

Constitution & Bylaws Amendments Workshop
January 20, 2026
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Welcome & Introduction

I extend a warm welcome to all members who took the time to attend this presentation this evening. I hope by the end of this presentation, you will feel comfortable with the instructed voting process.

The Constitution & Bylaws of The Catholic Women's League of Canada are the rules that govern how the organization operates. Over time, changes to this document are required for various reasons. During the time the strategic plan was being implemented, many changes took place, with the last amendments occurring in 2022.

For changes to be made to the C&B a process has to be followed. A member sends an amendment to the national council recommending a change. The proposal is studied by a national amendments committee. If the committee decides the recommendation has merit, the national council gives their approval that the amendment be circulated to all councils six months prior to the national convention. An instructed vote is held by all councils so that members can find out about the proposed changes, discuss them and vote on them. This year we are being asked to consider 10 Proposed Amendments.

The instructed vote is carried out following rigid procedures in order to ensure that the voting is done the same in every council.

Agenda

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Land Acknowledgement

Introduction of the topic

Viewing and Discussing the Proposed Amendments

Conducting the Instructed Vote in Parish Meetings

Sharing the Results

Questions

Closing Prayer

Opening Prayer

Land Acknowledgement

Introduction of the Topic

Each parish executive will have to decide when they are going to hold this instructed vote. It must be held at least 30 days before the diocesan convention in your area. These conventions are usually held in April or May. So you should do it in February or March.

When you send the notice for the meeting, send a "Notice of Motion" that the instructed vote will be held. For the vote to be valid, a minimum of 10% of your total members must be in attendance to vote. This is called a quorum. The number is based on how many paid members the council has as of December 31, 2025,

For each amendment, the new wording is in bold letters.

Proposed Amendment #1

To amend Part III, Section 1

The crest, as designed and adopted in 1922, shall be the cross, symbolic of faith, surmounting **13** maple leaves, symbolic of the provinces of Canada **and three territories**, with the words "THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA" enclosed in an unbroken circle, symbolic of constant service to God and Canada. The colours of the crest shall be blue, chosen for Our Lady, and the papal colours, white and gold.

Rationale:

The last redesign of the crest was in 1950 to show 10 provinces after Newfoundland entered Confederation. Since then Canada has changed again with Nfld. & Lab. being renamed and the addition of a third territory. The territories have never been represented on the League crest. In the spirit inclusion of the territories and of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, this amendment proposes the acknowledgement of all Canada.

Proposed Amendment #2

To Amend Part IX

To replace (a)(i)

The spiritual advisor. In cooperation with the chairperson of **faith (remove spiritual development)**, shall provide advice and guidance for the spiritual program. (Part VI)

Rationale:

To change **spiritual development** to **faith** in keeping with our new wording.

Proposed Amendment #3

Part XIV, Meetings and Quorums

Section 6: Expenses for Voting Delegates

(d) At national level, the national treasury shall pay:

(ii) transportation expenses **and registration fees** for honorary life members to attend the annual national meeting of members.

Rationale:

A few years ago the national executive made a motion to pay for the registration fee for past national presidents to attend the national meeting of members. This has been taking place ever since. It has to be included in the C&B for transparency.

Proposed Amendment #4

Part XIV Section 9: due Notice

Notice of the **date**, time and place of a meeting of members shall be given to each member entitled to vote at the meeting as follows:

Rationale:

The notice of a meeting must include the date when sending out advance notice. The notice for national is 60 days, while for parish, diocesan and provincial, it is 21 days.

Proposed Amendment #5

Part X: Representation at Annual Meetings of Members

Section 1: delegates

(b) Accredited Delegates

(i) Each parish council in the diocese concerned may **appoint (remove send)** TWO accredited delegates to the diocesan annual meeting of members and ONE accredited delegate to the annual provincial meeting of members.

(ii) Each diocesan council **in** the province concerned may **appoint (remove send)** TWO accredited delegates to the annual provincial meeting of members and TWO accredited delegates to the national annual meeting of members.

(iii) Each provincial council may **appoint (remove send)** TWO accredited delegates to the annual national meeting of members.

Rationale:

Because accredited delegates have voting powers, they should be appointed. Some councils also pay for some or all of the accredited delegates expenses so the appointment should be recorded in the minutes.

