



January 2021 Edition

Featuring the Diocese of St. Catharines and
OPC Education & Health Chair, Karen McDonald

"Care for our Common Home"



Colleen's Communications

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." *Isaiah 40:31*

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Happy New Year everyone! I hope that you had an opportunity to spend some time talking with family and friends over the holidays. At my house we got back to sending Christmas cards, not just emails or Facebook greetings. We lingered longer around the dinner table and we played cards more often. Even though the whole family could not be together we still tried to make it special.

By now all parish council presidents should have received a package from the national office with 2 instructed votes. If you have not received this package please contact national office immediately. If you have received the package you should have planned to meet to discuss the proposed changes and to take the vote. A notice of meeting must be sent to all members before this vote is to take place per the Constitution and Bylaws of our organization. If you have any

questions about these procedures, please ask your diocesan president.

The League is entering into year 3 of the Strategic Plan. It is both exciting and scary at the same time. There are many changes that will be taking place over the next 3 years. Pray that Our Lady of Good Counsel guides us as we move into the future.

My wish for all of you is that you stay healthy. The vaccine has arrived in Canada and there is hope for new beginnings.

With God's grace we will meet again soon.

Yours in faith,

Colleen Perry



St. Catharines Diocesan Council



Where Faith Lives

My Dear Sisters in the League, I am honoured to represent the St. Catharines Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada as Diocesan President.

St Catharines Diocesan Council is made up of 33 parish councils, and is divided up into four regions, Haldimand, Niagara, St Catharines and Welland.

No one could have predicted the impact of the COVID-19 virus on our everyday lives. My dear Sisters, we all have experienced a setback in life one way or another. This pandemic hasn't changed who we are as a League, the love we share for the league and for one another along with our faith will provide the comfort we need and to continue to help others during these challenging times.

Let us all take a moment to appreciate all the "everyday heroes" who are sacrificing their own safety for the good of us all. All the dedicated men and women on the front line, we pray that our Heavenly Father will guide and keep them safe.

Let us also take a moment to appreciate our Spiritual Advisors, parish priests and Bishops as they continue to pray for all of us, during these uncertain times where all our focus is on COVID-19:

Corona Virus Infection Disease, our faith in God and all that is possible through Him, with Him and in Him allows us to focus on **COVID : Christ, Omnipotent, Victorious, Incarnate, Divine...now and forever.**

St. Catharines Diocesan Council continues to carry out the Mission Statement of the Catholic Women's League of Canada calling its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.



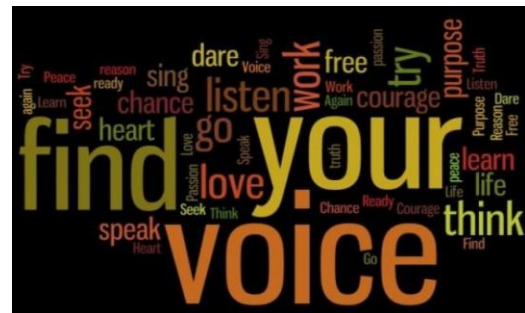
Josie Rocca
St. Catharines Diocesan President

Find Your VOICE!!!!

On February 15th, 2020, The Diocesan Annual League Development Workshop was held at St Mary Parish, Welland.

Find Your Voice: A Public Speaking Workshop.

Special thanks to Anna Tremblay and Lisa Henry for sharing their gifts and talents with their Sisters in the League and helping us all to “*find our voices.*”





Guest Speaker: Rev. Fr. Stuart MacDonald
Pastor, St Joseph Parish, Snyder

Seen in the photograph: Fr. Stuart MacDonald and St. Thomas More CWL Parish Council.

IN MEMORIAM
Theresa Mary Bujtas



1945 - 2020

On March 28th, 2020, our dear sister Theresa Bujtas was called home to be with our Lord. Theresa was a member of the Catholic Women's League of Canada for more than 45 years having served as Diocesan President from 2003-2005. She became a Life member in 2006. With the passing of Theresa, St. Catharines Diocesan Council has lost an extraordinary member, friend, and advocate of the Catholic Women's League. We will always remember Theresa for her warm greeting, loving presence, and her beautiful smile.

