

EDMONTON DIOCESAN CWL FALL NEWSLETTER 2020



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Welcome - Susan Casey	1
Father Jan Sobkowicz	2
President's Message	2
Our New Treasurer	4
Doreen Melton Award	4
Andrew Sheedy's Story	5
CWL Stories during COVID	6
Centenary Projects	8
Season of Creation	9
CWL in History	9
Rose Goudreau	10
Poster Contest	11
Anniversaries	12
Upcoming Events	12

Welcome – Susan Casey Communications Standing Committee Chair

Here we are, Autumn 2020. What a year it has been so far. We have come through a long stretch of isolation with the COVID 19 pandemic and we may be looking forward to more of the same. But all is not lost. We have entered Fall and it is a time of change. Just like the trees shed their leaves, so must we shed the burdens of the past and prepare for new things to come. We may not have had the ability to enjoy the in-person togetherness this year but we can still give thanks for all that we are blessed with.

During the past few months, it has become apparent that there is the need for the Catholic Women's League of Canada to focus on Social Justice and it is a positive step that the League has formed the first working group for the core value of social justice. As the League Objects state, we are "to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony."

Pornography and human trafficking are on the rise, as is domestic violence. We have probably all seen or heard about the plight of the homeless people in Edmonton and with autumn in full swing and winter approaching, now is the time for our councils to look as how to take on the social justice issues that present themselves to us. If nothing else, please pray.



As Pope Francis says:

Those who pray are not deluded. They know that many questions of life down here remain unresolved, with no way out; suffering will accompany us and, after one battle, others will await us. But if we are listened to, everything becomes more bearable."



Message from Fr. Jan Sobkowicz Diocesan Spiritual Advisor

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Within weeks, the coronavirus has encircled the globe. The impact of the pandemic is something that we never experienced before. It hit our families, culture, economy, political systems, worship, and leisure time. We are confronted with the fragility of our lives and again we are reminded that all people of the world are our sisters and brothers under God's providence.

God didn't abandon us. God goes with us, even in this time of trial and testing. In this moment we pray *Jesus I trust in you*. Now we are called to intensify our prayers and sacrifices for the sanctity of human life, for a personal growth in holiness and love of our neighbor.

Christ suffered and died for our salvation and no matter what befalls us, sickness or tribulation, our hope is in God who will never disappoint us. So, pray from the

bottom of your heart, tell the Lord about your situation, your emotions, your hurts, and loneliness. Ask God what he wants to teach you in this pandemic time, forgive people who hurt you in some way, ask forgiveness, and be reconciled.

The most used words of the Bible are: *Be not afraid*. Let God speak to us: *I have plans to give you hope and a future* (God has spoken through the prophet Jeremiah). Our world desperately needs God's intervention and integral solution for all.

United with Pope Francis, let us pray in solidarity for our sisters and brothers around the world, for all who are sick, for those living in fear and anxiety, for those in isolation, and finally for the dead. We pray for researches and health care providers, for those



who make difficult public decisions in this time of crisis.

Nourish your faith and maintain hope. Keep in touch. Person-to-person interaction with our best friends has been cut back to virtual connections. We have a wonderful tool to communicate, and even to participate in conferences, retreats, spiritual gatherings on line. Your house doesn't need to be empty. You can pray together, joke, laugh, plan things together sharing your thoughts and feelings.

Dear Ladies, on your work together may God bless you.

President's Message – Mary Molloy

These past months have been extraordinary for us as individuals and as a nation, and the need to respect others' safety and well-being remains a moral duty. Our dedication to this task will continue for some time to come.

The pandemic has highlighted the strength of our organization. Our members are resilient, drawing power from both each other and our faith in God. Members have been connecting through phone and email, safely gathering in small groups to pray and share experiences, have meetings, and honor friends at funerals and other celebrations.



Respecting the need for protective masks and physical distancing, Edmonton Diocesan Officers have continued to meet in small gatherings and online. Since March, virtual meetings have been held monthly, and in-person meetings were held at Hawrelak Park to approve motions and develop plans for the remainder of 2020.

