

FAITH IN ACTION

**NEWSLETTER OF THE
OTTAWA DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF
THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA**

NOVEMBER 2017 ISSUE

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Reflection from our Spiritual Advisor

Fr. Jessimar Cavan-Tapia, Mount Carmel Parish

The theme this year from our Ontario Provincial CWL Councils is “The Homeless.”

Globally, one of the main causes of homelessness is war and strife that forces people to flee for their lives. They often end up in refugee camps where the conditions are not always ideal. Throughout history, Christians have responded by welcoming refugees into their homes and countries.

Locally, if you drive through the low income areas of our city, the lack of affordable housing becomes apparent. There are some areas where homes are in a state of disrepair because the owners are either unable and/or unwilling to have the necessary repairs done. If they are unable to have the needed work done, it is often because they can't afford to do so.

How can we as Christians and specifically as members of the Catholic Women's League do to address these issues?

We can continue to support places in our city that offer affordable housing. We can also help low income homeowners understand the paperwork involved in applying for government grants to make repairs to their homes. We can also offer to spend time with senior citizens who have adult children as live-in caregivers so that the children can have a much-needed break. We can also volunteer on a Habitat for Humanity home-building project or donate money or other resources. In our own city of Ottawa, we can help support the Multi Faith Housing Initiatives. You can find out more at www.multifaithhousing.ca/homelessness.html

Whatever we do, we serve God. When we serve those who do not have adequate housing, we serve God, and when we serve others, the focus shifts from self to selfless. Jesus himself said, “Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me”.

In the words of Pope Francis, “let us open our eyes to our neighbours, especially to our brothers and sisters who are forgotten and excluded, to the “Lazarus” at our door. That is where the Church's magnifying glass is pointed. May the Lord free us from turning it towards ourselves. May he turn us away from the trappings that distract us, from interests and privileges, from attachment to power and glory.”

A Message from our President

Mrs. Onagh Dooley, Our Lady of Fatima Parish

*“The Gospel calls us to be close to the poor and forgotten, and to give them real hope.”
Pope Francis*

Thank you for all you do in your parish councils. I'm looking forward to reading your annual reports this year. They are always an inspiration and a great insight to the work you do throughout the year.

Please forward your photographs and short write ups to national office for posting on “On the Spot”, copy me, so I can boast too!. We want to celebrate your successes and by sharing, your events may become contagious and spread like wildfire.

Again, don't be afraid to step “outside the box” and try new ideas, host an appreciation dinner, have a theme meeting, panel discussion, ask a nearby council to join you.

One of the issues that crops up time and time again is the invisibility of the League in parishes. I would encourage you to wear your pins and advertise, advertise, advertise – put up flyers of when your meetings, potlucks and any events are, on any church bulletin boards, in your parish halls, and, in your church bulletins. Be proud to be a League member and be prepared to answer questions.

Margaret Ann Jacobs, National President, encourages us to try to find ways to support members so that they can attend a convention. Next year's Ontario Provincial Convention is in Toronto, not too far away, while the National Convention is in Winnipeg, a bit farther west.

Our Community Life Chair, Rosanne Nadon, is researching options for us, as a diocese, with the support of all of you, to assist an organization who provides for the homeless. I know you all do so much now and with great effort we will hopefully, broaden our horizons. Check out all the officer's communiques for updates, information and inspiration.

As we prepare for our Advent season, let us remember, “Do good while you still have time.”
St. John Bosco.

God bless.

President-Elect and Organization Chair

Mrs. Lynn Lavictoire, Annunciation of the Lord Parish

"We want the League of the future to truly reflect the strength and wisdom of its founders and embrace an envisioned future where core purpose, values and mission are timely and responsive to the needs of others." National President Margaret Ann Jacobs

Membership

The 2018 Membership Packages have been sent to all parish council presidents. If a president has not received this package by November 1, 2017, please contact our national office at 1-888-656-4040 or email: membership@cwl.ca. Councils enrolled in the online membership program will not receive a hard copy of the material. The membership fees, for councils, is due January 1, 2018 for that year (2018). Many councils have their membership drives and submit their fees before the required date. Fees can be sent using the automatic deduction form.

What should we be doing to continue and increase our membership? Our call to service in the League motivates us to nourish that call, model the way, and inspire a shared vision in consultation with members and potential members. This includes challenging the status quo, especially challenging ourselves, and enabling members to act and participate. Enabling means delegating other members to help out (not always the same people) and to keep asking because we don't know what God holds in the hearts of others and what would endear them to becoming a member or taking on a leadership role.

