



# President's Update

November/December 2023

The Holy Father's Intention for December is for persons with disabilities:

*We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation*

My dear sisters in the League,

Among many feasts, memorials, and reasons to celebrate throughout Advent and Christmas season, this month is full of famous feasts: St. Nicholas on December 6, St. Lucy on the 13, Our Lady of Guadalupe on the 12, St. Juan Diego on the 9, and, most obviously, the Nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ (Christmas!) on December 25.

We celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. The Holy Innocents, those innocent young lives lost in effort for the secular king to stop Our Lord from being born, are remembered on December 28.

During these celebrations with family, I hope you are filled with peace, joy, and love—what the candles on your Advent wreath represent. While we reflect on birth, conception, family, and saints who certainly stand up for love even if it meant losing their lives, please remember those we lose every day to abortion, suicide, MAiD and other instances that unnaturally end another's life.

## National Unity Outreach Workshops

Photo below is of Kate O'Quinn (President-elect/Organization), Scarborough Regional Chair Patricia Lobo and members of St. Aidan's council at the Unity Outreach session.



Thank you for participating in the National Unity Outreach program first session on listening. The purpose was to re-establish connections at all levels and one of the first goals was to find out what members need from the

League. We have forwarded your responses to Linda Squarzolo, Ontario Provincial President, as well as to the National Board. A separate letter will be sent out to

council presidents outlining the key concerns as well as next steps planned in the Toronto Diocesan Council. A huge thank you of appreciation goes to the members of the diocesan executive who were generous in their time to visit councils. We logged well over 3,000 kms in the 6 months of this program. If you would still like to send in some responses please forward them to me.

### **Toronto Diocesan Policies and Procedures**

Under the direction of Past-President, Hilarion Mitchell, the Toronto Diocesan Council (TDC) is working diligently to update its *Manual of Policy and Procedure*. The current manual (2022) is available on our website. The national manual is available at [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca) (Resource #615).

The TDC manual is being updated to reflect the change in our executive structure which will come into effect at the elections at our convention in April. All parish councils should have a manual and ensure that it is updated at least every term. Resources can be found on the TDC website: <https://www.cwltoronto.ca> under "Reference Documents". You will find a template as well as the PowerPoint notes from the CWL presentation of January 2023 given by Kate O'Quinn and Hilarion Mitchell. On the national website you will find Resource #812 *How to Prepare a Parish Council Manual of Policy and Procedure*.

### **Mark your Calendar for Convention**

The Toronto Diocesan 103rd Annual Convention will be held on **April 29 and 30, 2024**, at the Ajax Convention Centre. Two day registration will be \$50. Further information will be sent to councils in February.

The Ontario Provincial Convention will be held on July 7-10 in Sudbury and hosted by the Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan Council. It's a short drive to Sudbury and the host council is planning a great convention. We invite you to "BEE there". If you have not been to a provincial convention, this would be the one to attend.

### **Service Awards**

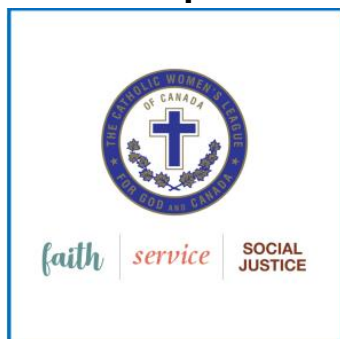
As we gather to celebrate the Advent Season are you celebrating your members with Service Awards? Do you have long time members who are celebrating milestone years? Many councils have potlucks and Christmas get togethers with visiting, carol singing and just having fun while celebrating an anniversary or enjoying a meal. If you have handed out service awards (or will be) please send these service awards (20 years and up) to Mary Antonio (Newsletter editor) and she will post in the next issue of the newsletter. Your complete list of 5 years and over will be posted on the TDC website. The deadline for submitting Service Awards for the next issue is January 30, 2023.



Mary's email is [m.antonio@sympatico.ca](mailto:m.antonio@sympatico.ca) Subscriptions are \$15 for the 2024 year (Feb. 1, 2024 to Jan. 30, 2025) and the deadline is Feb. 28. Contact Mary for this also.

