



WELCOME TO THE  
**ON-LINE NEWSLETTER**

*We're so glad you're here!*

INTRODUCING



The Vatican introduced an anime-style mascot named Luce to represent Catholic pilgrims in the 2025 Jubilee year and within a week, the character has already become a viral internet sensation. Luce, which is Italian for "light," is a blue-haired mascot who wears a rosary around her neck and a yellow raincoat that is meant to symbolize journeying through life's storms and reflect the color of the Vatican flag. She wears green muddy boots that represent a long and difficult journey and carries a staff meant to symbolize the pilgrimage toward eternity.

*Vatican News October 28, 2024*

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*So  
Grateful  
for Your  
Support!*



*On a personal note: Thank you to all who reached out during our family's recent loss of our dear nephew, Dylan, at the tender age of 20 years. Another example of the care, compassion, and spiritual outpouring of our sisterhood.*

*I encourage every Catholic woman to give themselves to the League and receive the gift belonging returns one hundred-fold.*

**Colleen Martin  
Provincial President**

# Colleen's Message of Joy



My dear sisters, it is hard to believe as I write this that another calendar year is slipping away. For the past year, Pope Francis asked that we pray in anticipation of the Jubilee Year 2025. In just a few short weeks, the year will begin on December 24 with the opening of the Holy Door into St. Peter's at the Vatican. I can only imagine the awesome feeling it would create to be present in person at that most Holy moment.

Many of us will not have the privilege to join a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee Year, but don't let that discourage you. I am personally planning a virtual pilgrimage on zoom open to all. It will begin March 10, following the Jubilee of the World of Volunteering March 8-9, and end on March 14. I will advertise it here, on social media, and likely on the website so keep your eyes open. Invite your friends to view online, view it at your parish with a group, do whatever Spirit moves you to.

The lead up to the Jubilee Year was the Synod on Synodality. In its final report, a definition of synodality, a term which, due to its novelty, has been open to a wide array of interpretations, was offered:

"Synodality can be understood as the walk of Christians with Christ and toward the kingdom, together with all humanity; mission-oriented, it involves coming together in assembly at the different ecclesial levels of life, listening to one another, dialogue, communal discernment, consensus-building as an expression of Christ's making himself present alive in the Spirit, and decision-making in differentiated co-responsibility." **Does it sound a little like our journey in The Catholic Women's League of Canada?** Consider delving further into this issue to read more about synodality and the greatness of our League.



# Vice President's Corner

Karen McDonald



The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Membership Gift Certificate

\_\_\_\_\_, you have been enrolled as a member of  
(name of recipient)

\_\_\_\_\_, council, in \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of council) (city/town)

This membership is valid for the year \_\_\_\_\_.

As a gift from \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(council president)

**Have you started your Christmas shopping?**

**Why not give the gift of the League?**

Membership Gift Certificate (#206) Available from the CWL online store

<https://eshop.cwl.ca/Default.aspx>

Contact national office via email or telephone (204) 927-2310



Consider purchasing a membership gift certificate and present it to a family member, friend, co-worker, neighbour, new parishioner. It is a beautiful way to say welcome, and to invite them to learn more about The Catholic Women's League of Canada.

Once gifted with a membership, she will receive The Canadian League magazine (or view it online). She will learn to access our national, provincial, diocesan websites and Facebook pages and find out more about this sisterhood bond that we share.

When I turned 16, my mother bought me my first membership. I immediately wanted to know more about this organization she and my grandmother spoke so highly of. I have gifted memberships to women who are still members. Will you consider it?

Dear God,  
Watch over all members and our spiritual advisors as this season of Advent begins. Bless us as we continue our service for God and Canada. Enlighten our minds and hearts so that we will interact with one another in a spirit of kindness and joy! Amen.

# Minute By Minute

Little Tips Shared by  
Diocesan Secretaries



## ***Ask the Secretary***

### **QUESTION:**

“How can I best assist our secretary when submitting reports for an executive or regular meeting?”

