

OPC Virtual AGMM, July 2021 Communication Chair

Madam Chair,

Covid-19 has rocked the world, this pandemic has created havoc in the life of many families. Fear of isolation, job loss, contracting of covid has put people at high stress, adding to anxiety that is already the most common mental health concern.

Amidst these challenging times, COVID exposed the need to modernize, juggle home and work life.

Each of us have had a HUGE opportunity to reach out, stay connected using TECHNOLOGY. There was a time where the internet, our global community hub, never existed. The effect the internet has had on our daily lives during this pandemic would have been unimaginable just a few years ago, never mind a decade or two, right now we are having our AMM partial virtual.

Communication is simplified, with just a conference call over a telephone app or computer program, helping us to complete a project, right there without having to put socks on, or the drive to get to the meeting and back.

My parish council is St. Francis Xavier, in Mississauga.

23rd February 2020 was the last in-person general meeting, this month is special to us as we do our membership drive. Despite covid, this year, we had 13 new members, their orientation was done virtually on 26th April, we incorporated some of the welcome program in our presentation, each past president played their part in presenting.

It's business as usual in our council **all done virtually**, every month the general meeting is held on last Tuesday, and second Tuesday they have their executive meeting.

We have speakers at most of our general meeting, topics ranging from health, finance at one meeting we had Deacon Robert Kinghorn, you might know him from the Catholic Register his column "The Church-on-The-Street" is published monthly, his talk was "about loneliness and life on the streets".

We hosted the annual senior Tea-party, sharing stories, ending the evening with bingo.

Other events held were:

- ❖ Reciting the Rosary during the month of May & October.
- ❖ Lenten retreat, Mother's Day event, an eventing with the cook "learn how to bake cake and summer drinks.
- ❖ 12 hours of palliative prayer: each executive had their calling tree ladies join them in the hour of prayer.
- ❖ Birthday celebration for those 75+ drive-by was done to their homes.
- ❖ From buying grocery, to taking the dog for a walk for seniors who needed help.
- ❖ Each executive has 14-15 ladies on their calling-tree list, regular monthly calls are done.

I have personally witnessed members evolve and embrace technology. I've seen them learn, apply, and demonstrate skills and capabilities.

The attendance at the virtual session is only 50%, some do not have computers or know how to use technology, or do not like virtual meetings, but glad the calling tree is there to keep them connected.

These are challenging times, but no matter what comes our way, we can rely on Jesus' promise: "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20).

This concludes my report.

Ann D'Souza/Communication Chair