



ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
OF THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S
LEAGUE OF CANADA



ON-LINE NEWSLETTER



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Sharing the Joy!

Peace be with you! The Ontario Provincial Council is reading The Joy of the Gospel together. The first line of this encyclical states, "**THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL** fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus." Then, the first section is titled, "*A JOY EVER NEW, A JOY WHICH IS SHARED.*"

I got so excited as I started to read, and each line spoke to my discernment of my theme. If each member of the League encounters Jesus in the other, how powerful it is!! Someone shared this graphic with me which shows the



sunflower and bee themes together. I am suggesting we BEE the difference in drawing others closer to our light, the Son; like the sunflower turns toward its light, the sun.

I remember hearing of encounters between past-national president, Agnes Bedard, and the homeless on the streets of Toronto and I was moved to tears picturing the human connections. I have participated in service projects personally where time was taken to encounter those receiving. To not just push them through a line or drop something and run but to sit, to be still and be present. The encounter is what connects us at the heart.

The Gospels show us time and time again Jesus taking these opportunities and calling us by His example to do the same, to share His joy.

Holy Father Pope Francis shares examples inviting us to rejoice in his introduction to The Joy of the Gospel.

"Rejoice!" is the angel's greeting to Mary (Lk 1:28). Mary's visit to Elizabeth makes John leap for joy in his mother's womb (cf. Lk 1:41). In her song of praise, Mary proclaims: "My spirit rejoices in God my saviour" (Lk 1:47). When Jesus begins his ministry, John cries out: "For this reason, my joy has been fulfilled" (Jn 3:29). Jesus himself "rejoiced in the Holy Spirit" (Lk 10:21).

His message brings us joy: "I have said these things to you, so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (Jn 15:11). In the Acts of the Apostles, we read wherever the disciples went, "there was great joy" (8:8); even amid persecution they continued to be "filled with joy" (13:52).

If we see the League as a safe space for women's ministry, we will develop deep relationships. The kind of relationship where we share "the inner workings of our heart-prayers, aspirations, insecurities, and places where God is challenging me or allowing me to struggle." [from joyful momentum, Elizabeth A. Tomlin].

I thank the Lord every day for sisters in the League who lifted me when I struggled, called me when I was drifting, and reached out to invite me to learn more about the gospels. And I thank you, for taking time to read this message, to care for others, to engage in faith, service, and social justice. God bless you and inspire you to BEE renewed sharing THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL!!

In Joy & Love,

Colleen Martin,
President Ontario Provincial CWL



Meet Your New Ontario Provincial Council!

On July 10th at the 77th Annual Ontario Provincial Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada in Sudbury, the following women were elected as your new Ontario Provincial Council for the 2024-2026 term. We ask for your support and prayers as they step into their new roles in service to the members across our province of Ontario.

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL - OFFICERS

Interim Provincial Spiritual Advisor



Most Reverend
Bishop Thomas Dowd

President



Colleen Martin

Past President



Linda Squarzolo

Vice President



Karen McDonald

Treasurer



Lisa Fillingham

Secretary



Lisa Henry

Provincial Chairperson of
Faith



Claudette Langdon

Provincial Chairperson of
Service



Sue Lubowitz

Provincial Chairperson of
Social Justice



Hilarion Mitchell

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL - APPOINTEES

Administrative Assistant



Wilma Vanderzwaag

Life Member Liaison



Mary Capobianco

Keeper of the Book of Life



Cathy McKinney

Screening Officer



Jeannie Coleman

DIOCESAN PRESIDENTS

Hamilton Diocesan President



Teresa Di Falco

Hearst-Moosonee Diocesan President



Nancy Bouvier

Kingston Diocesan President



Maureen Vincentine

London Diocesan President



Mary Bannon

Ottawa-Cornwall Diocesan President



Melina Nobert

Pembroke Diocesan President



Annette Chaplin

Peterborough Diocesan President



Maria Fitzgerald

St. Catharines Diocesan President



Deedee Alexandre

Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan President



Patricia Clizia

Thunder Bay Diocesan President



Cathy Carlino

Timmins Diocesan President



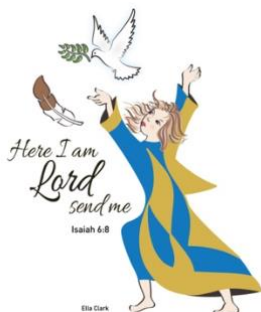
Audrey Shelton

Toronto Diocesan President



Kate O'Quinn

"I see leadership as a charism – a gift given by the Holy Spirit for the good of others and for the building up of the Body of Christ. When God grants us the gift of leadership, and calls us to use it, it is not for our own benefits or simply to satisfy some personal ambition. It is given to us to make a difference, and what can be a more precious and wonderful vocation or charism than that?" *Archbishop Eamon Martin*



As these servant leaders go forth in service, may all members be open to the call of leadership from God. Many may say, 'Not I Lord', 'You couldn't possibly mean me' but yes, you! If He calls you, he will equip you. May you respond with, 'Here I am Lord, Send Me!'