### **ANSWER:**

- Submit the report one week in advance of the meeting or at the very latest, on the date of the meeting so she may prepare the minutes in a timely manner.
- Keep your report brief if possible. You can even use point form if that helps. Here are some tips from “The Guide to Simplifying Meetings” on preparing your report. (This excellent resource may be found at: <https://www.cwl.ca/strategic-planning-resources-and-updates/>)
  - Reports of one page or less are more effective for keeping members engaged.
  - A simplified format consists of an opening, key points and closing.
  - Using bullet form, the key points of the report highlight important activities and provide updates.
  - The closing should be a short review of what was covered and to thank those who may have assisted.

As an executive council, adopt a standardized format for reports. For example:

- No more than one page in length
- List activities in point form using bullets
- Font Size: Verdana 12 (If using a computer to write reports).

# faith

Claudette Langdon

## Christ in Christmas

The Christmas season is a time for sharing, giving and enjoying time with family and friends but it is important that we remember the central figure of Christmas, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the reason for this most blessed season ...

The word Christmas is short for Christ's mass. The word Christmas has its origin from the old English term *Cristes Maesse*, meaning "Christ's Mass."

Jesus' birth is a message of hope, love, joy and peace. It reminds us of God's love for humanity and His desire to reconcile with us. It also teaches us about humility, service, and the importance of living a life of faith and compassion. **READ MORE....**



## December Prayer

*Dear God,*

*Help us to keep our focus first on Christ this season.*

*Please forgive us for giving too much time and attention on other things. Help us to reflect again on what Christmas is really all about.*

*Thank you that you came to give new life, peace, hope, and joy.*

*Thank you that your power is made perfect in our weakness.*

*Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Immanuel, is our greatest treasure, not just at Christmas, but for the whole year through.*

*Fill us with the joy and the peace of your Spirit. Direct our hearts and minds towards you.*

*Thank you for your reminder that both in seasons of celebration and in seasons of brokenness, you are still with us, for you never leave us.*

*Thank you for your daily powerful presence in our lives, assuring that your heart is towards us, your eyes are over us, and your ears are open to our prayers.*

*Surround us. Keep us safe in your care as we keep you first in our hearts and lives.*

*In Jesus' name. Amen*

## The Joy of Bake Sales: Bake a Difference!

*"Hope is the door that opens onto the future. Hope is a humble, hidden seed of life that, with time, will develop into a large tree. It is like some invisible yeast that allows the whole dough to grow, that brings flavour to all aspects of life."*

*Pope Francis*



Members of St. John Chrysostom, Newmarket making pies for their Christmas bazaar.

As we enter into the Advent Season and the Jubilee of Hope later this month, it seems a good time to reconsider the importance of our parish councils and by extension parish communities in the work of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. Within the new structure of the League, parish activities now fall under the Service Committee umbrella. One of the mainstays of a council's events calendar is the Christmas Tea and Bazaar. It is essential to understand the importance of bake sales and how they can lead councils to "bake" a difference in their communities and to live life more liturgically.

Want to know more? **[READ MORE...](#)**



# SOCIAL JUSTICE

Hilarion Mitchell

The liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas prepare us for the coming of Christ. We are filled with hope, peace, joy, and love making us more connected to others. It is a time to celebrate with our League sisters, spiritual advisors, family and friends.

## Charity and the Spirit of Giving

We are also keenly aware that affordability issues continue to dominate the news and are within our own homes, families, parishes, community and beyond. Housing, food, health care, transportation costs and more are experienced by many around us. During these festive times, charity and advocacy go hand in hand with Social Justice, and are reminders to help those less fortunate.

"Let charity be reborn," and "may we not let this Christmas pass without doing something good" so that a little hope can be "born anew in those who feel hopeless."

*Pope Francis*

Mindful that the spirit of giving embodies the true meaning of Christmas, brings joy and fulfillment. We feel blessed when we give of our time and provide financial donations. Councils and members looking for ways to help others can support the CWL national voluntary funds below:

- [Coady Institute](#)
- [Development and Peace – Caritas Canada](#)
- [Catholic Missions In Canada](#)
- [Catholic Near East Welfare Association](#)



[The Bishop Bernard F. Pappin Memorial Bursary Fund](#) is administered through the Ontario Provincial Council. Your diocese may have its own voluntary fund that you can also support. In addition, donate and volunteer to organizations such as Society of St. Vincent de Paul, shelters and food banks, give handmade gifts and homemade baking, make hygiene kits, etc.



