

NEWSLETTER

January 2024

SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL COUNCIL CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE



President's Message

Connie Crichton

Happy New Year sisters and Spiritual Advisors!

Thank you to all the councils who have completed the annual report summary. It is very encouraging to read about all the wonderful work our members have undertaken in 2023. Thank you also to the councils who have invited diocesan and provincial executives members to carry out the Unity Outreach sessions. I assure you our national executive is reviewing the feedback as are the diocesan and provincial councils.

Our National President Shari Guinta introduced her theme “Here I am Lord, send me” which will be used, with a focus on mental health, for the next two years. Look for more information on this in the winter issue of “The Canadian League”.

Our provincial council for the remainder of this term will be focusing on an aspect of mental health that includes accompaniment. How can we be good sisters to those who are struggling with mental health issues themselves or those of their family members?

We have had to make some changes on our provincial council due to members having to step down for health reasons. Wendy Dale will be taking over from Laura Novecosky as our Faith chairperson. Shirley Lamoureux will be acting Prince Albert Diocesan president taking over from Priscilla Wakelin. I am grateful that these members have stepped up to take positions to finish off the term.

We struggle at all levels to fill our leadership roles which has become one of our greatest challenges. Please have your councils pray for our members to consider saying “yes” when asked to take a leadership roles.

Blessings



PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE
Connie Crichton

The National website cwl.ca, now includes Indigenous resources. The resource "Walking Together with Indigenous Catholic Women" contains a wealth of information that can be used by parish councils in expanding their knowledge and providing ways to "Walk Together" on the path to Truth and Reconciliation.

We continue to ask you to send your stories about the activity (s) your council found to do with your members. The stories can be sent to provcwlsk@gmail.com. May the Holy Spirit provide you with guidance on this journey!

Any funds to be directed to the Bishops' Truth and Reconciliation Fund can be sent to:

**Patricia Keefe,
Box 333,
Waldheim, SK. S0K 4R0**

PAST PRESIDENT
Chantal Devine

As a new year is dawning, we look forward to embracing the new national theme *Here I am Lord, send me*. Wherever we are and whatever we're doing, let us be open to the Spirit, and heed His voice, especially in our work for the League.

One of our duties as past presidents, is to direct our members to review the National Manual of Policy and Procedures (P&P) regularly, and to send in any revisions by December 1st each year. For the past two and a half years, parish councils in our province have been encouraged to formulate their own P&P. I'm hopeful that at the provincial convention in June, many more councils will display their new manuals.

Archives is an important responsibility of the past president. What better way to preserve the past than by having each past president write a summary of her time in office? For the benefit of future generations, I encourage all past presidents to take "a walk down memory lane" and recount their experiences.

This is an election year for the Saskatchewan Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, and for many other councils across the province. As past presidents, encouraging our sisters in the League to accept a leadership position in their councils should be one of our first priorities. I'll be busy contacting members in the next couple of months requesting they serve on the provincial executive. Hopefully, they will place their trust in the Lord, listen to His voice, and respond, *Here I am Lord, I come to do your will!*



SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Fr. Francis Hengen

Brr! I think we are finally getting winter. What better time, then, to sit down with a cup of hot coffee and do some thinking, remembering and anticipating. I hope I have enough coffee in the perk to get through all of that.

Here are some of the happenings in the local council that took place since my last report. We celebrated the funeral for Liz Mayer in September. There was an honour guard for Liz who was a faithful member for 18 years. In October, Diocesan President, Janette Rieger, came to speak to the council as part of the Unity Project. The ladies that attended seemed to enjoy the experience and there was good discussion. In December, the members gathered for a Mass, brief meeting and social time as a prelude to Christmas. Card bingo, Christmas Trivia and a great variety of desserts was enjoyed by all in attendance. Sylvia Carriere, a member for 50 years, celebrated her 100th birthday in September, and Edith Zerr, a member for 53 years, will celebrate her 100th birthday in February. Sylvia will receive her 50-year pin at a Mass in the nursing home where she lives when it is open again to visitors. Their names will be sent into National Office for inclusion in the League Magazine. This year St. Joseph Council in Indian Head will celebrate 70 years as a council. No plans yet, but I am sure there will be a celebration.

