

One Heart, One Voice, One Mission

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council**

2015 Annual Reports

69th Annual Convention

Memorial Hall

Westlock, Alberta

June 3rd - 4th, 2016

Convention Hosted by St. Paul Diocesan CWL



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

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MESSAGE FROM PROVINCIAL SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Greetings and welcome, members of the Catholic Women's League, to the 69th Annual Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Convention in Westlock, Alberta.

One heart, one voice, one mission. This is the beautiful and timely national theme of the Catholic Women's League.

- One heart – filled with mercy, compassion and holiness
- One voice – united in harmony to speak the truth with courage and zeal
- One mission – witnessing to the Good News of the Gospel through personal encounter and joyful service

During this Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, it is a time to celebrate, contemplate, and endeavour to open our hearts to the unfathomable abyss of God's merciful love. In the [Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee, Misericordiae Vultus](#), Pope Francis states:

The Church's first truth is the love of Christ. The Church makes herself a servant of this love and mediates it to all people: a love that forgives and expresses itself in the gift of oneself. Consequently, wherever the Church is present, the mercy of the Father must be evident. In our parishes, communities, associations and movements, in a word, wherever there are Christians, everyone should find an oasis of mercy. (MV 12).

Working with one heart, one voice and one mission, CWL members serve the Church by bringing God's merciful love to world that in many cases no longer knows Him. With one heart and one voice, it is the mission of CWL members to share the Gospel through personal encounter and joyful service—through spiritual and corporal works of mercy. And, Our Lord has given us a model and guide for this work. Pope Francis tells us that it is Our Blessed Mother who exemplifies how we must bring God's merciful love to the world:

She is...the one who carefully keeps "all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Lk2:19). Mary is able to recognize the traces of God's Spirit in events great and small. She constantly contemplates the mystery of God in our world, in human history and in our daily lives. She is the woman of prayer and work in Nazareth, and she is also Our Lady of Help, who sets out from her town "with haste" (Lk 1:39) to be of service to others. This interplay of justice and tenderness, of contemplation and concern for others, is what makes the ecclesial community look to Mary as a model of evangelization. (Evangelii Gaudium 288)

My prayer for the CWL and its members is that you will live always with one heart and mind in union with Christ and His Church, bringing the merciful love of the Father to all with Our Blessed Mother as your model and guide. May this gathering of the CWL be a most fruitful one; and, may our loving God continue to bless you, your families and your individual parish CWL council.

In addition, as we meet in Westlock we offer our prayers and support for the city of Fort McMurray and the Diocese of St. Paul during this time of trial due to the wildfire situation. We assure you of our solidarity, now and in the months ahead.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Andrew B

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council
PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015
Cathy B

Diocesan Presidents:

Calgary:	Sharon M
Edmonton:	Mary H
Grouard-McLennan:	Irene B
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Sheila R-H
St. Paul:	Kathryn B

“*One Heart, One Voice, One Mission*” – this theme has been our call and focus in the League during this past year through our councils and activities. Our Diocesan and Parish Council Presidents and their councils have worked diligently and have been rewarded for their devotion to God and Canada.

One of the key reasons women join and stay in the League is our desire for spiritual enrichment. We celebrate our faith primarily through the Holy Eucharist, shared around the table of the Lord with our sisters. It is with creativity that we develop our spirituality; we pray together in many voices and many styles. We are led in retreat, spiritual presentations and workshops by our Spiritual Advisors and by our own League sisters. Our women are involved in the Church in so many aspects: in ministries of liturgy, pastoral care, teaching and sharing our faith through the RCIA, teaching Catechism, and Children’s Ministry.

Members move from their parish ministries to serve ‘in the world.’ Our members evangelize in many ways. CWL members live out the Gospel message by serving God and Canada. Councils have become informed and have participated in the Pornography Hurts postcard campaign and sponsored Refugees from Syria and other developing countries. We have written letters to the Government to respond to the issues of Physician Assisted Dying and Hospice Palliative Care. We have shared petitions and spoken to our MLAs about a provincial Independent Seniors’ Advocate. Our support of Catholic Schools in the province has been effective through letters and action to protect our Catholic schools. We are involved in a number of issues: supporting Youth, Refugees, Trafficked Persons and worldwide concerns, especially through partnership with Development and Peace and Catholic Missions In Canada. Councils have focused on the Papal Encyclical, *Laudato Si’*, and the Jubilee Year of Extraordinary Mercy with speakers, shared information and action.

Our presidents provide active leadership by representing their councils at conferences, fundraising dinners and events, workshops, and conventions at all the League levels. The annual conventions have been cited as the place where parish council members truly see the ‘big picture’ of the League. A few councils have been able to meet with politicians and we want to make this a priority. Presidents have used a variety of methods to communicate and inform the membership of the position of the League on current issues and priorities and new programs. Information and action plans have been shared out at Diocesan Council and Executive meetings. Websites and newsletters at all levels provide CWL with fresh and detailed information.

Members are recognized at the different levels in a variety of ways. Provincially we recognize parish council growth in the areas of increased individual membership and increased percentage of membership. In this way, even smaller councils can demonstrate and celebrate their growth. We recognize members who model extraordinary service by their lives with the Elsie Yanik Award. Individuals are recognized with the Bellelle Guerin Award. A new Life Member, June F., is added to our numbers this year while we mourn the loss of another, Ella E.

Many organizations and CWL dioceses invite us to attend their meetings and functions, and we have attended the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association Annual General Meeting, Covenant Health luncheons, Development and Peace workshops, every diocesan convention, anniversary celebrations, and as many workshops as possible.

All of our Bishops are supportive and promote the League, as do many of our parish priests. We find that we need all of our parish priests to support our work enthusiastically in order that parishioners see and share the value of what we do. Presidents who meet regularly with the spiritual advisor, and request their support, experience more success as a council.

All levels of our councils have become more mindful of goal setting and priorities. Councils who continue to use the League resource manuals and programs experience the most effectiveness of member retention and recruitment. We share the concern of the League across Canada of declining membership and participation and lack of members taking leadership. Conversely those who do take leadership are rewarded by the gains in their own skills and abilities. The challenge is to consider new possibilities and change the way we meet, act in League business, and how we 'do things.'

We keep hoping for new and improved ways to recruit new members. The reality is that members join and stay because they want a relationship with God and with their spiritual sisters. We need to invite women to become involved in the meaningful work of the League. We must treat the League as a desirable gift that we have and want to share with others, a blessing to share time and service with other women.

For God and Canada,

Cathy B





THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION ANNUAL REPORT 2015

June E. F

Diocesan President-Elects:

Calgary:	Janet M
Edmonton:	Cheryl B
Grouard-McLennan:	Lucille P
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Paula B
St. Paul:	Celine B

Calgary Diocesan Council:	3914 members in 52 councils
Edmonton Diocesan Council:	4653 members in 68 councils
Grouard-McLennan Diocesan Council:	529 members in 20 councils
Mackenzie-Fort Smith Diocesan Council:	99 members in 3 councils
St. Paul Diocesan Council:	<u>598 members in 19 councils</u>
Total:	<u>9793 members</u> (as of Dec 31 st , 2015)

MEMBERSHIP:

It was reported that membership retention and recruitment continues to be a concern, however, members have been working hard to attract new members by:

- ❖ Being visible in the Church Community – at special masses and funerals by wearing their CWL scarves/sashes which attracts many questions about the CWL
- ❖ Word of mouth, talking to the ladies and extending personal invitations
- ❖ Promoting the CWL through the Church Bulletin and Church Announcements
- ❖ CWL pamphlets promoting the works of the National, Provincial, Diocesan, and your Council
- ❖ Use of emails, newsletters and membership kits
- ❖ Mailing renewal membership notices
- ❖ Invite members and non-members to “Activities Nights” and meetings
- ❖ Ministry/Stewardship fairs
- ❖ Having the Spirituals Advisors support and encourage ladies to join the CWL
- ❖ letter/card sent out at Christmas with a membership renewal form enclosed along with a self-addressed envelope to return form and payment in