**Service Pin Ribbons** are still available. The price is \$12 each and includes shipping. Contact me if you are interested ([jslubowitz@gmail.com](mailto:jslubowitz@gmail.com))

## Membership



If you are planning a membership drive, have you looked at the *Why Become a Member* page on the National website? There are six short videos - *A National Sisterhood, Empowering Women, A Deeper Faith, Social Justice, Tea, Sandwiches and Saving the World, and Fulfillment*. Some resources that you may find useful from the national website are #623 *Embracing Diversity: Tools for Councils Use* #634 *Intergenerational Activity Program* and don't forget the promotional items (#300 items) that

can help you with a great display. Be loud and proud by wearing your scarf and pin. The 2024 per capita dues payable to National are \$32 per member. Please submit your dues by **February 28th** to ensure that councils at all levels promptly receive their allocated operating funds: National \$25, Provincial \$3, and Diocesan \$4. Insurance fees are also payable at the same time.

## Budget Planning

Every council should have a budget in place at the start of each fiscal year. It fosters prudent financial stewardship as it guides your activities without having to reassess monetary decisions. The Treasurer's role is to draft the budget and balance the numbers, while the entire executive is responsible to provide input on the



planned activities and required fundraisers. What do you want to do? Where will the money come from? Are you planning any milestone events?

Discussions should be held in November or December using the current budget and monthly treasurer's reports as a guide. The Treasurer presents the proposed budget at the general meeting in January and makes a motion to adopt it. Despite careful planning, a budget is not a precise calculation. Unforeseen incidents can occur and events don't always happen as planned. Be prepared for unexpected expenses and lower revenue, such as a sudden parish need, urgent humanitarian aid, lower attendance at the fall supper, or a less-profitable bake sale.

Councils should download the *Guidelines for Treasurers* manual posted on the National website. It includes an overview of duties, sample budget, and sample annual Report: CWL Manuals (resource #609).

## Spread the Word



**catholicwomenunite.ca**

Are you good with social media? Do you use Facebook and Instagram? Share your skills! Inspire women around you to join CWL by sharing your stories in many ways. "Clark Marketing Communications is the League's marketing resource for presenting the organization to non-members. It also prepared and hosts the website under the League's leadership." Clark Communications offered a virtual Information Session "Sharing is Caring" on October 10, 11 and 12. The presentation highlighted what they do for the CWL. *Resources on Social Media* and *How to Videos* were identified. Most importantly, we learned how we can help to share the message of CWL. The presentation included a great deal of information for everyone. To help share this information a "Sharing is Caring Care Package" was sent to all participants on October 25. The package includes a copy of the presentation and many other resources. Let me know if you would like a copy and I will forward to you.

## Book of Life

The Book of Life is a tribute to our deceased sisters who embodied their faith and call to ministry through service in the League. Diocesan, provincial and national councils all retain one to record the deceased sisters and spiritual advisors in our diocese, province and country. They are treasured remembrances of the incredible people with whom we have shared faith, fun and fellowship. We honor and pray for them at a special Memorial Service held at every annual convention. The deadline to report deaths for the annual Book of Life entries is January 15th of the following year. To ensure that no one is missed, promptly submit a notice of death through the online membership system; or email the *Form for Reporting Deceased Members* (Resource #505) to National office, with a copy to Diocesan Spiritual Development Chair Iris McNulty ([irismcnultycwl@hotmail.com](mailto:irismcnultycwl@hotmail.com)).



## Council Events

### **St. Joseph (Highland Creek) 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tea**

The 70<sup>th</sup> Celebration Mass was held at St. Joseph (Highland Creek). Mass was celebrated by Bishop Nguyen, Fr. Francis Folleh and two former pastors, Fr. David Okenyl and Fr. Oliver Iwuchukwu. There were fifteen past presidents in attendance including Honorary Life Member Betty Anne Brown Davidson. Betty Anne was there to present the Betty Anne Brown Davidson Award of Honour to Marguerite Civello, for her dedicated service to the council.



Past presidents of St. Joseph pictured below.



### **St. Aidan Autumn Bazaar Fundraiser: A Community in Action submitted by Rosario Dizon, Member**

When you think of a bazaar, you immediately envisioned an event that have rows of stalls or booths that sell a variety of miscellaneous products. What makes the Autumn Bazaar organized by the Catholic Women’s League, St Aidan’s Council unique, is you also get to see how a Catholic community brings their God-given unique talents to the forefront to make the event joyful and graceful, amidst the uncertainties of our Canadian autumn weather.