Annual Reports

Please follow the instructions below which were received from our Ontario Provincial President-Elect and Organization Chairperson Colleen Randall.

There is only one link to access the annual report forms. One must visit the secure site: survey.cwl.ca and ensure to enter the URL into one's browser bar (not a Google search). This link will be available from November 1 to December 31, 2017 inclusively. If, for any reason, the deadline is missed, the report must come to me and I will distribute it to the appropriate diocesan chairperson so that she may include it in her annual report.

Your user name will be your membership ID number, which is on your membership card. Your password will be your membership ID number + the first initial of your first and last name. For example, Bellelle Guerin, member ID 765321, and then enter her password 765321BG. This should bring you to your council's survey.

Our national office has made one modification to the survey. Councils who do not have a chairperson to complete the survey, will be able to skip over questions that don't apply to them.

Additionally, our national office encourages members to work as a team to complete these reports. Suggestions were made for councils and members who don't have access to an electronic device, to go to a library that has computers with internet access, or call on a family member or friend. Should anyone have problems, please contact the national office at the above phone number. †

1st Vice President and Community Life Chair

Mrs. Rosanne Nadon, St. Martin dePorres Parish

“The poor are at the centre of the Gospel. In the poor and outcast we see Christ’s face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ”. Pope Francis

The first World Day of the Poor will be observed on Sunday, November 19, 2017. In his apostolic letter to close the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis suggested the Catholic Church set aside one day each year when communities can “reflect on how poverty is at the very heart of the Gospel.” This day will now be celebrated on the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time each year.

Here are some ways that you can observe the World Day of the Poor:

- 1) Pray for the poor. There are so many people in need of our prayers. If you feel overwhelmed and not sure where to begin, try praying with your newsfeed. As you see headlines from around the world that move you, say a little prayer for the people affected.
- 2) Practice the Corporal Works of Mercy. They call us to: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and imprisoned, bury the dead and give alms to the poor. Pope Francis added a new work of mercy: to care for God’s creation. These works of mercy give a clear model and starting point for how to care for our neighbours in need.
- 3) Make caring for the poor part of your routine. Do you buy coffee, chocolate or Christmas gifts? One way to support low-income workers around the world is by buying items you use on a regular basis from organizations that pay a fair wage. Look for a fair-trade label which means that the farmers who harvest the coffee are paid fairly and work in safe conditions. As you begin your Christmas shopping, consider buying gifts from around the world that are produced and traded ethically.
- 4) Learn about the causes of poverty and work to change them. There are many reasons why people around the world are trapped in poverty: lack of jobs and war that can affect what farmers can grow to just name a few. We can educate ourselves and raise our voices together to ask our government to support policies that address the causes of poverty.
- 5) Support the Church’s outreach to the poor. Support the works of the Catholic Church.

Peace to all,

2nd Vice President and Education & Health Chair

Mrs. Sandra Blais, Our Lady of the Visitation Parish

Homelessness

We are encouraged to educate ourselves on the important issue of homelessness. The possibilities of sponsoring an even in our councils is endless. To help us navigate towards initiatives go to: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homelss/events/faithcommunities/50> for fifty plus ways.

Movember 2017

Movember Canada is the leading global organization committed to changing the face of men's health by speaking up. Men are facing a health crisis that isn't being talked about. As wives or mothers, we can focus on our love for our men folk to raise their awareness of the health issues of prostate cancer.

Environment

New partners are being sought to strengthen the strategies to safe guard our environment through the Recycle and Reuse Program in the Diocese of Ottawa. The Knights of Columbus have been apprised of this program and are interested in supporting this Social Justice Program. We are encouraged to enhance Pope Francis' call for kindness towards our world environment.

Spiritual Development Chair

Mrs. Nancy Grimshaw, Divine Infant Parish

First of all, to all new Spiritual Development Chairs, welcome, and I look forward to working with you. For those who are completing their terms, I thank you for serving the League and providing a spiritual program for your councils.

The Study of Catholic Teachings

"Laudato Si" was published in 2015, and Pope Francis wants us to all be responsible for safeguarding creation. There is now a 30 page document called "Living Out Laudato Si: A Commentary and Practical Resource for Canadian Catholics". This is available only online and can be accessed on the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) website at www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Living_Out_Laudato_Si_En.pdf.

The document is organized into six parts and could be used for individual study or used as part of your spiritual program at meetings. Please consider having a copy or two as part of your lending library if you have one, or for those who do not have internet access.

