



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

ON-LINE NEWSLETTER



November 2018 Edition

Featuring the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie

Life Member Liaison, Donna Provost

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call



Annie's Annotations

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Canadians have many things to be grateful for; religious freedom, parliamentary democracy, free speech and open borders to name a few. Brave men and women throughout our history have fought and given the ultimate sacrifice to ensure we keep these freedoms. November 11th is one day in the entire year that we stop, reflect and thank these individuals for the wonderful lives we have. If you see or know someone in the military, take the time to thank them for their chosen career, for keeping us safe and making personal sacrifices to accomplish these feats.

Many homeless individuals were once military personnel who struggle with adjusting back into society. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers and continue to be generous.

May God continue to bless us and this beautiful country we call home.

Lest we Forget



My CWL Journey

- submitted by Donna Provost, Life Member Liaison

I had heard of the Catholic Women's League as a child, as my mother was a member. She didn't go to meetings but supported them in other ways. The next I heard of the League was when I lived in Burlington and some kind ladies tried to make me feel welcome as a newcomer in their parish. I have fond memories of going to planning sessions at ladies homes and attending an event, perhaps a convention, in Mississauga. I was like a deer in headlights. It was all so amazing to me. Everyone was so welcoming and smart! Shortly after that I moved away and life continued.

Years later I moved to a small village in Quebec on the Ottawa River, part of the Pembroke Diocese. Again the ladies were so kind to me and asked me if I would like to join the Catholic Women's League in their parish. I was a mother of 3 young boys and a baby girl at this time. I was too shy to say no. So I joined. Their main fund-raising was to cater at weddings etc. and almost every weekend I joined them. It was hard work but we also had fun and I met many people doing this activity. They also served funeral lunches and I became aware of what a blessing this was to the grieving families. During this time a carload of ladies, Eleanor the driver, Margaret, and Noella attended the diocesan conventions and they asked me to go with them. What an adventure it was! - A hall full of Catholic women of all ages showing such respect for one another, laughing, praying, singing and listening to reports and guest speakers. So many notes I took. As time passed I was asked to put my name forward for different positions and of course I said yes because I was too shy to say no.

Eventually I became an executive on the Diocesan council for the Diocese of Pembroke. Wow! It was mind blowing. I had to stand up in front of the hall full of women and give a report. I was so nervous I thought I would die. Really I hoped the floor would just open and I would disappear. When I became Diocesan President the hardest thing I had to do was walk into a room full of 'strangers' by myself, and talk to people. Until that time it was something I never did on my own. I also had to go to Toronto to 'those meetings'. I was shaking in my boots. I was afraid to open my mouth and let them know how 'green' I was. They were the 'super stars' of the League! I so looked up to them. However I didn't need to worry because again they were all so kind and accepting. They treated me like I was one of them. Colleen and Heather let me ride with them to those meetings. We joked we were travelling with 'rose colored glasses'. We had sunny drives and snow storm drives but most of all we had laughs, and discussions about our faith, our lives, our journey through life and the CWL.

Each new position was met with a yes because I was too shy to say no. Today I am so happy those ladies who saw something in me asked me to join the League. They have passed away but their acceptance of me has moved me forward, given me the courage to seek God and growth. I remember hearing Life Member Betty Ann Brown speak and my memory of what she said was that the League was the only place where she could honestly be herself without fear. Her CWL sisters would accept her totally for who she was. I never forgot that message. It is so true. My League sisters have encouraged me to grow in faith and as a person. I met such inspirational women, filled with the Spirit trying to live their faith to the best of their ability. Fumbles were looked at as learning experiences; everyone was there to mentor me, to help me, to encourage me on my journey. Every day I thank God for the women who have been put on my path, for the Spirit who was my guide and for the Catholic Women's League.

11am 11th November

*On the eleventh hour
of the eleventh day,
of the eleventh
month....*

*We shall remember
them*



Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie

A diocesan wide food drive helps to fill food banks and soup kitchens in the north because “Hunger Knows No Season”.

CWL members from across the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie came together to help feed the hungry in our communities as part of a diocesan wide initiative in April 2018.

The outstanding efforts from members in all communities resulted in more than 11,252 lbs. of food being collected for local food banks and soup kitchens throughout the Diocese.

Lead members from each Region included Rita Laferriere - North Bay, Lucy Muscolino - Sudbury, and Colleen Murphy - Sault Ste. Marie, who coordinated the efforts in each region.





Members and future members joined in workshops held across the diocese this fall.

Women in all regions were invited to attend a second season of Find Your Voice public speaking workshops facilitated by members of the Diocesan Council – Lisa Henry, 2nd Vice - Education and Health, Cathy McKinney, President Elect - Organization and Giselle Floyd, 1st Vice President – Community Life. Participants in North Bay, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie practiced public speaking, learned some quick tips and met new friends too!



