



Edmonton Diocesan Council

CATHOLIC
and **LIVING IT!**



December 2023 Newsletter



Midwinter Regional Workshops

February 3:

- Edmonton-Jasper Region - St Agnes (Edmonton),
- Red Deer Region - Our Lady of Peace (Innisfail)

February 10:

- Edmonton-Provost Region - Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Sherwood Park)
- St Albert Lloydminster Region - Our Lady of the Angels (Fort Saskatchewan)

Additional Dates

February 28:

- Service Award Forms Due

March 1:

- World Day of Prayer

April 26-28:

- Edmonton Diocesan Convention – St. Joseph Basilica (Edmonton)

As we wait in Joyful Hope





PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Sisters in Christ,

As this newsletter goes out, we find ourselves just entering advent. A time of preparation and joy as we anticipate the welcoming of Christ's light into the world.

During advent, the theme of light is reflected through the four candles of the Advent wreath; one candle for each week of Advent, until Christmas Eve when the larger Christ candle is lit. Many families during Advent also set up a nativity set, leaving empty until Christmas Eve the manger where the Christ child would later lay. In our family, it has always been the task of the youngest child, our daughter Grace, to hide the baby Jesus, and then to try hard to remember where she put Him when Christmas Eve arrived! Thankfully, she always managed to find Him again.

Where do we find Christ in our lives? How do we prepare for Christ's coming? How do we share Christ's light with others?

One way to prepare for Advent and share Christ's light in our hearts is through intentional discipleship. 'Intentional discipleship' is about putting faith into practice and helping others to do the same. Our new national CWL theme starting January 1st is "Here I am Lord, send me!" which is a call to intentional discipleship as members of the Catholic Women's League. As CWL sisters, we encounter one another as companions on the journey and serve as intentional disciples alongside one another for the benefit of all God's people. We bear witness to our shared Catholic faith so as to help bring Christ's light to all those who need to feel His hope, love and peace.

We have enjoyed our trips out to visit with you this past year as part of the Unity Outreach Project and we look forward to spending time with you again February 3rd and 10th for the Mid-Winter Regional Workshops. Please also mark your calendars for the 2024 Annual Diocesan Convention which will be held April 26-28th at St Joseph's Basilica in the heart of downtown Edmonton. There, we will once again experience with one another the "Beauty of Encounter".

This Advent, may you find Christ wherever and whenever you seek Him. And, may the light of Christ shine brightly within you.

On behalf of your Edmonton Diocesan officer team, I wish you a joyous Advent season and a very Merry Christmas!

Christ is Born, Glorify Him!

Your Sister in Christ,

Clover Oryschak
Edmonton Diocesan Council President

SECRETARY

Many councils will soon be looking at elections. Please remember to send me your new council executive contact information so we can keep you in the loop.

Wishing each of you the gift of faith, the blessings of hope and the peace of his love this Christmas and always

Pat Keith
Edmonton Diocesan Council Secretary



TREASURER

As this is the season for giving to others, let us make sure that we know who we are giving to. There has been a lot of information lately about new technologies that scammers are using to dupe people into giving money to individuals or organizations that are not who they say they are. The latest buzz word has been AI technology. AI stands for Artificial Intelligence, which is able to replicate faces and even voices electronically. Scammers are now using social media accounts such as Facebook to locate individuals who have videos with their voices. It is amazing how much information they can find and be able to scam people with it. It is so easy to think that this will never happen to me, but it can. Just a few basic rules to follow to keep from getting scammed:

- Do not answer calls from numbers you do not recognize. If the call is legitimate and important, they will leave a message
- If you get a call from a family member and is pressuring you for money immediately, hang up and call the number you have to reach that person and verify the story.
- Revenue Canada will never call or email asking for information, especially not bank account numbers or Social Insurance Numbers.
- Be extra cautious if someone is asking you to change your password for your online banking, that should not happen

So let us be vigilant when it comes to dealing with financial matters and let this Christmas season be filled with blessings instead.

Joyeux Noel!

