

“...calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God.”

Your Provincial Executive in Action



Alberta Mackenzie Provincial President, Cathy Bouchard (center) along with Legislation Standing Committee Chair, Betsy Fletcher (left) and Spiritual Development Standing Committee Chair Judy Look (right) met with the Alberta Government on April 12, 2016.

The meeting with the Ministers went very well although it was only a half hour of their time. They met with the Minister of Health, Honourable Sarah Hoffman and her assistant; Minister for Seniors and Housing Honourable Lori Sigurdson, her Assistant Deputy Ministers, Mary Anne Wilkinson and John Cabral; and Jamie Tycholiz, End of Life Consultant from Alberta Health; Strategic Planning and Policy Development Division.

After giving the ministers an introduction to the Catholic Women's League and the level they represented, Cathy, Betsy and Judy spoke about the process of bringing a resolution to government, depending on what level of government to which it is addressed. They were pleased that a number of the people knew of the work of the CWL and were quite happy to meet with them.

Judy Look was very well prepared and spoke very well on our request for an Independent Seniors Advocate. She brought two copies of all of the petitions and the request for action. After she presented there was quite a lot of interaction and support regarding this incentive.

Due to time constraints, Cathy Bouchard addressed Jamie Tycholiz, End of Life Consultant from Alberta Health; Strategic Planning and Policy Development Division and let her know our grave concerns with the move to enact the law to allow Physician Assisted Dying. Cathy expressed the CWL's deep concern about freedom of conscience rights for physician and

medical personnel. We will continue to keep in contact with her regarding CWL support for Palliative Hospice Care.

Betsy Fletcher was also well prepared and brought packages for each government representative of the other two resolutions that we hoped to bring to their attention: Resolutions 2014.01 Income Qualifications for Alberta Dental and Optical Benefits for Single Seniors and 2015.01 National Standards and Provincial Protocols for Child Welfare Interventions. Betsy will continue to keep in contact with the Ministers and their assistants.

We were very excited to have this opportunity and look forward to other meetings with our provincial government.

Provincial President – Cathy Bouchard

In This Edition



Dear Sisters in the League,

At the 2016 provincial convention we announced that we are beginning the process of requesting a Per Capita Fee increase of \$2.00. (For more information about the process, see the National Manual of Policy and Procedure page 121 – 124.)

The Provincial Executive would like you to know the benefit to the individual members and the different council levels of an increase in per capita fees. We want you to know the ‘value’ of your money – how your money works for you.

Each of the Standing Chairs has been asked to share, in this newsletter, “What the League means to me” outlining how it has helped to develop leadership skills or what brought each of us to the league.

In the leadership levels at diocesan, provincial and national, one of the things that people speak about is “The Big Picture”. When one attends one of the meetings – such as a convention – we are surprised by the breadth of membership – the variety of ages, experience, gifts and talents and yet we are all united in our motto “For God and Canada”. Even after attending many of these ‘meetings’ I am still positively impacted by meeting these women who have become my sisters. It is easy to understand to see why some of our members use their holiday time and money to join at convention with sisters from across the country.

My faith life has grown through leadership in the League. Remember “the CWL is rooted in gospel values and call members to holiness through service to the people of God.” This may seem like the Martha – Mary contrast. I am connected to Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus in the well-prepared prayer services and reflections which speak to me as a woman. I am also enriched in using the gifts of the Holy Spirit in connections with our members; I learn patience, humility, and use the gift of listening. I use wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, courage, devotion, and wonder of the Lord in new ways.

Being in a leadership position in the League has given me many opportunities to meet women; travelling to the different council events to which I am invited gives me the chance to meet women in their own settings. I get the opportunity to listen to you and you get the opportunity to share what is happening in your own council. Each council reflects the League in their own unique way.

Some of you may not realise this but I am sometimes shy and reluctant to talk to people in new situations. A position of leadership gives a point of connection; something to talk about and discuss. Imagine the daunting position of speaking to government leaders – if we are prepared, and know that our discussion is on a CWL concern, it is much easier to be in discussion with people of power.

It is important for each of us to reflect on; “What drew me to the League?” and “How I have grown in how we are”, “How the League has enhanced my life?”

Your Provincial Executive in Action

Updates From Your Provincial Executive

- President – Cathy Bouchard
- President - elect – June Fuller
- VP /Spiritual Development – Judy Look
- Secretary – Ruth Boden
- Treasurer – Yvette Foster
- Past-President – Dorothy Johansen
- Christian Family Life – Gladys Brown
- Education & Health – Linda Vandenberg
- Resolutions – Joan Langevin
- Communications – Annette deBoer
- Community Life – Carol Schlachter
- Legislation – Betsy Fletcher
- Prov Life Member Liaison – Mary Heinzlmeir

Father Walter Krewski Awards

The New Annual Report Format

- CWL Updates & Initiatives**
- Independent Senior’s Advocate
- Elsie Yanik Award Recipient

National Convention Highlights

- Convention Report
- Spiritual Highlights
- Guest Speakers
- Convention Photos

Canada Comes to Calgary – 2019

Three Cups of Tea – A Reflection

Diocesan Council Updates

- Calgary
- Edmonton
- Grouard McLennan
- Mackenzie Ft Smith
- St Paul



**President Elect –
June Fuller**

Greeting Sisters in the League:

As members across our province begin planning for another year, it is encouraging to know that in our Province we currently have approximately 9500 members working 'for God and Canada'. As we plan every project, event, and meeting in the upcoming months, we need to focus on promoting the teachings of the Catholic Church with a tradition of service to others as expressed in our motto.

As we journey together, let us explore all the wonderful attributes that being a member of the Catholic Women's League has provided us. By doing this, we can share this experience with other women and encourage them to join us as Sisters in the League.

Personally, I want to share the benefits of being a member of the Catholic Women's League with you.

When, I first joined, I felt that I could help our ladies with funeral lunches, as this is such an important ministry for grieving families. **I did not want to take on a standing committee, as I could not talk in front of a group of people. When I was asked to be the secretary, I thought that I could do that, as no one would see my knees shake when I was asked to read the minutes at the meetings.**

As my circle of friends grew, so did my confidence. These new found Sisters in the League became mentors who encouraged me to take on positions that I never felt I could do. Attending other meetings and conventions, educated me and filled me with awe at all the work that the League has done. I still marvel when I listen to stories from our Life members.

Not only did my love for the League grow, but my faith in Jesus also strengthened. By being around so many faith-filled women, it has given me the opportunity to nurture my faith and love for the church. **I am so thankful for the ladies that asked me to join the CWL and my only regret is not joining earlier.**



**Spiritual Development–
Judy Look**



What CWL means to me...such an interesting question; one to which I haven't given much thought. Reflecting on it has made me realize that its meaning continues to evolve as my life journey continues to change.

When I first became a member it gave me the opportunity to share my gifts and talents. As I was a pastoral assistant and became the Spiritual Development convenor (yes convenor) I was able to apply that knowledge to my work as the Spiritual Development convenor (chair).

As the years have gone by CWL has given me opportunities to learn and study in areas such as parliamentary procedure, the resolution process, social justice challenges, ethical issues, and even how to run a craft sale. It also enriched my family with an understanding of volunteerism as they were often recruited to help. There was no ulterior motive on my part as they were boys. (No new members there!).