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

- ❖ Invite members to attend Council meetings and give them the information regarding date, time and place of these meetings
- ❖ Encourage members to attend the Diocesan, Provincial and National Conventions
- ❖ Personally mentor new members, encouraging them to participate in CWL activities and Church activities.
- ❖ Hosting a “Catch the Fire” or a “S’Mores” workshop
- ❖ Some members attended a ‘Leadership Brunch’ in Edmonton
- ❖ Sharing information on leadership development
- ❖ Work with the greater community to promote the CWL’s good work and visibility in the community
- ❖ Have retired executive help mentor the new executive and new members
- ❖ Provide a ‘welcome package’ for a new member
- ❖ Implement a calendar of events for the year. A calendar of events encourages new members to become involved
- ❖ Councils need to be open to new ideas if they wish to recruit new members



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

LEAGUE RESOURCE MATERIAL:

- ❖ Constitution & Bylaws
- ❖ National Manual of Policy and Procedure
- ❖ Leading the League
- ❖ Executive Handbook
- ❖ CWL National website
- ❖ 'The Canadian League' magazine
- ❖ Communiqués from Standing Committee Chairs at Diocesan, Provincial and National levels
- ❖ 'Be League' online newsletter and media publications are also of interest to many of our members

AWARDS:

Councils celebrate the dedication, service and hard work of their members by:

- ❖ presenting them with certificates, anniversary pins as well as the 'Maple Leaf' service pin
- ❖ some councils have their own special awards named after exemplary past members
- ❖ members who do not qualify for Life Membership but who display and demonstrate love of the League and an availability and willingness to continue to serve are eligible to receive the Bellelle Guerin Award. Last year Bea S. from the Edmonton Diocese received this prestigious award at their annual Diocesan convention.
- ❖ Several councils also celebrated anniversaries and celebrated with special events for these occasions

GOALS and PRIORITIES:

- ❖ To keep our CWL going!
- ❖ To maintain our membership
- ❖ To increase our membership
- ❖ To attract younger ladies to become members
- ❖ To make 'new member welcome kits' and deliver them
- ❖ To mentor the growth of new members within the council
- ❖ To recruit members to fill vacant positions
- ❖ To engage more members in CWL activities and to encourage new members to attend Diocesan meetings and conventions
- ❖ To make members feel that they belong and that they matter
- ❖ To improve communication with members so as to motivate them to continue with the organization
- ❖ To keep in touch with members, especially those unable to attend meetings and functions
- ❖ To challenge members who attend meetings
- ❖ To be a viable organization within our church and community
- ❖ To evangelize to others the existence of our League and council
- ❖ To raise awareness in our Parish about what our council does
- ❖ To serve the faith community
- ❖ To keep and focus on One Heart, One Voice and One Mission
- ❖ To continue to bring new life and energy to our council
- ❖ To become familiar with the organization
- ❖ To learn my roles & responsibilities
- ❖ To delegate more
- ❖ To keep track and recognize years of service accurately
- ❖ To learn how to do membership on the computer
- ❖ To feel more confident, breaking my fear to talk to my sisters when I have a question



For God and Canada

June F



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Judy L

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.



Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Mary B
Edmonton:	Mary M
Grouard-McLennan:	Lucille P
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Sister Margaret Ann B
St. Paul:	Karen C

Spiritual Development Annual Reports are one of the most important gifts we give to each other at all levels of the League as we share our ideas, evangelical efforts, works of mercy and opportunities for growth on the most important journey we will ever embark on ... our own **faith journey**. The following compilation reflects the opportunities presented to our members in our five dioceses for spiritual development:

Opportunities for Spiritual Growth for Members

Retreats	Spirituals/Reflections League Prayer	Prayer Breakfast	Prayer Chains
Promotion and Reflections on the Year of Mercy	Devotions to Our Blessed Mother	Spirituals before meetings	Memorial Masses for deceased members
Rosary Mass	Personal sharing of faith journeys and growth	Mary's Stations of the Cross Stations of the Cross	Alberta prays the Rosary on Tuesdays for peace
Presentations on encyclicals	Prayer Partners Prayer Circles	Our Lady of Good Counsel Feast Day	Reflection on the National Theme

Special Note: One council developed a guide and directions for planning a Mary's Garden

Opportunities for Study of Catholic Teaching

Bible studies	Papal encyclicals	Catholicism Fr. Robert Baron	Gospel according to Mathew
Anything by Pope Francis	Salt and Light TV	Women of Grace Series Fr. M. Gaitley	Seminars from Jesuit Forum - Toronto Ministries

Resources

Vatican website	CCCB website	The Canadian League magazine	Western Catholic Reporter
National Catholic Register	Prairie Messenger	The Word Among Us	Catechism of the Catholic Church

Role of Women in the Church

Leadership roles within the parish	Educational roles within parish	Involved in spiritual direction	Reflected on gifts and talents and how they can be used in the Church community
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Evangelization and Mission Assistance

Support local and foreign missions	Adopt children through Chalice	Refugee Sponsorship	Operation Shoebox
Contributed to “Effect Hope” - Leprosy Canada	Sponsored families with “Save-a-Family Plan”		

Special Note: One council had a fundraiser for Catholic Missions In Canada

Lay Ministries

All councils reported their members were very active in the liturgical ministries within their Church.

The following table indicates the activities outside of liturgical ministries.

Good Shepherd Program sponsored by one council	RCIA Sacramental Preparation for Children	Pastoral care activities as taking communion to sick as well as visiting the sick and shut-ins	Bereavement Activities
Lay-led Stations of the Cross	Honour Guard at funerals		

Ecumenism and Interfaith Endeavours

World Day of Prayer	Forty Days for Life	Retreat by Anglican Archbishop	Week for Prayer for Christian Unity
Habitat for Humanity Refugee Bags Transforming Textiles	Serve Day	Ecumenical Way of the Cross	Work with other Christians on social justice issues, homelessness and poverty

One Spiritual Development Standing Committee Chairperson concluded her report by stating:

“I feel privileged to hold this position in my council.”

For God and Canada,

Judy L



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL TREASURER ANNUAL REPORT 2015
Yvette F

Diocesan Treasurers:

Diocesan Councils Reporting: 5 of 5

Calgary: Renee S
 Edmonton: Jean A
 Grouard-McLennan: Diann R
 Mackenzie-Fort Smith: Barb M
 St. Paul: Rita F

Name of Council: ALBERTA MACKENZIE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Treasurer: Yvette F

DONATIONS RECEIVED FOR PAST CALENDAR YEAR-2015

National Voluntary Fund	
Coady International Institute	\$2,740.00
Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace	\$9,593.20
Catholic Missions In Canada	\$6,442.00
Euthanasia Prevention Coalition (until August 18 th , 2020)	0
Velma's Dream/Catholic Near East Welfare Association (until December 31 st , 2016)	\$4,101.00
National Voluntary Fund Sub-Total:	\$22,876.20
Standing Committees	
Spiritual Development	\$14,211.50
Organization	\$ 5,353.13
Christian Family Life	\$28,249.80
Community Life	\$33,294.18
Education & Health	\$16,388.80
Communications	\$ 324.00
Standing Committees Sub-Total:	\$97,821.41
All Donations	
National Voluntary Fund Sub-Total	\$22,876.20
Standing Committee Sub-Total	\$97,821.41
Parish Donations	\$275,766.09
Other Donations	\$19,572.16
TOTAL:	\$536,733.47

For God and Canada,

Yvette F



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Ruth B

Diocesan Secretaries:

Calgary:	Lulu C
Edmonton:	Mary Pat O
Grouard-McLennan:	Mary A
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Pat R
St. Paul:	Rita K

The duties of the Secretary of the councils vary, but for the most part they consisted of recording and preparing the minutes from the meetings and distributing them.