Diocesan Officers have a tremendous appreciation of the importance of personal connection and are resolute in wanting to meet with their fellow Council Presidents.

In April and September, we met with Parish Presidents through our Parish Buddy System. In May, we held a "CWL, Coffee and Conversation" virtual gathering in each of our four regions. More regional workshops are planned for October & November.



The workshops will provide information on the "Strategic Plan Year II", the "Welcome Kit," and explore ideas on maintaining CWL membership during this pandemic.

The first workshop was held on October 3, and the next is scheduled for October 17, October 24, and November 7. Presidents and President-elects are invited to a virtual presentation on November 14 to review the "Welcome Kit" and

discuss how to implement the kit in their parish councils.

A Diocesan wide virtual Memorial Service for Deceased Members is planned for November 18 to honour those members who passed in 2019.

Our Diocese priorities have changed, but we remain committed to connecting with our membership and providing opportunities to engage our members.

On September 26, Diocesan held a virtual retreat entitled "Season of Creation 2020: Jubilee for the Earth" facilitated by Belinda Halbach. The presentation was in response to Pope Francis's call to mark the "Season of Creation" from September 1 to October 4. Belinda is currently enrolled in the Laudato Si' animators course organized by the Catholic Climate Movement, a CWL Council President, and a graduate of the CWL Leadership Foundation Program.

Instead of physically attending the Annual Faith Fun Fit Run supporting Newman Theological College and St Joseph's Seminary, we donated our normal expenses for this event as a donation. We also contributed our annual donation of one month's rent (\$4500.00) in support of St Benedict's Chapel in downtown Edmonton.

There was a further donation (\$680.00) to the Foundation of Newman Theological College and St. Josephs Seminary for the CWL Doreen Melton Scholarship Fund.

Members attended the National Summer Speakers Series, and feedback received from our councils was very positive. Members are grateful to access the speakers' presentations if they are unable to attend the presentation.

Our councils have responded in many ways to help out the church and their communities during this pandemic. Examples include offering help to seniors and assisting those parishes celebrating mass on Sundays.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help created an innovative program for the homeless by sewing and serving lunch in cloth bags and making masks for health care workers in senior homes. During the pandemic, their contribution will be recognized by the Royal Alberta Museum. Their masks and lunch bags will become part of the permanent display at the museum highlighting significant contributions in response to COVID-19 in the province of Alberta.

I close with these words of Pope Francis: "The pandemic has brought us to a crossroads. We must use this decisive moment to end our superfluous and destructive goals and activities and to cultivate values, connections, and activities that are life-giving."

Stay safe, and God Bless

Our New Treasurer - Mariette Huot

With regret the Diocesan Officers accepted the resignation of Marguerite Attlebery as our Diocesan Treasurer effective August 1, 2020.



Marguerite Attlebery

Marguerite and her husband Ted decided it was time to move back to Ontario to be closer to their two sons and their families. We thank Marguerite for her service in the Edmonton Diocese and know her parish in Ontario is gaining a wonderful faith filled member.

Thank you Marguerite!

Please join the Officers in welcome Mariette Huot who has accepted the invitation to take on the Treasurers position.

Mariette is a member of Holy Trinity Parish CWL, Parkland County. She has served at the parish level as treasurer,

president, past president. Mariette was Chair of Zone 2 and was the 94th Diocesan Convention Co Chair held at Holy Family Parish in St Albert April 2016. Welcome!



Mariette Huot

Doreen Melton Scholarship Award

The Doreen Melton Scholarship was awarded to Seminarian Andrew Sheedy in September. He received a Certificate along with a cheque for \$750.



Annette Valstar, Andrew Sheedy, Mary Molloy, Fr. Stephen Hero and Clover Oryschak

Andrew Sheedy - 2020 Doreen Melton Scholarship

“I know that I am where God wants me to be.”