With our new provincial focus on homelessness, consider reading "Evangelii Gaudium", chapter four, which discusses the social dimension, care for the weakest persons, homeless, refugees, addicted, indigenous, and elderly. Homelessness does not always exist independently, it may co-exist with addiction, First Nations, etc. Consider learning and discussing what causes homelessness and study what options may be available to them.

Some websites which address homelessness and include suggestions for action are:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-socialdevelopment/programs/communities/homelessness/understanding>
<http://homelesshub.ca/> <http://homelesshub.ca/CommunityProfiles>
<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2017/05/31/commonmisconceptions-about-homelessness.html>

This year Pope Francis has established World Day of the Poor, to be recognized each 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, which is Sunday November 19 this year. Pope Francis challenges us to "Create moments of encounter and friendship, solidarity and concrete assistance with people who are poor." See the Christian Family Life communique for what we can do in the preceding week, and lastly, let your pastor know and ask him to promote this inaugural World Day of the Poor.

Please inform me when CWL members in your parish have passed away. As, Spiritual Development Chairperson, I send in quarterly reports to the Provincial Keeper of the Book of Life. I do get some notifications from National, some from our Diocesan President, and others I have never been notified of, yet the name is recorded on the list that National has for our Diocese. I would rather receive multiple notifications than to miss a member from one of our parishes. I also want to ensure all are included and remembered at the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel each year. Please send me an email, with or without a copy of, 'The form for Reporting Deceased Member' (which is usually sent to National) to let me know when you have a deceased member. Make sure the spelling is correct, so I don't misrepresent anyone. All deceased members from April 1, 2017 will be remembered in April 2018.

Christian Family Life Chair

Ms. Teresa Psutka, St. Maurice Parish

Welcome to November, as we are blessed with more rain. We must see this as our Dear Lord raining His blessings down upon us.

As we move our clocks back and gain that extra hour, may we be reminded to say an extra prayer against abortion. As Bill 163 (Bubble Zone legislation) went to third reading, received royal assent and was recently passed with a vote of 86 to 1, we need to continue to pray for an end to abortion. In your prayers, remember the little souls that have gone to heaven well before their time. Since we cannot be across the street from the abortuary on Bank Street during these last days of the 40 Days for Life, we are asked to continue to fast and pray for an end to abortion. One may go to St. Patrick's Basilica and pray during the day or pray at our own churches. The passing of this law will change things for the 40 Days for Life in the future. We can continue to attend the monthly Pro-Life masses being held across the city, to have a pro-life centre in Ottawa. We need to pray for the protection of life from conception to natural death.

In November, may we pray especially for the loved ones we have lost, either over the last year or over past years.

I was able to be at the Solemn Holy Mass on October 13th at Notre Dame Cathedral in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the apparition of the Blessed Mother Mary to the three shepherd children at Fatima. I was not able to join in the procession from St. Patrick's Basilica to Notre Dame Cathedral with the statue of Our Lady, but it was a sight to see when the procession arrived at the cathedral with the statue. When they opened the church doors, all that I could see was our Blessed Mother. I could not see anyone carrying her nor following her. It was a sight to see. Then as she got closer, I saw that she was being carried and then a throng of devoted followers processed in behind her. It was a very special moment for me. At first I thought that the church was not very full, forgetting that Our Lady and her followers would be coming. Once everyone arrived, the church was full to capacity. There were people there of all ages, from young to old. The mass was very special and we were able to touch the statue after. Everyone wanted a photograph taken with her. You would have thought that Our Lady was a rock star. It was a very touching time for me as I too touched and gazed upon the statue of Our Lady of Fatima.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel pray for us and keep us well - in mind, body and soul.

Communications Chair

Mrs. Grace Buchmayer, Divine Infant Parish

For some the thought of serving as a Communications Chairperson strikes fear in their hearts – oh the technology! For others, it's a convenorship without challenge or interest close to their heart. Well I'm here to tell all of you that a chair is what you make it. If you can send and receive emails you can handle the technology side. If you have been given lemons make lemonade, lemon meringue pie, lemon curd, lemon loaf,.. (great, now I'm hungry). You know what I'm trying to say. Every chair is an opportunity to express your special talents. You just have to set your mind to it. I, for one, am having a blast as the Ottawa CWL Communications Chair, constantly pushing my comfort zone to surprising results. Stay tuned to find out more.