It helped to hone my skills as a leader as I wound my way through the different levels of the League. **Most of all it gave me the opportunity to make life-long friends, so important when Jim was diagnosed with cancer. League sisters throughout my own and neighboring dioceses walked with Jim and me through prayers, visits, cards, hugs and meals.** Often in the mailbox I would receive a Mass card or a "Thinking of You" card from a sister in another part of Canada. After Jim died my League sisters continued to be there for me and I have often thought I am doing as well as I am because of their support. CWL for me is true sisterhood.

With all sisters there is agreement and dissension; rivalry and harmony; anger and calm, reconciliation and forgiveness and combined all of those qualities make for strong women, women who know who they are and sisters who will always have each other's backs.

This is always reflected as we line up as League sisters in a funeral honour guard, holding our lit candles, tears gently running down our cheeks saying good bye to a sister who has made us a better person because we have known her. CWL has enriched my life in so many ways and has helped me to become the person that I believe God created me to be.

Secretary - Ruth Boden

Our convention in June in Westlock, AB was a time for meeting with our sisters in the CWL from all over Alberta and Northwest Territories. Some faces were new and some were very familiar and dear.

One of the highlights of the convention was the workshop presented by our President, Cathy Bouchard and Past President, Dorothy Johansen. This workshop was on a new and innovative way of reporting being introduced by National. Yes, I said REPORTING. I'm sure that everyone has cringed and perhaps even turned down an opportunity to hold a position of leadership in their parish or diocese simply from their concerns about having to report at the end of the year.

I try to look at it a little differently. Reporting to me is a way to revisit our accomplishments at the end of each year, and pat each other, and ourselves, on the back for the wonderful works that we do. Sometimes I think we are so busy we forget what we did last week, never mind last spring. Another welcoming part of reporting, and with this new approach it will be even more exciting, is the idea of learning new things and exploring new frontiers by reporting electronically.

In our role as secretaries, it will be important for us who have computer skills to help share them with other who aren't as fortunate. To give computer literacy to those without it is a tremendous gift. My own mother who is 79 this year, has started texting her great grandchildren and following their activities on Facebook. It's almost like watching a person who is scared to swim put their head under water for the first time and then before you know it they are swimming in the deep end of the pool.

Stay tuned for more information about the proposed new reporting system coming in the fall.
For God and Canada, Ruth B



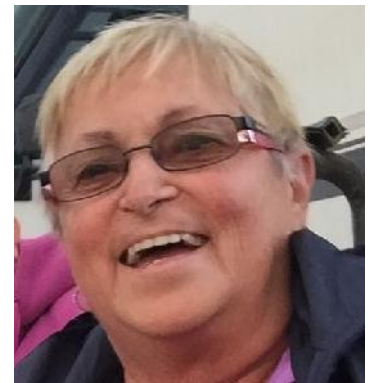
This is what being part of CWL is for me, stretching my limitations in a safe and loving environment with my sisters around me to pick me up and dust me off when I fall and who encourage me to try new things even when they are a little frightening.

**Treasurer –
Yvette Foster**

Just a note to remind everyone that all Parish Councils, are now covered by the National Treasury, for general liability from January 1, 2016 to February 2017. All claims need to be reported to the National Treasury as soon as possible, although property damage has a \$1000.00 deductible.

Remember to keep track of the budget versus actual expenses and start preparing for your annual reports.

There are National Funds available for League Development. This is a much underused fund, so let us start having more league development workshops in your dioceses and councils and use the resources available.



What CWL Means To Me

- The CWL has helped me to be more spiritual and have a deeper faith.
- I have found very sincere women that have a very deep faith.
- I know that when I have troubles, I can always find someone to talk to.
- I have learned that I belong to a very large group of like-minded women that work to better the world for all peoples.
- The friendships that have been founded over the last 32 years are very dear to me.



**Past President –
Dorothy Johansen**



A place where I can be myself and be accepted as a friend and a sister. A place where I am expected to find out my given gifts and talents, enhance them, and share them with others in service. A place where there are numerous areas to give service. A place where I have learned to gratefully accept gifts from others. A place where I can share my faith and witness to others.

This is what the CWL means to me.

Christian Family Life – Gladys Brown



What the League Means to Me...

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is an organization of Catholic women united in one voice, supporting family and community, and contributing to the life of the Church.

As Sisters in the League we pray for one another, share stories of our lives and being there for one another.

Being a member for the past several years, I have met wonderful ladies who are devoted to the League.

Being a CWL member has exciting opportunities and it connects me with more interests and I would like to make a difference as well as create value for my time. God called to be a Sister in the League to have fun, faith, friendship and love.

In Humble Service,
Gladys B



My involvement has shown me that we all have gifts and talents to share with one another.

When I was the President of the Edmonton Diocesan Council the League showed me how to work with ladies, communicating with each other and also gave me the confidence and self-esteem to continue to work for my family and the church.

I feel that I have deepened my spiritual understanding and more knowledge of the Catholic teachings.

The benefits of the CWL are most rewarding and memories are treasures that I will never forget. I have discovered my faith to be enriching and fulfilling.

**Education & Health –
Linda Vandenberg**



The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, Education and Health Committee –

This committee is committed to supporting Catholic Education in Canada which strives for the development of the human person in every aspect of his/her being, in order that he/she may develop spiritually, physically and socially. Under the heading of education, we also promote literacy and life-long education. Scholarship and Bursaries assist members or potential lay leaders to take courses which will prepare them to serve in their communities.

In addition to Catholic Education, this committee also works for universal access and excellence of quality in the health care system under the heading of Wellness and Sickness/Disease. Palliative care is just one of our focuses right now as we combat the idea of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. Other recent concerns are Lyme disease, the banning of Electronic Cigarettes and flavoured tobacco products, and the lack of mental health services

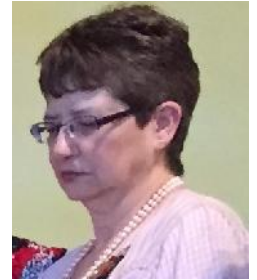
We strive to initiate action plans within our membership to support the protection of our environment and provide sustainable development in the world. A recent resolution advocates the banning of the use of Neonicotinoid Pesticides as we are seeing a loss of pollinators, birds and invertebrates due to the use of these pesticides.

The Catholic Women’s League, in all its works for God and Canada, provides a haven for many women as well as a venue for growing in leadership and faith.

As a young woman when I joined the league some thirty years ago, I found that haven as well as the opportunity to grow in both leadership and faith. Since then I have met many women with like-minded values and virtues. I cannot imagine my life without the Catholic Women’s League of Canada.



**Resolutions –
Joan Langevin**



At the National Convention in Halifax in August, 5 resolutions were passed.

The details on the resolutions will be available in the fall edition of The League Magazine, but you can see them now by going to the National website at www.cwl.ca and clicking on the Resolutions tab.

More information on the actions to be taken by members will be forthcoming in the next couple months.



What the League means to me

The importance of the League has changed for me over the years. It started off as getting to know the women of the parish and finding out what CWL was. The usual monthly meetings and lunches. And of course, don’t put your hand up or you may get selected for an executive position.

It has since evolved to a means of being spiritually regenerated. Over the years, I continued to attend the meetings and do small things, and eventually agreed to take on more responsibility.

Each level of the League brings new and interesting learning about the CWL. The companionship and inclusiveness of the members is amazing. Meeting new people from across Canada is wonderful. But, you have to be ready and willing to take on the new responsibilities and commitments. Pray for guidance and let the Lord show you what He wants you to do. Believe in yourself and those around you. Those friends you have made are willing to show you and help you along the way.

