aberdeen, Scotland. He started his career as a fish farmer before setting up Scottish International Relief, a charity that later became Mary's Meals. He is married to a nurse named Julie and lives together in Dalmally in Argyll, Scotland with their seven children.

After watching a news bulletin about war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina while sitting in his father's shed, Magnus and his brother agreed to take a week's hiatus from work to help. Neither of them expected it to be a life-changing experience. What began as a one-time road trip in an old beaten up Land Rover grew to become Magnus' life's work. He resigned from his job, sold his house and directed all of his efforts to feeding thousands of the world's most impoverished children.

Mary's Meals was created in 2002 when Mr. McFarlane-Barrow visited Malawi during a famine and met a woman named Emma, who was dying from acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). He asked her oldest son, Edward, what his dreams were. Edward stated, "I want to have enough food to eat and to go to school one day." Mr. McFarlane-Barrow tells of how "a series of miraculous circumstances and an overwhelming display of love from those around him led to the creation of Mary's Meals." This organization would hold the key to eradicating child hunger. It is a testament to the impact one person can make in today's society. From feeding just more than 200 children in southern Malawi in 2002, the charity currently works with 18 countries worldwide, serving meals to more than 1.6 million children every school day, at the cost of \$26.40 per child for the entire school year.

Mary's Meals provides the meals in a place of learning to attract hungry children into the classroom. Education can be their route from poverty. There is a rise in enrolment, attendance and attainment. To feed the body is to feed the child.



The work is done by volunteers who carry out acts of love on behalf of Mary's Meals and is named after Mary, who brought up her son Jesus, in poverty. It serves those of all faiths or none, united by the belief that "no child in this world of plenty should endure a day without a meal." The lives of hundreds of thousands of impoverished children are being changed.

Mary's Meals Canada was founded and registered in April 2013 by Bridgid Davidson, a Catholic educator who was battling stage four colon cancer at the time. Having lost her battle in June 2013, she leaves behind a legacy of kindness, generosity and compassion.

On November 26, 2018, after meeting with Mr. McFarlane-Barrow, Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, wrote, "Mary's Meals is a wonderful organization and provides meals for young people in Africa. I have met with the founder, Mr. Magnus Macfarlane-Barrow and have been very impressed by the great work which he and Mary's Meals are doing. I encourage Catholics, who wish to do so, to support Mary's Meals."

On October 3, 2020, in Gagetown, New Brunswick, a fundraiser was held for Mary's Meals, with some members of St. Francis of Assisi Parish Council (Lincoln) making apple cider. Fr. Charles Udeh, the parish priest, who is very familiar with Mary's Meals in his homeland of Africa, also took part in the activities.

Mr. McFarlane-Barrow has written a book called *The Shed That Fed a Million Children: The Mary's Meals Story*. It is the extraordinary story of Mary's Meals and can be found or ordered from any bookstore. All royalties from the sale of the book will go directly to Mary's Meals.

For more information, write to Mary's Meals Canada at PO Box 76144, Millrise RPO, Calgary, AB T2Y 2Z0, or contact via telephone at (855) 702-0330 or by e-mail to [info@marysmeals.ca](mailto:info@marysmeals.ca) 📧

The Catholic Women's League of Canada has reinstated its 1% Program for the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace. Parish councils are now able to collect and submit 1% of all revenue earned to the national voluntary fund for CCODP.

# Introducing



**June Brown**  
New Brunswick  
Provincial President

June was born in the community of Barnettville outside the Village of Blackville on the beautiful Miramichi River. At an early age, she moved to Moncton with her parents and grew up there. Years later, she was blessed by the birth of her sister Jill. Although she has lived away from the Miramichi for years, her family still maintains a summer home there.

June's journey began in Saint John in 1981 as a member of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish Council (formerly St. Joseph's Parish Council). Who knew that the invitation to attend that first meeting would lead to years of new friendships, love of the League and this great country? Since that time, June has served as her parish council chairperson of communications, recording secretary, president-elect, president (two terms) and past president.

Her time served on Saint John Diocesan Council began in 1996 as recording secretary for a two-year term; then from 2000–02 regional chairperson for Saint John/Kings Co. which turned into two more terms lasting until 2006. From 2006–08, June served as second vice-president and chairperson of education and health. She was first vice-president and chairperson of spiritual development (2008–10), president-elect and chairperson of organization (2010–12) and diocesan president (2012–14).

June has served the provincial council as chairperson of community life (2004–06), treasurer (2006–10),

second vice-president and chairperson of communications (2014–16).