Mariette Huot
Edmonton Diocesan Council Treasurer



VICE-PRESIDENT

Regional Workshops to be held Feb. 3rd and 10th, 2024

We are looking forward to having Regional Workshops on two Saturdays in early February from 9:30am to 2:30pm. Diocesan officers will lead the workshops on topics which may make membership in the Catholic Women's League more appealing. We will discuss what we can do to make our meetings more interesting and ways we can involve women of all ages and encourage them to be members. We also want to give members an opportunity to share with others the projects that your council does to help in your local community. We know there are wonderful initiatives being undertaken that we can all learn from. To that end, we will be asking each council to submit a short summary of at least one project that the council does.

The regional workshops also give members a chance to get to know one another and share ideas and concerns. All CWL members are encouraged to join us for one of these more informal gatherings. The cost of the workshops will be \$20 to cover lunch and refreshments. Registration information will be coming out shortly. In the meantime, please put the date and location for the workshop for your region into your calendar:

- Feb. 3rd: Edmonton-Jasper Region -St. Agnes Parish, Edmonton
 Red Deer Region - Our Lady of Peace Parish, Innisfail
- Feb. 10th: St. Albert-Lloydminster Region - Our Lady of Angels Parish, Fort Saskatchewan
 Edmonton-Provost Region - Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Sherwood Park

If you have any questions about the Regional Workshops, please contact Jean Ashdown, Vice-President at edmontoncwl.presidentelect@gmail.com.

Jean Ashdown
Edmonton Diocesan Council Vice President



PAST PRESIDENT

Dear Sisters in the League,

As we approach January 1, 2024, a new theme will guide our journey: "Here I am Lord: send me!" National President Shari Gunti, in the Fall 2023 edition of *The League*, urged councils to explore their calling to serve with a special focus or project. Emphasizing that League members are called to speak and advocate for those without a voice, she underscored the importance of active engagement in service and social justice, fortified by faith and aligned with the League's three core values.

While many councils have transitioned into the new organizational structure, the role of past president remains pivotal. Past Presidents continue to serve their council in a consultative capacity, overseeing archives, ensuring regular updates to policies and procedures, and orchestrating the election of the incoming executive. However, their most impactful role lies in encouraging and mentoring new members.

Looking ahead, the upcoming Diocesan elections in April, 2024 present a crucial opportunity for you to contribute. We earnestly ask that you consider letting your name stand for election. In January, we will extend a formal invitation for you to share your unique gifts by standing for election as a member of the executive. The eligibility list for office, including Past Parish Presidents and past Diocesan Officers from the previous six (6) years, will be circulated at that time. We urge you not to overlook this chance to serve and kindly ask you to contemplate how you can become involved at the Diocesan level.

As we navigate this significant period of transition, may the blessings of the Christ Child be with you and your family.

Warm regards

Merry Christmas! Peace and Joy in the New Year!

Mary Molloy
Edmonton Diocesan Council Past President



SERVICE

“At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God’s own love and concern.”

~Mother Theresa~



Dear Sisters in the League,

I wish to take this opportunity to thank everyone for your continued dedication to The Catholic Women’s League. As we prepare for the joy-filled experience of our Lord’s Nativity, let us be thankful for all the wonderful blessings in our lives and to share those blessings with others.

I would like to thank all the Parish councils that I had the pleasure of facilitating the **Unity Outreach Program** in 2023. The goal of this project was to ask the councils how they were doing, what they are proud of, what suggestions for change they may have had, and to listen to their concerns. I pray that blessings and good things have come from these dialogues.

The Diocesan **Adopt-A-Seminarian Program** is a beautiful way for our councils to support the seminarians at St. Joseph’s Seminary as they actively discern and study for the priesthood, so thank you to everyone for your support of this project. All of the 39 seminarians have been adopted by councils in our Diocesan. Your prayers and support will be greatly appreciated.