Joan

Communications – Annette deBoer



Weren't able to attend the National Convention? You can still enjoy the guest speakers by watching the video. Go to www.cwl.ca and click on Media, then Videos of Keynote Speakers from the 96th annual national convention.

We have a new National Executive – check out their communiques at www.cwl.ca.

Be sure to send photos and write-ups of your CWL activities to the Be League for inclusion in an upcoming issue.

“What does the CWL mean to me?”

About a year ago I got a phone call from a member of my parish. She started the conversation with “I understand that you are Mrs. CWL ...” That comment brought me up short, but when I had a chance to think about it later, I realized it was probably at least partly true. As a (multiple times!) past president for the parish, past president at the diocesan level, and current member of the provincial council – I guess you could call me “Mrs. CWL”.

I first joined the CWL after a visit to Whitecourt by the Provincial Field Workers. St Joseph CWL had deactivated before I moved to Whitecourt, and they were encouraging the group to restart. I don't remember exactly how it happened, but at some point in those first few years I took on the role of Treasurer and started to become more involved in the CWL, and through the CWL in the life of my parish. When the time came that I had to prioritize my busy schedule - as a mother of 3 active children and a wife, with a full time job - CWL was the volunteer organization that I chose to retain.

CWL has brought me many gifts. From the start I enjoyed working with my CWL sisters. I enjoyed being a part of a group of Christian women, and getting to know them. It felt good when we were able to do something positive for our parish and community.

Though it may not seem that way now, I was very shy and quiet. It took all my nerve to speak out in a meeting. CWL gave me a safe place to start expressing myself. When I became parish president, I headed off to my first Diocesan meeting, determined that if I was going to be president of my council, I would be the best president I could. My welcome at that meeting was overwhelming – a show of support and friendship that I never imagined. **My Sisters in the League believed in me, encouraged me, prodded me to new highs, accepted when I hesitated, but kept building me up until I was confident enough to take on new challenges, and then supported and cheered me on.** Even today, I continue to grow through my involvement in the CWL.

What I have learned in the CWL has impacted all areas of my life. I can now speak confidently (albeit I still have the jitters!) in front of a crowd, I am more aware of the needs of our society outside my own community. I am a better listener, recognizing how different personalities can interact; I am able to mentor others in the same way that I am still being mentored. Recognizing my limits and when to step back to allow others to grow. I cannot imagine my life without the blessings of my League sisters.

“For CWL, our strength IS
our unity”

Apostolic Nuncio at the 2016 National
Convention in Halifax

“At the Commissioning of new Life Members, when
my name was read and I walked past all the Honorary
Life Members to receive my blessing, it truly was a
very emotional moment.”

June Fuller, ABMK President-elect and new Life Member

**Community Life –
Carol Schlachter**



The Catholic Women's League Community Life Standing Committee can be very challenging. It calls us to action in so many worthy categories. Although every category is equally important, it is difficult to choose where one

should focus. World and local current events and certainly active resolutions demand immediate and most often, continued response. This helps to make good choices in our service.

Pope Francis' messages and encyclicals definitely call us to action. Much of his call falls under the work of the CWL Community Life Committee. Our members of the five dioceses proved their incredible commitment to our provincial works of mercy project. Reaching out to refugees, the poor and the marginalized and the letter writing commitment to government officials on so many issues shows a united sisterhood second to none.

The Catholic Women's League to me means a family of sisters. A family with the same values working together towards a common goal. We serve all of humanity and the creation God has given us in trust.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Holy Spirit led me to join the League. God revealed to me my hidden talents prompting my desire to serve humbly as the best servant leader possible.

The Catholic Women's League has given me an understanding of the challenging work, an enhanced spiritual commitment and the willingness to help make a difference.

The position of Alberta/Mackenzie Provincial Community Life Chair has broadened my horizons, challenged my work ethics and has introduced me to even more amazing women I can truly call sisters.

Where did we all begin? At the grass roots level where we continue to be equal members of God's Team.

Do not be afraid – listen for God's call!

FATHER WALTER KREWSKI MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Congratulations to the three CWL councils that were recipients of the 2015 Father Walter Krewski awards:

Greatest increase in NEW members	'Our Lady of the Angels' in Fort. Saskatchewan	19 <u>New</u> members
Greatest overall increase in membership.	Parkland Holy Trinity in Spruce Grove	An overall increase of 32 members
Greatest percentage increase in membership	St. Alphonsus Council in Edmonton	34.78% increase in their membership

Last year, 59 councils posted an increase in membership. Well done ladies!

Congratulations to all councils for their hard work and dedication in promoting the League and ensuring that all Catholic Women are given the opportunity to know who we are and what we do.

Legislation - Betsy Fletcher

The Legislation Standing Committee monitors and studies current and upcoming legislation and advises the League on ways to advance our mission statement in relation to

government for a Canada more representative of our values.

According to the 2013 Constitution & Bylaws, the responsibilities of the Legislation Standing Committee are:

- (a) monitor and study legislation at all levels of government
- (b) preparation of briefs and position papers on proposed legislation

These two tasks appear to present a daunting amount of work. However, being a part of the legislation committee is an eye-opening opportunity to learn about legislation in Canada and how it is enacted. Furthermore, we can influence and impact legislation locally, provincially and nationally. It's both motivating and fascinating when we see our successes, such as with our Flavoured Tobacco Resolution, (*Resolution 2014.3 Flavoured Tobacco Products Ban*) which helped lead to a ban in Alberta.

As Provincial Chair of the Legislation Standing Committee, I have learned how to look critically at proposed legislation and see where changes or improvements can be made. I learned how to write letters that would get the attention of government ministers-sometimes leading to in-person meetings- to be persistent and not give up.



When I first joined the League, I had no idea where my membership would take me...

We all say how important spiritual development and our sisterhood are to us, but it's more than just words. Throughout my journey with my CWL sisters, I have come to realize that each standing committee position I was part of, helped me develop more skills. My confidence and communication skills continue to improve. I'm not as hesitant to take on something new, knowing without a doubt that the support of my Sisters in the League will be there to help me find my way through new challenges.

**PROVINCIAL
LIFE
MEMBER
LIAISON**

"THANK YOU" to the outgoing national Life Member Liaisons - Pat and Ann, for keeping us well informed of prayer requests from Life Members across Canada and also the appreciations expressed. We "WELCOME" the new national Life Member Liaison - Bev Weiler, and we look forward to receiving her messages and information.

It is important to keep our Life Members informed of issues/concerns within our province, how Provincial Council is responding to these and what action we are encouraged to take.

In this Holy Year of Mercy, we are focusing on the Spiritual and Corporal works of Mercy, however when the Holy Year is over, we will continue these, because our objectives and goals are to make a difference in the lives of others. We are called to holiness through service to the people of God.

"Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. His love endures for ever"

Mary Heinzlmeir
Life Member Liaison



☺ The New **ANNUAL REPORTS** Explained ☺

Highlights of the New Annual Reporting Method

By Ruth Boden, Provincial Secretary

At the Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Convention held in Westlock, AB this June our President, Cathy Bouchard and Past President Dorothy Johansen presented a workshop on a new reporting method proposed by National. For years we have struggled with reporting in a way that was consistent from parish to parish and diocese to diocese. In an attempt to simplify and clarify reporting processes, new forms were created that weren't consistent across the provinces and territories so by the time the reports got up to National, they weren't very representative of the grass roots from which they came.