From 2016 to 2018, June served as first vice-president and chairperson of spiritual development and from 2018 to 2019, as president-elect and chairperson of organization. In October 2019, due to unforeseen circumstances, June became provincial president.

June's other experience includes her time as a "Gertrude" Field Worker (1990–92), and she has presented workshops in Saint John/Kings Co. Region and the Miramichi Region. From 2007–14, she was treasurer of the 2014 national convention planning committee, and in 2012 she was appointed provincial coordinator of *Catch The Fire!* She helped prepare and presented a workshop on preparing an annual report, and in May 2015, June received life membership.

In her personal life, June is the mother of two adult children. Her working life was spent as a helper in a private kindergarten. She then spent years as a parish secretary at St. Joseph's Church in Saint John and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Rothesay, a job which brought much gratification to her life. Now retired, June continues to volunteer at her church, where she is a current member of the liturgy committee and the pandemic committee. June is also blessed because her parents are still in their own home and will celebrate their 75<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in June 2021, God willing.

For more than 30 years, June has been a member of a local dance group, Fun'D Cloggers. The group has shared joy and sorrow over the years and has entertained at seniors' homes and various social gatherings in the area.

Encouraged by mentors, family and friends, the League has been an ongoing learning experience for June. The League of the future is exciting and open to new ideas and concepts. †

## National Council Regretfully Advises The Passing of Life Members:

**Lodia Cormier**  
Dieppe, New Brunswick

**Lorna Halderman**  
Deux-Montagnes, Quebec

**Margaret Van Meeuwen**  
Brighton, Ontario



## Magazine Deadlines

Spring issue – February 15, 2021

Fall issue – July 15, 2021

Winter issue – November 15, 2021

# Role of Women in The Church: A Personal Reflection

**Barbara Dowding**

Honorary Life Member



When National Second Vice-President and Chairperson of Communications Doreen Gowans asked me to write about my appointment as the first woman chancellor for the Archdiocese of Vancouver and how I reached this peak position in the church, I found myself at a loss for words.

Where to begin? Who among the League could have foreseen or foretold how her life would unfold?

Looking back, I can see so clearly where the circumstances and the opportunities that came my way were most often unexpected and always daunting. Detours, roadblocks and other obstructions pop up all over the place as people head toward what they think is their destination. Failed plans, dashed hopes and frustrating delays seem to ruin everything until they stop and look at where they would be if those incidents had not taken place.

My journey is very ordinary, not unlike many of my League sisters. When I was a young wife and mother, my life revolved around family and church. It was then I first joined the League. While the path from there to national president is another story, it certainly was the first step and an essential one for where I am today!

From early on, whether it was accepting a new role in the League or starting a new position at work, I would say a prayer, then say “yes.” I believed if someone had the trust in me to ask, the least I could do was try. But it was primarily the League relationships, mentorship, support, love and building up by those around me that shaped and guided my steps. It is what members do for one another. It is one of the most important things they do.

During those times of insecurity or fear of failure, my League sisters helped me stay the course. Leadership training, confidence building and trust in the League’s patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel, was the armour I needed to forge ahead. From public speaking to teaching conflict resolution, the skills I developed along the way were those same gifts I was able to take to my work.

From working in my archdiocese’s regional matrimonial tribunal to chairing major diocesan events, including Jubilee 2000 celebrations and the archdiocese’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to the Archdiocesan Synod and

directing the stewardship office, the skills I learned from the League had found a new place to blossom and grow.

For the past 16 years, I held the position of vice-chancellor, a first at the time for a woman, when then-Archbishop Raymond Roussin made the historic appointment. He is well remembered for his strong support of women in the church. My recent promotion to chancellor brought more responsibility, certain legal implications and a steep learning curve.

It is the chancellor’s responsibility to issue official documents, oversee the application of the law and diocesan guidelines, see to the preservation of documents in the diocesan archives, put into effect any acts of the archbishop or vicar general and provide information about the archdiocese.

Just as the League helped me develop my talents and gifts, my work for the archdiocese and the responsibilities of working as a woman in the church helped me be a better member. I grew in confidence, understanding and appreciation of the impact women can have and are making. While the debate would rage on around the ordination of women, I could see and still believe, women can and do make a huge impact on the church when working from within. The number of times I saw the effect of the feminine genius in a room full of clerics is real and true. I saw firsthand how my female perspective, often very different from that of a man, was welcomed and sought.