Roster updates and distribution are an on-going process as the dioceses conduct their annual conventions and bi-annual elections.

One diocese conducts its fall meeting via teleconference to keep travel costs down.

The duties of the Provincial Secretary have been mostly those of recording secretary at the fall and mid-winter meetings due to my own time constraints. The record of Motions has been updated as well as the Diocesan Rosters as they are submitted.

For God and Canada,

Ruth B



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL PAST PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015
Dorothy J

90 councils reporting

Diocesan Past Presidents:

Calgary:	Carol S
Edmonton:	Gwen E
Grouard-McLennan:	Linda V
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Theresa H
St. Paul:	Betsy F

Past presidents reported serving in a consultative capacity by:

- Mentoring new president and officers in the council
- Assisting with educating members, promoting the League
- Regularly attending executive and general meetings
- Being informed on the contents of the **Handbook for Past Presidents**, the **Constitution & Bylaws**, the **National Manual of Policy & Procedure**, the **Executive Handbook**, and the **Leading the League**.
- Embodying the yearly theme into the council activities, and living the example of the theme

They also took responsibility for council archives and history by:

- Reporting on items relating to the council's history or archives at the meetings.
- Ensuring minutes, records, memorabilia, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks and photo albums are kept up to date.
- Keeping a binder of information on council award recipients up to date.
- Ensuring electronic and paper copies are kept.
- Keeping a brief history of the council and updating it every two years to add new information.

Past presidents facilitated the study and implementation of the *Constitution & Bylaws* by:

- Sharing items from the *Constitution & Bylaws* at council meetings.

Other duties performed as assigned by the president included:

- Appointment as the chairperson of the Nominations and Elections committee.
- Being ad-hoc committee chairs for Mary Garden projects, Parish hospitality, membership drives, Anniversary committees, Elsie Yanik award nomination committee, reviewing and updating council policies, revising the motion book, coordinating Archdiocesan receptions, Christmas crafts & bake sale, funeral lunch committee, and seminarian brunch.
- Continuing to offer a hand to any sister who requires help.

On the provincial level, archives are being gathered and catalogued for the last ten years in order to bring the Provincial Council submission to the Provincial Archives of Alberta.

For God and Canada,

Dorothy J



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Gladys B

Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Lydia O. J
Edmonton:	Katherine T
Grouard-McLennan:	Irene B
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Tina R
St. Paul:	Rita K

It is always heartwarming to know how our members continue to expend their God-given time, talent and treasure for the furtherance of the Gospel and making life much better for those who are needy and vulnerable. Their corporal works of mercy are varied and this takes a lot of energy to accomplish both at home and abroad.

Marriage and Family

Councils throughout the province of Alberta have supported couples for the Sacrament of Marriage, promoting Natural Family Planning and Marriage Encounter. Some of the councils present the couple with a blessed crucifix for their new homes, recognize anniversaries by celebrating a Mass or catering for couples who have celebrated fifty years of marriage and beyond. Under "Family" councils support "Mothers' Group" by supporting them with financial needs to pay for a young girl who looks after the children while the young moms are reflecting on scripture, praying and sharing their story. Councils assist families struggling with relationships/contacting social agencies on their behalf, research, gathering information on the World Conference on Families/Agenda of the Synod of Bishops, and for families to recognize abuse and where to get help.

Sanctity of Life

As the theme for 2015 and 2016 is One Heart, One Voice, One Mission, the members have spoken out and hopefully action will be taken. We must be heard with respect to the new bill coming out in June 2016 – Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide. Members were encouraged in a letter writing campaign particularly to our newly-elected Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his cabinet to let them know where our members stand on these critical issues and to consult Canadians thoroughly before making a decision.

Vocations

At St. Joseph's Seminary in the City of Edmonton there are forty-six young men discerning on becoming a priest. The members of the CWL pray for the young men, support them with financial assistance, send cards of greetings for the various seasons of the year, invite them to the parish to meet the CWL members and also share their story of why they want to become a priest to serve in the diocese. There are donations given to various religious groups – Carmelite Monastery, St. Joseph Seminary and Newman College. Just recently the ABMK Provincial Council members and the Edmonton Diocesan Council members collected over two thousand dollars in support of the Carmelite Monastery. The funds were used to purchase essential groceries for the nuns. The nuns were ever so joyful.

Ministry to Seniors/Disabled

Many of the councils participated in the Independent Seniors' Advocate petition. Councils support seniors and disabled by providing transportation for their appointments, taking them to Mass, and then just take the time to visit with them.

Goals

Councils would like to focus on the needs of the Parish as well as the needs of the area in which they reside. Members would like to have an opportunity to dialogue or engage with other chairs of this standing committee – what programs they are involved in – and would like to see training offered to provide local grief share programs for the widowed, separated, divorced and single. One very important issue is to get younger members involved, get them to take on a small and simple task.

In closing, success is when you look back at what the members have accomplished and we should be proud of our achievements.

For God and Canada,

Gladys B



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL COMMUNITY LIFE ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Carol S

Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Kelsey G
Edmonton:	Gloria D
Grouard-McLennan:	Dorothy C
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Julia F
St. Paul:	Celine B

Dignity & Rights of Persons

Reports from the Alberta Mackenzie standing committee chairpersons of community life indicate that members are involved in numerous activities relating to the dignity & rights of persons.

Homelessness, seniors' issues, domestic violence, women's shelters, aboriginal women's issues, human trafficking, women's rights, mental health issues, pornography, and the rights of the disabled continue to be high on the list for active participation. Councils are promoting more letter writing to government officials. There is additional interest in guest speakers at council meetings with human trafficking listed as an important topic. One report noted that Fr. Mark Miller spoke to the medical profession on dying with dignity. He later gave a presentation on the same topic to the general public. It's interesting to note that some members attended a training workshop for persons wanting to be involved in awareness-raising and prevention of domestic violence. Councils are rating high the importance of educating members, parishioners and the greater community on issues relating to the dignity & rights of persons.

Social and Economic Justice

The provincial initiative, Independent Seniors' Advocate, received a good deal of attention from councils as members were invited to sign petitions in favour of this initiative. Many speakers have been invited to give presentations on social justice issues such as Euthanasia. Letters were sent to various government officials opposing Euthanasia and assisted suicide. Over 400 postcards were distributed for action on climate change. On-going commitments do not waiver as members give of their time to their individual churches & priests, visits to senior residences, meals on wheels, soup kitchens, blood donor clinics, Legion memorial services (presenting wreaths), youth groups, palliative care visits, lunch programs – only to name a few. One diocese reported members working to find employment for the needy in the community. Some members serve on a Board for persons with disabilities and they actively recruit businesses that might employ their clients. New projects are brought forward every year. One such project mentioned was educating for awareness of organ donation and Parkinson disease.

Fund raising and financial aid by councils is a necessity to support all the good works of the members. Students benefit from scholarships; donations are in aid of seminarians, priests, girls' school in Honduras, Ronald MacDonald House, the Canadian Wheelchair Foundation, Christmas hampers, funds for Syrian families, orphanages for the Philippines, Elizabeth House, Magdalene House. There is good participation in the 40 Days of Life Campaign, Terry Fox Run, Pro-Life Walk, March for Life, etc. One council raised \$1200.00 for a family in Edmonton who lost their husband and father, a member of the RCMP killed in the line of duty. The council made

1200 white lapel ribbons and 100 tree bows in solidarity with the community and for the funeral. Another council reported practising ecumenism, sharing a social with another women's church group.

As one community life chair stated "the list of projects, programs and activities by councils could take many pages."

Refugees/Immigration and Citizenship

The refugee crisis was a main issue. Some councils responded financially to a parish or community fundraising campaign for Syrian families. Household items, as well as other needed items and welcoming bags, were presented to refugees. One diocese reported financially assisting temporary foreign workers as well as sponsoring a young mother and her son from an Ethiopian Refugee camp. A new member was supported by her council as she received her Canadian Citizenship.

Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace

The majority of councils support Development and Peace. They participate in the 1% program, Spring and Fall campaigns and emergency relief were needed. There was a need to re-introduce and educate on the 1% program. This proved to be helpful in one particular diocese, which showed an increase in participating councils.

Developing Countries/Missionary Support

Many organizations are blessed with the support from Alberta Mackenzie councils. To name a few: Catholic Missions In Canada, Velma's Dream – CNEWA, Save-a-Family Plan, Chalice, MaterCare, Mission in Honduras, Roots of Change, SOJAS India, Red Cross, Jamaican Mission, SSVP sea-can project of non-perishable items for the Canadian North, Guatemala orphanage.

General Comments and Recommendations

Not all councils have been able to fill the position of community life chair but this has not been detrimental to the enthusiasm of members when it comes to performing the required duties of the community life standing committee.

One chair commented: "I am always amazed and impressed by the organization and support the CWL continues to give to the parish church, the community and the world."

Another commented: "Since membership recruitment is an issue in most councils, community life may be a particular area to talk about in your parish communities, and to discuss with young women looking for opportunities to get more involved in their faith community."

There is no doubt that our members in the five dioceses are living up to the work of the Community Life Standing Committee, being one of ACTION. The caring work of our hands does not and has not stopped at an individual's doorstep, nor the doorsteps of our churches, but reaches out to the greater community and the world.

It was noted previously that councils indicated their focus would be "hands-on volunteering" and from all reports, an excellence in achievement should be granted to all.

For God and Canada,

Carol S





THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Linda V

Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Bernice T
Edmonton:	Kara P
Grouard McLennan:	Monica B
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Cecilia B
St. Paul:	Caren M

The five diocesan Education and Health Standing Committee Chairs reported for 2015. From their reports we know that at least 98 councils reported.

Catholic Education

Catholic schools and catechesis – Many members in the St. Paul, Edmonton, Calgary and Grouard-McLennan Dioceses and Archdioceses are involved in children's liturgy and sacramental preparation. Councils give awards for religious studies while others give gifts for first communion and reconciliation. Bibles are given out in Calgary and Edmonton dioceses to students in Catholic Schools. Awards are also given out at school celebrations. Crucifixes are given out to Grade 12s in the Edmonton diocese. Holy Family in St. Albert promoted and attended a 150th Anniversary of Catholic Education in their community. Others in this diocese support the priests by managing school Masses or accompanying the priest on school visits.

The Edmonton Archdiocese reports that members are school board trustees, support staff, teachers, teacher assistants, volunteers in schools, sit on parent advisory councils, and read to students during Read-In Week. Councils send letters to the provincial government supporting Catholic education.

Many councils across the province do baptism preparatory classes and religious instruction for younger grades. Some councils do marriage preparation as well. One council in St. Paul Diocese is still working hard taking census and offering ongoing support for a Catholic school.

Breakfast For Learning and Hot Lunch Programs are operational in Catholic schools through the help of CWL donations, fundraisers and cooking skills in councils in the Calgary and Grouard-McLennan dioceses. School Mentoring Program is supported by CWL members in one Catholic School twice a month. Catholic Schools in the Grouard-McLennan diocese continue to be the main beneficiary of CWL involvement through student sponsorship in religious education, school reading programs, fundraisers for student travel (to Nicaragua).

Edmonton Archdiocese councils reported that they have a Poster/Essay Contest for Catholic students to participate and showcase their talent. There were 1106 entries from 28 schools. Some councils judge entries from their area and award prizes before submitting them to diocesan council.

Rites of Christian Initiation – Many members in the St. Paul, Grouard-McLennan, Calgary, and Edmonton Dioceses and Archdioceses are involved in RCIA as instructors, sponsors, leaders, or coordinators. Some members in the Edmonton Archdiocese have been invited to speak at sessions within their parishes as a way to inform and invite new members to join the CWL. In some councils in Calgary Diocese, free memberships are offered to ladies in the RCIA program.

Literacy and continuing education – Catholic women in the Mackenzie-Fort Smith Diocese are educating themselves with regards to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Murdered and Missing Aboriginal Women. The CWL councils especially in the north have had first hand experiences with those directly affected by these issues. In the Grouard-McLennan Archdiocese, members have been encouraged at meetings to look after our families and ourselves by taking Alberta Health Services advice on immunizations, diets, exercise, disease control, and generally monitoring our health.

The Edmonton Archdiocese reported that their members are furthering their education in theology at Newman Theological College, studying English as a second language, and various other educational endeavours, including Bible studies (e.g. *The Joy of the Gospel*), retreats, and accessing the church library. They also reported that 205 of their members attended the 2015 Diocesan Convention and National Convention.

Councils in the Calgary Diocese invited speakers, informing members on social, political, spiritual or health matters. Members were also encouraged to attend retreats, conferences and conventions with councils providing financial support. The majority of councils used Diocesan, Provincial and National newsletter articles as a focus at meetings. One council assisted new immigrants finding support services and helped with ESL during sacrament preparation.

Scholarships and bursaries – A couple of councils in the St. Paul Diocese do scholarships for education and one council awarded a scholarship for a young lady going into health services.

Councils in the Edmonton Archdiocese reported over \$9700.00 in Scholarships and Bursaries were awarded to Catholic students for Elementary to University with a total of 39 awards presented.

Councils in the Calgary Diocese report that the majority of councils raised funds and provided awards to each grade level up to and including graduating students. Scholarships from some councils are also given to St. Mary's University students.

Wellness and sickness/disease – Some councils in the St. Paul Diocese brought relevant articles to meetings and others had medical professionals on council and brought current and up-to-date information regarding many health issues. Councils are discussing euthanasia, Lyme disease, and physician assisted suicide. Some councils also gathered signatures for the Seniors' Advocate issue.

In the Grouard-McLennan Archdiocese, there were focused discussions on “Respecting our Elders” and how we can make them feel a part of our parish and community. Throughout 2015, the elderly have been in the forefront of our concern due to the federal and provincial government’s involvement in end-of-life issues, particularly regarding doctor-assisted suicide, prescription costs, depression and poverty. A spiritual diocesan workshop was held to inform members of the Catholic perspective of Mental Health. Members throughout this diocese filled out the survey, “The Mental Health Review” at the diocesan education workshop. Members in this diocese also wrote letters to the Federal and Provincial governments as requested by National CWL regarding educational and health resolutions passed at the National Convention 2015 and used the suggested letter format and content. Not many replies were received. Members are to be commended for their time spent visiting and praying for the sick, sacramental ministry in the home and hospital and bringing light, hope and humour to those restricted to their home or institutions.

Edmonton Archdiocese reported that their members are taking their health seriously by being proactive in their health. They have had speakers to their meetings on a variety of topics, and are getting into physical fitness. Many have also participated in such activities as Faith, Fitness & Fun Run/Walk in support of St. Joseph's Seminary & Newman Theological College, and the Relay for Life and Walk for Autism. Edmonton's councils are also supporting their members facing serious illnesses and diseases through prayer, prayer shawls, preparing meals, visiting, taking communion, phone calls, sending cards and flowers, and/or giving rides.

The Calgary Diocese reported that many councils spent time discussing current health concerns as well. Major topics included the use of supplements, personal directive, living will, palliative care, Tomorrow Project – a cancer study, elder abuse, MMR vaccine, Autism, food storage, and physician-assisted dying. The majority of reports included activities related to senior members of both council and parish. Visits were made to lodges, care homes, shut ins and the ill, providing assistance and encouragement.

Environment – Most councils that reported in the St. Paul Diocese are doing recycling at many different levels, whether it's at the parish level, community level, or personal level. One council in St. Paul Diocese and one council in the Calgary Diocese are no longer using disposable dishes. Some councils encourage carpooling.