I realize all these events involve only to the members of St. Joseph council which includes women from Indian Head, Wolseley, Grenfell and Qu'Appelle parishes, but I mention them as a reminder to all councils that, besides all the work they do for the League and the church, they must also remember to celebrate important milestones and occasions that acknowledge faithful service and steadfast commitment to the League and its Mission.

Past National President, Jean Mahoney, (1982-1984) died on December 12, 2023. I had many opportunities to visit with Jean at conventions – Diocesan, Provincial or National. She was a delightful lady to speak with and great resource to learn more about the League, its history and achievements. Her passing made me think about the future and where we will find the leadership necessary for the League to grow and meet the challenges of today's world and church. From a world perspective we can look at Velma's Dream. Past National President, Velma Harasen (2010-2012) "saw the plight of Christians firsthand, she knew the Catholic Women's League of Canada could help. 'Velma's Dream' became reality when Christian Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) became a recipient of the National Voluntary Fund." (Betty Colaneri – Velma's Dream information pamphlet). The Infant Welfare Center in Old City Jerusalem and Shepherd's Field Hospital in Beit Sabour became realities from this funding. Past National President Barbara Dowding (2014-2016) will attend the Synod on Synodality in Rome on October 2024. I believe these two examples demonstrate the high regard for the League's dynamic leaders. But where do these leaders come from? Women like Jean, Velma and Barbara all began their journey like everyone else – a member of a parish council and with encouragement and support made their way through diocesan, provincial and national levels of service. This encouragement and support for leaders is as important today as ever. Every organization needs certain roles to be filled by the members. In a couple of months conventions will be held and the election of executive officers will be on the agenda for Regina, Prince Albert and the Provincial conventions. (I believe Saskatoon gets a break this year.) In the coming weeks I ask that all members pray for the Spirit to guide prospective candidates to say, "Yes!" and accept a nomination to an executive position. **You may be that candidate**, and as Gabriel said to Mary, "Do not be afraid." And Mary said, "Let it be done to me according to your word."

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Fr. Francis Hengen



At the fall workshop I had brought up a couple of issues that came to the attention of the National Executive. Past President Vivian Bosch (2000-2002) had to deal with the issue of support for the March for Women and its support for the right to abortion. Past President Marie Cameron (2002-2004) faced the same sex marriage issue. Although there has so far been no response from the Saskatchewan bishops or the CCCB to Pope Francis' statement on blessing same sex couples, I think it is a issue that the League will be discussing at some point.

I had a very enjoyable Christmas, although with the Christmas on a Monday, it did mean I had nine masses that weekend and also the next weekend for Sunday and New Year's Day. I also hosted an Open House on January 1 for anyone who wanted to come. Looks good enough to eat.

God's blessing be upon you throughout the year.

Fr. Francis
Spiritual Advisor

Interim VICE PRESIDENT

Helen Kafish

In the recent Communique received from Betty Colaneri, the National Vice-president she reminds us that the time is now for renewal and recruitment of our membership. Betty reminds everyone how essential it is to act immediately upon receiving notification of a new member request from national office. We all know that personal contact is and should always be the best way to contact our members.

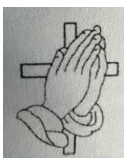
In December Betty introduced the “1” Campaign. I encourage you to go to the National website and find out more about this campaign. December’s message is: **It Begins With “1”**. Logo for the campaign is below. Each colour and symbol used represents something significant. Check her Communique #3 for a full explanation.

I also want to remind you of the provincial recruitment contest. You have until the end of February 2024 to have your council membership paid as well as the new member's fees paid. Check the end of this newsletter for more information and the form to be completed.

