



ON-LINE NEWSLETTER

December 2014 Edition

**Featuring the Thunder Bay Diocese and the Education and Health Standing Committee
We Have Seen the Lord**



Betty's Blog



One of the joys of being president is having the privilege to attend special functions. Recently I had the distinct honour to be present at Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King in Hamilton to witness our sister in The League and past provincial president, Shari Guinta, receive the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross. How amazing it was to be in the Cathedral of Christ the King on the feast of Christ the King for such a beautiful celebration of Mass and presentations! The presider was the Most Reverend Douglas Crosby, Bishop of Hamilton. The homilist was His Eminence Gerald Cyprien Cardinal Lacroix, Archbishop of Quebec and Primate of Canada who also pinned the medals on the recipients. The Most Reverend Daniel Miehm, Auxiliary Bishop of Hamilton and Very Reverend Monsignor Murray Kroetsch, Chancellor of the Diocese of Hamilton were the concelebrants. There were also other clergy and seminarians present. I joined with Shari's family in busting with pride at seeing her receive her well-deserved award. There were two others that received awards that only added to the excitement and thrill of being present. Lou Piovesan also received the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Cross and Dr. Moira McQueen received the honour of Dame of St. Gregory the Great. What an honour to be present to extended congratulations on behalf of the province!



As I write this on the first Sunday of Advent, I am reminded that our lives are but an Advent of waiting and longing for our Lord. During this time, we are invited to pray and to ponder the Word of God, but most of all, to become a reflection of the light of Christ. Advent reminds us that we must be ready to meet the Lord at any and every moment of life.

Pope Francis noted that "Christmas is joy, religious joy, God's joy, an inner joy of light and peace." And let us not forget hope! The pope asks us to be inspired and animated by the love that surrounds this joyous season: "Give food to those who are hungry! May the hope and tenderness of the Christmas of the Lord shake off our indifference. We must open our hearts to others, allowing God's tenderness to shine through and illuminate the hearts of those who are hurting and suffering around us. In this Christmas season, I pray that we can rest in the tenderness of our Lord, and, renewed, find the strength and energy to actively seek out with love the hungry in our communities, and work for justice for them. This means changing not only our own behavior, but working to undo the structural injustice that stands in the way of the kingdom of God, which first broke into the world on that first Christmas."

As we pray in joyful anticipation for the most important birthday of them all, let us prepare our hearts. O come divine Messiah! Wishing you and your families a Blessed Christmas full of peace and joy! Blessings and extra hugs,

Betty





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Christmas gift suggestions:

To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect. (Oren Arnold)



Catch the Fire Presentations in Thunder Bay Diocese

The Fall months saw three presentations of the Catch the Fire program in the Diocese of Thunder Bay. They were held at **St. Agnes Church, Thunder Bay; Our Lady of the Way, Pinewood/Stratton, Ontario;** and **St. Patrick's, Atikokan.**

Presenters were Gail Beda, Diocesan President; President-Elect, Alice Uvanile; and Life Members , Marlene Pavletic, Pauline Krupa; and Past Diocesan President - Elizabeth Bortolussi.

Since the diocese is the size of the country of France, it meant that the women doing the presentations had to travel a day earlier to Pinewood/Stratton and stay overnight.

The presentations were warmly received and helped the members present to gain new insights and an appreciation of what the League is and does.





*We have
so much to be*
THANKFUL
for

...At Christmas

FAITH - May you feel rich in God's love this Christmas. 'Today in the town of David a Saviour is born to you; he is Christ the Lord' (Luke 2-11)

FAMILY AND FRIENDS - May they be blessed with good health, happiness and unconditional love. They are our greatest treasures.

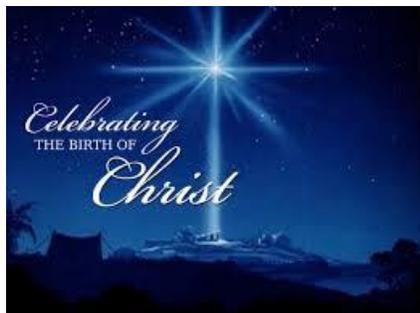
FREEDOM - May we continue to glory in the freedoms we enjoy. Let us never take for granted the freedom to practice our religion openly, the blessing of our Catholic Schools, the beauty of the great country we live in and our freedom to live as we want.