- Andrew Sheedy



Andrew Sheedy - 2020 Doreen Melton Scholarship recipient

I come from a fairly devout Catholic family and people at my parish often asked if I was thinking of being a priest, so I couldn't ignore the idea of priesthood as I was growing up. Nonetheless, for most of my life, it was a "backup plan"; something to consider if I didn't figure out what I wanted to do by the time I graduated.

The life of service of a parish priest was attractive to me, however, and I also grew to love daily Mass. When I was about 14, I went through a period of doubt and questioning, but even in the periods of greatest doubt, I found the priesthood calling out to me more than ever, which I thought strange at the time. When this crisis of faith ended, the priesthood was once again relegated to the back of my mind.

It wasn't until grade 12, when I met a seminarian who had had a similar faith journey to my own, that I began

thinking seriously about seminary. At this point, I already had plans about pursuing a career and was keenly interested in dating.

I began looking into seminary, but without immediate plans to apply. However, over the course of my last year of high school, I felt an increasing restlessness and turmoil whenever I thought of my plans. After much prayer and thought, I finally realized that I was putting my will before God's and so I decided to apply to seminary right away.

All the inner turmoil immediately dissipated. Since then, although I have gone through times of stress and frustration, there has always been an underlying sense of peace, and I know that I am where God wants me to be.

Andrew has been adopted by St. Theresa's Parish in Edmonton. To adopt a seminarian, contact Annette Valstar, at edmontoncwl.cfl@gmail.com

To view the current seminarians please visit the St. Joseph Seminary website

<https://www.stjoseph-seminary.com/Current-Seminarians>

CWL Shows the World

Stories from Councils during COVID

Our Lady of Perpetual Help - Sherwood Park

OLPH does several projects every year to raise money for about 40 different charities, as determined by their membership. The pandemic did not stop everything. OLPH parish hosts three inner city lunches per year. On April 05, Palm Sunday, the parish Knights of Columbus and Catholic Women's League jointly fed the hungry of downtown Edmonton along with the ecumenical Inner-City Pastoral Ministry staff, by completely re-inventing the normal format of a sit-down meal of fresh foods; and instead, handed out, on the street, 220 bagged lunches with pre-packaged, nutritious items, fresh whole fruit, and beverages.

The CWL had sewn colourful fabric bags at home while the Knights provided the food to fill them.



Mary-Lou Veeken Lady of Perpetual Help - Sherwood Park



*Global TV written summary & video link:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6781897/edmonton-church-meals-less-fortunate-covid-19-coronavirus/>

The CWL's pandemic sewing project will be memorialized at the Royal Alberta Museum! Staff have been in touch to obtain samples of the lunch bags the ladies sewed for the Inner-City Pastoral Ministry lunch, to serve as artifacts portraying the pandemic in Alberta.

CWL members have continued sewing face coverings since then; now numbering close to 500 masks. The vast majority were given away to inner city residents at the EXPO Centre, a centralized homeless services location during the height of the pandemic (April through July 31). Currently, CWL is sewing facemasks for volunteers at Habitat for Humanity ReStores.



St. Charles Borromeo, Mearns CWL Council



It was a difficult time when the husband of one of our sisters in St Charles Borromeo, Mearns CWL passed away during Covid 19 . They were not able to have mass in the church and only 15 people were permitted at the gravesite service. Many of her children could not attend as they lived out of province. To offer our love and support to our CWL sister several of our members and their spouses parked on the roadside outside the cemetery with signs to reach out to our friend in the spirit of fraternal love.

- Liz Falls President

Centenary Projects

Holy Trinity Parish – Parkland County

Parkland Holy Trinity council members donated, and planted 50 evergreen trees in the Willow Park Natural Area September 28 – 30. The trees were moved from their home on Elaine and Gene Dextrase's acreage, our council President Femia Streefkerk "volun-told" her husband, Gerald to dig the holes, and Sharon Zunti organized the local neighbours and their children/ grandchildren, to give the trees a new home. The Town of Stony Plain gave us permission for this project and we have permission to repeat the planting next year with another batch of trees. In 15 years, we will have a beautiful immature evergreen forest to welcome native animals and people to the area.