If you or your council are looking for assistance with transitioning to the new structure. Information and handbooks are available on the National Website for each of the positions in the new structures including a handbook for the Faith, Service and Social Justice chairpersons. In reading the annual reports on the survey I see that many councils have already established their executive under the new structure. Do not be afraid to contact your diocesan or provincial council for assistance so you can get the maximum value out of this change.

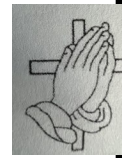
Happy recruitment ladies!





FAITH

(HEARTS IN PRAYER)
UNITING CATHOLIC WOMEN TO GROW IN FAITH
WENDY DALE



What a snowy white welcome we have had into the season of Winter Ordinary Time! The snow and frigid temperatures are certainly constant reminders that Winter is here. But what is Ordinary Time all about? The season name Ordinary comes from the Latin word *ordinalis* meaning numbered or ruled. This refers to the ongoing and rhythmical nature of the seasons. Just like everyday life, there is a rhythm to the days and weeks between holidays and special occasions. The weeks between the special occasions are a time for conversion, growth and maturation. It's a time for us to focus on Jesus and how he entwines himself more deeply into our lives and history. Winter Ordinary Time is a short season that ends on Ash Wednesday. There are many occasions that fall during Winter Ordinary Time that help us to grow in our faith and feel Jesus' presence more prominently in our lives.

Very shortly we will be in The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Jan 18-25). Have you checked out your local opportunities to pray and gather with women from other local churches? Does your Council invite women from other churches to special occasion gatherings? Pope Francis' prayer intention for January is for the gift of diversity in the Church, that we "recognize the gift of different charisms within the Christian community", an endorsement of making The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity anything but ordinary. Another occasion to meet with other Christian women is the World Day of Prayer on March 1 – not during Winter Ordinary Time, - but a time to build on relationships kindled during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year's World Day of Prayer has a very timely message prepared by an ecumenical group of Palestinian Christian women. Definitely an occasion to be promoted in your Councils.

February 2 is a very busy day – the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life and Candlemas. Has your Council considered supplying candles for services on that day? Do you have a special candle that you light while you pray? How is your Council supporting vocations? Choose a way that your Council can be a very visible witness to the rest of your parish on this day.

The World Day of the Sick is February 11, another opportunity to gather and pray with women from other Christian communities, and women from your own parishes who are not CWL members. What can your Council do to invite more women to experience the healing power of Jesus?

On all of the days of Winter Ordinary Time, I encourage you to practice Ignatian Gospel Contemplation as you read the Daily Gospels. Use your imagination to enter the scene of the Gospel. Will you walk and talk with Jesus? Will you ask him questions? Are you a bystander? Are you someone who was healed? What do the surroundings look like? (I know that there will only be warm sunlight where Jesus and I walk!) Putting ourselves into the Gospels each day makes us eager to get back and learn more about Jesus the next day. A perfect activity for Winter Ordinary Time.

In these days before the season of Lent, we can focus on building our relationships with non-CWL members of our parishes, and women from other churches. As is written in Romans 12, "though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ, and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body. Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times." Blessings on your Winter Ordinary Time season, and all the extraordinary relationships you build.



SERVICE

(HANDS THAT SHARE)

SERVICE TO THE CHURCH, CANADA AND THE WORLD

PATSY SALZL



Happy New Year to all. May this be the year that we will all feel blessed. The National theme for the next two years is "Here I am Lord, send me". It seems very fitting to me as we get back to the work of the CWL and we put God as our Leader.

The National board have suggested we focus on mental health issues such as homelessness, violence, spousal abuse and unemployment. Councils are encouraged to search in their areas for guest speakers or workshops and seminars, to help to learn how to reach out and help. Do you see unhoused people in your city, town or rural areas? Do you see Jesus in them someone's parent, sibling or child. As Catholics we should treat people that are abused, homeless or unemployed with respect in the same way we should treat others, offering them compassion and listening to them.