One council in the St. Paul Diocese had a presentation on the use of micro-beads and their harmful effects on water and marine and animal life. The Grouard-McLennan Archdiocese spent time at their diocesan education workshop looking at information on banning plastic micro-beads in personal care products and the banning of the use of neonicotinoid pesticides. Information was sent out to all the councils in the diocese. The Calgary Diocese members were informed on current resolutions and directed to write letters supporting the ban of micro-beads and the use of neonicotinoid pesticides. One council invited the fire department to speak on home fire safety. Some councils are no longer using disposable cups and plates.

Genetics – No councils reported working in this area.

For God and Canada,

Linda V





THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Annette dB

Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Jan M
Edmonton:	Sr. Susan S
Grouard-McLennan:	Donna P
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Kathryn L
St. Paul:	Vacant

Diocesan Councils Reporting: 5 of 5

“To announce and communicate, by words and action, the Good News of the Gospel”

Communication today is increasingly electronic – through email, Facebook, Twitter, www.cwl.ca, www.cwl.ab.ca, diocesan websites, parish council websites, CWL Forum!

Many of our members have embraced the new technology, but many others have continued to hold fast to the “tried and true.” Both ways are right and neither way is wrong. We must meet the needs of our members and prospective members by blending the old and the new. Reports from our councils indicate that we are doing just that!

“The Canadian League” and “Be League”

The Canadian League magazine is utilized as a resource throughout the councils in all diocese. Members read the magazine on their own; however Chairpersons often brought articles to meetings for in-depth discussion – articles on refugees, Development & Peace, and our national theme One Heart, One Voice, One Mission were specifically mentioned. Ladies enjoyed playing the League magazine “Bingo” and appreciated their “Companions in Prayer.”

Articles were submitted and printed in the *Be League*. Members are becoming more aware of this wonderful online tool for sharing with their sisters across Canada. Where internet access is an issue, printed copies are made available (at least for the issues where their councils are featured).

Use of Media

All manner of media is utilized by our ladies.

- Parish bulletin / websites
- Email / CWL websites at all levels
- Posters
- Newsletters

Subscriptions to Catholic publications include the *Western Catholic Reporter*, *Marion Helpers*, *St. Anthony's Messenger*, *The Word Among Us*, and *Prairie Messenger*. Salt + Light and EWTN are watched. At least one council mentions monitoring media and discussing it at meetings.

Local newspapers are used for advertising events – Tea and Bake Sales (one council advertises as a Nativity Tea and displays nativity sets as part of their decoration), Garage Sale fundraiser, Christmas Free Box (scarves, toques, mittens), and sometimes articles are submitted and published on CWL events.

Communications with Members All councils reported the use of at least one of the following means of communication with members.

- Parish bulletin (all councils) and/or parish bulletin boards, parish announcements
- Phone call reminders of meetings and events.
- Emailing of meeting reminders, minutes and notes, updates, and communication from other levels of the League
- Use of parish websites for CWL postings of meeting dates/times and minutes.
- Incorporating a Facebook page for their council
- Distribution of minutes to members, either through paper or email.
- CWL newsletter(s)
- Celebration of membership milestones

Communication from Other Levels of the League

Be League and **The Canadian League** enjoy a substantial readership, and communiques from the various levels are seen as good information and resources. The national theme is often used as a focus for events including use of the theme logo as part of their signature on emails and printed materials.

A great deal of effort has been given to encourage members to visit CWL websites and improvements in website looks and ease of use for members are appreciated. CWL Facebook, CWL Forum, and Twitter are promoted.

Promotion of the League in the Parish and Community

- Members are encouraged to wear their CWL scarves and pins and many councils have made sashes or blazers that identify them as CWL for events in the parish and community.
- Cards were sent to seniors at Christmas and Easter, baby cards, get well cards, cards and gifts to First Communion and Confirmation candidates. Visits to seniors and shut-ins.
- Gifts or scholarships
- One council had their parish priest speak on the CWL theme, and invited all ladies of the parish to come.
- CWL participation in parish events – annual picnics, feast day celebrations, potlucks. CWL members are active in liturgy and music ministry.
- Posters are placed on bulletin boards both in church and in the community to advertise CWL events – Tea and Bake sales, Garage sales,
- Attendance at local Remembrance Day celebrations
- Members entered a float in their local parade and are a member of their local Chamber of Commerce
- CWL representative attends all Parish Pastoral Council meetings
- Hosted a retreat and opened it to all women in the community.
- Participation in the World Day of Prayer with other churches in their communities.

Pornography Hurts Campaign and Other Social Justice Actions

We continue to promote Pornography awareness and support the agencies that are working towards its elimination through the Pornography Hurts postcards. Letters were also written to the new government regarding:

- Mental health issues and access to proper treatment
- Seniors' Advocate
- An online petition was circulated to register objections to Euthanasia and Doctor-Assisted Suicide.

Members participated in a White Ribbon campaign, showed videos on Human Trafficking, hosted the annual Walk for Life in October, joined prolife organizations, donated and assisted at their local women's shelters.

Personal Comments

Communication is the act of keeping our many members connected – to each other and to the greater organization; and helping them become more aware of the greater community we all live in. “Becoming more visible in our parishes and keeping our members, priests and parishes informed of activities and current issues is critical.” (quote from Calgary Diocesan report)

A great number of our councils do not have Communications chairpersons, but it appears that we are finding ways to get our information to members. If we want to attract the younger women to our councils, we need to open ourselves to communicating with them in the manner to which they are so accustomed – through social media and promotion of ourselves online. For those members who are interested, but not able to attend meetings, we can bring the CWL to them – by being available online with minutes, informative articles, and invitations. Let's remember that once upon a time the telephone, TV, fax machines were all new technology that we take for granted today!

For God and Canada,

Annette dB



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL RESOLUTIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Joan L

Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Kathleen W
Edmonton:	Catherine M
Grouard-McLennan:	Laurie F
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Irene B
St. Paul:	Vacant

Councils reported on being informed of the latest resolutions that were passed at National convention in Vancouver, BC. Two resolutions were put forth and passed at the Alberta Mackenzie annual convention which was held in Yellowknife, NT. The resolutions passed were:

2015.01 ESTABLISH NATIONAL STANDARDS & INTER-PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL PROTOCOLS FOR CHILD WELFARE INTERVENTIONS

2015.02 A JUST SETTLEMENT FOR THE LUBICON LAKE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

There have been concerns brought forward about the resolutions and how they can be reviewed and worked on again in a more generic presentation so that they are not specific to a province or location. Both resolutions will be led by their respective submitters and possibly resubmitted under new titles.

Many members wrote letters to their MLAs, MPs, Prime Minister and any other appropriate cabinet minister that represented a government department.

Members are encouraged to read *The Canadian League* magazine and review the website <www.cwl.ab.ca> for any of the latest actions taken in respect to our resolutions.

One Diocese reported to have made presentations to their congregations after Mass on the current Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Suicide issues. Letters were written and petitions signed and submitted.

Each Diocese continues to support the issue on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls from across Canada. We are happy to see that our Prime Minister is supportive of this initiative as well.

For God and Canada,

Joan L



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION ANNUAL REPORT 2015
Betsy F

Diocesan Chairpersons:

Calgary:	Kathleen W
Edmonton:	Catherine M
Grouard-McLennan:	Laurie F
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Irene B
St. Paul:	Vacant

Diocesan Councils Reporting: 4 of 5

Most councils reported combining the Legislation and Resolutions Standing Committees. Some councils have difficulty filling executive positions which means that members are filling more than one position. Frequently, legislation is a difficult one to fill.

Councils report knowing who their government representatives are at all levels of government. They write letters and send postcards in the hope and expectation of a reply. Communiqués from all levels of the League are appreciated and used.

Resolutions were prepared, presented and passed at our Provincial Convention. Some of our councils spent time reviewing resolutions, specifically those passed at the 2015 National Convention in Vancouver.