St. Vital - Beaumont



The St. Vital, Beaumont council planted a maple tree on Tuesday, June 3rd for the National CWL centennial project. It is extra special at their parish as it is also their parish building's centennial

Join St. Joseph's Basilica's – Centenary Project

For the 2020 Centenary Project, as outlined on the inside last page of "The Canadian League" magazine, the executive of St. Joseph's Basilica has requested that 3 or 4 other Councils share with them, the cost of planting a tree at Holy Cross Cemetery. The total cost is a minimum of \$1400.00 which equals \$350 - \$400 for each Council (if there are 4).

If interested, please contact Melanie Elliot cwlpresidentstjosephsbasilica@shaw.ca

Tree (includes planting): \$700.00

Dedication plaque: \$653.00 + \$32.65 GST = \$685.65 (this includes set in concrete)

Season of Creation – Jubilee of the Faith

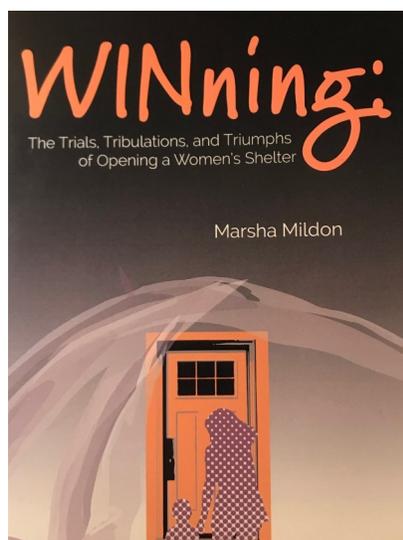
Diocesan was pleased to host spiritual retreat presented by Belinda Halbach on Saturday, September 26th via ZOOM. The one-hour presentation was response to Pope Francis' call mark the Season of Creation from September 1 to October 4th. Belinda is currently enrolled in the Laudato Si' animators course organized by the Catholic Climate Movement with several hundred other people from around the globe. a current CWL Council President and a graduate of the CWL Leadership Foundation Diocesan council is please to support her in this retreat and prayer service. Thank you, Belinda. The presentation and relevant material are posted on the Diocesan website for your viewing at <http://www.edmontoncwl.org/events.html>.

There is also a link to the Catholic Climate Movement

https://www.faithcommongood.org/global_catholic_climate_movement_canada



CWL in History



On August 26th the Edmonton Social Planning Council held a virtual “Lunch and Learn” entitled the “History of the Women’s Shelters”. Rose-Marie McCarthy (CWL Life Member) and Lynn Hannley discussed the history of the women’s shelters chronicled in the book “**WINning: The Trials, Tribulations, and Triumphs of Opening a Women’s Shelter’s**” by Marsha Mildon. That history relates how the CWL was instrumental in establishing these vital shelters.

More information on the book can be found at <http://www.enable.org/winning>.

Rose Goudreau receives Bellelle Guerin Award

On October 7th, St. Vital Parish Council (Beaumont) gathered for an awards ceremony. Rose Goudreau was presented with the Bellelle Guerin award for exemplary service in the League, having served for 45 years.

Rose moved to Beaumont in 2006 and was an integral force in the formation of the CWL council at our parish on October 22, 2008. She is an active supporter of our parish council and she usually attends diocesan meetings and conventions, provincial conventions and when possible national conventions.

She is available to mentor any council member in their position, she actively recruits new members and strongly encourages attendance at conventions, retreats and meetings at all levels for all members.

Rose is a true advocate for the Catholic Women's League and the work that we do. She understands the league and has kept herself well informed with the strategic plan. She encourages others to do the same. Rose is always willing to share her knowledge, lend a hand or just offer a hug to someone in need. She remains positive through adversity and gently encourages others to remember that we are called to be disciples of Jesus.