This appointment is less about me and more about us, women of the church. Members need to continue to break down barriers, to build bridges and go forward trusting in the Holy Spirit that their voices are being heard and they are making a difference. †

## A note from Barb Dowding,

A heartfelt thank you to all who sent masses, prayers, letters, cards and e-mails of congratulation. The love, support and overwhelming generosity by League sisters is a testament to this great organization.

# Experiencing Holy Moments

**Jackie Kierulf**

Divine Infant Parish Council, Orleans

One of my favorite bible quotes is the passage, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mt. 6:21). I think of that treasure as God’s love. In spite of all my sinfulness, I am loved. When Catholics are able to trust and surrender to Him, they have the potential to experience holy moments, those treasures of the heart of Jesus that He wants them to have.

I used to think that holy moments were reserved for saints, priests and individuals in religious orders, but they are not. God’s love has no bounds and that is also true of holy moments. They are there for all people to experience if they are open to receiving them.

In a holy moment, there is a separation of oneself from the world. The cluttered and chaotic world is absent. Those things do not belong in a holy moment, because they do not matter. What does matter is the person’s focus on the Lord.

Members may think that there is not much of an

opportunity for holy moments during this pandemic. They may feel detached, frustrated, sad and helpless. It is in these times of crisis that people need God even more.

Was there a time members felt that deep love of God for them? It may have been the peace they felt when they held their loved one’s hand as they took their last breath. It may have been a hymn that members heard or even sang that brought them great joy. It may have been a time that they knelt before the blessed sacrament and cried because not only did they feel the pain of God’s suffering for their salvation, they felt gratitude beyond words for His love for them.

The peace, the joy, the love that holy moments bring are treasures.

Excerpt from “Keeping the Faith Amid the Pandemic” from *Our Sunday Visitor*. ©OSV Publishing. www.osvnews.com Used by permission, no other use of this material is authorized. †

## Comments From The Summer Speaker Series

The comments submitted following the Summer Speaker Series from members excited about the strategic plan were numerous. The editorial board is happy to share a few with members.

1. Dr. Cory Andrew Labrecque: presented an interesting point of view regarding the “hierarchy” of man, animals and the earth as stated in the bible which I had not really thought about. Referring to nature as the new poor is a very apt descriptor and one we should take seriously. He has inspired me to investigate more about the green church movement.

2. Dr. Donna Orsuto: Dr. Orsuto’s presentation was inspiring. “Live Simply So Others May Simply Live”. (Mother Teresa, I believe), the importance of communing with nature and seeing the beauty of the earth and all living things, 10 Green Commandments and our responsibility as Christians, move me to action beyond what I am already trying to do for the environment

3. Sr. Dr. Nuala Kenny: I especially liked the linking of New Testament encounters that Jesus had with women for us to take our cues to act in helping to heal our church. Sister Kenny’s invitation for us all to speak up about clerical abuses, to pray for atonement, and to accept the challenge that we as women can

make a positive difference in our Catholic church is so endearing and worthy of our consideration and action.

4. Fran Lucas: I was overwhelmed with how seamless things worked considering multiple speakers, plus video and PowerPoint. I was emotional towards the end of the presentation-seeing what is being worked on and where we are going. It is encouraging to see the resources being “invested” into the future of the CWL parish councils will feel more supported and not feel isolated or that they have to start something from scratch. Videos were uplifting, engaging and inspiring!

5. Anne-Marie Gorman: Today I have seen that the staunch teams of leaders at our helm have only taken a pause to collect their thoughts and then have moved forward in whatever way they could to keep going on. I am so proud to be a member of this organization and by the grace of God and the help of our Patroness Our Lady of Good Counsel we will overcome this hurdle and continue on for many more years. Thanks for this webinar! It gives me hope and I will try to bring some of this tenacity back to my Council.

# Call to Meeting

**Kim Scammell**

Executive Director



So much has occurred since the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, throwing the world into a state of chaos that has not been seen for decades. The first presumptive case arrived in Canada on January 25, 2020, foreshadowing the situation as members currently know it. Cases quickly sprung up in Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec. All other provinces quickly followed suit, causing the declaration of states of emergency across the country, complete with restrictions on movement and gathering for citizens, and the shuttering of businesses and services, including faith-based institutions.

The League and its members were not invulnerable to the pandemic's far reaching consequences. Members were no longer allowed to gather to worship, to celebrate their faith or to serve others. Meetings were cancelled, as were all other events. In my own parish council, the executive was forced to cancel a communion luncheon that was to feature Most Rev. Martin Currie as guest speaker. It would have been a delightful event.