Even though I'm fairly new at my post I do have some 'communications' tips. Make sure you are reaching your audience effectively. Some members still require phone calls. If you're starting a new email group, use 'Return Receipt' when you send the first time to confirm who is correctly receiving your message. Always blind copy, 'Bcc', the email addresses you're sending to. When you are relaying a message cut out the section addressed to you specifically like, "Grace, please send this email out to all members", and any unnecessary headers. Just relay the information. More gems to come. If your reading this and not lining the bird cage with it, please click [here](#) to be counted.

The theme for this term is 'homelessness'. In homelessness we find poverty. The 'World Day of the Poor' is November 19. A great way to learn about this through Covenant House. You can find more here. We should consider not just the physically homeless, but all forms of homelessness. The home of our faith resides in our Lord. So many are outside this home. Lost, and searching for direction to find their spiritual way back. We can be signposts by being the best example of our faith possible. Start by smiling at strangers, hold a door if you can, thank those who are holding your door if you can't, and suffer fools patiently. As Gandhi so eloquently put it, "be the change you want to see". I almost always wear a symbol of my faith, and when I am smiling that symbol is within sight. I hope the connection is made. My faith fuels my joy, like the electricity lighting a neon sign. This way home.

If I don't see you at the Advent Retreat this year, which is going to be awesome (see website for all the information you'll need on this), I wish you and yours a very joyful and blessed Christmas.

Resolutions and Legislation Chair

Mrs. Dyann MacDonald, The Good Shepherd Parish

“His word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones.” Jeremiah 20:9

With November upon us, our minds turn towards the Advent Season and the coming of Christmas. Please spend some time on reflection and prayer about the many needs of our sisters and brothers around the world.

Resolutions:

As your council may have started to review and study some of the resolutions for 2017, a good idea would be to start a study group to review a resolution and present it to your council for action. You could also invite your neighbouring council to participate.

We are approaching the deadline DECEMBER 15, 2017 FOR SUBMITTING the name of a new resolution you want to present. Set up a committee and review ideas from your council. Check the list of previous resolutions adopted by national, provincial and diocesan councils to see if the issue has been addressed (www.cwl.ca; www.cwl.on.ca; www.ottawa.cwl.on.ca). Present the topics to your council, choose one and have it approved by the members. Research your topic using current Canadian research materials that are reliable. Review relevant research using books, newspapers, magazine article, Hansard, tapes, films etc. Submit your title and Brief to myself and the diocesan president, before December 15, 2017 as the Provincial Resolutions Chair requires it by that date, if the topic concerns provincial and/or national. If it is a local resolution topic, and is accepted, it will be presented at the Diocesan Convention and voted on and will not be forwarded to provincial or national. (eg: Safe Playgrounds in Ottawa).

Now is also the time to start getting ideas together and researching issues, to start planning for a resolution for next year. Take the idea to your council to see if it is viable. If you need assistance e-mail me. Good planning is the key to good resolutions. Happy Resolutions Hunting!

Legislation:

Both the Provincial and Federal Governments are back after the summer recess, please have your council review the current Bills that are applicable to our Resolutions and choose one or two to take Action on. Be part of how governments determine policy in Canada, such as the housing issue for Canadians and Indigenous issues.

Anne Madden, our new Provincial President, has asked each diocese to focus on “Homelessness” as our theme. Its wide complexity provides ample room for each council to do something to help our sisters and brothers. Our corporal actions and prayers are needed. See Community Life (activities) for further information.

God Bless. May the Spirit of Advent and Christmas be with you and your families.

Past President and Historian

Ms. Joanna Sisk, St. Ignatius the Martyr Parish

National Past President Barb Dowding stated, “As past presidents, we each have a role, a distinct mission or part. How we carry out this task will depend on each one’s gifts, talents and personal discernment. As we embrace the new theme Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God’s Call we can trust that the Holy Spirit will be our guide and show us the way. Past presidents are well placed to cultivate prospective leaders, to affirm the good work going on and encouraging qualified members to let their names stand for election.”

How are you doing in your role as past-president? It is not our role to sit back and say we are finished! Are you able to be a kind and supportive mentor to your president? Remember what a huge responsibility it was for us as presidents, and how we appreciated any help we could get!

The passing on of history and tradition gives members a sense of pride and importance in belonging to the League.

It is with hope, that through the strategic planning process, we will see and explore new options that will take the League into it's second century. It was interesting to discuss both the struggles and the successes at the parish level, but it was also interesting to note that we have a very rich history in the League and one that we are so proud of. Now we need to plan our future and look at implementing changes that will keep us active and vibrant for many years to come. See the fall 2017 issue of The Canadian League for a full view of the process, prompting good discussions at all levels.

