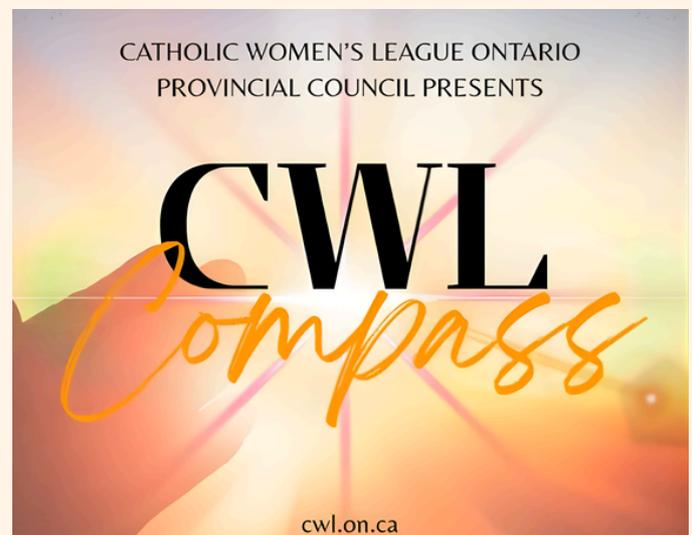


WELCOME TO THE
ON-LINE NEWSLETTER
We're so glad you're here!

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*Discover the Ontario Provincial CWL
Compass Podcast! Inspiration,
connection, and faith-filled
conversations—ready to watch and
share.*

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@OntarioProvincialCouncilCWL/podcasts>

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/show/6yi4vvSJKjCOsM1wBUwDzT>

Amazon Music: <https://music.amazon.ca/podcasts/90825266-27fd-4757-8728-07826dcf451f/cwl-compass-podcast>

Spread the word and enjoy the journey!

Important Provincial Convention Update – Mrs. Roper Fun Night!

**Please note that the venue for Mrs. Roper Fun Night
on Saturday, July 4th has changed:**

New Location: Columbus Centre, May St.

(Previously scheduled at Sleeping Giant Brewery)

Your bright caftans, bold accessories, and joyful Mrs. Roper spirit are still very much encouraged – only the venue has changed!

The Convention Registration Package on the Ontario Provincial website has now been updated to reflect this change.

<https://cwl.on.ca/conventions/>

Colleen's Message of Joy

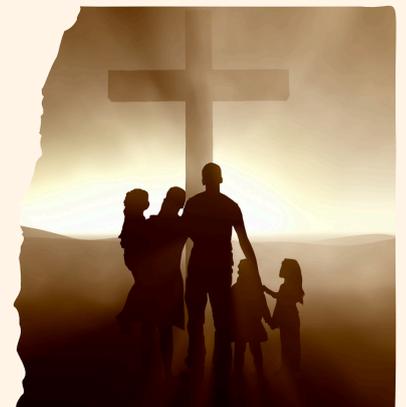
My dear sisters ... Holy Spirit did not let me down once again. I was struggling with how to structure this month's sharing with you. One of my sisters shared the *40 Days of Lent-From Cross to Hope* video for Day 20 with Fr. Tom Lynch. If you did not see it, you should [click here](#) and watch it. After you read this newsletter of course.



When I set out on my presidency in 2024, I prayed and discerned a goal to be with you in person wherever I could, to encourage you, and to lift you up in the challenges we are all feeling living our faith in today's secular world. This goal did not come to me from out of the blue sky. I believe God has a divine plan for our life, for what our 'work' is. Fr. Tom Lynch affirmed this for me in his video message when he states, "work creates the worker."

Fr. Lynch then goes on to talk about how in our 'work' [I add in 'if we are open and led by God'] we change the world and each other. How profound is that!! Every ordinary action of our day has extraordinary impact in the world. Each action taken or not, impacts the outcome of the rest of our life and of all those we might or might not encounter because of it.

In my travels, I have seen the impact of a sister's action echoing through the years; many, many years. If we let them, these situations will overshadow the good works of the League and leave many standing at the foot of the cross suffering on both sides of the struggle.



Let's all examine our consciences in this time of Lent and prepare for Easter renewal. Are we involved in one of these situations? Are we holding fast to our position? Would we rather be right or would we rather be peacemaker? Where is there an opportunity for dialogue, reconciliation, and peace, as Jesus did on earth? Believe in the good intentions of people, see their actions are formed by their past, hear what they are feeling, share what you are feeling.



As you stand suffering at the foot of the cross your faith should speak to you that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Light. It is He who brings healing to any situation. The time to seek reconciliation is now, to rise with our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ to Easter renewal.

My sisters be assured that your work for God and Canada is not something you choose, God leads you to this work to create you, the worker, and form the world. In scripture "you have been told, O mortal, what is good, and what the Lord requires of you: Only to do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8.