With no lessening of restrictions by April 2020, the national executive had to make the agonizing decision to cancel all diocesan, provincial and national conventions. It was a decision that was made to honour all public health protocols and to protect the members, especially the most vulnerable in our midst. But it was also heartbreaking, as members were excited to celebrate 100 years of friendship, faith, service and social justice. It was to be a year for the history books!

Indeed, 2020 has become a year for the history books, anyway. Members, never to be idled, have learned to adapt to new circumstances. The transformation into a digital age became imperative for many a council to function. Digital meetings, events and retreats had often been entertained in the past; however, it was given little favour because in-person gatherings offered more and better opportunities for dialogue and relationship-building. Alas, the move to

digital gathering has been imposed.

At the time of writing this article, Manitoba is in its second wave of the pandemic. COVID-19 seems to have taken a firm hold in much of Canada. Various restrictions wax and wane based on current transmission rates for the virus and will continue to do so until mass immunization occurs. The earliest prediction for a return to "normal" is August 2021.

In the midst of such volatility, how does an executive plan a convention, a meeting? What is the most judicious course of action? The national executive faced this question in relation to the 2021 annual national convention, which is to be held in Toronto, Ontario, August 8-11, 2021.

Projecting future circumstances with any assurance is impossible. Questions that needed to be considered included: "What, if any, gathering restrictions might be present at the time of the event?" "What is the rate of transmission and how vulnerable would the attendees be?" "Would members choose to attend, given the potential health risks involved?" "What about contracts for venues? What penalties would the host council incur in the event of gathering restrictions or low attendance?" "How do the host council and venue accommodate physical distancing requirements? What are the new limits for occupancy?" And finally, "How does the host council comply with the statutory requirement to hold an annual meeting of members (aka annual general meeting)?"

The national executive considered all of these questions and many more before making a decision about the 2021 convention. After many prayerful deliberations, the national executive hereby calls for an annual meeting of members for 2021 to be held in Toronto, Ontario, August 8-10, 2021, for the transaction on necessary business only.

The agenda will attend to necessary business items, including the giving of reports, the discussion and adoption of resolutions, the motion to increase per capita





fees (page 16), the instructed voting process to amend the *Constitution & Bylaws* (page 17), and the election of national officers.

To ensure a safe, physically-distanced annual general meeting, attendance will be by invitation only and limited to voting and accredited delegates. Members who are not accredited to attend will be invited to participate remotely;

all sessions will be live-streamed from the event site. More information will be provided in Spring 2020.

With members' prayers, and by the grace of God, the national executive fervently hopes that the pandemic will be declared over by 2022 so that we can all once again celebrate together, August 14-17, 2022, in Kelowna, British Columbia. †

## THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

C-702 Scotland Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 1X5

Website: [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca)

E-mail: [info@cwl.ca](mailto:info@cwl.ca)

### TO VOTING AND ACCREDITED DELEGATES OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Notice is hereby given that the national annual meeting of members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada will be held August 8-10, 2021 in Toronto, Ontario for the transaction of necessary business.

## 2021 NATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS TORONTO, ONTARIO

### **APRON FUNDRAISER**



This handy apron, available in blue, is imprinted with the League crest. It is a one size fits most with a neck strap and waist ties to keep the apron in place. There are two spacious front bottom pockets to hold pens, paper pads, cell phones and other essentials. Great for those League functions.

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# Are You Crazy?

**Janet McLean**

National Secretary-Treasurer



Why would anyone vote for a per capita increase to their membership fee in the League? The world is in the middle of the greatest pandemic since the “Spanish” influenza outbreak in 1918. Some members are out of work or are living on reduced wages. They may be providing financial support to family, friends or neighbours. Most parish activities are on hold, and fundraising may almost be at a standstill. The last thing members want is to pay a higher membership fee. So why are members being asked to vote on a national per capita increase?

In order to remain on solid financial ground, a fee increase to take effect in the fiscal year 2022 is proposed.

Why should Catholic women remain League members if the fee is going to be higher? I believe there are two reasons. The first reason is that Catholic women need a national organization where they are free to express their faith and stand up for their Catholic beliefs in an increasingly secular world. Catholics need to nourish this faith and can do this through the League’s various spiritual programs.