Reporting is about reviewing our past year's accomplishments in this very diverse and vast country. It is about showing the spiritual strength in our organization of nearly 100,000 Catholic Women. We show our love for God and for one another, one simple action at a time. When you multiply that one action by 100,000 you get a lot of wonderful miracles happening every day.

National is listening to our concerns about the difficulty of reporting in a consistent fashion and has come up with an electronic survey form for each Standing Committee in our parishes and diocese.

The workshop gave us a taste of what we can expect when National rolls it out to us later on. This was an opportunity for the members to give some feedback into the development of the survey.

The format is very similar to any questionnaire you would see electronically; basically you fill in the check boxes and write a brief message about your findings. Once you have answered all the questions that you can, you send the report on to National.

Some of the logistics will still need to be worked out such as;

1. How is the information being disseminated to the diocesan chairs and then on to provincial and national chairs?
2. What about computer literacy in some of the smaller parishes? Will there be support for them? What format will that take?
3. What happens if you don't have an answer to one of the questions in the survey?

These were just a few of the questions that were raised at the provincial convention, and our President, Cathy Bouchard promised to present them to national for answers.



The process is being developed and your input and questions are all welcome. Please forward them to your parish president and diocesan presidents for presentation to the Provincial President and on up to the developers at national level.

By Cathy Bouchard, Provincial President

By now you have heard that we are going to a new method of annual reporting. The format of the questions will be consistent across Canada.

The method is best done on computer but can also be done on paper and have someone else input for you. Encouragement and assistance is available for you from the Diocesan President and President Elect. (They will be talking about this at your Diocesan Fall Meeting.)

Annual Reports

Concerns

- The form has every possible way a standing committee may do its work. Sometimes this seems quite long
- Access to computers and ability to use computers and the internet (This might be a good opportunity to involve others to assist us and perhaps interest them in the work that we do.)
- We wanted to ensure that we have the ability to save and print completed forms. (The survey program on the computer saves our work for us.)

Advantages

- We can measure our growth as a council and see where we might improve
- Reports became learning tools particularly when councils got together to complete the forms.
- Less repetitiveness in reports between standing committees
- Completed forms offered opportunities to look at areas that may need further education/training because trends can be identified
- The questions give a full picture of how the standing committee work may be done
- It is hoped that the forms can assist executive member to set goals
- Material is available to us to do the Annual Reports, particularly the workshop that was given at the provincial convention along with samples of completed forms. Check www.cwl.ab.ca

It is intended that forms will be printed and circulated to parish councils in the fall parish council mailing from National, along with a memo with instructions for completion and the report form links/access information distributed in the same package. A video tutorial is in the offing to assist with the task of completion.



“WE” - Women Empowered

Evelyn Suter, Holy Cross Council, Grande Cache speaking to Resolution 2016.02 – Reducing Impact of Disposable Hygiene products.

Annual Reports – Final Points & Notes

- The Reporting Survey is meant to help us.
- **Do not be worried if parts of the report form could not be completed, as a council would have to be a super active council with about 1000 members to do all of the items listed.**
- No one person or council will be able to complete all of the activities in any one standing committee or executive position.
- **The reports were very detailed and might actually give the members an idea of new things they might want to try in the next year.**
- The reports are very simple/easy to complete. They use standardized questions (We are not requested to answer questions not pertinent to CWL activities).
- This is a great step forward in assisting councils to complete reports. One council finished putting all of them in within an hour.
- We WILL be switching to another platform – one that will automatically send the completed responses to the person taking the survey.
- There is certainly good work being done even if there is no chair that the president might wish to report, but should not feel obligated to complete the whole form.
- As we will all have hard copies from the office, it will be easy for them to complete them and retain your copy, plus they will get an e-mailed response generated from the system.
- The data, once entered, stays on the survey website and will be accessed by national office staff who will distribute the survey results to the diocesan and provincial chairpersons.
- One-page question sheets have been generated to allow members with reporting responsibilities to start thinking about their activities and how they would be reported under the new system



It is important to note that once the information is gathered, completing the form will only take a matter of minutes which is why it is hoped the full questionnaires will be included in the fall mailing to every council

Please feel free to contact your Diocesan President or President-Elect for more assistance if needed.

CWL – UPDATES AND INITIATIVES

Independent Senior's Advocate

Update from Legislation Chair, Betsy Fletcher

Dear Sisters in the League,

The following is an update to our provincial initiative re: Independent Seniors Advocate:

- We were successful in gathering over 4000 signatures!
- Met with the Ministers of Seniors and Housing and the Minister of Health in April 2016 to present the signatures and had a very positive reception.
- Discussed the fact that there is no vehicle for accountability within the Seniors Ministry as there is no formal complaint process. This is due to the fact that there is no Seniors Act at this time and the Seniors Advocate has no authority to deal with concerns other than disseminating information.
- We suggested amending the Health Care Act as requested by our petition or writing a Seniors Act in which a formal complaint process would be included.
- The Minister of Seniors responded that there is no thought to writing a Seniors Act but did remind us that the present Seniors Advocate reports to her and not the Health Minister.
- We followed up with a letter to the Minister requesting clarification of whether the present Seniors Advocate would be an independent officer of the legislature.
- July 14, 2016, the Alberta Government announced that a new Seniors Advocate has been appointed. We read that "The Seniors Advocate works with seniors to resolve a wide variety of issues. The advocate also advises government on trends and systemic issues that concern seniors and their families." (Click on the link for the complete news release - <http://goo.gl/6RbeFO>)
- August 8 – a letter was sent to Honorable Lori Sigurdson. To date we have not received a response.

ACTION PLAN

- We are asking all members to follow up with their individual MPs – ask them what is happening regarding the CWL request for an Independent Senior's Advocate. All MLAs are familiar with our request as each MLA was contacted. Those MLAs without CWL councils received a letter by email explaining the initiative.
- If your council has not yet met in person with your MLA, please do that as soon as possible. Introduce yourself, the League, and talk about the work we do.
- We need to have concentrated follow up on our request in order to have the government move on this very important issue.

Check out the June edition of the **BE LEAGUE** for a picture and report on our meeting with the Provincial

Report by June Fuller, President -elect

Elsie Yanik Award Recipient for 2016

The provincial council annually presents the Elsie Yanik Award which was created in 1997 to commemorate the leadership, ministry and service of Elsie Yanik to the Catholic community in the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith. Elsie's achievements are many and she has received a blessing from Pope John Paul II for her work within the Catholic Church. She has spent most of her long life spreading kindness, being a strong advocate for native women and promoting health and education in her community. Award recipients are nominated for these same qualities and service to the church and their community.

The Alberta Mackenzie Provincial CWL council was pleased to present the 2016 'Elsie Yanik' award to Rose-Marie McCarthy, a member of St. Thomas More CWL in Edmonton.



Rose-Marie has been a member of the CWL for over 50 years and she has held leadership roles on parish, diocesan and provincial councils and was president of the Provincial CWL from 1983-85. Rose-Marie received her 'Life Membership' in the League in 1987.

Rose-Marie's passion for the CWL led to many hours of mentoring members and she was instrumental in organizing the Edmonton Diocesan Field Workers. As a member of the National Field workers, she helped create and facilitate a workshop 'Spirituality – Day of Discovery', to help women discover their God given gifts and strengths.