Pearls of Wisdom

OPC Past President

Linda Squarzolo

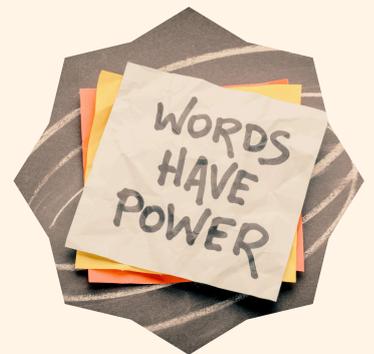
Pope Leo's Lenten Message

At the beginning of Lent, Pope Leo XIV offered this message. In part he stated, "I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbour. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace."

Lent is coming to an end and Easter is just a few days away. However, is this a practice that should only be done during Lent? At the provincial council's winter meeting, Spiritual Advisor Most Reverend Alan Campeau encouraged members to consider doing penance, almsgiving and abstinence not just during Lent but throughout the year.

This message is so necessary in the current world. Hope and peace are more needed than ever. How impressive was it to see our prime minister and the leaders of the opposition holding hands in solidarity in Tumbler Ridge?

How can we mend broken relationships in our families, amongst our friends and in our councils? How can we be supportive to others in their times of troubles? Can we find ways of expressing our points of view without harsh words? These are small gestures that yield large results.



Let's cultivate kindness and respect in our own little world.

Easter Renewal

*Let us take inventory of our spiritual life
and embrace new beginnings with wonder and joy.
This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.
Psalm 118*



Spring is a time to burst forth, to grow, to open. What an effective metaphor for our spiritual life at the end of Lent and the beginning of the 50-day Easter season. There is a reason why Jesus died and rose again during the springtime.

The Easter Mystery is the foundation of our faith in which we all share an experience of mystery, beauty and joy. The Holy Triduum, from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday, is a special spiritual time to prepare for and enter into Jesus' resurrection, the catalyst for our growth in spiritual renewal, hope and faith.

Like a seed that must die to bring new life, Jesus' death on the cross on Good Friday, was His ultimate loving sacrifice, His ultimate atonement for humanity's sin and hope for eternal life.

Easter signifies the proof of God's love triumphing over death and of His grace and power of love and forgiveness. We can apply this teaching in our lives by embracing hope, even during difficult times, making a positive impact in our world. We can also help others find hope by being a source of encouragement and support.



During the fifty days we celebrate Easter, beginning on Easter Sunday and ending with Pentecost, our liturgies feature special masses, renewal of baptismal promises and joyful traditions. The Holy Eucharist is a profound sacrament of the Church. Each time we receive the Holy Eucharist we have a personal encounter with God. It is a thanksgiving to Him that transforms our life and renews our commitment to Him for all He has done for us.

The teachings of this season extend beyond Eastertide. As Catholics we are called to live out this living faith every day.

In forgiving others, loving one another, having faith and spreading the Good News with hope we live out the teachings of Christ. We extend kindness and support to others, emulating Jesus' love especially to those who are less fortunate.

The burning Easter candle during this time reminds us that Christ is the light of the world and that He is present to us. It also reminds us of our baptismal promises which we renew again, rejoicing in the victory of Christ over sin and death and our hope in the resurrection.

So, we are called to live our lives with faith, knowing that God is with us always. Let us remember too that God wants us to experience the joy of Easter in our lives, every day.

If we open our hearts to Christ, nothing can keep us from the joy of God filling our hearts with His hope and grace.

Blessed Easter Wishes!



Prayer of Renewal



Father in heaven, may the faith You have given us in Your Son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of Your Kingdom.

May Your grace transform us, into being more faithful missionary disciples, capable of sowing the seeds of the Gospel in our families and our parishes.

Open our hearts to empower us with enthusiasm for Your mission.

Send Your Holy Spirit to ignite our hearts with the fire of Your passionate love.

May those seeds of love transform humanity and the whole creation in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil overcome, Your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of renewal reawaken in us, the call of our baptism in the witness of our faith, to seek always the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To You our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

*Prayer adapted from
The Jubilee Prayer, Pope Francis, 2023*



CELEBRATING EASTER THROUGH SERVICE AND GIVING



*Come to the feast of heaven and earth!
Come to the table of plenty!
God will provide for all that we need,
here at the table of plenty.*

(Dan Schutte) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwfKYpymoRI>

This is a regular hymn at my parish and I always enjoy singing it along with the cantor. As we end the Lenten season, a period of fasting, reflection, and self-discipline, this hymn brings us joyfully into Easter and the triumph of life over death and the power of love and forgiveness.