The second reason is that Canada needs the League for the support it provides in parishes and communities across

Canada and the advocacy it does with governments. As mandated by Christ, Catholics are His voice, eyes, ears, hands and feet on earth. Christians are being persecuted more than they have ever been in the past. The need for a strong national Catholic voice is self-evident. Women are strong, and they are even stronger when they work together. Members support one another, are there for one another in good times and in bad, and form a sisterhood whose bond cannot be measured. They may have different opinions, but members know their League sisters are there when they need them. If some members cannot afford an increase in per capita fees, then their League sisters will help them. Members raise millions to help others—surely they can raise money to help their own sisters!

So, my answer to the title of this article is, yes, I am crazy. I am asking for all members’ support of a per capita fee increase because I believe in the power of the League, and I want it to remain a strong and viable organization for many years to come. Please be crazy with me and vote “yes” to a per capita fee increase when your parish council holds the instructed vote on this matter. †

## NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Part XVII, Section 1(b) of the *Constitution & Bylaws (2013)*, notice is hereby given that the following motion proposing an increase in per capita fees for the national level will be presented at the 101<sup>st</sup> annual meeting of members of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada in August 2021.

**That the national per capita fee be increased from \$13.00 to \$25.00 effective with the 2022 membership year.**

# Members to Vote For Change



## Margaret Ann Jacobs

National Past President and Chairperson of Laws

The objective of League magazine articles is to generate action and awareness, and assist members in reflecting on and growing in their Catholic spirituality (*How We Serve*).

My passion and enthusiasm for the organization—like most members—was fuelled by a desire for spiritual enrichment, educational programming, and opportunities to meet and develop relationships with other women of faith, not only in my parish but in the broader spectrum of League work. What a challenge for the League today with varying degrees of isolation and restricted travel across the country! The unique and creative ways members have found to offer care and compassion in support of each other in the face of this pandemic is remarkable. I applaud their ingenuity. Bravo!

In an article entitled “What the Church Needs Now,” Brett Powell states that, “Great organizations all around the world and in every industry are constantly innovating.... Innovation should be discussed... often and... passionately...”

The League is a great organization! Phenomenal work has been undertaken by the implementation committee to innovate strategically. The time, effort and cost involved in such an endeavour are staggering. Now it will be up to the members to fulfill the most critical piece in this innovation. Their approval for amendments to the *Constitution & Bylaws (2013)* (C&B) is required. A great deal of

consultation with members across Canada is reflected in proposed amendments to the positions of officers and standing committees, and their duties. Other proposed amendments will require members’ attention too.

Instructed votes are required for the election of officers, changes to per capita fees and amendments to the C&B. Information has been circulated through former magazine articles, parish mailings and instructed vote packages mailed directly to parish councils on December 11, 2020. Voting delegates must be present to vote. Mail-in or proxy voting is not allowed.

So, the pressure to organize in-person parish council meetings weighs heavily on parish presidents. At the time of writing, most churches are allowed to gather, and members pray that councils will be able to do so safely. Members are strongly encouraged to make every effort to support the parish council in this endeavour. Through the national executive/board, innovative strategies have been undertaken to meet the needs registered to them by members. Besides the basic changes to the organization, exciting new programs and initiatives are being rolled out. Members are required to affirm these efforts and bring to reality a new vision of the League for the future.

“For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations” (Ps. 100:5). 🙏

**The Canadian League magazine:** The editorial board for the League magazine invites you to provide comments on each edition of the magazine. Do you have ideas to improve the magazine? We are interested in keeping the magazine modern and appealing to members of all ages. E-mail comments to [communications@cwlc.ca](mailto:communications@cwlc.ca).



**Where will you be August 2022? At a beautiful lakeside resort, surrounded by sun-kissed hills covered with vineyards and orchards? World class golf courses and restaurants minutes away?**

God-willing, the COVID-19 pandemic will be behind us and we will see you all in Kelowna, British Columbia. The planning committee is moving full steam ahead, to bring members a convention worth the wait! Mark your calendar for August 14-17, 2022.

# The Journey Continues - Implementing The Strategic Plan

## Implementation Committee

### Goal 1, Lisa Henry, Lead Year Three Working Groups

The League has goals, a plan, an implementation team and now the Year 3 working groups need volunteers!

People do not climb a ladder with one step—they have to take one step at a time. They do not stop after only one step—each step leads to the next until they achieve their goals. It is about having a constant purpose. This purpose is the driving force, the fuel that propels people to pursue and achieve their goals and dreams. Members are the driving force to reach these goals. Their desire to see the League grow and be relevant for another 100 years, passion for seeing the League be the best version it can be and the talents and gifts to make it all come to life are what the implementation committee seeks.