Rose-Marie recognized the importance of preserving the history of the Catholic Women's League and was instrumental in compiling a CWL Archdiocesan history book, a Diocesan archive (now in the Provincial Archives in Edmonton) and while Provincial secretary, collected and assembled 30 years of CWL history that was deposited with the Glenbow Museum in Calgary. From 2009-2012, she co-chaired a committee to produce a pictorial history of the one hundred years of the

League in the Edmonton Archdiocese.

Like Elsie Yanik, ministry and leadership go hand-in-hand for Rose-Marie. Her passion for caring for women was evident through her volunteerism with Win House, Wings, Kara, and as a board member of the Alberta Councils of Women's Shelters, just to name a few.

A highlight for Alberta in 1984 was the papal visit by Pope John Paul II. Under Rose-Marie's direction the Papal Banner Project was initiated and every CWL council in the province and the Northwest Territories participated in making 2000 banners that lined the papal route.

Rose-Marie's contributions to the Catholic Women's League and the community are immeasurable and we are so fortunate to have her as a member and mentor for our ladies.

Check out: <http://www.wcr.ab.ca/This-Week/Stories/entryid/7553>
for WCR coverage of Rose-Marie's CWL journey.



**“From prayer to parliament,
our voices must be heard”**

Barb Dowding, Past National President

The 2016-18 National Executive:

Margaret Ann Jacobs	President
Ann Marie Gorman	President-Elect and Organization
Fran Lucas	1st Vice-President and Education & Health
Shari Guinta	2nd Vice-President and Communications
Janet McLean	Secretary-Treasurer
Joan Bona	Resolutions
Betty Colaneri	Community Life
Doreen Gowans	Christian Family Life
Jacqueline Nogier	Spiritual Development
Nancy Simms	Legislation
Bev Weiler	National Life Member Liaison London, OT.

2016 National Convention, Halifax, NS

(Report from Cathy Bouchard, Provincial President)

What a great convention. **‘Thank you’ to all of you who were able to be there and represent our province.**

The new theme starting in January will be **"Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call"**.

Our own Albertan, Fran Lucas was elected as 1st Vice President! Congratulations!

Thank you to Dorothy Johansen for offering herself for election.

Thank you to Fr Dom, Calgary Diocesan Spiritual Advisor and Fr. Jozef, Edmonton Diocesan Spiritual Advisor for attending and supporting us and to Archbishop Smith for co-presiding at the Opening and Closing Masses.

Thank you to June Fuller for organizing our Provincial Supper and all those who entertained us.

Thank you to Sharon Malec for sewing the Alberta Tartan scarves.

PALLIATIVE CARE

A Resolution on Palliative Care passed at the National Convention. It will be presented in the fall 2016 Canadian League magazine.

"12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care" on May 4 will become an annual CWL initiative. With this much advance notice, councils should have plenty of time to prepare.

The 2016 petition to the Federal Government netted over 25,000 signatures. Watch on Facebook for when these will be presented to Parliament this fall.

The Palliative Care Prayer Cards from across Canada will be used to create a Spiritual Bouquet to be given to His Holiness, Pope Francis. Do not be shy about the activities and prayers you are involved in. If you have not yet completed a Palliative Care Pledge Card, please do it now and mail it into the national office before Oct. 31, 2016. If you and your council have already sent one in but have since then completed other prayers or activities, please send these as well

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Bishop McGrattan reported on his meeting with spiritual advisors from the various levels of the League. They shared that the CWL continues to be parish based and parish focussed.

† **In the League there is a challenge; everything is possible with God but we don't have to do everything.**

† We are reminded to always be preparing for the future of the League by mentoring the next level.

† **All women should feel welcome in the League even if they do not yet belong. Focus on welcoming new members.**

† In our outreach and planning we should learn to think outside the box - think about changing meeting times and days, how we meet as a council.

† **The "How" of the League should not overpower our "why"**

† The 8 objectives of the League should be our compass and give direction for the League.

† **We shouldn't drift to the center [the comfortable, the familiar, the 'way we've always done it'], but move to the peripheries. Change is difficult but sometimes necessary. WE need to develop our skills of discernment.**

† We have One Heart, One Voice, One Mission to serve the Kingdom of God.

Part IV – CWL Constitution & Bylaws (2013)

The Objects of the League shall be to unite Catholic women of Canada:

1. to achieve individual and collective spiritual development
2. to promote the teachings of the Catholic church
3. to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life
4. to protect the sanctity of human life
5. to enhance the role of women in church and society
6. to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere
7. to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world
8. to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony

The new theme "**Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to the Call**" will begin in January of 2017.

The description of the theme elements and meaning will become available in the next while. The National Executive will be working on spirituals and workshops to develop this theme and if any members feels inspired to create something along this line, please let Cathy, the Provincial President know so these can be shared across Canada. We are reminded to be careful about copyright laws and get permission for all non-original work.

REMINDERS

Diocesan councils are reminded that the **LIFE MEMBERSHIP PROCESS** has changed somewhat so please review this in the National Manual of Policy and Procedures and be aware of timelines.

Invite Margaret Ann Jacobs, the National President to your Diocesan convention by sending the invitation to the national office as soon as possible. The office tries to coordinate her calendar with Margaret Ann.

(Please copy the provincial president as well.)

The **NATIONAL BURSARY PROGRAM** is awarded biannually. The next submission deadline is Nov. 30, 2016.



National Convention – Spiritual Highlights

Submitted by Judy Look

From the opening mass at St. Mary's Cathedral to the closing one at the same church all delegates had the opportunity to grow in their faith. The procession of flags reminded us that we were a gathering of women from coast to coast to coast; the liturgical procession consisting of at least 7 bishops and over 20 priests from across the country reminded us of our connectedness through our Baptism as we are all spiritual sisters and brothers in the League.

On Sunday our voices rang out in song welcoming the Lord and they continued to sing and hum throughout the days until the final hymn was sung in praise and thanksgiving on Wednesday to celebrate a new executive and the beginning of a new chapter in our CWL lives.

All good spiritual programs allow the theme to permeate the meetings and this convention was no exception. The thread of mercy ran through the entire convention with a special pilgrimage to the Cathedral on Tuesday morning which included "Morning Prayer of the Church" and the celebration of the Eucharist.

The delegates had an opportunity to pass through the Holy Door. Vancouver's Archbishop Michael Miller's homily focused on the significance of walking through a Holy Door. He told us that when you go through any door you leave "stuff" behind and he asked, **"What do you need to leave behind in your lives when you go through the door to God? What are the things holding you back?"**

As you go through the Holy Door you go forward to meet the Lord in His mercy. Mercy is the person of Jesus Christ. We believe that God is inviting us to something new. The Lord refreshes us; He opens us

to a broader vision. Because this year is the Extraordinary Year of Mercy confession was available each day to all the delegates either at the Church or the prayer room at the convention hotel.


The prayer services for the North American Regional Meeting of WUCWO Sunday afternoon and Monday morning had the theme Women of Mercy – United in One Heart, One Voice One Mission that called us to reflect on mercy from the global perspective.

The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was central to our Eucharistic Celebration on Monday the 15th. It was wonderful to celebrate one of Our Lady's feast days at convention. **Each day had meaningful spirituals lead by various members of the National Council all calling us to reflect on some aspect of God's mercy – Merciful Like The Father; A Disciple's Heart, Called Forth, Mission: We are Called.** The Prayer room offered the delegates some quiet time in peaceful reflection. We said good-bye to our sisters who were called home to the Lord in a beautiful Memorial Service and we blessed the outgoing executive through a short prayer service.

