



ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S
LEAGUE OF CANADA



ON-LINE NEWSLETTER

December 2015 Edition

Featuring the Dioceses of Alexandria-Cornwall and Ottawa and the Education and Health Standing Committee

ONE HEART
VOICE
MISSION

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***Pauline's
Ponderings...***

December 25th

***The Birth of Our Lord and
Saviour, Jesus Christ***



Greetings:

Advent begins a new liturgical year. This year is extra special because we will begin our Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy as proclaimed by Pope Francis. This is the time to focus on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. As members of The League the corporal works are a part of our everyday lives...it's what we do. Our greater task will be to give attention to the spiritual works of mercy. Do some reading and pondering on all of them to get a good understanding of what each one means. Choose one for yourself to emulate as a goal over the Advent Season as part of your preparation for the coming of the Lord.

Over these past few weeks you have been preparing your parish annual reports. It is always so wonderful to read the good news stories that you share in your reporting. Many of our councils will hold elections for new executives. I hear your concerns about getting people to take on the executive positions. It is not healthy for a council to keep the same executive for years and years. You might have to think outside the box and find ways to keep your council alive and well without all the positions filled. Nurture those who might not see themselves as leaders.

Wishing you all the best of this most holy season. Merry Christmas!



On November 11th a wreath was laid at the National Memorial Service by Lynn Lavictoire, Ottawa Diocesan 1st Vice-President and Christian Family Life Committee Chairperson, on behalf of The Catholic Women's League of Canada.

Ottawa Diocesan Council has 25 parish councils. Unlike many dioceses, it takes less than one hour to get from Our Lady of Miraculous Medal in Russell in the east to St. Mary's in Almonte in the west.



Left to right:
Lillian Martineau
Onagh Dooley
Sharon St Jean
Joanne Sisk



We are fortunate to have one Honorary Life Member, Joan Chesser, and nine life members in our Diocesan Council. They met for a lunch meeting with Diocesan President Joanna Sick and President-elect Onagh Dooley. This semi-annual event is a great means of keeping each other up to date. Seated (l to r): Anida Simurda, Joan Chesser, Edith Mockler. Standing (l to r): Shirley Bernier, Heather Sisk, Colleen Shirley, Kay May, Moira Matthews, Jane Munro. Absent: Phyllis McIntommy

On October 4 members joined in the annual gathering to remember murdered/missing Aboriginal sisters which took place on Parliament Hill. It was a heart-rending experience to listen to the families' stories and really hard to imagine how we would feel, react and act if we were at the microphone speaking about our own family member. Speakers urged us to bring awareness of their plight to all Canadians so that pressure can be brought to bear on our Leaders and Chiefs to find an answer to all the unanswered questions from the families about their loved ones. Please keep the families of these murdered and missing girls, boys, and women in your prayers.



St. Claire's Council, Dwyer Hill, hosted an evening of prayer for Religious and Vocations to Religious Life. The evening was warm and heartfelt with a Deacon, a Sister and a Parish Priest sharing the stories of their call. Those in attendance blessed the religious present with our Song of Blessing. A reception hosted by members of St. Claire's CWL followed in the parish hall.



A Day in the Life of a CWL Member



Betty Febrile, Ashwini Joseph, Brenda Laroque, Desneiges Miseferi, Aleida Sturkenboom

On the weekend of Sunday, November 22nd, and in preparation for their annual Christmas Tea and Bake Sale, **St. Columban's Council**, Cornwall, sold raffle tickets on this beautiful Christmas basket prepared by Lorraine Casselman to promote the CWL Membership Drive.



Alexandria-Cornwall Diocesan Councils



The **Agora Centre in Cornwall** was the setting for a S'Mores workshop, titled *Leading the League*, hosted by the Alexandria-Cornwall Diocesan Council mid-October. Each Diocesan Standing Committee made a PowerPoint presentation on the role and responsibilities of their committee/position. Pictured l to r:

Anne Vincelli, Darlene MacGregor, Sandra Wood, Jeannie Coleman, Margaret McAllister, Linda Rines, Emma Rose Rayburn, Angela Audet, Sheila Gibbs and Bernadine Greffe

International Plowing Match



The International Plowing Match was hosted by the Counties of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry in the community of Finch, Ontario. More than 30,000 visitors attended the week long festivities in September of this year. Women from different church groups in the area responded to a call for help. Fifty-six CWL volunteers, registered to form teams to make bag lunches for the nearly 1,000 volunteers, working at different venues, over a two day period. Here members of **St. Andrew's and St. Columban's Councils** take a well deserved break in the parish hall of St. Bernard's Parish.



Education and Health Standing Committee

In July 2015 the Government of Canada announced that it would bring forth legislation to ban the use of microbeads in this country. When the government was dissolved in August that proposal was lost. We must make our feelings known to our newly elected officials and resurrect the legislative journey in order to support the action plan in resolution ON.15.01.

ON.15.01 Ban the use of plastic microbeads in personal care products E&H

Action Plan

- Write letters to the manufacturers of products containing microbeads urging them to discontinue their use and switch to biodegradable abrasives.
- Become knowledgeable about the effect of plastic microbeads and how they can contaminate water.
- Beware of products using plastic microbeads and avoid buying products that contain the words polyethylene (PE), polypropylene (PP), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), or polymethacrylate (PMMA) in their ingredients.
- Choose products that do not contain plastic and choose products that use natural exfoliates such as walnut shells, almonds, grape seeds, sugar, oatmeal and sea salt.
- Invite a speaker from your community dealing with health and/or environmental issues concerning plastic microbeads in Ontario rivers, streams and the Great Lakes.
- Write letters to Provincial ministers of health and environment urging protection of Ontario's water, as well as enact legislation, to ensure that plastic microbeads are removed from personal care products by the manufacturer.
- Write letters to the Ontario Dental Association and Ontario Medical Association to learn their stance on the use of microbeads



Tips for Coping with the Christmas Blues

- **Make plans in advance.** Uncertainty and putting off decision-making add enormous stress.
- **Shop early** to avoid the shopping crunch and enjoy the experience.
- **Ask for help** from your family and children. Women tend to think they have to do everything, when a team effort can be more fun.
- **Don't buy things you can't afford.** Instead of struggling to buy a gift, let your loved ones know how much you care in other ways.
- **Don't allow perfectionism to wear you down.** Remember it is being together and goodwill that matters.
- **Make time to rest and rejuvenate** even amidst the pressure of getting things done. This will give you more energy.
- **Spend time alone to reflect and grieve, if necessary.** Pushing down feelings leads to depression. Let yourself feel. Then do something nice for yourself and socialize.
- **Don't isolate.** Reach out to others who also may be lonely. If you don't have someone to be with, volunteer to help those in need. It can be very uplifting and gratifying.
- Spend time reflecting on the **Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy**

• Adapted from the article "*Understanding and Coping with the Christmas Blues*" at psychcentral.com