With Grateful Hearts

We sincerely thank the 2022-2024 Ontario Provincial Council under the leadership of Linda Squarzolo. On behalf of the CWL members across Ontario, we thank the following for their faithful service to God and Canada.

2022-2024 ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

President	Linda Squarzolo
Past President/Historian	Colleen Perry-Dow
President-Elect/Organization	Colleen Martin
1 st Vice-President/Spiritual Development	Wilma Vanderzwaag
2 nd Vice-President/Community Life	Karen McDonald
Treasurer	Marie-Theresa Lamphier
Recording Secretary	Anna Tremblay
Provincial Chairperson of Christian Family Life	Betsy Currier
Provincial Chairperson of Education & Health	Hilarion Mitchell
Provincial Chairperson of Communications	Emma Rose Rayburn
Provincial Chairperson of Resolutions	Mary Capobianco
Provincial Chairperson of Legislation	Joanna Sisk

APPOINTEES

Administrative Assistant	Rebecca McCarrell
Life Member Liaison	Shelley Tamas
Book of Life	Cathy McKinney
Screening Officer	Jeannie Coleman

We recognize and thank these women who have shared their God-given talents and support them in the new ways they are called to love the Lord.

thank you



Vice President's Message

**"The Catholic Women's League of Canada
is many things to many people."**

(CWL National home page www.cwl.ca, Inspire tab)



In 1990, I joined the Catholic Women's League following in the footsteps of my grandmother and mother. I quickly realized why the League was so important in their lives and what a gift our membership is.

Have you accessed the *What's Your CWL?* and *Powerful Stories* links yet? They are on the national website home page www.cwl.ca under the *Inspire* tab. If you know of anyone without computer access, share these inspirational videos and stories.

Being present to members, and finding ways to support our councils, is so important. I enjoy interacting and making that personal connection. I pride myself on being a good listener, and I want to hear from you. Let us know what is happening in your corner of the province.

We are never alone in our League work. We can always reach out to our members. I did and I am blessed with an amazing group of women to assist me on the committees I oversee. My sincere thanks to each for saying 'yes'.

The **V.P. Team** currently consists of:

Annual Reports Review

Joleene Kemp (Thunder Bay diocese)
Glenda Klein (Peterborough diocese)

Policy, Procedures, Guidelines Review

Bernadette Burgess (Kingston diocese)
Anne Madden (Kingston diocese)

Membership

Emma Rose Rayburn (Ottawa/Cornwall diocese)
Nancy Richer (Kingston diocese) * liaison with Communications Team
Joanna Sisk (Ottawa/Cornwall diocese)

Sub-Committee

Joan Schurter (Hamilton diocese)

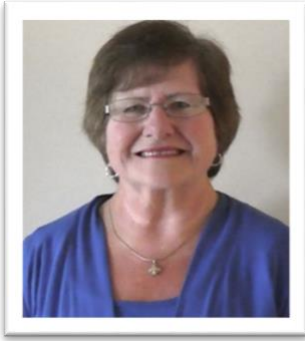
I am also blessed to be working with the diocesan vice-presidents.

As this journey begins, I recall these lyrics from a favourite hymn of mine ...

*Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown? Will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?
(The Summons)*

Submitted by Karen McDonald, Vice President

Past President's Message



Since many councils held elections this year, several of us are settling into our roles as past presidents.

In order to become more familiar with the duties associated with this position, I encourage all past presidents to download the [*Handbook for Past Presidents*](#) from the national website under *Manuals*, item 611.