North Bay Region September 2018



Sault Ste. Marie Region October 2018



Sudbury Region October 2018

The “Homeless” theme was embraced at 98th Annual Sault Ste. Marie (SSM) Diocesan Convention

At the 98th Annual SSM Diocesan Convention held in Sudbury in April 2018, councils presented gifts of sleeping bags during an afternoon prayer service entitled “Bringing Warmth to Homeless Youth.” It began with a YouTube video



and song, “What have you done for the poor ones here in our midst”. During the song, a procession of sleeping bags that had been purchased by councils wound through the convention ballroom. Fr. Trevor Scarfone, Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, blessed the bags in a prayer service.

Guest speaker Lise Senecal, executive director of L'Association des Jeunes de la Rue, the organization to whom the sleeping bags were gifted, provided a short description of the organization's mandate and what they do to help homeless out in the streets on cold winter Northern Ontario nights. She graciously accepted the gift of warmth, compassion and love to pass on to those served by her organization.



The Dean Schooled Them

One night four college kids stayed out late, partying and having a good time. They paid no mind to the test they had scheduled for the next day and didn't study. In the morning, they hatched a plan to get out of taking their test. They covered themselves with grease and dirt and went to the Dean's office. Once there, they said they had been to a wedding the previous night and on the way back they got a flat tire and had to push the car back to campus.

**FOOD FOR
THOUGHT**

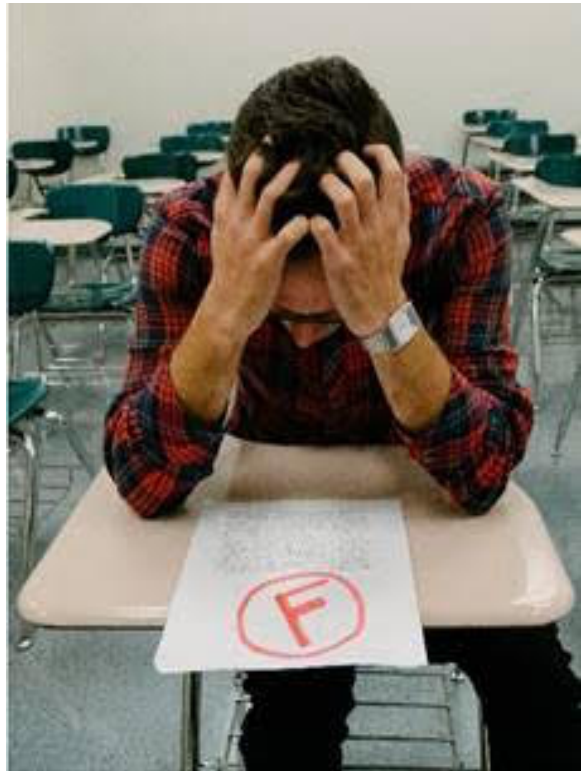
The Dean listened to their tale of woe and thought. He offered them a retest three days later. They thanked him and accepted his offer that time.

When the test day arrived, they went to the Dean. The Dean put them all in separate rooms for the test. They were fine with this since they had all studied hard. Then they saw the test. It had 2 questions.

- 1) Your Name _____ (1 Points)
- 2) Which tire burst? _____ (99 Points)
Options – (a) Front Left (b) Front Right (c) Back Left (d) Back Right

The lesson: always be responsible and make wise decisions.

- submitted by Anna Tremblay, OPC Spiritual Development Chairperson



SISTERS TOGETHER in CHRIST

On September 6, 2018, two members Lynn Olenik and Chereyl Marino from St. Theresa's Council in Geraldton as well as former member Marlene Pavletic, headed out on the Polar Bear Express to make our first contact with our sisters in Christ in the Diocese of Moosonee.

We were met at the train station by Father Paul, priest of the Christ the King Cathedral in Moosonee.



Here we are with Father Paul and some of the supplies we brought. After walking around the town, checking prices at the Northern Store and visiting the beautiful cathedral we were hosted by twenty local ladies to a marvelous pot luck supper.

After supper, a prayer service was held, followed by a discussion on the needs and concerns of these women. We then went to mass where all the responses and songs were led in Cree.

Following the service, we returned to the hall to do a simple craft. It was at this time that we got to know more facts and build friendships and warm relations with these women.

The following day, we visited the Bishop Belleau Catholic School. A fruitful discussion was held with the principal before we toured the classrooms.





Here we are with the principal, her secretary and Father Paul and the donations to the school.