As the League enters its third year of implementing the strategic plan, Goal 1 has two strategies for which working group members are needed.

**Strategy 1:** Improve, streamline and expedite internal and external communications. This working group will examine current internal and external communications and research areas that need to be improved or changed.

**Strategy 2:** Develop training programs to meet the needs of members using technology and employ technology to develop training tutorials to meet the needs of the current demographic. This working group will examine methods to deliver training using technology with a multi-faceted approach that is flexible to meet the needs of a cross-section of members.

Additional information will follow in the coming weeks with more details on how to join a working group and what is involved. Monitor the national website and Facebook page for ways to be part of the League's envisioned future!

### Goal 2, Sr. Susan Scott, Lead

Members: Shelley De-Serres, Belinda Halbach and Linda Maddaford.

As the League enters Year 3 of implementing its strategic plan, the committee is thrilled to share the focus for the Goal 2 working groups. As many know, the organization had its roots in Edmonton, providing support, comfort and companionship for women arriving as immigrants. These founding members were there to advocate for new Canadians, which members have continued to do for the past 100 years.

This working group has been tasked with the vital role of developing and delivering advocacy workshops at all League levels. The target by Year 5 is to have one member per parish council who has participated in an advocacy workshop. The workshops will train members in leading advocacy efforts. Training sessions will be both theoretical and practical/action-oriented in content. A second task for Year 3 will be to generate a comprehensive

list of experts from other organizations to train members in leading advocacy efforts. There is no need to “reinvent the wheel” if resources already exist.

Both working groups' focus will be Catholic social teaching, which is rooted in the sacred scriptures. The second working group for Goal 2 is to examine and improve the process of communication and advocacy with all government levels that will allow for respectful dialogue and constructive feedback. Data gathered from annual reports will be used to prepare resources that will increase dialogue, interaction and advocacy strategies with governments at any level. The working group will propose a method by which interactions can be shared within the League as a method of accountability and encouragement for future encounters with any government level. It would seem the League has come full circle back to its origins—members advocating for the vulnerable and those without a voice.

In the words of Christ as He began His public ministry, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent



me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Lk. 4:18–19).

### **Goal 3, Jacqueline Nogier, Lead**

#### **Working Group 3A: League Misconceptions**

Members: Sylvia Jurys, Karen Rossiter and Laura Wilson.

All people have preconceived notions about individuals and groups. It is well known that making judgements without personal knowledge is a dangerous thing to do. How can individuals have an opinion about something without any knowledge about the topic or group? The League is no different when it comes to people jumping to conclusions about what it does and what it stands for as an organization.

This working group has gathered information to determine misconceptions about the League. It has compiled the data and is developing ideas on how to dispel these misconceptions. Members all hold the responsibility to dispel myths surrounding the organization and share what they do. This group will help these efforts by standing tall and leading the charge. By eliminating misconceptions, the group will help the League grow stronger as an organization and as a sisterhood.

#### **Working Group 3B: Encourage Diversity**

Members: Victoria Barredo-Oppersthauser, Philiz Goh, Gerda Hazenberg and Hilarion Mitchell.

Canada is a diverse country. The church is a diverse church. The League is a diverse organization. Members are blessed to have a country, church and organization made up of many different cultural groups and ages. This working group has been tasked with finding ways to encourage that diversity within the League.

The group has created a list of multicultural celebrations parish councils might use as a starting point to learn about cultural diversity within their parishes and country. It has produced advertisements, celebrating cultural and generational diversity that have appeared on the League's Facebook page and in *The Canadian League*. These advertisements are available for download as posters and postcards. Celebrate the diversity within churches and parish councils.

#### **Working Group 3C: Toolkits**

Members: Pat Crossman, Maureen Fadum, Lauri Friesen and Christine Mason.

While being immersed in a global pandemic may have slowed down members' lives, in some ways, it has also made life more unpredictable. Hopefully, members have reset some of their priorities and have realized that reaching out and helping others is a very concrete way to live their Catholic life in a meaningful way.

This working group has researched what a toolkit might look like and what it might include. It has created the templates and draft toolkits for faith, service and social justice, and will soon be ready to look for feedback from council presidents at various League levels. Members

willing to lend a hand should look for the request for help in the near future!

### **Working Group 3D: Spiritual Formation**

Members: Louise Beggs, Theresa Duncan, Sharon Malec, Marjorie Robinson and Con Marks.

At its heart, the League has a spiritual focus. Members pray first and act second. Members know their lives run smoother when they take time to pray, whether individually or as a group. They understand that to have a strong and vibrant League, they also need to have strong and vibrant prayer lives.