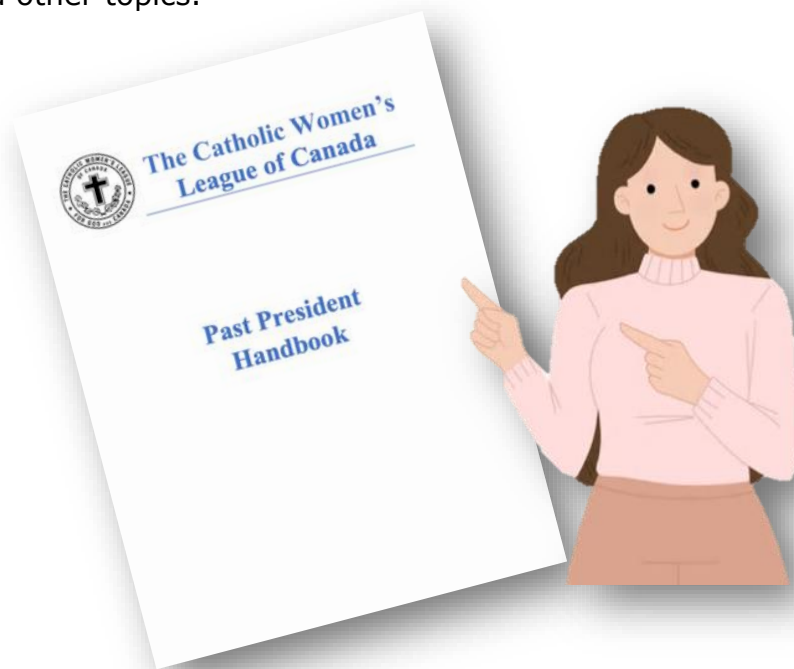
<https://www.cwl.ca/manuals/>

The past president is tasked with:

- ◇ Serving as an advisor to the council
- ◇ Being responsible for archives and history
- ◇ Making sure members study and implement the Constitution and Bylaws
- ◇ Forwarding proposed changes to the National Policy and Procedures
- ◇ Helping councils develop their own policy and procedure manuals

During my term, Life Members Anna Brady and Joan Schurter have agreed to serve on my Archives Committee. Other members may be appointed, as needed.

My aim is to be a mentor to the members of Ontario and plan to offer webinars on archives and other topics.



Submitted by Linda Squarzolo, Past President

Faith Chairperson



PRA YER, JOY AND HOPE...

I am honoured to serve on the Ontario Provincial Council as the Faith Chairperson.

My goal is to strengthen engagement by interacting regularly with the Faith Chairs at both Diocesan and Parish levels.

Your contributions are valued. I want to be *present* for councils and to promote open communication.

Our parish councils are the centre of our League. We want all levels connected, encouraged and heard.

I would like to introduce to you the Faith Vision for my term.

Embrace our Sisterhood's spirituality through prayer with joy and hope; strengthen engagement through collaboration and support.

Background

The national theme "Here I am Lord, Send me" aligns well with the Provincial President's vision for the next two years. The focus of *Joy* and bringing as many women as possible in Ontario to the mission of the League; we 'Rejoice in the Lord Always' Philippians 4:4

Pope Francis officially declared 2025 a Year of Jubilee with a papal bull titled "Spes Non Confudit," meaning "Hope Does Not Disappoint." *Hope and prayer* have been designated with the theme 'Pilgrims of Hope'

Prayer, Joy and hope are the core of the Faith Vision.

Together with help of the Holy Spirit, we will grow together in faith, hear God's call to bring our gifts to His service with generous hearts while witnessing the joy, hope and love of God.



Orange Shirt Day

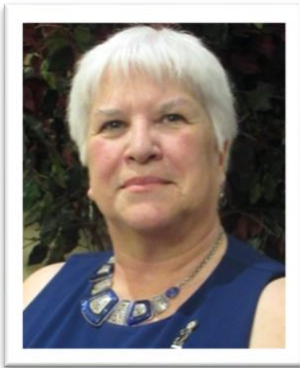
September 30, 2024 is Orange Shirt Day. This is a day to remember, to witness, and to honour the healing journey of residential-school survivors and their families, and to demonstrate a commitment to processes of reconciliation.

Wear orange shirts to honour this day and show our support!

Prayer: Strengthen us in our walk together. God of truth, let honesty guide our steps along the path of truth and reconciliation, of healing and friendship. Grant us wisdom to recognize and celebrate the beautiful gifts of Indigenous cultures.

*Blessings and Hugs
Claudette Langdon
Faith Chairperson*

Service Chairperson



Team members:

- Lynn Olenik, Life Member (Hearst-Moosonee Diocese)
- Iris McNulty, (Toronto Diocese)

The Service standing committee has combined some of the portfolios of three previous committees: Christian Family Life, Community Life, Education and Health. Little did I know that when I was working on the first working group of the Strategic Plan dealing with the restructuring of the League, that I would be the first Ontario Service Chair!

If you are part of this committee across the province, do you identify more with Martha than Mary? In one of his general audiences in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI gave a reflection on women in the service of the gospel. It's a very short read and if you are interested it can be found here:

https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20070214.html

That's what we are: women at the service of the Gospel. Situations particular to each council will call members to do their work in the parish community and the public square in solidarity with the suffering and for the common good. Our service is the hands of the League as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ when we address the corporal works of mercy. This may feel overwhelming to know where to start and how to live this out but together we will come to realize how we are already living them and how we can possibly grow in one or more of these works.

Our work involves action but should always reflect a profound life of prayer to bring out the inner Mary in all of us. Over this term, we will work together to better understand how our work is needed more than ever. We must begin to think of all we do as beyond the very limited meaning of the word "charity" as it is usually thought of and used today. Charity should be used interchangeably with the word "love"; a sanctifying love that is God's own energy.