During the COVID-19 pandemic Rose has offered spiritual support to our membership by sending out links to Divine Mercy Sunday videos, by preparing a spiritual for members to



Belinda Halbach, Mary Hunt, Rose Goudreau, Mary Molloy

do at home for the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel, by keeping in touch with some of our most vulnerable members and by updating her knowledge of the faith



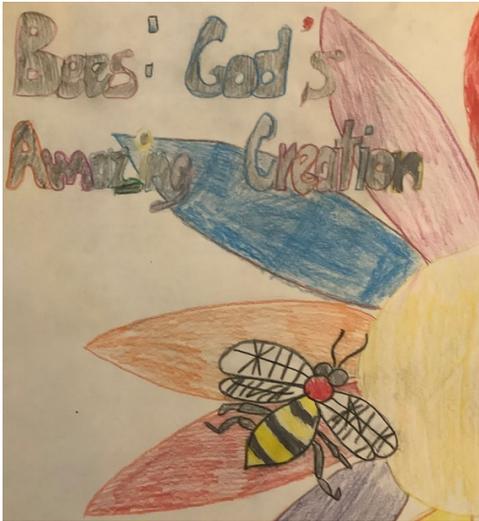
Rose Goudreau

by reading books at home.

Previous to living in Beaumont, Rose was a member of the Mackenzie-Fort Smith Diocese. For the Assumption Parish Council, she held many executive positions there, as well as being president for two terms.

At the diocesan level, Rose was president for Mackenzie-Fort Smith from 1990-1992. She was also past president, acting secretary, and community life chair. Rose was also the title person at the Diocesan Convention in 2008. The same year in which she received her Maple Leaf Pin.

25th Anniversary Annual Poster Contest



2020 is the 25th anniversary of the Diocesan Poster Essay Contest. This year's theme was "Bees: God's Amazing Creatures". The deadline for entries was March 31st however, due to the pandemic, the deadline was extended. Unfortunately, due to school closures, we had fewer entries than usual, however we did consider all entries and have chosen the winners for this year. We would like to thank all those that helped promote the contest to the students and all those students who submitted entries. Special congratulations go out to the winners who will be contacted:

And the Winners are:

Grades 1/2

1st place Paxton from St. Anthony School Drayton Valley St.
 2nd place: Rosalee from Holy Spirit School Devon
 3rd place: Audrey from St. Anthony School Drayton Valley

Grades 3/4

1st place Yian from Madonna School Sherwood Park
 2nd place Sanjij from Madonna School Sherwood Park
 3rd place Cymone from Madonna School Sherwood Park

Grades 5/6

1st place Sarah from St. Philips School Edmonton
 2nd place Emily from Ecole Notre Dame School Leduc
 3rd place Alexis from Our Lady of Mount Pleasant Camrose

2020 Edmonton Diocesan Parish Anniversaries

The following parishes are celebrating anniversaries this year:

70 years – St. Anthony, Edmonton – founded in 1950

65 years – St. Anthony, Drayton Valley – founded in 1955

65 years – Our Lady of the Assumption – founded in 1955

60 years – Annunciation, Edmonton – founded in 1960

25 years – St. Thomas More, Edmonton – founded in 1995

5 years – Corpus Christi, Edmonton – founded in 2015

Congratulations and let's keep them in our prayers.



Upcoming Events

- ◇ October 24 – Edmonton – Provost Regional Workshop
 - ◇ October 28 – Webinar – How to Complete an Annual Report Survey
 - ◇ October 31 – Deadline to have 2019 Memberships in to National
 - ◇ November 1 – Annual Reports link available on National Website
 - ◇ November 7 – Edmonton – Jasper Regional Workshop
 - ◇ November 14 – Welcome Kit Workshop via Zoom
 - ◇ November 18 – Service for Deceased Members via Zoom, 7 – 8 p.m.
 - ◇ November 24 – Webinar – How to Complete an Annual Report Survey
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