This working group has taken time to research prayers and spiritual programs that are available to members. It has researched copyright-free sources available online. The group is working on creating a workshop that will support and guide members towards being able to create their own prayers and spiritual programs. It is in the process of creating original prayers and spiritual programs that will be available to all councils and members.

### **Goal 4, Sharon Ciebin, Lead**

Members: Susan Kaller, Philomena Menezes, Diane Miedema, Janette Rieger and Barbara Thuen.

#### **What—Me a Leader?**

"A goal without action is just a wish" (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry).

In Year 2, the focus of all strategies is on leadership! The six members highlighted above have gifted their leadership skills to develop an extensive action plan that will ensure two strategies, "capitalize on members' willingness to take on short term leadership" and "restructure the existing standing committee structure at parish level", become a reality. The group's plan encompasses addressing a further strategy, "project-based committees beginning at the parish level," which will incorporate the core values of faith, service and social justice. These dedicated members have spent many hours researching the numerous non-elected leadership opportunities gifted to members by the national officers via communiques, parish mailings and *The Canadian League*. These women are amazed at the myriad of unique activities members are currently involved in for the benefit of their parishes and communities. These activities were uncovered through a thorough review of annual reports. Member engagement is a top priority for this group, and the next step of its plan will be to reach out to selected parish councils for input. Please follow the group's progress through the implementation committee's monthly updates posted to Facebook and the national website at the beginning of each month.

Each member is a leader, and the implementation committee is calling on members to share their leadership skills by volunteering as a working group member in Year 3. In early February, the implementation committee will advertise for members willing to share their time and talent on one of nine strategies. The posting will be located at [cwl.ca/implementation-of-the-strategic-plan/](http://cwl.ca/implementation-of-the-strategic-plan/).

No travel is involved as all meetings are done via teleconference. †

# Happy Birthday

## Congratulations to the following centenarians!

### **Flora Johnston**

103 years old on September 17, 2020  
Holy Redeemer Parish Council  
Saint John, New Brunswick

### **Marie A. Dubreuil**

100 years old on August 20, 2020  
St. John The Baptist Parish Council  
Estevan, Saskatchewan

### **Lydia Reichert**

100 years old on August 17, 2020  
Holy Family Parish Council  
St. Albert, Alberta

### **Rita MacFarlane**

102 years old on August 8, 2020  
St. Bernard Parish Council  
Moncton, New Brunswick

### **Nellie Grandish**

100 years old on August 6, 2020  
St. Charles Parish Council  
Edmonton, Alberta

### **Theresa Sinkwich**

100 years old on September 25, 2020  
St. Alphonsus Parish Council  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

### **Laura Anselmo**

100 years old on September 12, 2020  
Holy Trinity Parish Council  
Trail, British Columbia

### **Delia Landry**

100 years old on October 24, 2020  
St. John The Baptist Parish Council  
River Bourgeois, Nova Scotia

### **Julie Wambeke**

100 years old on October 4, 2020  
Immaculate Conception Parish Council  
Kelowna, British Columbia

### **Dorothy Davidson**

100 years old on August 19, 2020  
Blessed Sacrament Parish Council  
Chatham, Ontario

### **Florence Pulvermacher**

100 years old on September 6, 2020  
St. Bruno Parish Council  
Bruno, Saskatchewan

### **Betty Wedge**

100 years old on October 12, 2020  
St. Bernard Parish Council  
Moncton, New Brunswick

### **Mary Ratelle**

100 years old on August 12, 2020  
St. Paul Parish Council  
Summerside, Prince Edward Island

## Congratulations!

### Congratulations to parish councils celebrating anniversaries!

#### **100 YEARS**

Montreal Parish Council  
Montreal, Quebec

#### **95 YEARS**

St. Francis De Sales  
High River, Alberta

#### **90 YEARS**

St. Alphonsus Parish Council  
Chapeau, Quebec

Is your parish council celebrating an anniversary of 25, 50, 75 years or more? Be sure to let the editorial board know by contacting them at [communications@cwl.ca](mailto:communications@cwl.ca).

## Thank You!

A sincere thank you to the members of the 2020 national convention planning committee for their efforts in planning what would have been the League's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and national convention in Montreal, Quebec.

Though members could not gather to rejoice and celebrate as a League, please know that your efforts did not go unnoticed.