Together, with your diocesan chairs I look forward to sharing together how the work we are called to do is holy and to do it with love within your parish and community.

(reference: "Caritas in Veritate: On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth" Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, 2010.)

Submitted by Sue Lubowitz, Service Chairperson

Social Justice Chairperson



Social justice is one of the three Core Values of the League along with Faith and Service; together they are the new standing committees. Social justice is the part of Catholic teaching that addresses matters of social, economic, and ecological justice in the world. The fundamentals of social justice in the League includes the *Objects of the League*, the Catholic social teaching, active involvement in society through awareness of government legislation and advocate for change through the League resolutions process. Examples of social justice issues are abortion laws, MAiD, housing, poverty, racism, human trafficking, the environment, etc.

At the provincial level, committees for social justice, resolutions reading team, resolutions review team, resolutions government visitation team and social justice award review team were formed.

During the 77th Ontario Provincial Convention in July 2024 in Sudbury, the following resolutions gifted by Sault Ste Marie and Toronto dioceses were adopted.

- ON.24.01 Elimination of the Mature Minor Doctrine in Mental Health
- ON.24.02 National School Food Program for All

The first will be posted to the Ontario website and actioned by the provincial council. The second included a bridging clause to national council. It was not accepted due to the announcement by the federal government in its spring budget to fund a national school food program. The national social justice chair encouraged the Ontario president to ask members to monitor the implementation to see if it is realized and sustainable; and, if it is not, to consider another resolution at that time.

The League resources below provide members and councils with an awareness of social justice events and issues.

- 622 *Calendar of Social Justice/Catholic Social Teaching in the Church*
- 639 *Toolkit for Social Justice*
- 624 *Catholic Social Teachings Resources*
- *12-Hours of Prayer Kit*
- *League Position Papers Action Plan in applicable months*

It is very gratifying but also daunting to be on the inaugurating executive under the new League executive structure as the first provincial social justice chair. *Here I am Lord, Send Me* (Isaiah 6:8), serving joyfully and encouraging members to put their faith into action.

Social and Economic Justice Team

- Betsy Currier, Life Member, Sault Ste. Marie Diocese
- Paddy Fitzgerald Nolan, Life Member, Peterborough Diocese

Resolutions Reading Team

- Betsy Currier, Life Member, Sault Ste. Marie Diocese
- Anne Madden, Life Member, Kingston Diocese
- Celestine F. Hall, Life Member, Toronto Diocese

Resolutions Review Team

- Karen McDonald, OPC Vice President
- Linda Squarzolo, OPC Past President
- Colleen Martin, OPC President (ex-officio)
- Shaila D'Souza, Secretary, Toronto Diocese

Resolutions Government Visitation Team

- Karen McDonald, OPC Vice President
- Linda Squarzolo, OPC Past President
- Colleen Martin, OPC President (ex-officio)
- Most Rev. Bishop Thomas Dowd (ex-officio)

Positions Paper Team

Archiving done in 2022-2024 OPC executive term/ Not required in 2024-2026

Submitted by Hilarion Mitchell, Social Justice Chair

Lynn Olenik 2024 Ontario Provincial Council Social Justice Award Recipient

Congratulations! Lynn Olenik was awarded the Ontario Provincial Council Social Justice Award at the 77th Annual Ontario Provincial Council Convention on July 10, 2024, in Sudbury. Lynn has been a member of St. Theresa Council in Geraldton, Hearst-Moosonee Diocese for the past 35 years. She has served in various positions including parish and diocesan presidents. She was gifted with her Life Membership in 2018.



Lynn exemplifies the principles of our Catholic Social Teaching which teaches us that resources, opportunities and services should be accessible and shared fairly by everyone. Lynn makes a difference through her many Social Justice involvements such as:

- Organized mission trips to the Dominican Republic, Peru and more recently in Honduras where she assists the School Sisters of Notre Dame. She brings various school/ craft supplies and spends time in classrooms with Lenca women and children.
- Provide financial aid to Sister Mary Kennedy in Honduras through her Bucket of Hope fundraising projects.
- Fosters friendships with Indigenous sisters and has accompanied her other League sisters to Moosonee on James Bay. These visits have nurtured a trusting friendship with Oji-Cree women in this remote community.
- Work closely with the women in Aroland First Nation.
- Member of Development and Peace and is her parish contact.

Thank you, Lynn, for all you have done in answering the call to serve within and beyond your local community.

Our thanks to Hearst-Moosonee Diocesan President, Nancy Bouvier, for submitting Lynn's nomination.

2024 Ontario Provincial Council Presented Resolutions Outcome

League resolutions process help advocate for change by putting our faith into action. Resolutions cannot be acted on until they have been adopted at the level to which they are destined. Hence, resolutions directed to the national level for consideration that are not accepted or adopted, do not become publishable or pursuable at any level. Adopted resolutions, not directed to National are posted on the Ontario Provincial Council website.