OUR POSSESSIONS - Many of us have more than we need. May we reach out to the underprivileged, and share the good things we have been given.

OUR BLESSINGS - All of the above! We are truly blessed to have our faith, family, friends, freedom and possessions.

JESUS - the gift we are all given this Christmas!

Carol Richer, Education & Health Standing Committee Chairperson



St. Francis of Assisi in Newcastle Special awards for 2014

Maple Leaf Service Pin – Elizabeth Hache

40 year pin – Regina VanDerWerf

10 year pin – Cathy Thoben

Submitted with Blessings by Dennie Radcliffe, Pres.

The Francis Effect

St Margaret's Council in Thunder Bay invited people to attend a viewing of the video *The Francis Effect*. Over 40 attended on November 19th. *Salt and Light TV* created the video which offered a critical and in depth look at the church under the new leadership and vision of Pope Francis. Significant people are interviewed, both Catholic and non-Catholics, during the video. We see how the Pope is having an effect on the whole world. His humble and simple manner shows his gentleness and his ability to relate to the people in the pews. We are blessed to have been given a Pope well suited to our times. The video is available at www.saltandlighttv.org.





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Grace, God's Free Gift

On November 15th 2014, the **St. Agnes CWL** sponsored a retreat for the Year Of Grace, "Grace, God's Free Gift". It was attended by 27 ladies from 8 churches. The facilitators were the leaders of the St Agnes "Life in the Spirit" Prayer group; Deacon Armand Danis, Deacon John Myers (music), Rosaire Lidkea, Don and Rita Randle, Linda Kaczmar, and Ann Femiak. Both women are CWL members.

The day started with a prayer and blessing by Deacon Armand. The introduction explained that grace is a gift by God and freely given and the day would be a sharing experience, not a teaching.

Session one began with a scripture reading and a witness by Rosaire. Then a talk on "Gift of Self" by Deacon Armand was given followed by personal reflection time, small group sharing and a report from each small group to the group as a whole.

After lunch there were two more sessions. Don Randle did a scripture reading, gave a witness, followed by individual reflection and small group, then large group sharing. Don's theme was "God's Grace at Work". The last session began again with scripture, a witness by Linda Kaczmar, individual reflection, small and large group sharing. Linda's theme was the "Power of God's Grace".

Songs were interspersed among the readings and used to call members to return from small groups to attention. At the end of the day, we joined hands in a circle and sang "He has the whole world in His hands". Members attending the day of reflection were filled with grace and renewed in the Spirit.

Members were asked to evaluate the day. Many comments were positive and appreciative of the day's presenters and witness.

This is the second day of reflection presented by St. Agnes' CWL. Last year's theme was "A Day with Mary". It is hoped that this day of reflection will continue in coming years.

Respectfully submitted:

Ann Femiak, Spiritual Development Chairperson, St. Agnes CWL, Thunder Bay, Ontario

St. Peter's CWL Council in Thunder Bay has a yearly **Two Bit Auction** which is held in October. This year, the ladies put together 40 "gifts" that were available for bidding. A charge of \$5 for entry into the auction allows participants to enjoy delicious treats with coffee or tea. The auction realized a profit of \$3000. Some of the money is used towards paying the registration of members to the Diocesan and Provincial Conventions. The rest of the money is used for the Council's charitable donations and Council operations for the coming year.

Respectfully submitted, Gail M. Beda, Council Member





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Christ the saviour is born! Merry Christmas!

While the Christmas season brings much joy and celebration to most of us, for others it is exactly the opposite. Often people who suffer from various forms of mental illness, dementia and Alzheimer disease find this time of year leads to greater stress and depression... feelings of confusion, hopelessness and extreme anxiety.

If your Christmas plans include a visit to someone dealing with any of these situations, there are a few things that you can do to make the visit more enjoyable for both of you.