One of the most meaningful aspects of Easter is the spirit of giving. Christians are called to follow the example of Jesus Christ, who lived a life of service, love, and generosity. Easter provides us with an opportunity to emulate this by reaching out to those who are less fortunate and offering support through charitable acts.



Many parish communities organize food drives, clothing donations, and fundraising events to assist families in need, ensuring that everyone can partake in the joy of the season. These acts of giving embody the Christian values of compassion, selflessness, and caring for one another.

Unfortunately, the latest report from Feed Ontario tells us that 1,007,441 people used a food bank in Ontario between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025, nearly 10,000 more people than the previous year and a 87% increase since 2019-2020.

Hunger hurts communities. Hunger isn't just a crisis for people and families – it's a crisis for Ontario. Spikes in food bank use are often a warning sign that some of our province's biggest challenges, like homelessness, an overcrowded healthcare system, and instability in our communities, could get even worse. As detailed in the latest Feed Ontario report:

- When food bank visits go up, homelessness follows.
- When food bank visits go up, healthcare costs increase.
- When food bank visits go up, communities feel the pressure.

You can read the full report at:

https://feedontario.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2025/11/FEED_HungerReport25_Digital.pdf

Food banks are doing everything they can to help people, but they cannot solve hunger or the affordability crisis. This can only be done through good public policy that prioritizes people. With targeted investments and coordinated action across all levels of government, our elected officials can reverse this trend and build a strong, resilient province for everyone. As members we are in the strongest position to heal the hurt that hunger causes. Every day, we see in public polls that what matters most to Ontarians is affordability, healthcare, and safe communities where everyone can thrive. These priorities are not separate from food insecurity; they are directly connected to it. Contacting our provincial representatives about our concerns is the first step.

Food collection transforms Easter from a personal celebration into a communal act of love, reflecting the season's promise of new beginnings for everyone. Advocacy to our elected officials ensures that more of our fellow Ontarians can enjoy “a table of plenty”.



*May your
Easter be filled
with blessings.
Hallelujah!*

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Hilarion Mitchell

*... human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself.
(Laudato Si', 66)*



Renewal in Easter is strongly connected to caring for the environment. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, symbolizing new life, rebirth, and transformation. The Catechism of our faith teaches us that we are stewards of God's creation, called to protect the natural world and ensure that it flourishes for future generations.

It reminds us that the Earth is a gift that should not be damaged. As Catholics protecting the environment is part of living out the Gospel message.

Easter and April are rich with environment-themed observances that align with ideas of renewal and stewardship. This includes community gardening, tree planting, park cleanup, municipal confidential shredding programs, nature walks and more. League position papers and resolutions related to environmental issues are the advocacy documents used to influence government policies for change.

League Position Papers

- 2025 [Waste Management](#)
- 2023 [Water](#)

League Resolutions

- 2024.03 [Grant the Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise Legal Authority to Investigate Environmental and Human Rights Abuses](#)
- 2023.01 [Combating Textile Waste in Canada](#)
- 2022.01 [Enact Federal Legislation to Reduce Food Loss and Waste](#)
- 2019.02 [Canadian Support for the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#)



April 7th is designated **World Health Day** with the 2026 theme, **Together for health. Stand with science**. It raises awareness about global health issues and promotes healthier lifestyles connection between environment and human health. Clean air, safe water, sustainable cities, and climate action directly affect wellbeing, from reducing respiratory diseases to improving mental health. Protecting ecosystems helps prevent the spread of infectious diseases and ensures nutritious food. A healthy planet is essential for healthy people, making environmental care a critical part of global health.



Earth Day is celebrated on **April 22nd** and is during the Easter season. The 2026 theme is, **OUR POWER, OUR PLANET™**. It is a rallying cry for collective action, emphasizing that individuals and communities have the power to protect the environment, strengthen a green economy, and ensure sustainable, resilient communities, regardless of political shifts through the campaigns below:

- **End Plastics:** Informs policymakers and contributes to the international discussion on plastic pollution and its causes, including pushing for national legislation and corporate commitments.
- **The Canopy Project:** Help restore vulnerable landscapes, protect wildlife and their habitats, and protect community livelihoods.
- **Climate and Environmental Literacy:** [Earth Day Showcase 2026 Materials ENGLISH ONLY](#)
- **Food and the Environment:** Over-farming, development and other factors, soil capacity is dramatically declining, with some experts predicting fewer than 60 harvests remaining.
- **Fashion for the Earth:** The fashion industry, particularly the fast fashion sector, minimal oversight for decades, resulting in many environmental damages from water and air pollution to deforestation, oceanic microplastic contamination, and biodiversity loss.
- **Act on Climate Change:** To tackle urgent environmental crises, biodiversity loss, plastic pollution, and climate change.



Your Personal Connection Will Make All the Difference!