Let us continue to respond to God’s call joyfully, with our experience, expertise and love of the League.

Life Member Liaison

Mrs. Heather Sisk, Our lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish

Life Membership

One of the most frequent questions I have heard since I became active in the League is “What does it mean to be a life member?” Most people just assume that after you have been a member for a certain number of years you automatically become a life member. I thought this would be a good opportunity to review the criteria for life membership and dispel some of the ‘myths’.

Criteria

1. Must be a member of the League in good standing for at least 10 years.
2. Must have been a diocesan or provincial president.
3. Must have held executive positions at diocesan level for a minimum of 4 years. (See Special Norms (b) below)
4. Must have held executive positions at provincial level for a minimum of 4 years. (See Special Norms (a) below)
5. Must have demonstrated love of the League, encouragement of others and ability to participate in study, research, presentations, workshops, etc.
6. Must be willing and available to continue serving the League at the national level on committees, preparing briefs, researching reports and resolutions, facilitating workshops and attending conferences at the request of the national president.

Special Norms:

- a) In Ontario, with 13 diocesan councils, criterion #4 may be waived, providing the nominee has served in executive positions at diocesan level for a minimum of 8 years. In this situation, years served at diocesan level must include two years as diocesan past president at the time of anticipated presentation.
- b) In provinces with no diocesan councils, criterion #3 may be waived, providing the nominee has served in executive positions at provincial level for a minimum of 8 years.

Life membership is not intended to be a reward for years of service or a retirement gift. National council requires support and active service from its life members. Only diocesan and provincial executives are entitled to submit applications for life membership in accordance with established criteria and protocol.

Life members are expected to maintain their membership by paying annual per capita fees through their parish council and are responsible for registering for diocesan, provincial and national conventions. They are expected to pay their own expenses other than registration fees for national convention.

Treasurer

Mrs. Diana Baines, Our Lady of Fatima Parish

As your treasurer, I would like to point out a few important items and pass along a few suggestions. Many people are reluctant to let their name stand for treasurer. Comments range from; "it's too complicated", "I'm no good with money", "I don't want to be responsible for cash", to, "too much paperwork". Let's stop kidding ourselves, most of us having been running a household for years and that includes budgeting, paying bills and the dreaded "balancing the cheque book". We already have plenty of experience. Being a treasurer means being organized and watching details.

Fall brings a lot of changes in everything, it also brings the dreaded "Annual Report" time. Stop worrying about Annual Reports! They're not that frightening if you plan ahead. Throughout the year, keep a record of income and expenses according to category. Once you enter an item in your General Ledger, enter it on a separate sheet according to category: was it a charitable donation, a supplies expense, an expense for a workshop or convention, membership fees submitted to national, monies raised from an event? Once you have this type of breakdown, filling in your Annual Report is much simpler. Take a look at the questions asked on last year's report and prepare your lists accordingly.

I was asked a question at this year's Executive Meeting and Pot Luck: how much money should a council have in its bank account? This is ultimately an executive decision made by each council, based on its budget, however, a good rule of thumb is; you should have enough money to cover regular council expenses for one year. This means the expenses that can't be avoided: committed donations, basic supplies for the running of meetings etc. When running a fundraiser, you should decide in advance whether the gross or net profits of the event will be given to the charity, this can make a big difference to your council's expenses.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at upcoming CWL meetings and events.

Special Editorial

2016 Ottawa Convention “Gifts of the Holy Spirit”

The 94th Ottawa Diocesan CWL Convention took place at St. John the Apostle parish on Saturday, April 29th. It was well attended and full of inspiring music, good food, thoughtful presentations and even a fair measure of business which included the elections of the new Diocesan officers. We were blessed with how the Holy Spirit touched the work of the diocesan officers. In their oral reports each officer was asked to include how a specific 'Gift of the Holy Spirit' touched their chair. After many requests, here are some excerpts from the reports:

“Piety is a gift of the Holy Spirit and a virtue. It is dedication to the Church’s sacramental life and devotions. It is worth pondering that we find Jesus in the Eucharist... Piety is opening up one’s heart to God and one’s arms to embrace our sisters and brothers. The gift of piety puts us at peace with God in gentle service to others. It recognizes that our spiritual lives belong in relationship with God’s love. The Gospel of John tells us that to be children of God we must abide in Christ and he will abide in us just as Christ abides in the love of the Father. This draws us towards the beauty and mystery of His love even during our most difficult moments.”