ST. CATHARINES DIOCESAN COUNCIL NATIONAL CENTENARY 2020 TREE PLANTING PROJECT.

The St. Catharines Diocesan Council, along with several CWL Parish Councils took part in the National Centenary 2020 Tree Planting project celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Catholic Women's League National Council.

A Canadian Maple was planted at the Catholic Centre in honour of the CWL 100th Anniversary. The Tree was blessed by His Excellency Bishop Gerard Bergie, Bishop of the Diocese of St. Catharines. In the Pictures are Wilma Vanderzwaag, Provincial Resolutions Chair, Josie Rocca, Diocesan President, Betty Colaneri, National Legislation Chair, Lisa Fillingham Diocesan President-Elect, Father Richard Kowalchuk, Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, and Bishop Gerard Bergie.



St. Ann, Fenwick



Our Lady of the Scapular, Niagara Falls



St. Catherine Of Alexandria:
Cathedral, St. Catharines



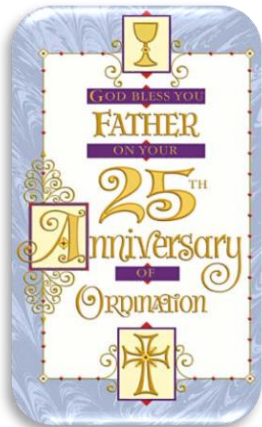
Star of the Sea, Port Dalhousie,



St. Joseph, Grimsby



St. Thomas Aquinas,



The St. Catharines Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada congratulates Fr. Richard Kovalchuk, Diocesan Spiritual Advisor and pastor at Star of the Sea Parish, Port Dalhousie, on the 25th Anniversary of his ordination to Priesthood, May 13, 1995. A mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated at Star of the Sea Parish on October 15th, 2020.

May you continue to be sustained by the Grace of God and may your life in His service be filled with joy!!!



St. Catharines Diocesan Council congratulates the following parish councils who celebrated special anniversaries in 2020.

St. Catharines Region

St Patrick Merriton 60 years!!

(Date of Charter Inception November 9, 1960)

Welland Region

St. Ann, Fenwick, 30 Years!!

(Date of Charter Inception March 13, 1990)



100 Years Strong!!!

St. Mary C.W.L Welland
January 11, 1921-2021



St. Catharines Diocesan Council wishes to congratulate St Mary CWL Parish council, Welland on the 100th Anniversary of their Charter inception!!

St. Mary CWL parish council was established on January 11, 1921 and will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of their Charter inception on January 11th, 2021. The ladies of the St Mary CWL parish council have dedicated their time and talents living out the league mission statement in the parish and throughout the community. They have done it all together with faith and love. Many of the members are also involved in different ministries within the parish and their presence is known within the community as volunteers in nursing homes, members of the St Vincent de Paul Society, and Welland Port Colborne Pro Life. As you continue to journey on towards tomorrow, go with love and always go with GOD!!



Tree planted in honour of St Mary CWL Welland 100th Anniversary.
Blessing of the tree to take place in Spring/Summer 2021.
In the picture are members of St Mary CWL: Nijole Hominuk, Esperanza Hanna, Pat Klein, Florence Paul.



Life Member, Past Provincial President, Past Diocesan President, Past St. Mary CWL Parish Council President Janice Deslauriers

Welland Bridge 13, downtown Welland will be illuminated in Blue, White and Gold, from January 11th to January 15th, 2021 in honour of St. Mary CWL 100th Anniversary of Charter Inception January 11th, 2021.



An "Eye on Education and Health" ...

"The League's initial mandate was to help new citizens of Canada – a country that is honoured as one of the best countries in which to live. Health care and education are but two of the reasons Canada is held in such high regard."