Postcards were prepared and sent to MPs asking that Physician-Assisted Death not become legal. As well, postcards were sent to MLAs and the Provincial Minister of Learning regarding the document "Guidelines for Best Practices: Creating Learning Environments that Respect Diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions." There are elements of the document that cause concern relating to our Catholic schools, and parents/guardians rights as primary educators to make informed choices for their children. This issue has been an ongoing concern in our province for many months.

Our Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Initiative, which included the petition "Urge the Provincial Government to Amend the Alberta Health Act to ensure that the Seniors' Advocate is an Officer of the Legislature and therefore Independent" has also been a very important issue to our members. The petitions were taken all across the province, meetings were held with individual MLAs and letters to the Minister of Seniors and Housing requesting a meeting were sent. A date was secured by provincial officers to meet with the Seniors Minister as well as the Health Minister in April 2016.

One council's report stated "We fight lots of losing battles, but that doesn't mean the battles aren't worth fighting." A very wise statement indeed!

For God and Canada,

Betsy F

*"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."
Jesus Chris*



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

LIFE MEMBER LIAISON ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Mary Hz

I was privileged to be appointed provincial Life Member Liaison at the provincial convention in June, 2015. We have 34 Life Members in Alberta Mackenzie.

I endeavour to keep our members informed by forwarding messages from the national Life Member Liaisons, for the prayer requests from across Canada, and updates from provincial council. For those members who do not have e-mail, I mail copies.

Birthday greetings were sent to Natalie C. on the occasion of her 90th birthday and a prayer request was received from one of our members for her daughter who was having surgery.

In October, Life Members in Calgary Diocese met for a luncheon meeting, with discussion about the Catholic Women's Leadership Foundation, profile updates, and how can we help members in the other three dioceses to be more connected with those in Calgary and Edmonton diocese. Because of distance, members in the other dioceses do not have the same opportunity to meet. A suggestion was made that we have a project that all members in Alberta Mackenzie can participate in, such as: aboriginals – how can we connect with them; asking councils to share their ideas on how they attract new members.

Some members in Edmonton diocese met in August and November, for discussion on the Catholic Women's Leadership Foundation, diocesan issues and also the Doreen Melton Scholarship. They have questions and concerns in regard to the Leadership Foundation and are looking for answers

In November, Ella E. was diagnosed with cancer. A 'Get Well' card was sent to her and a prayer request forwarded to national Life Member Liaisons. Following treatment in hospital, Ella returned home and had palliative care. I arranged visits to Ella at home, to celebrate her birthday in December; 3 members visited the day before her birthday and 3 the day following the birthday. We were pleased we had the opportunity to share stories, laugh and pray. Ella died on December 21st. A Mass intention and sympathy card were given to the family. Many CWL members were present at her funeral, with a large honor guard present.

Christmas greetings were sent to all Life Members as we celebrated this special time.

The binder with Life Member profiles was incomplete, as some had not been submitted, so I forwarded a list of those who had not prepared their profiles and encouraged them to please do so and include a photo.

In January, nine Life Members in Calgary diocese met for a luncheon meeting, with discussion again on the Leadership Foundation, as there are several questions and few details in regards to this. Also, discussed Bishop Henry's letter to the Education Minister in Alberta.

With this being the "EXTRA ORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY," our response to the prayer requests from our Life Members provides an opportunity to focus on the "works of mercy." The appreciation expressed helps us realize "we do make a difference in the lives of others".

"God is so merciful toward us. We too should learn to be merciful." ...Pope Francis!
For God and Canada,

Mary Hz



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

CALGARY DIOCESAN COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Sharon M

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Forever and ever

It is my pleasure to extend greetings to the members of this assembly from your Sisters in the League of the Calgary Diocese. Our diocese extends from the US border to Carstairs and from the BC border to the Saskatchewan border. We have 5 regions, 53 councils, with 3941 members.

The 94th Annual Calgary Diocesan Convention of the Catholic Women's League was held in Lethbridge, Alberta on April 29, 30 and May 1, 2016.

Our Pre-convention meeting on Friday, the speakers were Dr. Michael Pollard, Deacon from St. Martha's, Teresa Hanlon, Doctoral Candidate, St. Stephens College, and Chris Smeaton, Superintendent of Holy Spirit Catholic School Division. Our theme was ONE Heart, ONE Voice, One Mission. Our convention meeting began Saturday morning with the Deceased Members Service. The business of the day commenced. There were no resolutions submitted this year and no elections, and the business section ran smoothly.

2019 National Convention – Calgary, Alberta (August 18 to 21, 2019)

Judy M. and Marilyn S. have agreed to be the chairs of this fabulous event. The Hyatt Hotel in Calgary has been booked. All of the planning committee chairs have been filled as well. Fundraising with Bernice T. chairing is progressing. A Gala Snowflake Ball, bedding and tomato plant sales and pin ribbons are going smoothly. Each council in the Calgary Diocese agreed to forward \$1.00 per member for 4 years for the seed money needed for the convention. We are developing a theme which will be announced.

2015 Annual Bishop's Dinner in Calgary – On behalf of the Calgary Diocesan Council, I was invited to give the invocation. What a privilege! It was a little daunting, though, as there were a lot of priests there. Cathy B and I had an enjoyable time.

The Fall Meeting was held in Lethbridge in September. We adopted the revised *Policy and Procedures* of the Calgary Diocesan CWL. This document was revised in order to align it with the *Constitution & Bylaws* and the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*. Under the guidance of Gloria L., Joan B., Gabrielle K., Janice B., Carol S., and Aurore M. spent numerous hours on research.

The CWL councils in our diocese continue to flourish. Yes we have some councils that are struggling. Good news was that St Frances de Sales, High River council celebrated 90 years as a council in October. What a milestone!

We have a new council as of January 13, 2016. The executive of Ascension Council in Calgary was installed on April 17, 2016. Fr Avi, the parish priest, Maureen K. and Darlene S. have been instrumental in the formation of this council. Shirley H. and Anna-Maria M. accepted the position of mentors.

The Anglican Church Women of the Calgary Diocese celebrated 125 years (April 16, 2016) at their convention. On behalf of the Calgary Diocese, I brought greetings to the assembly.

Bill 10 and the Guidelines have taken a large part of my time. I have had conversations with Dr. Turcotte, St Mary's University President, numerous times on the matter. My letter was submitted to Minister Eggen on behalf of the Calgary Diocesan Council. To date I have not received an answer or an acknowledgment,

A Contest!

There is a prize. Ask all your members to visit as many holy doors as they can. They must have a picture with the door, place and date. They then submit the file to me. Closing date will be December 31, 2016.

With **ONE Heart** we will remain Christ centred, welcoming our new executives and members with great love, understanding and support. With **ONE Voice**, we will 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 every one we meet. We are rooted in Gospel values, calling our members to holiness.

For God and Canada,

Sharon M



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

EDMONTON DIOCESAN COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Mary H

58 Councils Reporting out of 68

During the past year CWL members in the Archdiocese of Edmonton have demonstrated passionate commitment in their service For God and Canada. Annual reports provided a glimpse into the challenges, joys, achievements and contributions made in our councils. Our members continue to make a significant difference in the Church, in their families and in their communities.

The **annual reports** provided by presidents throughout the Archdiocese are **a reminder of what a great gift the League is**. The presidents who responded dedicate themselves to meeting the needs of their councils. Most have set goals for themselves in the areas of membership, communication, meetings, spiritual development, education, council work and community work. Overall, presidents in the diocese possess a commitment to the growth of the women in their councils at a spiritual, personal, and professional level. They strive for good leadership, good stewardship, to be good communicators (listen receptively to what is being said and what is not said) and to building a spirit of teamwork.

The national theme of ***One Heart One Voice One Mission*** has been embraced by our councils and has been the inspiration for meetings, retreats and workshops including our Fall and Mid-Winter Meetings.