Our concluding Mass was one of great celebration as the new executive was installed and made their promise to serve God and country. The flags were retired reminding us that we now have to take everything we have absorbed and live it out as we return to our homes.

We are to be the instruments of God's mercy in this very broken world. We came away with a full understanding of what it means to be women with One Heart, One Voice, One Mission, enveloped in Mercy.

Mercy:
the bridge that connects
God and man,
opening our hearts
to the hope
of being loved forever
despite
our sinfulness.



-Pope Francis

96th Annual CWL National Convention: Highlights from the Guest Speakers

Submitted by June Fuller

This year we had the pleasure of participating in the 96th Annual National convention of the Catholic Women's League as well as the North American regional conference of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organization (WUCWO).

On Monday, August 14, **Sr. John Mary spoke on the topic of "Women of Mercy United in One Heart, One Voice, One Mission": Sister John Mary is a member of the 'Sisters of Life'** that was founded on June 1st, 1991. Their goal is to defend life and affirm the value of each individual. In her keynote she shared a few reflections on Mercy which, as she said, is a gift of the church and the world. She spoke on the Mission of the Sisters of Life and their communities' work. She covered Mercy as the heart of motherhood and gave us some concrete orientations of heart that would help us to become better women of mercy, personally, in our family and in our parish. She encouraged us to become instruments of mercy! Be faithful and continue to do the good work that we do as CWL members.

Tuesday, August 15 - **Fr. James Mallon spoke on "I Am a Mission on this Earth":**

Father James indicated that the central crisis that we have in today's church, is an identity crisis. He explored what this means and asked us these three questions:

1. What is the fundamental stance of the Catholic Church and as a member what does it mean to us?
2. What does this mean for our parishes?
3. What does this mean for CWL?

He explored the following subjects: accommodation, opposition, withdrawal and engagement. He told us how important it is for the church and for CWL to engage others, and not just within the confines of our church walls. That is why discipleship is so important for all of us. We become Disciples through the development of caring. Evangelization is relationship through caring. We must become disciples to go out and encourage and enlighten other people to care for the church.

Wednesday August 17 began with Morning Prayer followed by **Dr. Nuala Kenny who spoke on "Palliative Care"**.

Dr. Kenny is a physician ethicist and a Sister of Charity from Halifax. In her keynote address, she gave us a better understanding of Medically Assisted Death, and spoke about the challenges for Christians today with this new legislation now that Bill C-14 has become law. She told us that we can have a good death and she listed the characteristics of a good death. She gave us a clearer understanding of the following information:

- Understanding the Supreme Court of Canada's decision and Bill C-14 on Medically Assisted Death
- Recognizing the importance of and misunderstanding of palliative care and hospice
- Accessing the reason for requesting Medically Assisted Death
- Accepting the challenges for the Christian community to respond to suffering and do the works of mercy
-

In closing she told us we need to 'Walk the Talk'. Visit the sick, comfort the afflicted, and bury the dead. We need to be witnesses to mercy and compassion. Why? Because that is what Jesus did for us.

Exciting News! The keynote speakers were livestreamed over the internet from the convention. You can listen to them (or listen again) by going to www.cwl.ca.



Alberta Goes to National Convention



Alberta Delegates at the National Convention in Halifax

Cathy Bouchard, ABMK Provincial President

Life Members Donna Prevost and Mary Heinzlmeir



Spiritual Advisors, Fr. Jozef and Fr. Dom

Life Member Ceremony



Canada comes to Calgary – National Convention 2019

Motivation, inspiration, creativity and energy have fully encompassed our 2019 CWL National Convention planning committee. We have not only hit the ground running, but have gained incredible momentum.

CWL NATIONAL CONVENTION – AUGUST 18-21, 2019

Our committee is proud to announce that we have secured one of the best locations in Calgary, The Hyatt Regency Hotel and Conference Center to host our convention. We will be celebrating Mass in two amazing churches; St. Albert The Great in South East Calgary for the Opening Mass, and St. Mary's Cathedral in downtown Calgary for our closing mass.

A huge shout to the Sisters of our councils in the Diocese for all of your fundraising support.

We are so blessed to have a sisterhood who is working tirelessly on supporting and fundraising to help make our 2019 Event the best it possibly can be. The fundraisers such as the Fish/Meat Sales, Bake Sales, Craft Markets, Cookie Walks and many other methods in addition to the \$2.00 per member per council will go a long ways to support the convention expenses. The Calgary Diocesan hosted a plant sale at multiple locations in Calgary in the spring. It was a HUGE success because it was supported by our Sisters and their communities. Thank you!



Have you seen any of the gorgeous CWL Fundraising merchandise we have for sale?

Visor clips \$5.00
CWL Ribbon \$10.00
CWL Journal \$20.00

Contact Bernice at
bernicet@telus.net
to purchase

SUPPORT YOUR CWL SISTERS FUNDRAISING FOR THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

Snow Flake Gala - Croatian Canadian Cultural Centre
Saturday, January 28, 2017

Reception | Seated 4 Course Dinner | Host Bar | Silent Auction | Raffle
Entertainment, Fun & Fellowship, and Much More!

Tickets \$125 per person - Contact Lulu at lulu411@shaw.ca

“We are all like snowflakes – all unique in our own beautiful way.”

Three Cups of Tea - A Reflection

From Judy Look, Spiritual Development Standing Committee Chair



Have you ever wondered why, after hours of research and preparation, your report fell flat? You were so sure that the group would be enthralled, educated and motivated to action but instead there was apathy, an attitude of who cares.

I suggest it may not have been the report at all but the fact that you didn't sip three cups of tea. "Are you out of your mind?" you are thinking. What has tea got to do with anything?

Many years ago I read the book Three Cups of Tea ... One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson "

It focused on one man's quest to build schools in Afghanistan. The following quote taken from the book: 'Here we drink three cups of tea to do business; the first you are a stranger, the second you become a friend, and the third, you join our family, and for our family we are prepared to do anything - even die' - Haji Ali, Korphe Village Chief, Karakoram Mountains, formed the author's strategy for negotiating with the people of Afghanistan. He knew to be successful he would have to drink three cups of tea; in other words spend the necessary time that it takes to introduce, flesh out and make the idea part of the group he was working with.

When we use this approach to our work the idea to be presented is the first cup of tea - the "stranger". We tend to think people know what we are talking about but that is not necessarily so. The first presentation merely sows the seeds of the idea. The second cup of tea - become a friend- the issue is brought back by giving basically the same presentation but because the seeds were sown there are now questions and the possibility that the issue maybe workable; the third cup of tea - join our family- the issue comes back for the third time and the members are listening with understanding and are prepared to work on it. Often we give up after the first cup of tea and many great ideas are lost.

Membership and resolutions are two areas that could benefit from three cups of tea:

Membership

First Cup of Tea.

When a woman takes out membership she is the stranger-



Second Cup of Tea

It needs to be sipped one on one; perhaps a phone call or a luncheon date where we get to know each other. This cup of tea is crucial.

Third Cup of Tea

The new member is no longer a stranger. She knows someone who cared enough to spend time with her outside the meeting. She is beginning to feel comfortable and later on when she is asked to volunteer she most likely will step up to the plate because she feels she belongs.

Resolutions

First Cup of Tea.