In November and December I participated in the Called and Gifted program. It is a discernment process that has been used since 1993. If you have a chance to take this program you should try it and find out what your talents are and how to use them.

No good deed is lost. If you are doing something good, it is going to come back to you one way or another.

J-Jesus

O-Others

Y-Yourself

Suggestions from Saskatoon Diocesan President , Marion Laroque on SERVICE:

Dr. Marty Nemko wrote in the *Psychology Today* about [The Power of Having Something to Look Forward to](#) as a tool to combat feelings of sadness or what we call 'the blues'. Are you looking forward to an upcoming trip or visit from your family, or even a long-awaited surgery? You know then how good it feels to have something to look forward to. I always called my mother on the anniversary of my father's death but made sure I had booked flights to come for our yearly visit first, so I could give her the good news that we were coming. I like to think it gave her a lift on her darkest day.

Could your council plan an activity that would reach out to parishioners who may be lonely, or grieving a loss? Even a phone call, an offer of a ride to an event or to mass, a lunch after mass, or an invitation to coffee could make a big difference to them. The possibilities are many.

Our monthly meetings:

If you don't look forward to your meeting, please change things! A great resource to help with change is #636 *Guide to Simplifying Meetings*. Or, if you need more help, perhaps *Conflict Resolution – Reaching a Win-Win Workshop* found under Strategic Planning Resources might be the answer.



Happy New Year

January is National Mental Wellness month. Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Mental health is important at every stage of life – from childhood to adulthood. If you experience mental health problems, your thinking mood and behaviour could be affected.

The federal government has put a pause on expanding the access to MAID to patients whose medical condition is mental illness. The pause is coming up this March of 2024.

Please see below for reference material on this.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/liberals-debate-expanding-medical-assisted-dying-1.7069887>

<https://www.catholicregister.org/item/36016-bill-c-314-defeated-maid-will-be-offered-for-mental-illness-next-year>

<https://digital.catholicregister.org/Catholic-Register-12242023-e-Edition/2/>

Glenda Carson in her Social Justice communique in December wrote:

“It remains essential to keep encouraging legislators to revoke the legislation supporting mental illness as part of the criteria and to work to protect the needs of those most vulnerable in society so that MAID is not the only option for them.”

Postcards have been created and are available on the National Website. Provincial council will be looking into having the postcards printed and distributed to all Parish councils for their members so send on to the applicable government official.

<https://www.cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/185c-Medical-Assistance-in-Dying-Mental-Illness-Postcard.pdf>

Glenda Carson in her most recent newsletter has asked all CWL members to support Bill S-210 – Protecting Young Persons from exposure to Pornography Act. This bill would make it an offence for organizations to allow young person's access to sexually explicit material on the internet. I encourage you to read the Social Justice Communique #6 on the CWL National website.

<https://www.cwl.ca/communique-06-social-justice/>

During the month of January please remember: If you don't make time for your wellness, you will be forced to make time for your illness. Read that again!!!

DIOCESAN COUNCIL NEWS

Prince Albert
Shirley Lamoureux
Acting President

Due to Health reasons, Priscilla Wakelin has had to step down as Prince Albert Diocesan President. To complete the current term, Shirley Lamoureux has agreed to take over the position until the Diocesan Convention. At that time a president will be elected for the 2024-2026 term.

Priscila thanks all who have assisted her in the past three years in carrying out her duties as president.

Regina
Janette Rieger
President

It's election time again, and for those of you who go on vacation down south or who watch American news, I don't mean for the US President. This is more exciting! It is for the Regina Diocesan CWL Executive! Yes, it is an election year for our diocese and I am asking for your help. Since I don't have a past-president to take on this duty as would be the norm, in addition to my duties as president, I am tasked with finding members to join the next executive.