(CWL Executive Handbook - May 2014)



The Education and Health Standing Committee is asked to focus on these topics:

- Catholic Education
 - (i) Catholic schools and catechesis
 - (ii) rites of Christian initiation
- literacy and continuing education
- scholarships and bursaries
- wellness and sickness/disease
- environment
- genetics

In this newsletter, I will highlight a few of these topics by referencing information provided by National Education and Health Chairperson Faith Anderson.

"Support the National Bursary Fund and the Coady International Institute Fund. These funds assist League members or potential lay leaders from abroad to take courses which will prepare them to serve in their respective communities."

(CWL Executive Handbook - May 2014)

National Bursary Fund provides members with financial assistance while pursuing studies in *spiritual growth, adult faith formation, youth ministry, ministry to patients in palliative care, ministry to shut-ins, parliamentary procedure, and literacy tutoring*. Members use this opportunity to take online courses and workshops. One thousand dollars can be awarded per year to a maximum of \$4,000 in a member's lifetime. Refer to item #552 on the League website for criteria and application information.

The League **brochure** is found at (Ctrl+click):

<https://cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/312-National-Bursary-Fund-Brochure-2019.pdf>

Coady International Institute: The League has supported Coady since 1969. Ongoing support from councils is still needed. Due to COVID-19, Coady is offering online courses open to anyone, not just international participants. For course information, visit [Education Programs | Coady Institute \(stfx.ca\)](#)



Faith Anderson gave permission to view this **thank you** from Coady Institute (Ctrl+click)
<https://stfx.thankview.com/video/e3f5fdcb6b9b5bb2/faith-anderson>

*"It is vitally important that we work for universal access
and excellence of quality in the health care system".*

(CWL Executive Handbook - May 2014)

Canadian Blood Services is always in need of blood donations. Members have the privilege to donate blood and encourage others to donate. Members are asked to give the gift of life this New Year and to register with Canadian Blood Services **'Partners for Life'** program using the League's unique **Partner ID (CATH011269)** to record donations. Donations can be directed to more than one group.



*"Society is in danger of being directed by what can be done technologically
rather than by what ought to be done".*

(CWL Executive Handbook - May 2014)

On the topic of Genetics, members are asked to monitor and study the advantages/disadvantages of scientific developments in light of teachings of the Catholic church.



Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute (CCBI): Current information is available regularly on the CCBI website at ccbi-utoronto.ca/. Why not complete the contact information and ask to be placed on their mailing list?

This article was brought to our attention by Faith Anderson ... <http://www.ccbi-utoronto.ca/2020/12/04/ccbi-resources-for-covid-19-december-4-2020/>

The CCBI website also has a section entitled **For People in the Pews (FPIP)** which is "an 'everyday bioethics' lecture designed for parishes and other interested groups." There is also a brochure with the FPIP programme ... check it out!

....Submitted by Karen McDonald Education and Health Chairperson



RESOLUTIONS



Here is a New Year's Resolution for our members -- let's begin 2021 writing to our government regarding Bill C-7. The Senate has an extension until early February to decide on whether to make Bill C-7 law. Here is some information from Coalition for HealthCARE and Conscience to assist you.

While Parliament has passed Bill C-7, it still needs to be passed by the Senate before it becomes law. The debate continues this week in the Senate around this bill. NOW is the time to send them the message that Canadians don't want this Bill passed and that we don't want them to further endanger the lives of the vulnerable!

A Canadian Psychiatrist shared with us his concerns about the news that several Senators are seriously considering amending the draft legislation to allow people with mental illnesses to be euthanized. Mental illness was specifically excluded in the draft legislation, but we fear the calls to remove this exclusion will be successful, unless Canadians speak up.

Watch this compelling video of Dr. Ehmann's concerns for his patients:
<https://youtu.be/rEZ3TI8PhKA>

If you haven't emailed your MP yet, please write them right away at canadiansforconscience.ca/federal_government.
Then write to the Senate at canadiansforconscience.ca/writesenate.