The next day, with Father's help and Celine, a very knowledgeable Cree lady, we went by barge to Moose Factory for a tour of the hospital, Ecolodge and Cree community.

This trip was an awesome experience! We definitely connected with the local

women and have plans to return at the end of November.

In our discussions with the ladies as well as Father Sudakar in Fort Albany we have compiled a list of articles we are collecting:

- Indoor shoes (size 4-13)
- Winter mittens, neck warmers
- Winter jackets
- Back packs
- Food items : pasta, rice, soups, canned fruit and vegetables, beans
- Winter boots

We appreciate all items and hope to bring these on our next visit. For Fort Albany the articles will be flown from Moosonee.

Thank you for your assistance in doing our Lord's work!

Prepared by: Lynn Olenik, Spiritual Development Chair, Hearst Diocesan Council

Discernment

This morning I sat thinking about what I should say about discernment in this article. You might say I was discerning how I could best speak about the topic so that it would in turn, get you thinking about it and then taking discernment to heart.

Whenever thoughts begin twirling around in my head I generally stop and think...then I listen and lastly I act.... the stopping and thinking usually lead me to googling... so I googled discernment and here is what I discovered:

Discernment, in its broadest meaning is the ability to judge well. In our Catholic tradition we see discernment as so much more. It is a process by which we come to know what is in God's heart for us and to come to realize it is what is in our hearts as well. In the words of Ann Yeong, "Discernment is a loving and attentive listening to the One we love more than anyone and anything in the world so that He can unveil for us our deepest desires – the very desires that He had planted. Discernment is the wonderful process of letting God dream His dream in us and finding that He has made us co-dreamers with him." So it is all about letting God work in us. We must take to heart what God is wanting for us.

Parish council elections are coming for many soon and will take place in dioceses and provincially in 2019. This is an excellent time for us to take heart; to stop, think and listen. Do not say "NO!" to leadership in the League. You have something special to bring to the table that no other person has. You are gift! Is God calling you to share your gift of self to your council, diocese or province? Discern!

As always, keep those who are discerning in your prayers as we journey together in the League.

- Submitted by Pauline Krupa, OPC Past President/Historian



Congratulations to Lisa Henry, 2nd Vice President, Education and Health—Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan Council, who has been chosen from applicants across Canada to be one of four members on a newly formed National Strategic Plan Implementation Team responsible for carrying out the strategic plan over the next five years.

The committee will include National President-Elect Fran Lucas, as the chairperson and National President Anne Marie Gorman and Executive Director Kim Scammell both in an ex officio capacity.





2018 Annual Reports.... YAY!!!

Congratulations to all the parish councils who have already submitted their annual reports on-line!

For those who have not... make it a joyous event. Gather together with a cup of tea and reminisce about all you have accomplished in 2018. You can even use one computer or tablet or phone to input them all while you are together.

Remember to print a copy for your own records before you submit.

On-line reporting is available until January 15, 2019. If you are submitting paper copies that deadline will be December 15, 2018.

- Submitted by Colleen Perry, OPC Organization Committee Chair

National Voluntary Funds

- By Linda Squarzolo, 1st Vice President/Christian Family Life Chair

In October I shared some information about the national council's voluntary funds which support two of CNEWA's (Catholic Near East Welfare Association) projects in the Holy Land and Palestine, **Shepherd's Field Hospital** and the **Infant Welfare Centre**. These projects are known as "**Velma's Dream**" in honour of a past national president, Velma Harasen.

Infant Welfare Centre is situated in East Jerusalem and operated by the Greek Annunciation Society. It was originally founded in 1950 to provide medical and social support to Palestinian refugees displaced in 1948. In 2003 the centre began to focus on the needs of women and children from the Christian community. In 2009 the kindergarten provided daycare, food and medical assistance to the children of working mothers. Currently, 60 families are supported, which is 10% of the Christian population. The centre also provides tuition and other assistance for school-age children, as well as, financial and social support to the mothers. Mothers pay 50% of the cost and the rest comes from donations. Tanya Awwad, the director, met with us, explained the programs and gave us a tour of the facility.

The Christians in the Holy Land are doing amazing work with limited funds. Having personally seen what is being done, I would recommend councils consider

offering their financial assistance. If you do choose to support these projects, cheques can be sent to the national office.



In Jerusalem's Old City, the director of the **Infant Welfare Centre**, Tanya Awwad, met with the CWL pilgrimage group.

"Warmth and Comfort" Project



"Homelessness" is the theme that is being promoted during the second half of this term. With the "Warmth and Comfort" project, we are asking the councils to collect socks –men, women and children; peanut butter jars and boxes of crackers to donate to the homeless shelters in your area.