## Reducing Environmental Footprint During the Holidays

This season, though enjoyable, comes with excess waste from boxes, gift wrappings, food and more. Zero Waste Canada found: [Zero Waste Canada](#)

**[READ MORE...](#)**



# MEET THE SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

## FATHER TERRY SAWCHUK THUNDER BAY DIOCESE



*Father Terry Sawchuk was born and raised in Thunder Bay, Ontario, the third oldest in a family of ten. After attending St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario, he was ordained to the priesthood in 2010.*

*Following his initial assignment to serve at St. Peter's, Thunder Bay, he was reassigned to the parishes of Holy Angels, Schreiber, and St. Martin of Tours, Terrace Bay. Father Terry currently supports the mission and work of the Catholic Women's League as spiritual advisor in two parish councils as well as the Thunder Bay Diocesan Council.*

Dear friends in Christ,

It is a great joy to be able to share this message with you, especially as we enter into this privileged season of Advent grace. One of the things I appreciate more and more about this season is the call to alertness and action that it places on our heart. Advent exhorts us with the words of St Paul: "Brothers and sisters, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from your sleep." (Romans 13:11)

Invariably, this is a piece of scripture that makes me think about my alarm clock. On my alarm clock there are two buttons – snooze and stop. While the snooze button is by far the biggest and easiest to find, the stop button is much smaller and more difficult to locate. I suspect that whoever designed the clock must have known a lot about human psychology and which button would be most utilized!



It has been said that a majority of people will hit the snooze button at least once before getting out of bed. I'm willing to admit that I've done it myself! As innocuous as it may appear to be, there is something about the snooze button that can be hauntingly revealing about one's overall disposition to the day and even to life. When the alarm clock first rings, I am faced with a choice – to engage or disengage. To get up promptly is to choose engagement. To hit the snooze button is to choose disengagement. Which will it be? **READ MORE...**



The Ontario Provincial Council  
of The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Invites You to a Zoom Presentation on

# *The Holy Doors of Jubilee*



**Presented by: The Most Reverend Bishop Thomas Dowd,  
Provincial Spiritual Advisor**

**Mark your calendar for Thursday, December 19, 2024 - 7:00 pm  
Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

**Register in advance for this meeting:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIkOispzktHtDn8kbt5k512gFU-bPcrf8>**

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





# Here I am Lord ... the Call to Synodality

Louise Beggs  
OPC Faith Sub-Committee

Just a month ago Pope Francis closed the second and last Synod assembly on Synodality in Rome and the delegates went home, commissioned to share what they have learned.

Now, we ourselves are being called to embrace Synodality. To “make it real”, in our parishes and in our beloved Catholic Women’s League of Canada (CWL).

This is a new kind of journey. We are being called to start “walking side by side” in faith, to allow the Holy Spirit to act in us as Church. This means listening to each other, being open to “conversion”, to newness, and always in prayer, together.

The journey is all about faith. Delegates focused on Scripture, looking closely at how Jesus spoke and acted. They prayed, during and after. They listened respectfully and openly to each other’s wisdom on many questions facing our Church. Each had an equal amount time to speak, without interruption or question. Then discernment followed, wrapped in prayer. The result is the Final Document on the Synod, where all 115 paragraphs were approved.

Practicing Synodality changed the delegates. They walked together first in October 2023 for a month and then returned this October for another month. From a distance, it appeared to me that they had changed. Last October there were tensions as some bishop delegates were seated side by side at round tables with lay consecrated and non-consecrated people. As they learned to really listen to each other, equally. This October they looked relaxed, happy and productive. Many delegates spoke to the press afterwards and were happy to have experienced Synodality in action. Practicing Synodality is the way to learning and appreciating it as a way of being together. **READ MORE...**