So, I am asking all current council presidents to reflect on this very carefully. We need members for all positions except past-president, which I will assume, and president, which will be filled by our current vice-president, Linda Maddaford. The vacant positions are Vice-President (who also covers the Organization duties), Faith, Service, Social Justice, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Eligible candidates are the past-presidents of your council, going back 3 terms. That means that each council president should approach the last 3 presidents to ask if they would be willing to let their name stand. In addition, those who have not served as president but would be willing and able to serve on the diocesan level, could be appointed to a position if there are no other applicants. Please discuss this at your next council meeting with all of your members and help us to fill our executive, so that we can in turn, lead, guide, and assist all of our parish councils. If you are currently the president of your council, but will be past-president in the near future, please include yourself on the eligibility list! I will try to call eligible members as well, but I appreciate any help that you are able to offer.

Please forward the names of any candidates to me by **February 29th, 2024**. After that date, the nomination list will close and people will be contacted regarding an appointment to a position. Also, please contact me, or have any interested members contact me, for more information.

Finally, remember to **save the date for the Regina Diocesan Convention on Sunday, April 28th, and Monday April 29th, 2024**, at St. George Parish in Assiniboia. The scheduled guest speaker will be Deacon Eric Gurash, presenting on mental health.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL NEWS

SASKATOON

Marion Laroque
President

In October the Saskatoon Diocesan CWL executive sponsored a successful afternoon session on the Feminine Genius facilitated by Sr. Malou Tibayan of Verbum Dei. I have had positive feedback and hopefully we can continue to provide a faith event for all women, not just our league members.

Once again this year our councils has a good response to the challenge of completing the annual report survey, despite the change of deadline. I will read each and every comment and summarize it all into an annual report for the parishes.

The availability of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) in our country is disturbing and by March 17 of this year it may be expanded to include people whose only affliction is mental illness. We need to act now! To support our parish councils' efforts in this regard the diocesan CWL has printed postcards to send to your member of parliament. These postcards will be distributed soon, (or your council may already have them). Please take the time to speak up on this issue.

We have listened to the comments shared by our rural councils. Our Winter executive meeting scheduled for Saturday, February 10th will be virtual via Zoom. No need to worry about travelling, just fill up your coffee cup, find a comfortable spot and join your sisters in the league. I hope we will have a good attendance.

Convention Dates to mark on your calendars

Prince Albert 100th Diocesan Convention :

Saturday, April 20, 2024 , St. Joseph Calasactius Parish, North Battleford

Saskatoon Diocesan Convention:

Monday, April 22, 2024, Little Flower Parish, Leader

Regina Diocesan Convention:

Sunday April 28 and Monday April 29th, 2024, St. George's Parish, Assiniboia

Saskatchewan Provincial Convention

Sunday, June 2 and Monday June 3, 2024, St. Joseph Calasactius Parish, North Battleford

National Convention:

August 11-14, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

YOUR PLACE IS AMONG US!

This is the year to join!

COME AND SEE!

We are having a contest! Everyone can win!

Every council in Saskatchewan is encouraged to sign up new members! The council with the largest increase (%) in new members for 2024 will receive free registration for their council members attending the provincial convention in June. Every council has the same opportunity. All new members will have their name entered into a draw for a prize.

All memberships must be paid by: February 2024

To enter your council for the contest, complete the attached form and email to:

skprovcwl@gmail.com



**Saskatchewan Provincial Council
2024 Membership Contest**

Parish Council Name: _____

Diocese: _____

Parish Council Contact Person:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone #: _____

Total Members Paid by February 29, 2024 _____

Total New Members: _____

(New members do not include transferring members or members returning from absence of less than three years.)

Entries should be submitted to **skprovcwl@gmail.com** by April 1, 2024.

Names of new members for purposes of the prize draw to be made at the Provincial Convention in North Battleford on June 2, 2024.