Twenty-six vendors brought an eclectic mix of products from clothing, home-baked food items, household décor, and religious items all to the delight of the shoppers who themselves were a mix group of parishioners, their families and friends coming from different parishes in Scarborough and Toronto. There was lively music and a balloon arch set up at the entrance of the church to welcome everyone, coffee was available as shoppers milled around, and an opportunity to be part of a raffle draw and win baskets filled with goodies, all set up to help the charitable organizations supported by the Catholic Women’s League, St Aidan Council. This autumn bazaar was yet another opportunity for us to live and witness our Catholic virtues of Faith, that God’s grace provides, and Hope, that everything turns out all good when we show Charity to everyone around us.



## **Teaching Divine Liturgy**

**Submitted by Rita Jakym, Spiritual Development Chair, Durham Region CWL**

On Saturday, October 28, members of the Durham Region CWL joined with their UCWL Sisters at St. George the Great Martyr Ukrainian Catholic Church in Oshawa to celebrate a teaching Divine Liturgy. Reverend Father Dmytro Hancharyk and Reverend Father Bohdan Bilinsky celebrated the Divine Liturgy (Mass) with commentary before and during this special service by Reader Mr. Oleh Bych. The most striking visual difference is the iconostasis which represents one of the most important architectural features of Eastern Rite churches. The iconostasis is an unbroken screen composed of icons separating the sanctuary (symbol of Heaven) from the central nave (symbol of Earth) where the congregation gathers. We all learned about the similarities and difference in the two Rites of the Catholic Church. Oleh shared Pope John Paul II's analogy of the left lung representing the Latin Rite and the right lung representing the Eastern Rite. A humanitarian collection for "Food Boxes for Ukraine" through the papal agency Catholic Near East Welfare Association was received with donations of \$1035.00. Following the Divine Liturgy, all the ladies enjoyed a beautiful buffet lunch that included Ukrainian pyrohy, cabbage rolls and shish kabobs in the church hall. The delicious meal was prepared and served by members of St. George's UCWL Branch #1. This was a wonderful enriching spiritual experience, filled with faith, fun and fellowship.





## Fall Gala Dinner Dance Fundraiser for the 2025 C.W.L. National Convention

Pictured below: Gala Planning Committee (L to R): Debbie Bates, Connie Cristinziano, Ann D'Souza, Sue Lubowitz, Lucia Vacca, Kate O'Quinn, Mary Capobianco. Missing from the photo is Donna Capobianco.

The 2025 National Convention Committee chairs as well as the gala planning committee wishes to thank everyone who attended the event as well as those who generously gave of items for the silent auction tables.

Everyone who attended commented on how much they enjoyed their evening. All proceeds from this event will go towards hosting the 2025 CWL National Convention to be held in Toronto in August 2025.



The sale of aprons continues to help support the hosting of this national convention.

This handy apron, available in blue, with the CWL crest is one size with a neck strap and waist ties. There are two spacious front bottom pockets to hold pens, paper pads, your cell phone and other essentials. Great for those CWL functions.

**Price: \$20.00 each + \$6.00 postage & shipping**

**For orders of 2 or more please contact Lucia Vacca for shipping cost details.**

**Make cheques payable to: *The Catholic Women's League of Canada***

**Send your order and payment to: Lucia Vacca, 187 Calverley Trail, Toronto, ON M1C 3Y4 For more information contact:**

**[lucia.vacca@sympatico.ca](mailto:lucia.vacca@sympatico.ca) (416) 283-3536**

## Be sure to register

Dec. 11 Virtual Prayer service hosted by Bishop Dowd, Provincial Spiritual Advisor and Ontario Provincial Council. 7 pm Registration information is in the provincial December newsletter

[https://cwl.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023\\_Dec\\_ON\\_line-newsletter-1.pdf](https://cwl.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/2023_Dec_ON_line-newsletter-1.pdf)

President and Vice-President Workshops: Choice of 2 dates

January 20 (St. Mary, Brampton) 9:30-2:30

January 27 (St. Leo the Great, Durham Region) 9:30-2:30

To register: [jslubowitz@gmail.com](mailto:jslubowitz@gmail.com)

*Advent: A Favourable Time*

*Advent invites us to a commitment to vigilance, looking beyond ourselves, expanding our mind and heart in order to open ourselves up to the needs of the people, of brothers and sisters, and to the desire for a new world.*

*It is the desire of many people tormented by hunger, by injustice and by war.*

*It is the desire of the poor, the weak, the abandoned.*

*This is a favourable time to open our hearts, to ask ourselves concrete questions about how and for whom we expend our lives.*

*Pope Francis*



May your Advent Season be rich in contemplation of the mystery of the Nativity and in hope of Christ's coming.

Peace be with you and your families,

Sue Lubowitz  
President, 2022-2024  
Toronto Diocesan Council