Bringing the titles of the resolutions passed at the National Convention to a meeting



Second Cup of Tea

Bringing information about the resolutions to the next meeting and having a discussion. Members can take the information home with them

Third Cup of Tea.

Taking ownership for the action plan at the next meeting.

**All of what we do is built on our relationships with one another.
We must work as family so the time spent nurturing our family is crucial.
So ladies get your teapots out and prepare to have three cups of tea.**



Diocesan Council Updates

Calgary Diocesan President Sharon Malec

Greetings to all the Sisters in the League from the far south of the province. Calgary Diocese stretches from the BC border to the Saskatchewan border, from the 49th parallel to Carstairs. We are a group of dedicated women that work for 'God and Canada'.



This upcoming year is quite exciting! We are looking forward to it.

- † On September 18, St. Mary's University will celebrate their 30th Anniversary by celebrating Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral in Calgary. The CWL Chair for Catholic Studies was initiated by the Calgary Diocesan Council. To date, we have donated more than \$1.4 million dollars toward this cause.
- † The Diocese councils will come together in Okotoks for our annual fall meeting on September 24, 2016. A full schedule is planned. There will be workshops and a presentation concerning Human Trafficking.
- † To continue our spiritual development, the annual Advent Retreats will be held in both Calgary and Lethbridge. St. Martha's, Lethbridge and St. Bonaventure, Calgary are the host councils. Information will be available on the Calgary Diocesan website.
- † Calgary Diocese is hosting the 2019 National Convention. The committee which is chaired by Judy Montes and Marilyn Schafer is working endlessly. Fund raising is a major concern and for sale are Pin Ribbons and Madonna Journals. On January 28, the Snowflake Gala will be held in Calgary at the Croatian Centre. There will be great food, dancing and a silent auction. A great Christmas gift would be tickets for the event.
- † Our 2017 Diocesan convention will be held in Calgary at the Executive Inn & Suites on May 5 to May 7. The plans are in the making. More details will be found on the website.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send?"

Isaiah 6:8

**The Doors were Opened and we were Cast Out into the Deep but paddled hard to join our Companions on the Journey. How simple it became to Love One Another as Women of Peace and Hope when were all Centered on Faith and Justice.* In the most recent past together as sisters in the League, We Have Seen the Lord and are forging ahead with ONE Heart, ONE Voice, ONE Mission*

** Quote from Pauline Krupa, OT Provincial President in her 2014 annual report.*

My Journey in the CWL

(Sharon Malec, Calgary Diocesan President)

When I look at how the CWL has helped me as a woman to grow, I think of my mentor and friend, Edith MacDowell. Edith served as Calgary Diocesan President in the 70's. When I met Edith in Claresholm, I was a young mum with 2 pre-school girls and had moved into a small town not knowing anyone. Edith was always a presence in the "League" as she called it. She encouraged young women to join and in doing so found all my records and now I am a 40-year member.

Edith got us to conventions, made sure we had great guest speakers at our year end banquets, conned us into running for offices (2 terms of 3 years for me). By setting the example, Edith showed me that it was not what you get out of the CWL but what you give to the CWL. Her wisdom continues to live in my heart. I have a large number of 'sisters' because of the League. We travel down roads together so that we can approach the different layers of government to give them a boost so that they as lawmakers can change the laws. We are for Canada. We serve our God. He is what gives us the members of the CWL the courage to act with justice and to treat everyone with respect and dignity. The CWL has given me opportunities to see parts of Canada I would never had gone to. There I have met sisters that have the same conviction as myself about the church. We have prayed together and of course cried together at the loss of our sisters. We are one.

With ONE HEART, together we as women will remain Christ-centered welcoming **ALL** with great love, understanding and support.

With ONE VOICE, let us continue to share the 'Good News' and be the voice for those who are not being heard.

ONE MISSION calls us to work in unity and concentrate on the challenge of seeing the Lord in everyone we meet. We are rooted in Gospel values calling everyone to holiness.

**Edmonton Diocesan President
Mary Hunt**

As I begin my second year as Edmonton Diocesan President, I find myself ever growing in appreciation and awe for my Sisters in the League and the gifts and talents they so generously share.

We were encouraged by recently canonized St. Mother Theresa to do small things with great love...well there are tidal waves of small things being done by our members that are crashing on the shores of our parishes and communities providing quality of life in abundance.



Focusing on our Catholic faith, collectively we are accomplishing great and wonderful things. **National Spiritual Advisor Bishop William McGrattan reminded us at the recent national convention that “with the Lord all things are possible” but that “the Lord does not expect us to do all things”.** This reminder said to me that in our desire to *change the world* we need to find ways to make change manageable by focusing on our faith and through finding ways together to bring about change by identifying smaller goals that build upon one another, culminating in the change we seek. Most importantly, we must never underestimate the power of prayer in all that we do.

The CWL has helped me to grow in a myriad of ways. It has provided me with a greater appreciation of my Catholic faith and the Catholic family to which I belong ...one that is loving, supportive, fun and faith filled.

Belonging to the CWL has honed my personal skillset in terms of personal awareness, confidence, reporting, organizing, counselling, public speaking and listening. My prayer life has grown exponentially and I hunger with the desire for more information about my faith and how it relates to my life. I have always enjoyed Church music but my CWL sisters have elevated that enjoyment...at Masses and spirituals celebrated by CWL members the music is so uplifting...everyone sings with joy, passion and love making these gatherings graced moments in my memory as we raise the roof in praise.

I have also learned the power of kindness and realize that if I want to make progress in my spiritual life I must learn to be kinder. It has been said that kind thoughts give power to words and works and that without kind thoughts, there can be no charity. **Mark12:41-44** *whenever the loving thought does not accompany words and works of charity, these are dead. And every man who does not cherish within him kind and loving thoughts—whatever his works or words may be – is devoid of charity.*

My CWL experiences have taught me to bring greater attention to the things that I do and how I do them...being consistently kind can at times be difficult but key in developing a closer relationship with God. There are so many wonderful mentors in the League who inspire me to be the best Catholic woman I can be...so it is with joy that I am so very grateful for the gift the CWL represents.

IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP REMINDER FROM NATIONAL OFFICE

To ensure accuracy and prevent mailings from being returned, address changes MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING VIA FAX, POST, or EMAIL. ADDRESS CHANGES ARE NOT ACCEPTED OVER THE TELEPHONE.

**Grouard-McLennan Diocesan President
Irene Brassard**

The summer has come and soon gone and all members are/were



Involved in their families, church and area communities. Now we walk into the new 2016-2017 year.

- † Some of us attended the pilgrimage in Girouxville, August 13+14, 2016 to commemorate The Assumption of Our Lady. A lovely, sedate, prayerful day with Confession, the Eucharist, fellowship and singing.
- † Our Faith Rally, held on August 19-21 in Grouard was blessed with beautiful sunny weather, was well organized with guitars and music by Kirt and Jerry Boucher, riveting talks on Mercy by Fr. Mario and Archbishop Pettipas. There is always room for one more at the Rally.
- † Holy Family Catholic Regional Division #37 has nominated High Prairie, Valleyview, and McLennan as recipients of the FRIENDS OF EDUCATION award for helping with the Sacraments, hosting luncheons, and providing gifts in these schools.
- † August 14-17, CWL National Convention was attended by Donna Prevost, our Communication chair, representing us and we await her report.