Five resolutions were received from Hamilton, Toronto and Sault Ste. Marie dioceses for consideration by the OPC Resolutions Review Committee. Three of the resolutions were presented at the 77th Annual Ontario Provincial Council Convention on July 10, 2024, in Sudbury.

ON.24.01 Elimination of the Mature Minor Doctrine in Mental Health

The resolution gifted by the Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan Council was adopted. It urged the Ontario provincial government to enact legislation to include parents/legal guardians in the assessment, development, modification, and ongoing implementation of mental health treatment plans for children under the age of 16, thereby eliminating the practice of mature minor doctrine.



The resolution is posted on the website located at [Resolutions](#). Councils and members are to review and work on the associated action plan. The Resolutions Government Visitation Team which includes Colleen Martin, President and myself, Hilarion Mitchell, Social Justice Chairperson, will address the resolution at the next government meeting. The resolution will also be presented to the Meeting of the Assembly of Catholic of Ontario Bishops (ACBO) in September.

The resolution on *National School Food Program for All* gifted by the Toronto Diocesan Council was adopted and forwarded to the national Resolutions Review Committee. However, it was not accepted as the federal government had taken the required action in early April 2024. The resolution on *Enhancing Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) Data Collection* gifted by Hamilton Diocesan Council was not adopted at the convention.

Our gratitude to members from the submitting councils for bringing these timely social justice topics to members' attention. We also thank the resolution committees and members for their input during the subsequent stages at the diocesan and provincial levels.

Note: The 2025 Resolution Topics Submission Deadline: **Thursday October 31, 2024**

Call for Nominations! 2025 Ontario Provincial Council Social Justice Award

The Ontario Social Justice Award is presented to a member in Ontario who has gone above and beyond their vocation in life to advocate and serve to promote social justice through contribution to her community.

To boost nominations, there is no limit on the number of nominations received from the 12 dioceses for the 2025 Social Justice Award/

The nominee must be a member in good standing for the past five years. They demonstrate social justice in contribution to community and must include.

- a) social justice engagement at parish, community, regional, national, or international level
- b) demonstration of leadership in social justice engagement
- c) demonstration of generosity of spirit in social justice engagement
- d) extraordinary service in social justice engagement
- e) living a reflection of the mission of the League

Visit the OPC website [Forms](#) and/or click on the hyperlinks below for more information on the award.

[Social Justice Policy](#)

[PDF Fillable Social Justice Award Nomination Form](#)

Submission Deadlines

- Diocesan President Sign-off: Fri. Nov. 15, 2024
 - OPC Social Justice Chair: Sat. Nov. 30, 2024
- Hilarion Mitchell, Social Justice Chair, Ontario Provincial Council
Email: opcsocialjusticechair@gmail.com



CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Uplifting, Engaging, Faith Filled!

77th Annual Ontario Provincial Convention



July 7-10, 2024 - Sudbury
It was so great to 'bee' there!

The 77th Annual Provincial Convention was held in Sudbury in the diocese of Sault Ste. Marie from July 7-10, 2024 and began with a Flag Raising ceremony at Tom Davies Square. Mother Nature provided just the right amount of wind and sun for the flag raising which was well attended by CWL members. This convention, attended by almost 300 delegates was brimming over with moving spiritual programs, sisterhood, engaging presentations and of course, an abundance of fun!



Sunday afternoon, delegates filled the conference room to take part in dynamic discussions and share perspectives on the two proposed resolutions (*see pg. 10 for list of resolutions*).

Delegates then made their way to Our Lady of Hope parish for a jubilant opening Mass celebrated by the Most Reverend Bishop Thomas Dowd. Convention Chair, Karen McDonald invited greetings by Sudbury MP, Viviane Lapointe, Sudbury MPP, Jamie West, Sudbury Mayor, Al Sizer, Sisters of St.



Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie, Sister Roberta Low, Knights of Columbus Master District, Knights of Columbus Grand Knight, Don Larocque, Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Jeff Shannon, Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan President, Patricia Clizia, National President, Shari Guinta and Provincial President, Linda Squarzolo.

With faith at the centre of all we do, Monday opened with a beautiful Eucharistic celebration presided by Bishop Thomas Dowd. The momentum continued to build with a schedule of events including presentation by vendors, a solemn Crowning of Mary ceremony, an inspirational report by National President Shari Guinta on the national



theme "Here I am Lord, Send me!" and the business day wrapped up with inspirational Diocesan Presidents' reports highlighting with pride, the incredible work being carried out by members across our province. Members then boarded buses to attend a dinner hosted by the members of St. Mary's Ukrainian Church. It was a joy-filled evening where delegates enjoyed a variety

of delicious Ukrainian food, fellowship, a presentation by President, Linda Squarzolo to the Ukrainian church and an incredibly moving speech by Gerry Lougheed, a passionate and long-time supporter of the CWL. His words uplifted and energized everyone. Rev. Petro Bodnar, Pastor of St. Mary's then hosted a tour of the church highlighting its rich history and beauty.