“Did you know that there are lots of words that describe wisdom; acumen, astuteness, brains, caution, clear thinking, comprehension, foresight, intelligence, discernment, common sense and my favourite 'horse sense'... When I began my term two years ago,... so many things went through my mind. What do I do? I was pretty nervous. As I sat at my computer, a thought came into to my head. Ask the Holy Spirit to help me. Now, before I started doing anything, I asked the Holy Spirit for guidance.”

“The word fear in Latin is *reverentia*, which has many meanings; awe, deference, esteem, fear, obeisance, respect, reverence, veneration, and worship. All of these can apply to our relationship with God. I would like to expand on one of them, respect. When we respect someone we look up to them, we have faith in them and we sometimes see them as a model for our lives. Sometimes we respect a person even though we certainly wouldn’t look upon them as a close friend. You can respect a person even though you may not agree with them on many things, but their belief is so pure and honest that you respect it. Our relationship with God, our Faith and our Church can be like that. Disagreement on large and small issues has led to a multitude of divisions in Christianity, but we all believe in and respect the same God.”

“I have been asked to relate a gift of the Holy Spirit to my office, the gift of Fortitude to the office of Treasurer. Fortitude; strength or courage in the face of pain or adversity. I hadn't really thought of the duties of a Treasurer in such terms. But then, as Treasurer I pray constantly for the Holy Spirit to give me strength when I deal with others, that I remain calm in the face of disorder, that I never offend those who seek my help, and that I am able to serve with compassion before efficiency. What this reflection has made clear to me is that I have been praying for fortitude all along.”

“What is Counsel? Pope Francis said, “Counsel is the gift by which the Holy Spirit enables us to make concrete decisions according to the logic of Jesus & the Gospel”. How do we make good decisions? Ruth Chang gives us 5 steps: Get all the facts. Be ready with answers. Figure out what really matters. Make a choice. Commit to your decision. Finally - become the solution. As believers, we would add PRAY. Pray for good counsel. Pray for right judgment. Pray for wise decisions. Then....be still and hear the voice of God.”

“The gift of understanding, to comprehend how we need to live as followers of Christ. To learn and understand the scriptures, grasp the essence of the truth of the Catholic faith. In Pope Francis' teaching on the "Gift of Understanding" on April 30, 2014, he stated, "...let's ask the Lord to give us, to give all of us this gift to understand, as he understands, the things that happen, and, most importantly, to understand the Word of God in the Gospel. This is precisely how the Holy Spirit acts within a Christian with the gift of understanding. We, too, oppressed by the weight of life and of our limitations, are unable to recognize the Lord beside us by ourselves. When, however, we welcome the Holy Spirit into our hearts, everything acquires a new light and tells us about God and His love. Dear friends, how important the gift of understanding is for our Christian life! Through this gift, the Spirit of God breaks through the darkness of our minds and our hearts and makes us true believers, able to enjoy what the Lord reveals to us in His Word and rejoice in all that he does in our lives.”

“...I have seen and experienced all of the Fruits of the Spirit; I have felt kindness, as members consoled those who have lost a loved ones or came to the aid of a member who was ill or in need, seen goodness when members collected items for St. Joe's Womens' Centre, seen faithfulness as we worked together to fight pornography and gentleness as we listened to speakers share the plight of their Aboriginal sisters; learned the importance of patience; experienced joy when we gathered, at a tea, to honour our past presidents; felt peace as we gathered as sisters, to celebrate the mass for our deceased members; observed self-control used among our members when working to end injustices; and yes, I have felt joy, knowing that The Catholic Women's League is a membership of women who now and in the future will seek to do God's work here on earth.”

“...Understanding rises above natural reason which is concerned only with the things we can sense in the world around us, thus understanding is both speculative – concerned with intellectual knowledge and practical, because it can help us to order the actions of our lives toward our final end, which is God... In understanding, one comprehends how one needs to live as (a) follower of Christ. A person with understanding is not confused by the conflicting messages in our culture about the right way to be. The gift of understanding perfects a person's speculative reason in the apprehension of truth. It is the gift whereby self-evident principles are known.”

May the Gifts of the Holy Spirit grace your parish executive councils, all you do as members of the League and as Catholics.

...from the editor's desk

News from Parish Councils

*What a great opportunity this space is!
You could place a notice of your parish events,
inviting members from across the Ottawa diocese.*