Once you've emailed them, we ask you to call your MP's office to let them know of your concerns. You can find their phone number and contact information at <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Members/en>. This follow-up phone call will increase the impact of your voice exponentially!

Coalition for HealthCARE And Conscience:
<http://www.canadiansforconscience.ca/>

.....Submitted by Wilma Vanderzwaag, OPC Resolutions Chair



Food *for* Thought

Realize the value of empathy!

- Power of vulnerability and empathy makes a huge difference in people's life if only we try and understand each other just a little bit better.
- Resilience is in us all! Empathy is what we need more than ever before! We can get through any hardship if we're optimistic, respect each other and help one another.



Empathy encourages humility and understanding without judgment, which promotes personal connections to reach out.

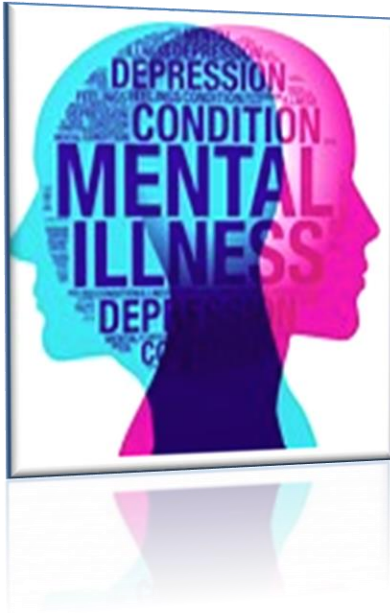
Just listen



2020 was a year full of learnings and unfolding the new ways to adapt to dynamic situations. With the powerful impact that 2020 has had in our lives... Lessons learned:

- ❖ In life, the important things are not things.
- ❖ It's the people that surrounded you → Your family!
- ❖ ...And friends who kept in close contact with you, either by email, video, or phone calls.
- ❖ Your neighbour who checked on you.
- ❖ Priest and churches who helped enrich your spirituality, strengthening your faith and giving you hope.

Food *for* Thought

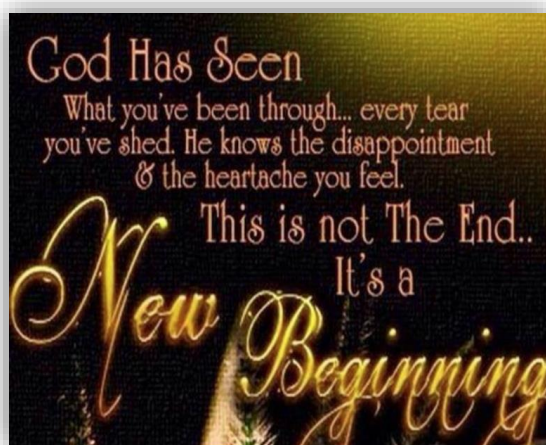


- The pandemic has changed personal interactions in many ways, some have managed to find greater unity by being more deliberate.
- Mental health conditions are unseen. We need to learn more about facts, tools, and support.
- There seems to still be a stigma if people have mental health conditions, just know; just as other people have chronic physical issues, these people have problem with their brain, so they are not different, they are just like us whole and authentic selves. We should be their allies and help where we can.
- Lookout for anyone who might be struggling and in need of help.





- ✿ To be grateful for everything you have and to not take anything for granted.
- ✿ Hope for more peaceful future, adapt to the reality, and stay kind to every being around.
- ✿ Communicate, communicate, and then communicate 😊 never make assumptions on people feelings and needs; simply ask them, and when asked, simply answer.
- ✿ Kindness and humility are more important than anything, be decent, kind and caring.
- ✿ Not to take things for granted. Explore options how to communicate differently and effectively.
- ✿ The world has seen ups and downs in our battle against the coronavirus. Regardless of how you recognize this seasonal transition, the new year brings an opportunity to shift our perspective and hope for better.



Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. Isaiah 43:18-19

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11