Carrying the fullness of joy from an amazing first day of convention with them, members were up and on the buses at 7:00 am, yes... 7:00 am to share in a peaceful Sunrise Prayer Service at Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, a hidden gem nestled in the heart of downtown Sudbury. Surrounded by scenic paths and exhibits, the Grotto was the perfect retreat to open our day in prayerful fellowship. With a stunning stone altar as a backdrop, Wilma Vanderzwaag, Provincial Spiritual Development Chair and her faithful team, guided members through a beautiful spiritual program that offered members an opportunity to begin their day in nature and prayerful fellowship.



Following a peaceful encounter at the Grotto, members reassembled at the convention space to share in the opening Eucharistic Celebration presided by Provincial Spiritual Advisor, Bishop Thomas Dowd. Grounded by a strong, faith-filled morning, the day unfolded with Provincial Officers' Presentations where each were asked to share 10 minutes sharing resources from the Strategic Plan Implementation that would familiarize members with the robust collection of resources available through the CWL. In the afternoon, guest speaker, Edwina "Eddie" MacDonald, Executive Director of the

Anishinabe Spiritual Centre in Espanola. Eddie introduced the members and work of the Christian Life Community (CLC) Manitoulin. The presentation included a guided activity where members participated in a sharing circle. A stone, placed at each table, was passed around identifying the holder as their turn to share on a theme "Listening to Indigenous Voices". It was a deeply moving time of being open the Holy Spirit in the sharing of perspectives and growing together in a good way.



After a full and spirit-filled day, members dressed up and gathered for the banquet to enjoy fellowship and dancing the night away!

Wednesday opened with an uplifting morning prayer service where Provincial Spiritual Advisor, Bishop Thomas Dowd led everyone through the rosary incorporating teaching elements to enhance and assist with a deeper significance of each mystery. Bishop Dowd presented this in a virtual presentation in May. View the recording here: [Bishop Dowd's Rosary Presentation](#)

Next, the Social Justice award was presented to Lynn Olenik from the Hearst-Moosonee Diocese. A well-deserved recipient! [See photo and citation on pg.11](#)



Following the Provincial Spiritual Advisor and President reports, London Diocese presented a most upbeat and welcoming invitation to the 78th Annual Ontario Provincial Convention in London, July 6 - 9, 2025. You won't want to miss it! Book your rooms now before they're gone! [See booking info on pg. 21](#)

Incoming Provincial President, Colleen Martin was then called forward to present her vision for her term. It is available to view here: [Greetings from Colleen Martin](#)



Finally, elections for the 2024-2026 Ontario Provincial Council were conducted under the new executive structure format. Continuing on the paths of previous councils and building on the future with new possibilities, this new council goes forward in faith and hope in service to God and the members of Ontario.



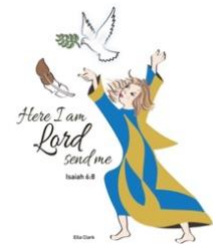
Closing out the convention, delegates boarded buses for the Closing Eucharistic Mass and Installation of the new Provincial Executive at Holy Redeemer Church.

The ceremonial handing off of the CWL Convention Banner took place with Sault Ste. Marie Diocesan President, Patricia Clizia handing off the banner to London Diocesan Vice President, Denise Morris (standing in for President, Mary Bannon) who will host the 2025 Annual Provincial Convention.



We congratulate and sincerely thank the incredible team who organized this convention under the leadership of Karen McDonald, Ann Koivu and Cathy Keaney for this absolutely amazing convention!

**104th Annual National Convention
August 11-14, 2024 - Saskatoon**
Here I am Lord, Send me!



The Spirit of the League and sisterhood was alive as a great number of Ontario members joined their sisters from across the country at the 104th Annual National Convention in Saskatoon.



Delegates were warmly welcomed by CWL hostesses at the Cathedral of the Holy Family for the Opening Eucharistic Celebration where we witnessed with pride, National President, Shari Guinta and Ontario Provincial President, Colleen Martin processing in the CWL and Ontario flags



The Celebrant, Most Reverend Mark A. Hagemoen, Bishop of Saskatoon shared during his homily about a recent 30 km marathon he completed where he learned that even when you are tired, your journey still must continue and you can find strength in God as Elijah did during his journey into the wilderness in 1 Kings 19:4-8. He found this strongly connected to the League's national theme, "Here I am Lord, Send Me!" (Read more at: [Opening Eucharistic Celebration](#))

Monday, August 12th began with a morning Eucharistic Celebration, with celebrant Most Reverend Albert LeGatt.