We are hoping that if every council concentrates on this project, we will be able to make a bigger impact as a whole. Please send in pictures of your councils as you donate these items to the food banks and/or homeless shelters in your area. Don't forget to keep track of them and forward final results to be tabulated across the province. Photos will be posted on facebook.

We are hoping that by highlighting the good works of the League, other women will want to join our group, as they see how collectively we can impact the world!



New Catholic Girl's League

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that we have opened a new **Catholic Girl's League** (CGL) in Peel Region at Sts Peter & Paul Parish, Mississauga on 27th October 2018. This was all due to the hard work of the President and the three CWL members in the council, along with the Toronto Diocesan Christian Family life Chair (Philomena Menezes) and the Peel Regional Chair (Val Egerton).

It was a privilege for me to witness it all as the thirteen girls were so eager to join. Their first meeting is on 10th November, and I know that in no time they will increase and multiply their membership as the two CWL mentors have big plans on membership increase.

The parents of the girls were invited by the council at the session to enlighten and inform them on the roles and work that will be carried out by the CGL and ask questions. They were indeed happy to see the well-organized session.



Seated in front are the CGL officers.

At the back: rest of the CGL girls, along with the two CWL members in blue (Natalie Meier, and Aurora Chavez, they are the CGL mentors), along with their Council President, Virginia Estevez, and Christian family chair, Shelly Scott and myself.

- submitted by Ann D'Souza, Toronto Diocesan President

Feature on Homelessness

St. Peter Thunder Bay

Fill the Basket Project for people living without a home

Each month in this CWL year we are asking members to donate specific items to be given to Grace Place, a Street Mission for homeless people in our parish neighbourhood. In October we asked for personal care products.



We received:

Bars of soap – 94

Tooth brushes – 78

Tooth paste – 51

Wash cloths – 54

Individual tissue packages – 45

Dental floss – 24

Incidentals such as toothbrush and soap holders, mouth wash, hand cream, shampoo and conditioner, deodorant, combs and brushes – 91

- Submitted by Pauline Krupa, OPC Past President/Historian



Homelessness...



Is not a choice, in reality anyone can become homeless. In simple terms I would have defined it as an individual not having a place to live, basically people on the streets, however today the homeless crisis we see today is much more diverse. It was shocking to learn that the individuals that we see on the street today represent less than 20% of the homeless population

and that Canadians estimated at 250,000 experience homelessness each year and 35,000 on any given night. The length of time they spend homeless continues to rise. Although the root of the problem is poverty, underlying issues can include poor physical or mental health, violence or abuse in the home, lack of employment or income and a shortage of affordable housing.

Hidden Homeless - individuals who temporarily stay with family or friends, sleeping in a car or other precarious places or housing because they have nowhere to go. **Families with children** are the fastest growing homeless demographic. **homeless youth** is also on the rise, many of these young people are escaping situations with 61% of homeless youth reporting either being physically or sexually abused by an adult at some point in their lives. **Indigenous people** are over-represented in the homeless population - 1 in 4 people experiencing homelessness identify as Indigenous or First Nations.

There is so much that we can do to help and support the homeless; check resources within your own regions and communities; local food banks, shelters and community programs. Contact them, perhaps you can offer the gift of time - volunteer at soup kitchens, out of the cold programs, see what their immediate needs are; Host fundraising events with proceeds going to help these local shelters, have food and clothing drives, prepare toiletry kits or other basic need kits and the list goes on. Remember to review the 50 Plus ways to help People Who are Homeless from our Provincial Community Life Chair.

"Teach us to share with others at home and abroad, the goods things you have given us" (League Prayer)

Dignity and Rights of Persons

The last several months Environment Canada has issued extreme cold weather alerts. The city was faced with a homeless shelter crisis as demand was on the rise. This was due to shelters closing their doors and remaining ones overflowing. With the housing waiting list rapidly growing, finding a permanent place to call home becomes a nearly impossible task.

According to the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association over 170,000 households are on the waiting list for affordable housing and the average waiting time is four years. Governments are



challenged with global economic crisis, the needs of the poor and most vulnerable are at even greater risk of being overlooked. Research has shown that long-term approaches to ending homelessness are more cost effective than emergency responses. Investing in affordable housing today means enabling more people to realize their full potential in the future.

Let us reach out and help the marginalized and vulnerable brothers and sisters, and to pray that the Ontario Government continues with its ambitious long-term goal to end homelessness.

- submitted by Joanna Sisk, OPC Community Life Chairperson,
- written by Connie Cristinziano, Community Life Chairperson, Toronto Diocesan Executive



In Flanders Fields

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To take you from failing hands we throw
The torch, be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Major John McCrae
Canadian doctor and WWI artillery commander

Lest We Forget

(Photo: Monica Galentino)