# It is Not Too Late to Get a 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir Pin



## Do you need a bag to carry papers to League meetings?

The Quebec 2020 convention committee has just what you need! A soft sided brief case with embroidered crest, and front and side zippered pockets to carry pens, sticky notes, a cellphone and water bottle.

**Price: \$30.00 plus shipping.**

## 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY PINS

**Price: \$10.00 plus shipping.**



Please contact Janet McLean at (514) 631-5992 or 2020cwlmtl@gmail.com for more information or to place an order.

## The Catholic Women's League of Canada Many Cultures in Faith!



**In the commandment, Jesus told the disciples, "...love one another as I have loved you."**

*John 15:12*

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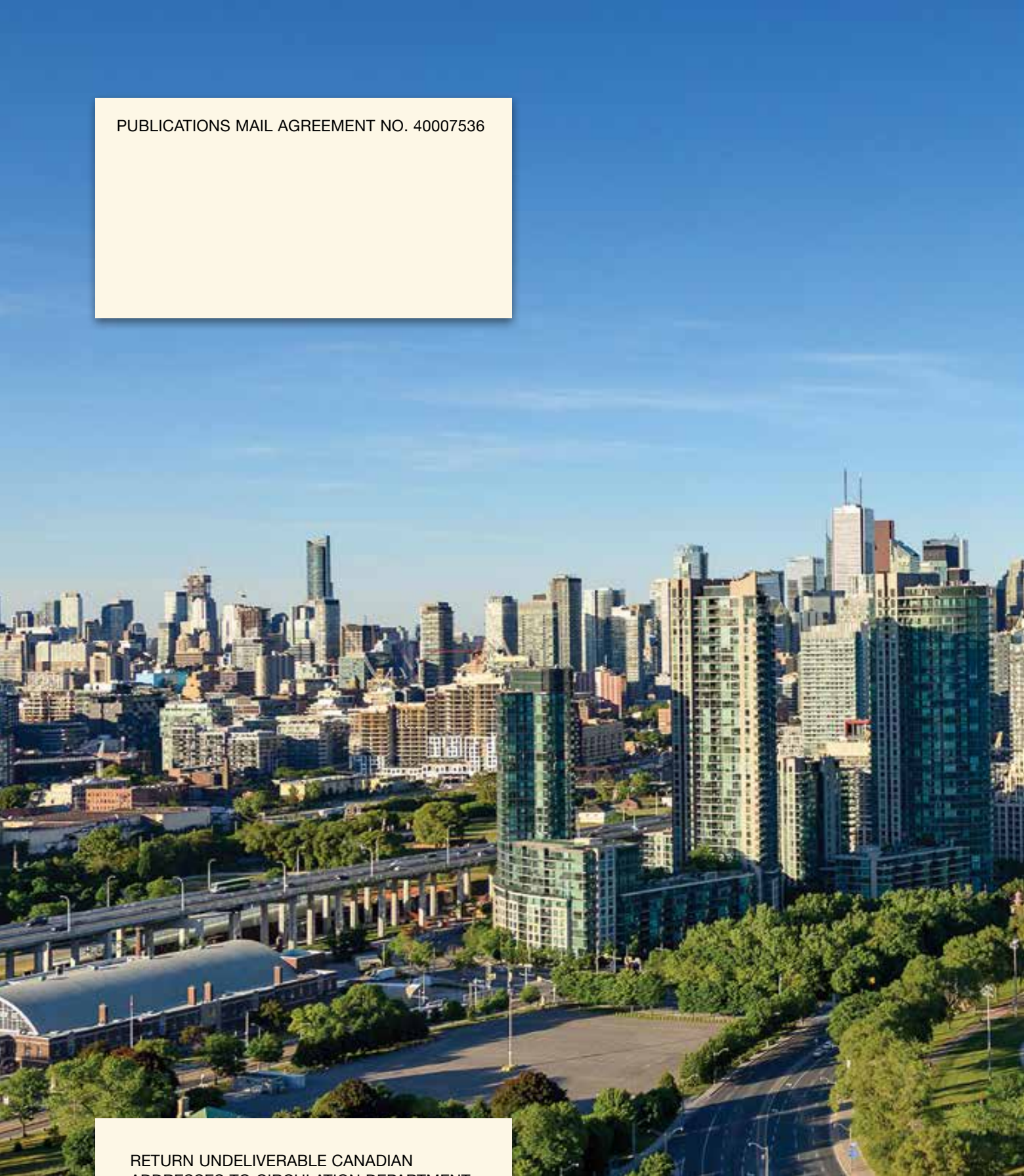
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