After mass, National President Shari Guinta shared an opening message acknowledging the new format of the convention which allows for more educational opportunities to be given, stating this is the first step of many big steps.

National Spiritual Advisor Bishop Lobsinger provided greetings and shared the meaning behind his coat of arms, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Another message that he wanted members to keep in mind for the next few days was, "mercy within mercy, within mercy". He encouraged members to "show mercy so that He may increase". (Read more at: [Monday August 12th](#))



Following his greetings, Bishop Lobsinger and Honorary Life Member Barb Dowding delivered a presentation called "Walking Together in Synodality". Bishop Lobsinger explained that synodality means to "journey together", to find ways to hear the voices of all the people of God, as all who are baptized are guided by the Holy Spirit. He said that it is not about changing the truths of our faith, but to think about how to bring the truths of our faith into our world today.

Barb Dowding asked members to discern together how the Holy Spirit is calling the Church in Canada. A synodal church is a church that listens, as quoted from Pope Francis. Barbara said to not only listen to what a person says, but by what she means and what she has experienced. She then asked members to discuss with others at their table what characteristics of female leadership is God calling forth for women in today's Church? This and other thoughtful questions were deliberated to decide what actions should be done moving forward. (Read more at: [Walking Together in Synodality](#))

Two other captivating guest presentations were:

1) "Here I Am Lord, Send Me" by author and faith speaker Leah McDonald Perrault. Leah conveyed the need to learn to love in the midst of brokenness. She shared miracles she witnessed in her own life through personal stories, and said God is acting in our lives just as powerfully. She encouraged others to have a moment with someone at their table and answer the question: "Where have I encountered Jesus?" Members were gladly reaching out their hands to each other as they spoke, some with tears in their eyes.



Leah expressed that worthiness is rooted in God's invitation: "Whom shall I send?" It is not a pretty nor easy journey, but it is the beauty and boldness of our belief that allows us to say "yes" to Jesus. She ended her presentation with an acoustic performance of the song "New Wine" by Brooke Fraser. ([Leah McDonald Perrault - Here I Am Lord, Send Me](#))

2) An important session discussing the historical legacy of the Papal Doctrine of Discovery was presented by Archbishop Donald J. Bolen and Deacon Harry Lafond, Chief of Muskeg Cree First Nations.



Deacon Lafond expressed that we usually think of the word "discovered" as a positive term. But for Indigenous communities and the history they experienced from colonization, it is not a positive term. The Cree community sees all things designed to be interconnected and not as a commodity to be parcelled out into pieces, and we need to learn to talk and listen to each other. A standing ovation was given for their presentation as members were encouraged to make this topic a longstanding focus in their work. ([Papal Doctrine of Discovery Discussion](#))

Woven into the convention schedule were workshops presented by National Officers which, members could sign up to attend in advance. This was very well received by members as it assisted to support and further their learning of available resources offered through the CWL.



There were many raised eyebrows from drivers stopped at a red light as CWL members dressed in pirate costumes walked from the hotels to the conference centre on Monday, August 12th. A sea of pirates took over the TCU Conference Centre Place for the Pirates of the Saskatchewan River Banquet! Members dressed up in their best pirate costumes and each centerpiece at the tables were designed by a different parish council to represent their city.

Delicious Ukrainian food was served and a live band, Brad Johner and the Johner Boys, were rocking the stage with grooving original music and a medley of classics like "Peggy Sue", "Honky Tonk Women", and "I Love A Rainy Night" and everyone was on their feet. There was a photo shoot opportunity with a giant pirate ship and even an incredible conga line was formed later in the evening from all the fun dancing!

Overall, delegates found the new convention format to be spiritually uplifting, filled with relevant information for members and provided time for sisterhood and fun. Our congratulations to the convention committee and the National Board for the opportunity to experience an outstanding convention.

**Content containing links are captured from cwl.ca*

**Photo credit - the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon*



COMMISSIONING OF NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Cheers and celebration were in order during the Commissioning of New Life Members at the 104th Annual National Convention in Saskatoon.

The new life members were welcomed and called forth one by one to receive a blessing. The following from Ontario received their Life Membership

- Paddy Fitzgerald Nolan, Sydenham, Ontario
- Hilarion Mitchell, Brampton, Ontario
- Audrey Shelton, Haileybury, Ontario *(No photo available)*



UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Stay tuned for an upcoming spiritual event for our Indigenous peoples.

Mark September 30, 2024 on your calendar. Have your orange shirts ready to show support, *details to follow...*

The Toronto Diocesan Council presents: Stewardship in the CWL – Elections

Presented by Sue Lubowitz

To register for this virtual event contact: Andrea Tijoe a_tjioe@yahoo.com

see poster at: [Stewardship in the CWL - Elections](#)

A Webinar on the National Communications Plan

You are welcome to attend a free webinar on September 24th, 2024 at 6:00 PM CDT.