Proposed Amendment #6

Part XVI: Eligibility, Nominations and Elections

Section 2: Term of Office

(b) An elected or appointed officer shall serve but not exceed one full term in the same office except the **chairpersons** and **treasurers** (secretary-treasurer at national level) who may be elected to a second consecutive term. A chairperson shall be given a different standing committee **during each term (remove in her second consecutive)**. **A treasurer may serve a total of two terms only in this position.**

Rationale:

The intent of this section is to state that a member is eligible to hold the position of treasurer twice or to be elected as a committee chairperson twice. This is to discourage members from holding the same office for too long.

In my experience, councils that have allowed members to stay in positions for several terms are the ones that have difficulty filling leadership positions down the road.

Proposed Amendment #7

Part XVII: Finance

Section 2: Financial Projects

- (a) At parish level, all financial projects, shall be approved by the members at a council meeting. (**remove in consultation with the spiritual advisor**)

Rationale:

The current wording implies that the spiritual advisor has a say in approving financial projects when in fact each council has autonomy over its distribution of funds.

Proposed Amendment #8

Part XX: Amendment of Constitution & Bylaws

- (a) The amendments committee shall be composed of the national past president as chairperson, the national president, **the national vice-president** and other members as required, appointed by the national president.

Rationale:

Since amending the C&B is a two-year process, for the sake of continuity, the vice-president should be a permanent member of this committee.

Proposed Amendment #9

Part XI: Officers

Section 4: vacancies at Any Level of the League

(c) In the event of a vacancy in the office of vice-president **during her term**, the secretary shall perform the duties of the vice-president until the next election. She shall not be appointed to the office of vice-president nor assume the office of president.

(d) in the event of a vacancy in the office of vice-president after an election is held, an "acting" vice-president may be appointed by the president in consultation with the executive and the spiritual advisor. The "acting" vice-president shall perform the duties of the vice-president until the next election. She shall not automatically move to the office of president at the time of the next election. She may be nominated and elected to the position of president as long as she meets the eligibility criteria and has not held the office of president on that council before.

(e) In the event of a vacancy in any other office **than president or vice-president**, a member shall be appointed by the president in consultation with the executive **and the spiritual advisor** and shall serve until the next election.

Rationale:

This explicitly states that an appointed vice-president, not having been elected, does not automatically become president of a council.

Also, a member cannot serve as president if she served as president of the same council before.

Proposed Amendment #10

Part XVI: Eligibility, Nominations and Elections

Section 5: Election of Officers

(e) Any office, **other than the offices of president and vice-president**, left vacant following the election shall be filled from those eligible for nomination to office in that council. **In special cases, an "acting" president or "acting" vice-president may be appointed by the executive in consultation with the spiritual advisor.**

Rationale:

Since these positions were not elected, the term "acting" is used for a member serving in these positions who have not been elected.

Procedures at Parish Level

- The vote must be held 30 days before the diocesan annual meeting of members.
- Note the number of members the council has as of December 31, 2025. Ensure that 10% of that number is in attendance, which means there is a quorum.
- Record the number of members in attendance. Calculate what the number of votes required for a yes vote of more than 2/3. Use a calculator.
- Assemble a team to conduct the vote. President chairs the meeting and reads the amendments. One or two scrutineers help count each vote. The secretary records how many voted in favour and how many opposed.
- Read each amendment separately. Allow for discussion. Take the vote.
- Every parish CWL member can vote, including the president.
- When the vote is counted, if 2/3 of the members voted in favour, it is a yes vote.
- If less than 2/3 voted in favour, it is a no vote.

Recording the Results

As each amendment is read and the vote is taken, the secretary records the results on the chart.

The council president and secretary must sign the results forms. A copy is attached to the minutes of the meeting.

If you received your information by email, you received both a printable and fillable form to be completed.

Additional copies must be made.

The president will take one copy to the diocesan convention.

One copy is sent to the diocesan president.

One copy is emailed to the national office.

Now that covers the paperwork for the instructed vote.

There is one more step to have your vote count.

When the diocesan convention/AMM is held, each parish president is expected to attend. If she is not able to attend, another member should be designated to attend in her place. During the business part of the convention, the amendments

will be read and the voting delegate will be asked to state how her council voted. This is the official vote and record of the instructed vote. The same process will occur when diocesan presidents vote at the provincial convention and the provincial presidents vote at the national convention.

Questions

Closing Prayer