

July, 2021

2021 OPC AMM OTTAWA DIOCESAN COUNCIL REPORT

Madam Chair,

In the beginning there was chaos. Our lives were interrupted. Our comfort, freedom, and power rested in God's hands as we wrestled with an uncertain reality. We nestled in our homes alone and away from all that was familiar. We waited.

Care for our Common Home was no longer a concept, but a reality. Through God's providence and His great mystery, we became attuned to an unfolding state of awakening of our senses. He invited us to explore new paths in unprecedented times. He welcomed us to diversify our talents using the world wide web.

As members of the one Church of Christ, we were able to participate in Eucharistic celebrations around the world. Who could ever have imagined it? This sparked a new beginning for us in the midst of the ongoing pandemic.

As the one body of Christ, the Ottawa Diocesan Council needed to stay in touch with its members. Even if we couldn't see each other on our first few conference calls – we could feel each other's smiles and these same smiles grew when our council experimented with virtual meetings. We were learning something new, something out of our comfort zone, and doing it together.

Encouraged that we "could do this," we ventured into hosting what we would normally have planned, such as, League Development Day, the Lenten Morning of Reflection, and an afternoon presentation on Iconography. It also led to a revival of our *Faith in Action* newsletter – we needed to read about what parish councils and our members were doing. We have so much to learn and share from each other!

Other in-person events, such as, our Advent Mass and the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel celebrations were still held even when the numbers were as small as ten, all the while following government regulations to keep our members safe. The diocesan team took their responsibilities seriously with humility and grace.

We ensured all members were informed and notified through our regular emails. Our "CWL Wednesday!" was an incentive from the start of the pandemic. This is a weekly outreach that keeps our members informed, accompanied with a short reflection on the day's Gospel reading. This is so well received that we now have members contributing to it!

As the one body of Christ, it has transformed the way League business is being implemented in Ottawa. More members attend meetings. There is an interest in

attending and participating in webinars across the nation and even around the world. And most of them are free – how fun is that?!

Ultimately, we are builders of bridges with God and between our members. Change is inevitable. But, the cries of the poor and the marginalized and even our own sufferings, cannot wait until everyone is ready again. We need to be transformed, building new bridges so no one is left alone and unheard. We are the one body of Christ and, when we stand with Him, all things are possible.

Respectfully submitted,

(498 words)

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