To Register, click here: [National Communications Webinar](#)

Join National Secretary-Treasurer Dorothy Johansen as she discusses the new national communication plan and the steps the national board has taken to strengthen communications throughout the League.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

78th Annual Ontario Provincial Convention – London 2025

- July 6 - 9, 2025
- Four Points Sheraton Hotel (1150 Wellington Rd. South, London, ON)
- Toll Free: 1-888-236-2427
- **Booking Reference:** "2025 CWL Provincial Convention"

[Marriott Four Points London](#)

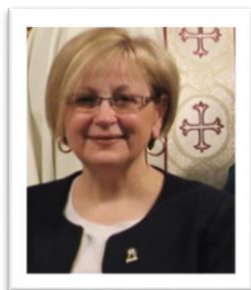
Room Rates: *Book your room before they're gone!*

Superior room with 1 King bed	\$169	Tower Suite (1 King bed 1 pullout Sofa)	\$189
Superior room with 2 Queen beds	\$169	Tower Suite (2 Double Beds, 1 Pullout Sofa)	\$189

105th Annual National Convention – Toronto 2025

- August 10 – 13, 2025
- Marriott Downtown CF Toronto Eaton Centre (325 Bay St., Toronto, ON)
- Reservations: 1-800-905-0667/416-597-9200
- **Booking Reference:** "The CWL National AGM"

Final Thoughts....



Secretary - A Communications Committee has been established under the position of Provincial Secretary. It is with sincere gratitude that I thank the following women for their servant leadership and sharing their gifts of time and talent in support of this committee:

- Daniela Carlino, Communications Co-Chair – Thunder Bay Diocese
- Joyce Cotter - Hamilton Diocese
- Ann D'Souza - Toronto Diocese
- Nelly Kelders - London Diocese
- Pauline Krupa - Thunder Bay Diocese
- Claudette Langdon - Ottawa Diocese (OPC Faith Chair)
- Sue Lubowitz - Toronto Diocese (OPC Service Chair)
- Lynette Mendes - Toronto Diocese
- Hilarion Mitchell - Toronto Diocese (OPC Social Justice Chair)
- Nancy Richer - Kingston Diocese
- Lauralee Sopczak - Pembroke Diocese
- Anna Tremblay - Sault Ste. Marie Diocese
- Wilma Vanderzwaag - St. Catharines Diocese (OPC Administrative Assistant)

77th Annual Provincial Convention Photos Update: We apologize that we have not been able to post a link of the convention photos to website as of yet. Instead of a link, we are working on establishing a gallery page on the Ontario Provincial Website where photos will always be accessible to members. We thank you for your patience as we work to get this set up and apologize for any inconvenience. ***We will post a notice on the Ontario Provincial Council Facebook page once the gallery page is up and running.

Like and Follow us on our FB page at: <https://www.facebook.com/cwl.on.ca>

Share your Photos & Events! We want to celebrate you and the incredible work you are doing across our province! Do you have photos to share of your council or diocesan events? They will now be shared on our Facebook page and not in the provincial newsletter. Send your submissions to: opcsecretary24@gmail.com

Guidelines:

- Ensure you have permission from the people in the photos to share on social media
- Send a write up with the photo that incorporates the following from the event:
Who, What, When, Where, why


Submitted by Lisa Henry, Secretary

Message of Thanks from Mary Bannon, President of London Diocese

Well, after my unfortunate tumble at OPC Provincial AMM/Convention resulting in a dislocated shoulder, I am gradually recovering with the love, comfort, cards and prayers of my CWL sisters. The bruising is gradually disappearing and I have so much help from family, community care workers and a physiotherapist. With Love, Mary Bannon



Prayer for September - Prayer from Pope Francis - Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, on 24 November, the solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, and the conclusion of the Year of Faith, in the year 2013, the first of his Pontificate.



Mary, Virgin and Mother,
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed the word of life
in the depths of your humble faith;
as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
help us to say our own "yes"
to the urgent call, as pressing as ever,
to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Filled with Christ's presence,
You brought joy to John the Baptist,
making him exult in the womb of his mother.
Brimming over with joy,
you sang of the great things done by God.
Standing at the foot of the cross
with unyielding faith,
you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection,
and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit
so that the evangelizing Church might be born.

Obtain for us now a new ardour born of the resurrection,
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life
which triumphs over death.

Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,
that the gift of unfading beauty
may reach every man and woman.

Virgin of listening and contemplation,
Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast,
pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are,
that she may never be closed in on herself
or lose her passion for establishing God's kingdom.

Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,
pray for us.

Amen. Alleluia!