

**The 74<sup>th</sup> Ontario Provincial 2020/2021 Annual Meeting of Members  
THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA  
July 11 & 12, 2021**

Last year, as the pandemic became our reality, we were notified that all our conventions at every level of the League were postponed until 2021. The hope was that the pandemic would soon be over and we would all return to living a normal life at least in the way we've known and appreciated it. This was not the case and our conventions turned into annual meetings of members with most attendees online and at least four delegates attending in-person.

The Ontario Provincial 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Members (AMM) began on Sunday, July 11 with the Opening Mass held at Notre Dame Cathedral in downtown Ottawa. The weather was sunny and it was just a beautiful day!



In preparation for the Opening Mass, I was asked to bring the flags including the Canadian flag, the Provincial flag and our CWL flag. The three flags were set up at the side of the steps leading up to the sanctuary ahead of time as there were no processions.

As big as the cathedral is, with a two-hundred in-person allowance at the time, only seven members attended and participated in the Mass. From Ottawa there was our Ontario Provincial President Colleen Perry and myself. There were four members from the Alexandria-Cornwall Diocesan Council and one member from the London Diocesan Council. The Ontario Provincial Spiritual Advisor Archbishop Marcel Damphousse was the presider.

The Eucharistic celebration was solemn as it began without the usual welcome since there wasn't a council hosting the AMM. Colleen did the First Reading and I read the Second Reading. The Responsorial Psalm song was sung by the one-person choir and the Prayers of the Faithful were prayed by the Ontario Provincial Spiritual Development Chair Emma Rose Rayburn. Archbishop Damphousse connected his homily to the Gospel Reading and the First Reading well. He also had a special message to all of us as leaders in the League, that we are called to bring people back into the Church. Not only are we important as members of the League but we are called to be missionaries in the Church. When Mass had ended, Colleen went up and read letters she had received even though it wasn't a normal convention.



The Opening Mass was livestreamed and if you missed it, you can still watch it at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNP78kOAY>. Last time I checked, it had 340 views.



The 2020 and 2021 AMMs were held virtually with four members present at the same location to meet the legal requirements. The GoToMeeting was conducted from a store in Cornwall. All technical issues were addressed by the London Diocesan Past President Rebecca McCarrell. There were 105 voting and accredited delegates registered for the meetings and 12 were from Ottawa.

On Monday, July 12, the morning began at 8:00am with the 2020 OPC AMM. This brought us into a spiritual mindset as we were led in a video presentation of the Crowning of Mary and Life Member Memorial. Roses were placed with Our Lady to represent thirteen diocesan councils and a single white rose to represent all our dearly departed members from across the province.

The 2020 Business Session was to the point and finished quite a bit earlier than expected which allowed time for Archbishop Damphousse to give a presentation. He spoke on the current Indigenous Residential Schools issue in relation to the well meaning yet misguided information being expressed about the Church. We need to be informed and educate ourselves before we start believing in everything the press releases in the media. His Grace's talk was well received.

The 2021 Business Session began after the archbishop's talk. It was business as usual. However, this time we heard reports from the Standing Committee Chairpersons and reports from the Diocesan Presidents. All reports were excellent! I encourage you to read them. The reports are readily available on the provincial website or at: <https://cwl.on.ca/annual-reports/>. Our provincial president's report highlighted all the things that councils across the province did and continue to do in light of the pandemic. Colleen represents us well. We also heard from our National President Anne-Marie Gorman who reiterated all that we did and had to learn to keep connected with our members.



The 2022 Ontario Provincial Convention Planning Committee's invitation video (<https://app.memento.com/HykT89ynd/group-video>) was presented to all attendees. Ottawa is hosting this event, so again, I was honoured to see how the video played and promoted the event so well. The planning committee continues to plan and deliver. We hope to see many of our sisters in person to celebration the Ontario Provincial Council's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

See you all then!

Love, Peace and Joy,

*Lynn Lavictoire*

President, Ottawa Diocesan Council  
The Catholic Women's League of Canada