



# March 2023

## President's Monthly Update

Dear Sisters in the League,

March 8 is International Women's Day (IWD) and some organizations are claiming the month of March as International Women's Month.

Let's celebrate IWD not *just because* and not because it's a catchy social trend, but because we have the best reason to celebrate. We, the people of God, know better than anyone else the value of women made in God's image! The stained glass image portrays the four female doctors of the Church: Sts. Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila and St. Therese de Lisieux.

This IWD, let's spur one another on (Heb. 10:24) to encourage and advocate for women both near and far.

### **Sacred Heart Parish, Port McNicoll (Northern Region)**

Dianne Hunter, Northern Regional Chair and I were pleased to present this council with its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary certificate. The parish church itself will be closing, most likely by the end of April, but these ladies are continuing their membership at neighboring councils. What a wonderful group of women and we thank them for their years of service to the League and Canada.



### **Development Day (February 11, 2023)**

For those of you who took part, you can attest that this was a day filled with information, inspiration and ideas! Barb Dowding (Honorary Life Member), five of our own Toronto Diocesan mentors (Honorary Life Member Margaret Ann Jacobs and Life Members Mary Ellen Stinson, Mary Hawkey, Donna Shaddick and Marlin Taylor) and executive standing committee chairs provided excellent food for thought.

This was a virtual event with over 300 members attending from across the province (250 virtually, and 56 gathered in 5 councils). Members attended from Toronto Diocese as well as the Dioceses of Pembroke, Peterborough and Thunder Bay. Wilma Vanderzwagg, OPC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Spiritual Development Chair and Maria Bertoldo, Thunder Bay Past President were also in attendance. Councils who attended virtually, together in their parish hall gave good feedback on the experience. Below are members from Our Lady of Miraculous Medal and St. Ambrose Parish Councils (left) as well as members from St. Gregory Parish Council (right) who watched from their parish halls.



Councils may wish to repeat this kind of experience with one of the Heart to Heart Webinars that the National CWL will be hosting (March 28 and April 15). Registration information is in the attachment from Provincial President Linda Squarzolo.

To register for the Lenten Virtual Retreat with National Spiritual Advisor, Bishop Stephen Jensen on March 31<sup>st</sup> please use the following link:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2511742383441124444>

### **Actively Engaging Members**

If you are looking for some help in actively engaging your members I am attaching, resource #635 from the Strategic Plan Working Group in the hopes that it can be of some assistance to you.

Another way of getting members to feel a part of things is to use an icebreaker at the start of meetings. We talked about this strategy when the Welcome Program was presented last year.



St. Joseph Parish Council (Scarborough Region) used an icebreaker activity at their February meeting and members reported enjoying the activity. As they entered the hall members chose half a heart with half of a word. Their challenge was to find the member with the other half of the heart and spark a conversation to get to know them better.

For more ideas on ice breakers, refer to the following source:

<http://www.womensministrytoolbox.com/Icebreakers-games>

### **Building Relationships with Indigenous Women:**

In her Communiqué #17, National Community Life Chairperson Faith Anderson advised that an ad hoc committee of national officers and Indigenous members has been formed to help deepen our relationships with Indigenous Catholic women: "The committee wishes to gather information from members at large so it can recommend the necessary supports and resources to ensure Indigenous members are equally valued, respected, nurtured and able to fully participate in all League activities and projects, and to encourage them to take on leadership roles."

(National Community Life Communiqué #17 – February 14, 2023)

All League members are asked to complete a survey by March 31st which can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CWLIndigenousSurvey>.

An article has been posted on the Archdiocese of Toronto website that you may wish to share with your members. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has issued four pastoral letters "to advance the journey of healing, reconciliation and hope with Indigenous Peoples".

The series of pastoral letters, "That We May Walk Together", are addressed to the First Nations; the Inuit in Canada; the Métis; and the People of God in Canada.

The pastoral letters can be found using this link:

<https://www.archtoronto.org/en/outreach/news/archdiocesan/canadian-bishops-release-pastoral-letters-on-reconciliation-with-indigenous-peoples2/?s=03>

or at this CCCB link:

<https://www.cccb.ca/indigenous-peoples/that-we-may-walk-together-series-of-pastoral-letters-2023/>

# Deadlines

Don't be left behind by neglecting the following important deadlines:

- ❖ **Instructed Vote Forms:** Pink form to national office, Yellow copy to me by **April 10th** and White copy to be brought to convention
- ❖ **Convention Registration:** **April 5** form is online
- ❖ **Convention Banquet:** **April 5** form is online
- ❖ **Patricia Beattie Mentoring Award:** **March 31** form is online

# Member Development

The following opportunities are being offered to members:

- ❖ **Ontario Provincial Council:** Hilarion Mitchell TDC Past-President and Provincial Education and Health chair will be hosting a webinar on March 8 as March is Nutrition Month. The topic is diabetes.  
Speaker: Roshni John, Registered Dietitian  
Registration Deadline: Mon. March 6th  
Contact: Shaila D'Souza [shailaflavy@gmail.com](mailto:shailaflavy@gmail.com)

- ❖ CWL Wednesday, March 15 Welcome Program with Kate O'Quinn, Organization Chair/President-Elect  
Register by March 13 with Shaila D'Souza
- ❖ Regional General Meetings: come out and meet fellow members from across your region. Ask your president or regional chair for date and location.

**Not to be missed:** you may wish to take part in this virtual reflection by the Provincial Spiritual Advisor, Bishop Dowd on April 19, 2023 – 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Topic: *Why Did God give us free will and personality?*

Format: prayer, reflection and small group discussion

To register: [preselectopc@tbaytel.net](mailto:preselectopc@tbaytel.net).

For those of you who attended last year's provincial convention and heard Bishop Dowd's homily, you know that he is a very engaging speaker.

## The Fast Life

Fast from judging others; Feast on Christ dwelling in them.

Fast from fear of illness; Feast on the healing power of God.

Fast from words that pollute; Feast on speech that purifies.



Fast from discontent; Feast on gratitude.

Fast from anger; Feast on patience.

Fast from pessimism; Feast on hope.

Fast from negatives; Feast on encouragement.

Fast from bitterness; Feast on forgiveness.

Fast from self-concern; Feast on compassion.

Fast from suspicion; Feast on truth.

Fast from gossip; Feast on purposeful silence.

Fast from problems that overwhelm; Feast on prayer that sustains.

Fast from anxiety; Feast on faith.

- Author Unknown

From:

<https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/lent-prayers>

A blessed Lent to you all,

In Sisterhood,

Sue Lubowitz,  
President 2022-2024

Toronto CWL Diocesan Council