Plan ahead; come up with two or three things you know your loved one enjoys talking about -- a hobby, former job, and grandchildren. When the conversation isn't going anywhere, you'll have something to talk about that they will enjoy.

If your loved one talks about the struggles he or she is having, listen. Don't try to minimize the challenges. On the other hand, if they seem to want to ignore "the elephant in the room", let them feel as normal as possible. It's okay to try to keep topics light and encouraging most of the time. They are likely aware of their diagnosis and illness, and can use encouraging news.

Make sure that you don't ignore them in conversations with others. Involve them as much as possible. They can often sense exclusion from the conversation, and are already sensitive to their memory problems. Treat them with respect. If you want an update on their situation, ask them directly or check with another friend or relative when they are not in the same room.

If you've had the privilege of knowing the person for a long time, bring up some favorite memories from the past to reminisce about. These are great conversation starters and mood boosters. Draw attention to the person's remaining skills. If he or she is good at puzzles, bring one along and work on it together. If gardening is their gift, ask for some tips on how to grow things in your garden.

The best things you can bring to the visit are your time and attention. It's so easy to get caught up in all the business of Christmas. Keep Christmas a time of celebration and love. Don't let the visit with your friend or loved one become a chore.

The beauty of the Christmas season can remind us of all the beauty in life that we take for granted...our family, our friends, and our faith.

Blessings, love and peace to you this Christmas.

Carol Richer, Education & Health Standing Committee Chairperson



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League Development Days in the Diocese of Thunder Bay

League Development Days were held in the Diocese of Thunder Bay on October 17th and 18th. They were hosted by Our Lady of Loretto/St. Mark's CWL Council. The Diocesan Executive met with the Council Presidents over dinner on Friday discussing coming events in the diocese. Then that evening Father Terry Sawchuk, Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, gave a talk on "What is a Saint?" This was followed by refreshments in the Church Hall. On Saturday, workshops were held on Spiritual Development and on Education and Health.

In the morning, Hanna Hay, of the Diocesan Adult Faith Office gave an overview of materials available for loan from the office. Then the members were able to view part of the DVD titled "Untold Blessings - Three Paths to Holiness" with commentary by Father Robert Barron. Members were presented with "Mary's Trivia Quiz" to discover how much they knew or did not know about the Blessed Virgin and her various titles. A lunch of hot soup, beef on the bun, dainties, and coffee/tea followed at noon.

In the afternoon, Dr. Jerome Harvey, a retired physician, who founded M.E.M.O - Medical Equipment Modernization Opportunity - gave a presentation on the work of this organization. Dr. Harvey gave an overview of the history of M.E.M.O. and told members how outdated medical equipment that is still useful is being repaired and sent to Central American countries like Cuba and El Salvador. He spoke of going to Cuba and helping to train doctors and nurses on how to use diagnostic equipment for detecting cancers. M.E.M. O. also sends bedding and clothing along with other needed articles to these countries. It was edifying to know that Dr. Harvey and his organization work very hard to help our brothers and sisters in third world countries. Of course, his organization needs volunteers. There was a sign-up sheet provided. Many CWL members put their names on the sheet.

In all, League Development Days were inspiring, educational and allowed members to meet new and old friends during the week-end.

Respectfully submitted, Gail M. Beda, Diocesan President





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Recognition

Renfrew's St. Francis Xavier Council, Pembroke Diocese honoured members at our June 2014 Year End Dinner.

60 Years	50 Years	40 Years	25 Years	10 Years	Insignia Pin
Eileen Vice	Doreen Ballard	Mary Hass	Suzette Pelletier	Teresa Friske	Debbie Macdonald
Verlie Wark	Idena Durocher	Arlette Hermans	Teresa Surnoski	Shawna Lemenchick	Mona Mahusky
	Elaine Turner		Gertrude Windle		Kate Windle
	Eileen Windle		Dorothy Wright-McIntyre		Anne Wolfe



*Our next issue will be in January
Featuring
the Sault Ste. Marie Diocese and
the Communications Standing Committee*

