



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Ottawa Diocesan Council
PRESIDENT

Care for our Common Home



COMMUNIQUE #6

SEPTEMBER 2020

TO: Parish Presidents

From: Lynn Lavictoire, Diocesan President

**"Give something, however small, to the one in need.
For it is not small to one who has nothing.
Neither is it small to God, if we have given what we could."
-St. Gregory Nazianzen**

Re-energized by the spirit of the League, September is the month we would normally anticipate our General Meetings and our Annual Potluck Lunch Executive Meeting to which all our members are invited to attend. This year, September begins with a new hope. Hope that one day soon our new reality will return to its normalcy.

Liturgically in the Catholic Church, September is dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows with her feast day celebrated on September 15. This feast day falls on the day after the feast of the Holy Cross showing the close connection between the Sorrows of Mary and the Passion of her Son. Reflecting on our own sorrows, it is helpful to remember God can make beautiful things grow even from the darkest times.

Our Holy Father's prayer intention for this month is respect for the planet's resources: "We pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner." It reminds us of our national theme: Care for our Common Home and is an opportunity to reflect on how our current situation is affecting our environment possibly in unexpected ways: what happens to all those disposable masks?

With the unique challenges we face this year, League activities have slowed down but they haven't stopped. Our creativity and indomitable spirit are beginning to shine through. This year's national convention in Montreal celebrating the 100th Anniversary of The League was a victim of the pandemic which was especially unfortunate since it was so close to Ottawa. On the positive side, the national executive took this opportunity to livestream the invited convention speakers so that we would not miss out on this opportunity to learn more about the League and members to meet electronically after one of the presentations and discuss some of the issues brought forth. If you missed the original presentations in August, they were recorded and are now available on the national website at: <https://cwl.ca/re-watch-the-summer-speaker-series-webinars/>.

Our National Spiritual Development Chairperson Shari Guinta has worked and planned the "Women in Mission: A Spiritual Retreat with National Spiritual Advisor Bishop Stephen Jenson" which was to have been held on Wednesday, September 16. This retreat was also recorded and is available on the national website for those who couldn't attend on September 16. We may not be able to gather physically in significant numbers, but we can still participate!

At the provincial level, Ontario Provincial Council President Colleen Perry stressed in her Directive #3 that as the province moves into stage three of the economic recovery plan, it is important that we all continue to

follow the municipal, provincial and federal guidelines for meetings. She emphasized that our priority should be the wellbeing of our members and our communities. She also explained that because all our conventions were cancelled this year, the terms of office at every level of the League have been extended from two to three years.

Colleen also mentioned that due to the unprecedented nature of our times, *The Canadian League* magazine will be sent to all members, even those who did not pay their membership this year. This was a decision made by the national admin committee. The fall issue of *The Canadian League* magazine is expected to be distributed at the end of October.

The Ottawa Diocesan Council welcomes a new life member, Joanna Sisk. Joanna has done good work in the League and we look forward to seeing her again. The diocesan council will present her with her award when we can all meet together again. We all wish Joanna success in her new leadership role.

The 2021 Ontario Provincial Convention Planning Committee has been meeting electronically on a regular basis and has been laying the groundwork for a successful Ontario Provincial Convention next July here in Ottawa. The fundraising campaign has begun and the items for sale can be found displayed on the 2021 Ontario Provincial Convention page of the Ottawa Diocesan website. With most advertising opportunities cancelled (i.e., this year's diocesan, provincial and national conventions), the fundraising efforts have been mainly be electronic "word of mouth" so don't be afraid to spread the word!

In the diocese, parish councils are finding ways to remain active and keep members engaged even with the restrictions preventing physical meetings. St. John the Apostle Council recently organized an online inner healing retreat for September 26 and 27. This is an ambitious project and a wonderful way to spiritually feed the members of their council, the diocese and beyond.

A number of councils have submitted articles and pictures to the Centenary Committee, *The Canadian League* magazine, the provincial *ON-Line Newsletter* and other CWL resources. Being witnesses to what is going on in their councils and in their own lives, this has been a great way to keep members engaged and reassured that we are all in this together throughout the good times and the bad.

Additionally, with Masses now being allowed in the archdiocese (at least with limited capacity), some councils have been able to hold CWL Masses for their members presided by their own Spiritual Advisors. A seemingly small light in terms of this overwhelming pandemic challenge, when it is with the light of Christ any good thing is possible!

Moving into the fall with the reopening of our schools seems like the recipe for the dreaded "second wave" and a reminder that we haven't yet made it through this pandemic yet. It has already been a long stretch and it would be easy to shut down and try to wait things out. In light of the provincial theme of *Loneliness*, we still need to reach out to others especially those who are unable or feel too isolated to reach out. It's surprising how often reaching out to others can be an inspiration and a source of hope to us as well.

As we enjoy the leaves changing colours as we enter into the month of October, a month dedicated to the Rosary and Respect for Life. These are two of our traditions that echo the unique splendour of Catholic Christianity.

Celebrating 100 Years, 1920-2020!