Ontario Provincial Council (OPC)

Ontario Legislature Visit – Thursday, April 23, 2026

The Ontario Provincial Council is calling on members to help extend a personal invitation to their local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) to attend the OPC Complimentary Luncheon at the Ontario Legislature.

This special event offers a valuable opportunity to connect directly with your MPP and ensure that the voices of women and families across Ontario are heard at the highest levels of provincial decision-making.

Why Your Role Matters

A personal invitation from a constituent is far more impactful than a general notice. By reaching out to your MPP's office, you help ensure that Ontario's 124 MPPs:

- Hear directly from constituents about issues affecting communities across the province
- Strengthening advocacy efforts through visible community engagement
- Gain insight into grassroots concerns and solutions shaped by lived experience

Find Your MPP

- Access contact details through the [Current MPPs Contact Information](#)
- If you don't know your MPP's name or your riding, use the "**Find an MPP**" tool on the [Current MPPs](#) page

How You Can Make an Impact

- Reference that Provincial President Colleen Martin issued the official invitation on March 8, 2026
- Use Talking Points for Members to highlight the purpose and importance of the luncheon
- Encourage your MPP to RSVP by April 10, 2026, to: Hilarion Mitchell, OPC Social Justice Chair opcsocialjusticechair@gmail.com

Your outreach strengthens our collective voice and demonstrates the importance of community engagement. Your invitation could be the one that ensures your MPP is present at this important gathering.

***Your
VOICE
MATTERS***

Make the connection as your voice matters!

A Story for Spring



A father saw that his 11-year-old son was crying silently. He asked him what was the matter? The young boy replied that his rich classmates mocked him, called him the son of a gardener. They said that you live off the money you earn from watering and feeding plants for their parents. The father paused for a moment, then said. "Come with me son, let's plant some flowers. It might cheer you up."

He held his hand and walked him to the garden, then he took out some flower seeds and said, "Let's carry out an experiment. We will plant two flowers separately. I will care for one, and you will care for the other. I will water mine with clean water from the lake and you will water yours with dirty water from the pond. We shall see the outcome. It took them a few days to finally germinate the flower seeds. They cared for them respectively and watched them grow.

Some time later, the father brought the son to the garden and said to him. "Look at the two flowers and tell me your observation." The boy responded. "My flower looks better and healthier than yours. How is that even possible when your water is cleaner?" The father smiled, then said. "That's because dirty water doesn't stop a plant from growing, rather it serves as organic fertilizer to help it flourish.

"You see son, there are some people who will put you down in life, mock your dreams and throw dirt on you. Always remember that there's nothing wrong with you, it is their ego they have to satisfy.

So, don't let harsh words from people affect you, instead, let it encourage you into being a better person. And doing so, you will be like the flower and will flourish even in the midst of dirt like negativity and harsh words."



**Submitted by Wilma Vanderzwaag
OPC Administrative Assistant**

Beyond the Bake Sale:

Fresh recipes for Council Fun and Growth

IGNITED AND EMPOWERED: APRIL RENEWAL IN ACTION

Emily Donato, social justice chairperson, and Cathy Hopper, president at St. Patrick council in Sudbury, supported by their spiritual advisor Fr. Pat Woods, hosted a letter writing and petition signing weekend at their parish.



They issued a friendly 'join us' challenge to other councils in the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, to enact a similar activity in their respective parishes; a synergistic and coordinated show of faith and advocacy in support of Bill C-218.

Bishop Thomas Dowd eagerly provided his full support for this petition campaign, and affirmed with a timely communication from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In true League spirit, the flame of advocacy spread quickly and with a 'can do' attitude, women empowered their members, scheduled volunteers and printed petitions and information to pull together a petition signing and letter writing campaigns in their parish.



In North Bay, led by diocesan social justice chair, Shirlene Condie-McVeigh, a coordinated approach with the area parishes resulted in a weekend blitz of advocacy and life lifting activity. Petitions were signed, parishioners were engaged, and a visit was made to MP Pauline Rochefort, Nipissing-Timiskaming.

On March 24, 2026, MP Rochefort presented a petition to the House of Commons, to support Bill C-218 which would reverse the law extending eligibility for MAiD to people with mental illness as their sole medical condition.

There is still time to have your voice heard! Write a personal letter or make a phone call to your MP today and urge them to support Bill C-218 – to save a life for those living with mental illness through treatment, not MAiD.

*"Contact Us" House of Commons
"How to Write to Your MP," Results Canada*

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

79th Annual Provincial Convention & Annual Meeting of Members

JULY 5 - 8, 2026

THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO

VALHALLA HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTRE

Details & Registration Information can be found at:

cwl.on.ca/conventions/



Ignite Your Passion

Empower His Mission

*United as Sisters in Christ - gathering from near and far
to build the Kingdom of God with joy!*