Grouard McLennan Upcoming Events

Sep 9-11, 2016	Provincial Executive Meeting, St Albert
Oct 1, 2016 @10:00am	Diocesan Executive Meeting (Peace River)
Oct 22, 2016 @10:00am	Education Workshop (Grimshaw)
Nov 16, 2016 @ 10:00am	Diocesan Executive Meeting (Rycroft)
Jan, 2017	Provincial Executive Meeting (Calgary)
Feb 25, 2017 @10:00 am	Spiritual Workshop (Beaverlodge)
Mar 25, 2017 @10:00 am	Diocesan Executive Meeting (Bezanson)
Apr 22, 2017 Reg @9:30 am	Diocesan Convention (Bezanson)

The reason I am in the Catholic Women's League is to

1. Serve my church
2. Remain in the know of my neighbor's needs, in the parish, community and world- they are my true friends with similar wants, needs, prayers and support.

Check out these sites for information on CWL and more...

CWL National website	www.cwl.ca
CWL National Important Links	http://cwl.ca/about/important-links/
The Canadian League Magazine	http://cwl.ca/category/media/the-canadian-league/
CWL Be League	http://cwl.ca/category/media/be-league/
CWL Alberta Mackenzie website	www.cwl.ab.ca
Salt and Light TV	www.saltandlighttv.org
CWL on Facebook	
Twitter @CWLNational	

We are sad to say goodbye to the Western Catholic Reporter (WCR) as they cease publishing at the end of September. CWL would like to thank them for their support and promotion of the League through their reporting over the years.

**Mackenzie Ft. Smith Diocese
Sheila Ryan-Hachey**

Greetings from the Diocese of Mackenzie Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories!

One day when we were doing a fundraiser, a man asked me why the CWL was a "League". Interesting question and I quickly answered that it was a union of Catholic women from all parts of Canada. I hadn't really thought about the word, "league", until that moment and now you ask "What does the "League" mean to me?"

Having pondered that question, I can now say the "League" is a foundational rock to ground me. I joined the "League" less than 10 years ago and I did so only because a CWL member, Ruth Boden, asked me to chair a CWL Diocesan convention. Well, I didn't have any idea of what that would entail but Ruth said "no problem, you just have to keep it moving". I agreed to do that.

I had always helped in church activities, children's liturgies, sacramental preparation, but could not see my face in the CWL. **I did not feel like I was a good fit. I was too busy with everything else and couldn't attend Tuesday night meetings. If I couldn't fully participate, I wouldn't join. When I think about that now, I laugh...here I was, a practicing Catholic woman who didn't feel the CWL was a good fit for me. How ridiculous is that?**

When I looked up the dictionary meanings of the word league, it could be a noun or a verb; and there were two meanings. Some of the synonyms for a noun really define what the "League" means to me ... alliance, union, association, coalition, affiliation, cooperative, partnership and fellowship. Our CWL is all of those for me. I associate with cooperative women from all across the country and with them I feel connected, invigorated,

supported and loved. My deepest, most profound moments can be shared in a safe environment.

As a verb, league means join in a league or alliance... **leagued with** and the synonyms are ally, join together, unite, band together, affiliate, combine, amalgamate, team up, join up. For me the CWL does that... it unites me with women who share their gifts, stories, burdens, joys and sorrows. We are different, we are the same, and we are one. When we gather as one, I am empowered to hear the word, deepen my spirituality and work on being a better person. I am proud to say I am a member of the Catholic Women's League. It strengthens me and encourages me to share the joy of being a part of a great league of women. I am a better person today than I was yesterday.



The next meaning of league is also significant... "a rough measurement of about three miles, usually at sea." How deep is the ocean? How deep is our faith? The "League" makes me go deeper in faith.

The League gives me an opportunity to encounter people in a new way. When I meet a person and we genuinely share a moment, I know that we were brought together for a reason. I cherish that encounter and it gets woven into my life story. From there, I share a story with someone else and a new connection is made. The interrelationship among CWL members is faith based and the foundation is rock solid.

My relationship with the "League" will be ever-changing and always good. I see my face in the faces of other CWL women and I am a good fit. I am exactly where I am supposed to be.



Provincial Council weeds flower beds at the Star of the North Retreat Centre as part of our Care For Creation project.



**St Paul Diocesan President –
Kathryn Bourque**



St. Paul Diocese – a short update

This year the St. Paul Diocesan council marked 60 years of service for God and Canada.

At our 60th annual convention in Athabasca, we acknowledged a charter member of the diocesan council – Theresa Kallal, who remains active in her parish council. We had excellent speakers. Kelly Lynn Spafford drew our attention to how to recognize elder abuse

and what we, as individuals can do about it. Dr. Ted Fenske gave a provocative presentation on Euthanasia, its roots, its implications and countering this culture of death with care. The recipient of the Dorothy Roberts Award this year was Kelly Lynn Spafford.

It was St. Paul Diocesan council's turn to host the Provincial Convention and this took place in Westlock. Westlock was also celebrating 60 years as a council and we acknowledged four charter members at our banquet – Clara Sabourin, Frances McInnes, Katherine (Kitty) Swaren and Theresa Kallal.

Although it is a challenge to host a convention of this size, it is also very rewarding and members were stretched to do things they hadn't done before. A great learning experience, a great opportunity to draw members together.

Within our diocese, the fires of Fort McMurray affected a great many people over the past months. Some people are just returning home in the early days of September. **The outpouring of prayer support from sisters across the province and further has been received and greatly appreciated by the members of the St. John the Baptist council in Fort McMurray. The financial support, both through the Red Cross and the St. Paul Bishop's fund, was overwhelming. On behalf of the members of Fort McMurray, thank you!**

As the Year of Mercy draws to a close, members of the League are stepping forward to assist with the closing masses in each of the deaneries. These "Mega-Masses" are wonderful expressions of fellowship with our neighboring parishes and missions and a chance to host the Bishop.



We are looking forward to getting back into the swing of things. Leadership development, outreach to our more distant councils of Fort Chipewyan and Fort McMurray, increasing membership and member nourishment are the focus for the coming year. With God's help and your prayers, we will accomplish great things.

Personal growth? In the CWL? How could that be? Well, when Cathy Bouchard, Provincial President, asked the executive to describe how the League has helped them grow as individuals, I had to really think. About how I've grown over the past 27 years and what growth hasn't been influenced by CWL.

I have definitely learned many practical things, like how to run a good meeting. How to run a successful fundraiser. How to delegate. How to handle differing opinions and hurt feelings. How to be organized. (I'm still working on this last one.) How to cater a lunch for 100 people! I learned a lot of these things by first making some mistakes.

My CWL sisters have gently and kindly guided me over the years. There has also been available to me, through the League, many excellent workshops geared to these practical things. That learning has helped me in my home, my parish, my work.

I learned about the importance of involvement in issues of social justice way back in high school when I would type up my mom's Community Life reports. I have grown in my understanding of the world around me and my responsibilities as a baptized Christian to those less fortunate than me. **I have learned that I can have an influence on what goes on in government at all levels. I would not have the perspective that I have had it not been for my involvement in the Catholic Women's League.**

Finally, I have grown spiritually. The Catholic Women's League has widened my horizons when it comes to spiritual practices, how to pray, appreciating the different spiritualities of others, deepening my personal relationship with Jesus along the way.

The Catholic Women's League has helped me to grow in so many ways. I can't think of any other organization that I have been involved with that has had such a positive impact on who I am as a Catholic woman.