A great deal of work, planning and care has gone into parish councils meetings. Presidents try to meet members' needs by being organized, and so to run meetings efficiently. They plan to start meetings on time, keep them centred, interesting and informative, and no more than 2 hours. Presidents mention the importance of making an agenda and following it while allowing time for discussion and decision making. It was mentioned that meeting times and locations are planned to meet the needs of aged and disabled members. Sometimes afternoon meetings are held in the cold weather and darkness of winter.

Membership recruitment & retention, encouraging attendance at meetings and activities continues to be a high priority with the executives in our councils. Personal contact and being visible are offered as two important ways to attract new members. For some councils, spiritual development by praying and working together is cited as a way to increase numbers. We must remind ourselves and others that membership in the CWL is a joyful opportunity for Faith, Fun and Fulfilment, and look for ways to meet the needs of women in our parishes whether younger or older.

Improved communication happens through email, phone calls, parish bulletin announcements, parish websites, and personal contact, with the goal to increase attendance of members at meetings and activities and keep members who are unable to attend meetings informed about the CWL.

The programs and activities in our Parish councils are too numerous to mention here. No matter the size, councils are active in their parish, their community and spiritually. Their contributions have made a difference in the quality of life for countless others.

Filling executive positions in councils continues to be a challenge for many. Mentorship, education and leadership development are important to having members be willing to accept positions. Some councils who do not have standing committee chairpersons work together to cover all that needs to be done in areas of concern.

Councils appreciate the **Parish Buddies** initiative and the connection it has provided between their Parish council and the Diocesan Officers offering their guidance, and support. The new **Diocesan Website** was

mentioned with appreciation as an “excellent resource and user friendly.” Some of our councils are looking for ways to gain more support from their Spiritual Advisors.

On the Feast Day of Our Lady of Good Counsel in April 2015 we were blessed with the **addition of a new council in the Archdiocese, Corpus Christi**, which was celebrated at a Mass and Installation of Officers. After almost 40 years, the **St. Gregory Council in Holden surrendered their charter**. We were saddened by this development but grateful for the contributions and dedication of the women who have belonged to this council.

Five main Priorities for 2015-2017 for Edmonton Diocesan Council were identified through evaluations received: 1. Increase membership by developing a recruitment strategy 2. Provide support to Parish Councils 3. The Spiritual Development of Members 4. Support women and families in need (i.e. First Nation, Metis and Inuit, refugees, post-abortion, homeless and abused) 5. Modernize CWL governance at the Diocesan, Provincial and National levels. Our councils listened to the **call for social action** and used their collective voice to share the concerns of the day. They attended sessions on Physician-Assisted Dying and Euthanasia. Many completed the online survey and pursued a letter writing campaign. Members wrote letters to the Education Minister regarding Catholic education and the proposed *Guidelines*' potential effect for Edmonton Catholic schools.

Our councils actively supported the Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Independent Seniors' Advocate Initiative by providing information, collecting signatures, writing to and visiting their MLAs.

Edmonton Diocesan Council continued to support the **Faith, Fun & Fitness Run/Walk in support of Newman Theological College and St. Joseph's Seminary** through the purchase, preparation and serving of hotdogs to participants in this important annual fundraising event.

Our councils raised more than \$12,000.00 in support of the **Wild West Catholic Youth Conference** which was to be held in Red Deer in October 2015 but was postponed to October 2016. Many of our members will be assisting as volunteers.

Presidents are called upon to assist members in identifying and developing their gifts and talents. Please remember the power of prayer in your work for the League. You have companions on the journey who are willing to support, encourage, mentor and guide you when needed. You are all on God's A-Team!

May Our Lady of Good Counsel guide you during the coming year and may you receive the Lord's blessings in abundance as you continue to encourage and share your talents, gifts and faith with your League Sisters in your councils, your families, your parishes and communities in service For God and Canada. With joy,

For God and Canada,

Mary H.



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

GROUARD-McLENNAN DIOCESAN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Irene B (529 members)

“One Heart, One Voice, One Mission” was put into action at each parish level in relation to the member numbers, talent and capabilities. Members fill every possible ministry. At our meetings we immerse ourselves to 1/3 spiritual with reflection or prayers. Many members attend Bible courses, retreats or pilgrimages.

Our members have leadership roles in the parish, school or community. Membership is down slightly and by keeping our hearts and doors open, we are always trying to renew and retain the present members. We found that personal contact and invitations are effective ways of reaching potential members. We get to know and support each other. Our Spiritual workshop in McLennan (Feb20/16) was about stories of Divine Mercy by Fr. Albert.

Service in our communities include hosting family BBQs, picnics, and a yearly Faith Rally in Grouard, support RCIA, hosting lunches and suppers, bazaars, raffles, providing small gifts to honor babies, First Communicants, Confirmands, graduates, new couples, ordinations. The Lord's work in our communities is seen in members involved in Development & Peace, living exemplary lives, writing letters to our government about subjects our country is involved in (e.g. pro-life, physician-assisted suicide/death, and transgender policies). Euthanasia Prevention Coalition postcards were sent out to give time to respond to the euthanasia ruling expected. This is of grave interest to us all. Reading on this subject is encouraged.

We support our Catholic Schools with prayers and mentoring. We wrote letters to Honorable David Eggen on behalf of the Diocesan CWL and individually as voters about the school policies to protect all students. Efforts are taken to be environmentally conscious, sharing pro-active action. *Catholic Digest*, *St. Anthony's Messenger*, parish bulletin, CWL website, *Western Catholic Reporter*, and *It's Time* are a few of the journals or magazines we use for Catholic news.

Five of our members attended the Provincial Convention in Yellowknife, June 5-6, 2015. Motion 2015-16 was moved by the Grouard-McLennan Diocese Council, that the Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council adopt Resolution 2015.02 “A Just Settlement for the Lubicon Lake Nation” was accepted at this level. We have one member representing the CWL at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council. Our Diocesan Executive meeting and pre-convention meeting was held in welcoming High Prairie (March 19, 2016) and it's always great to get together. Our Diocesan Convention was held in beautiful, sunny Peace River and somehow the atmosphere was light, holy and fun. Dorothy C. was our quest speaker and she emphasized reconciliation and forgiveness.

It will always be our aim to love God and love each other.

For God and Canada,

Irene B



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

MACKENZIE-FORT SMITH DIOCESAN COUNCIL PRESIDENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Sheila R-H

2015 was a special year for our diocese. The national theme of “*One Heart, One Voice, One Mission*” proved to be a unifying theme as it called us to be merciful, courageous and committed Catholic women. In our three councils, the commitment of members was evident as they joyfully engaged in service at all parish, diocesan and provincial levels.

At the parish level, members gave witness to their personal encounter with Jesus when they were supportive of each other and acknowledged the special gifts that each member had been graced with. Members served in all ministries as lay ministers, lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, catechists, collector/finance. We organized and participated in providing hospitality, music, prayer lines, funeral services and luncheons. Members were active on parish councils and fundraising committees and contributed to our respective communities. Members acted with *One Heart*, and in performing service they brought the heart of Jesus to all the people they encountered. In providing quiet, constant leadership in ministries, the path God had chosen for us was written on our open hearts and He provided guidance in a merciful, caring way.

At our April Diocesan convention hosted by St. Joseph council in Fort Smith, we received a very special presentation, “Relax and Refresh” from Guest Speaker Maree Sobalewski. Each person was brought to a place of refreshment and peace in the presence of Our Lord and truly felt the love of Our Father. Evidently we were guided by our Father to be at that place and time because for the very first time all executive positions, excepting one, were filled through the election process. A chair was ready to lead each standing committee. We were stepping up to Diocesan leadership because we heard and answered the call with *One Voice* – Yes!

St. Patrick Yellowknife council was honored to host the annual Provincial Alberta Mackenzie Convention in June 2015. Council members worked very hard to ensure all hosting details were covered. Each of the 3 northern communities played a role and collectively, the effort resulted in a warm, welcoming environment which provided ample opportunities for joyous encounters among the participants. From our perspective, the experience allowed us to learn more about the League. Many of our members commented on how they felt spiritually rejuvenated. It was wonderful to meet and speak with Barb D., our National President, and many were thrilled to have a picture taken with her.

