



**Ontario Provincial Council of
The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Organization Standing Committee**

**CATHOLIC
and LIVING IT!**

Directive #6

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Enclosures (1)

Date : August 21, 2023

To: Diocesan Organization Standing Committee Chairpersons
Ontario Provincial Officers, Diocesan Presidents, Most Rev. Bishop Dowd
cc: National Organization Standing Committee Chairperson
Sub-Committee: n/a
Enclosure:



**GO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE!**

⁹Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love; Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care with the elect.

Wisdom 3 The New American Bible, Revised Old Testament 2008 and 2010

Provincial and National Convention

The diocesan, provincial and national conventions and reports are now completed for 2022. With the elections at national convention, the new national executive follows the revised format with our three pillars faith, service, and social justice.

Although the chairpersons for each pillar are not yet named, the executive list is updated at <https://www.cwl.ca/meet-our-executives/>. Congratulations to our own province's Shari Guinta who assumes the position of National President and Betty Colaneri on her election to the position of National Vice President.

A copy of my oral report is attached while the national oral report is not yet posted to the national website but please check regularly for updates to see that report.

Membership Recruitment

Contrary to popular opinion, membership recruitment does not have a set timeframe in line with collection of annual membership dues. It is our responsibility as members to:

- Inform other women we meet, throughout each year, about the good work of the League and to invite them to participate to experience the sisterhood.
- Be aware at League events of attendees who appear to be alone, engage them in conversation, and ask if it is okay to sit with them.
- Generally, be good ambassadors of the League anywhere in public, you never know who is watching.
- Find the pillar that speaks to us and be engaged in at least one associated activity within each year.
- Consider stepping forward in faith, service, or social justice to lead a related activity.

League Development Zooms

An invitation was extended to all the OPC executive (officers and Diocesan Presidents) to consider facilitating one session between October and May on a topic they are comfortable with. I am now extending that offer to each of you. If there is something

you would like to share with other members (a fundraising idea, a membership recruitment idea, or other initiative related to League goals and objectives), please forward a short description of your session, a title, and a preferred date and time for scheduling **by September 8, 2023**.

Consider the mini workshop you delivered at convention as one idea. They were well received and many members not in attendance would be interested, I am sure. It is my intent to advertise the schedule in the upcoming newsletters beginning with the October issue.

My next directive will be sent after our Ontario Provincial Council meeting scheduled for October 12 - 14, 2023 unless there is an urgent matter requiring communication.

Looking forward to sharing with all of you as we step forward toward 2024!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sollun".

ORAL REPORT TO CONVENTION – JULY 2023 – PRESIDENT-ELECT/ORGANIZATION

As it pertains to my office/standing committee, what suggestions can you give to League members to make a noticeable difference?

For several years now, the League has undergone lifesaving surgeries in the hope of stemming the hemorrhaging of members. In my archived files, I found an Ontario membership report from August 2019 where membership was 40,006. Despite all the strategic planning of the past several years, the membership report at our meeting this past February, for December 31, 2022 showed a total of 32,250 members.

Let that sink in {pause} a loss of nearly 8,000 members over 3 years {pause} 8,000 sisters .. experience tells us that many of this number may have passed on but what about the others? Thousands of sisters that simply walked away {pause} the question we need to ask ourselves is why? {pause} .. a very simple question .. why?

Unfortunately, the recent process conducted by national called "Unity Outreach," asked the right question, "Is the League relevant for you today?" but spoke to members who are still here and still finding the League relevant.

So, what is it that you and all members can do to make a noticeable difference? I challenge each one of you to be a leader. I believe the answer is partly in those of us who have not yet led, the ones who say I cannot do that. Those who could bring a new view, new ideas and new ways. To move forward, everyone needs to be encouraged to embrace change, to step outside our comfort zone and to move toward our best self.

I recently heard a talk centred on how many of us conform our lives into what we feel is expected of us, to what we feel God wants from us. However, to truly live the life God wants for us, we need to seek answers within us. That is where the Divine spirit is ready to speak to us and to guide us to be the very

best image of ourselves. To be what only God knows, with absolute certainty, that which we can be. Sit with God and ask Him to move you in ways that will surprise you. Ask God to show you what you can do.

Secondly, I challenge each of you to champion a quest back at your councils, a quest to gather women of your parish community. Not just members but all women who seek change in your parish.

Invite them to gather as concerned sisters, mothers, and grandmothers over coffee and refreshments a little wine and cheese may also help. Engage a talented facilitator from outside of your parish to encourage the women to prayerfully reflect, to look deep inside and to share their dreams for a perfect parish and world. Then, have the facilitator explain the new structure: sharing of faith, serving in community, and advocating for social justice. What can be done within those pillars to move toward the dream parish? Hopefully, the sisterhood and change in community is the hook that then draws women to evangelization and to the League. Once you have nodding women on the change that is needed, ask them to commit 1 or 2 hours a month to one area: faith, service, or social justice; then let God work.

May you encourage the women of your council and parish to live their life as John O'Donohue, author and philosopher, described: "I would love to live life like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding." I challenge you to Bee open, Bee brave, Bee adventurous, Bee the change! Go make a difference!!