

## 2022 CWL Convention Oral Report

Living in Northern Ontario, I have the opportunity to experience the beautiful and the not so beautiful aspects of the four seasons; the bountiful bugs who harass you but also pollinate the beautiful wild blueberries, and raspberries; the nasty cold temperatures that produces beautiful snow so that you can ski and snowshoe; and the unpredictable spring and fall frost that tests your gardening expertise. And gardening in Northern Ontario, like all of Ontario, is a most rewarding experience.

Being a CWL member can be compared to gardening; it is a lot of work but so very rewarding for you the gardener and for those who reap the benefits of your hard work.

Patience as a gardener is essential. I think potato bugs are nasty little pests but I learned that if I practiced patience and planted later in June I can outwit them and get a good crop of potatoes.

COVID is also a nasty bug and it requires us to be patient.

Thankfully our Past Diocesan President was very patient with her executive as we became familiar with the workings of Zoom.

What a godsend Zoom has been: we can meet during the winter when driving can be hazardous; it provides members who don't drive long distances, the opportunity to participate in meetings; it allowed us to participate in Zoom activities offered throughout the province by other dioceses; and it allows members who choose not to interact with others, facetime without exposure. It is a useful tool that will saved us time and money, provide peace of mind and allow members to interact if isolated.

Gardens need nurturing; good soil, limited the weeds and sufficient moisture. It is through faith studies that we nurture our members. Spiritual advisors provide advice and guidance for the spiritual program. Together with our Diocesan Spiritual Advisor Fr. John Lemire, it is our plan to suggesting possible topics for the spiritual advisors to speak on at their council's regular meetings. Topics could include: Role of women in the church, the lay ministries, the goals set out by our bishop, the curriculum in our catholic schools; and what influenced them to

enter the priesthood; we have many priests in our diocese who were not born in Canada and the CWL members would be very interested in the practices in other countries.

Gardeners work hard and deserve praise and recognition for their efforts. Parishes in our diocese are acknowledging the fruitfulness of members by delivering gratitude bags containing a greeting card, some chocolates, cookies and tea. These will be hand delivered, this summer, at a time when the visit can take place outdoors. There are some members, we have not seen since the start of the pandemic, what a happy reunion it will be for those that have been isolating.

Gardening is essentially a solitary activity. It's just you, the sun, the dirt, and the plants. Enjoy your garden, big or small, and God will use your garden to teach you all kinds of lessons.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shirley Gravel,  
Timmins Diocesan CWL President