Assumption Council celebrated their 50th anniversary and to mark that milestone, the Hay River council commissioned a local artist to etch blue stained glass in various textures with “The Madonna.” These were sold at the Provincial Convention and more are being created. The council worked on another major project by asking members to ponder on the theme and express what it meant to them. The verbal expressions resulted in a beautiful painting which was displayed at the Provincial Convention. Since then cards were made and are also available for sale.

As testament to the growth within our Diocese, one of the Father Walter Krewski awards was shared by Assumption Parish, Hay River and Bow Island of Calgary Diocese. In 2014, Yellowknife council also received a Father Walter Krewski award. Two councils & two successive awards within one diocese was a great accomplishment in our area. It reminded us that every member counts and we thank all new, renewed and returned members for making the commitment to the League.

At the Diocesan level, members were involved in or sponsored numerous activities: ‘Spirit Alive’ – the first youth gathering was held in Yellowknife; the Bishop’s Annual Appeal Dinner; Syrian Refugee Relief Fund; Interfaith Ministerial Groups – World Day of Prayer, Lenten Lunches, Good Friday March and Service, Proclamation, New Year’s Eve Service; Grief to Grace Workshops; Sponsorship of ‘Because I am a Girl’; Chalice; Catholic Missions in Canada; Relief for Nepal Disaster; Tuesday Rosary for Peace. In all service and by participation, we were called to go out to the world and bring the heart of Jesus, the joy of His Word, the Gospel. We were entrusted with this mission through Mary ... ***One Mission***.

Two members represented the North at the national convention in Vancouver and we give heartfelt thanks to our Alberta League sisters for contributing to Nickels for the North. With your financial support, we had the opportunity to recognize the ‘feminine genius’ of Canadian Catholic Women and to be a part of it. Upon return, the stories and resources were shared with all members. The podcasts of Dr. Josephine Lombardi were extolled and many of her books were purchased for member use. Our diocese will encourage members to attend retreats and conventions at all levels and with your continued financial support, we will meet you there.

Two retreats were facilitated by Sister Maggie B. and took place in October. The first was held at Trapper’s Lake Spirituality Centre just outside Yellowknife. It was centred on our theme of “***One Heart, One Voice, One Mission***” and 18 women attended the retreat from Friday to Sunday. All were nourished by contemplative material presented by Sister Maggie and we were empowered by the Holy Spirit to share our thoughts and feelings. The second was a parish retreat in Fort Smith and it was on the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. All reports from that community were very positive and appreciative of the experience.

The members appreciate our Life Member, Barb MacD., who demonstrates her love of the League by unfailingly engaging in leadership roles. Her lifelong dedication is inspirational and her mentorship is appreciated by the executive. The League is well loved and our members contribute to its success by participating in all activities. At the end of 2015 we had 99 members. All 3 councils promoted the League by presentations at Masses, notices in weekly bulletins, personal invitation to join, personal invitation to attend a social function. Our visibility was increased at church and community events by wearing CWL scarves, pins, or aprons. One council is planning to take meetings out to nearby communities and invite women to share in a potluck as a means of introducing the CWL.

We will make every effort to grow our membership. With our prayers and God’s help, more ladies will be drawn to the League and next year we hope to have an increase in membership.

For God and Canada,

Sheila R-H



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council

ST. PAUL DIOCESAN COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Kathryn B

This has been another productive year for the League in the Diocese of St. Paul. Councils have embraced the National theme of *One Heart, One Voice, One Mission*.

There are nineteen councils in the diocese, with a total membership of 590 for the year 2015. Fourteen of the 19 councils sent in president's reports. Although few councils boast a full slate of officers, all the councils report that the work of the League is being done. One council has co-presidents. Another council reports having rotating chairpersons at meetings. There is great creativity amongst the members to increase membership. Some councils advertise the CWL in the local welcome wagon packages and participate in the annual "get to know your town" events, setting up a table and being present. One council reported having a CWL float in the local fair's parade. Many councils report using a newsletter, circulating minutes of meetings, CWL pamphlets and the bulletin to advertise the work of the League and hopefully entice women to be a part of this wonderful organization. One council reports having an "Early Bird Draw" for membership dues received early. Lucky winners, one in each of the months of October, November and December, will have their dues paid for by the council. Other councils pay membership for their more senior members. One council pays for the entire membership through monies raised from the sale of religious articles. Leadership development among the members varies from council to council, but most councils encourage members to attend the fall and mid-winter meetings and conventions as they recognize these meetings as a great learning experience. Although two "Catch the Fire" workshops were scheduled to happen, only one took place. Mentorship is occurring as a way to encourage newer members to take on roles of responsibility and it seems to be working. There were several new presidents this past year.

Spiritual growth of the membership is one of the consistently reported objects being met. Councils report numerous activities including Bible studies, faith sharing circles, retreats and missions, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Councils host or participate in World Day of Prayer and other interdenominational prayer services. Masses were said for deceased members, for Our Lady of Good Counsel feast day and for the various Patron Saints of the parishes. Recitation of the rosary is a staple of the prayer life in the councils, especially during the months of May and October. Councils also support their parish youth programs/vacation bible camps. Our diocesan summer Camp St. Louis is also supported.

All councils report supporting their parish. Most councils were involved in one way or another with the closing Masses of the Year of the Family, providing members to help organize the liturgies, fill the various ministries, choir, and of course food for the gathering afterwards. On an ongoing basis, members serve in the parish community, including all ministries, religious education where no Catholic school exists, sacramental preparation and RCIA. They are involved in cleaning of the church and supporting church maintenance through donations. It is usually the members of the Catholic Women's League who spearhead any parish functions, such as potlucks, coffees after Mass and parish celebrations or anniversaries.

All parish councils report serving their local communities. Members participate in Meals on Wheels, Refugee Sponsorship Societies and working at the local food bank. Financial support is given to breakfast programs at school, women's and men's shelters, Santa's Anonymous, food banks and Family Support Services. Collections of clothing for babies, toques, mitts and socks for homeless continue to be spearheaded by CWL councils. Members regularly visit seniors who can no longer come to meetings. In fact one council reports having two meetings per year at the local lodge so that those members can attend. Social Justice doesn't stop at the community level. Provincially, councils support Magdalene House in Red Deer. Two councils had an information evening on this transition home for women caught up in and trying to escape human trafficking. Councils also participated in the Alberta Mackenzie "Independent Seniors Advocate" initiative, collecting signatures. Only one council reported being able to meet with their MLA, but several wrote letters aside from the informal petition. On the national front, councils continue to support CCODP, not only with financial donations, but with campaign promotion in their local parishes, most recently the "Creating a Climate of Change" campaign. Coady Institute continues to receive donations. Postcards were sent to the federal government: the "Pornography Hurts" campaign as well as letters regarding sexual exploitation. Outside of our country's borders, several councils report sponsoring a child through "Chalice." Councils partner with their parishes to fill shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

The CWL in the diocese continue to serve God in various ways. Councils have adopted seminarians, of which our diocese currently has six at St. Joseph's Seminary. "Clergy Appreciation Nights" are one of the ways that the parish priest and/or deacon is supported.

The Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of St. Paul is alive and well and continues to contribute in great ways from their council to the community, the province, the country and the world beyond. As with many organizations in this day, getting people to take on leadership roles is continually a challenge. Although some councils run with skeleton executives, they continue to get the work done and done well. This is true even at the diocesan level. Councils received the challenge to increase membership by 60 in the coming year, in honor of the 60th anniversary of the Diocese. It will be exciting to see if this happens in 2016!

For God and Canada,

Kathryn B



ONE HEART VOICE MISSION

- **One Heart** – filled with mercy, compassion and holiness
- **One Voice** – united in harmony to speak the truth with courage and zeal
- **One Mission** – witnessing to the Good News of the Gospel through personal encounter and joyful service