Just a reminder about the ongoing Edmonton Diocesan initiative in partnering with **Our Lady of Victory Camp** to provide support to the camp. In September, a letter of thanks was received from the Camp Coordinator and forwarded to councils, for all of the CWL help received to make the re-launch of the Our Lady of Victory Camp in 2023 a success. Looking forward to 2024, our councils are encouraged to continue their support of OLVC by sharing this with your members. Consider your upcoming budgets, perhaps sponsor the camp through a donation, or council members might consider becoming a monthly donor to the camp. Members are also encouraged to offer their time and talents to lend a hand with the many more repairs and improvements planned to ready the camp for the 2024 season. Please visit the Our Lady of Victory Camp website at www.camps.caedm.ca to view the introduction of the new Camp Director, Cody Parr and also the presentations and notes of the November 4th Annual General Meeting. It includes financial reports, a maintenance report, camp report for 2023 and a looking ahead to 2024 report with wants and needs, work bee dates, etc.

To those members that are still finding their way in their new roles as Service Standing Committee Chair, please know that there is a whole smorgasbord of activities to choose from. Discuss with your councils what speaks to your members, what are their interests and most importantly, what makes the best use of their gifts and talents. As a council, you may choose to only focus on one activity for each of the 3 Pillars in a year, but I am certain that it will be with great results.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, guiding and protecting you in all you do within your councils and throughout this blessed and holy Advent and Christmas Season.

Margaret Korte
Edmonton Diocesan Council Service Chair

SOCIAL JUSTICE

With Christmas approaching, Pope Francis' reflection resonates with me: "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. Jesus is not satisfied with appearances and good intentions."¹ We can all find ways to let charity be reborn. Christmas is a time when we think of others, it is a season of giving. It is about faith, showing appreciation and helping those in need.

We appreciate your overwhelming response to our Diocesan CWL projects including donations to the Welcome Refugee Bags and the Feed the Hungry project. If any councils are interested in providing a hot lunch at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples in Edmonton on the first and fifth Saturday of each month, please contact me.

When planning out council activities for the upcoming year, perhaps find room in your schedule to support some of our National Resolutions. Encourage your members to start a letter writing campaign in support of these and other resolutions:

- [2023.01 Combating Textile Waste in Canada](#)
- [2022.01 Enact Federal Legislation to Reduce Food Loss and Waste](#)

Information on letter writing to government officials is available on page 131 of the [National Manual of Policy and Procedure](#). A sample letter will be posted on the Diocesan website that you can adapt to make it personal.

As Christmas approaches, it is important to cut through all the glitz and glam of the season that has grown increasingly secular and commercial, and be reminded of the beauty of the One who is Christmas. "Christmas reveals the **immense love of God for humanity**. From that flows also the enthusiasm, the hope of us Christians, that in our poverty we know that we are loved, **we are visited, accompanied by God.**"²

I wish you a Christmas filled with peace, joy and love, guided by our love for Jesus and the true meaning of Christmas. Blessings All.

Susan Casey
Edmonton Diocesan Council, Social Justice Chair

¹<https://www.usccb.org/news/2022/bring-hope-others-justice-poor-pope-says-christmas-mass#:~:text=%22Let%20charity%20be%20reborn%2C%22,good%20intentions%2C%20Pope%20Francis%20said.>

² <https://catholic-link.org/images/christmas-reveals-gods-love-for-humanity-pope/>

FEED THE HUNGRY PROJECT

Thank you, councils, for your overwhelming response in providing a hot lunch to our less fortunate brothers and sisters on the first and fifth Saturday of each month at Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples in Edmonton. We are still seeking councils for (2024) August, October, November and December. It is a gratifying experience.

"What so ever you do to the least of... that you do unto me"

If your council is able and wishing to volunteer,
Contact Susan Casey edmontoncwl.community.life@gmail.com



FAITH

Sisters in the League & Faith Chairs,

As you begin your preparations for the Advent Season and the New Year 2024, let us discern that whatever happens in these coming days are according to God's will. Let us keep in mind "What is our reason we choose to stay or be added new members to the Executive - *What will be your passion be?*"



Communiqués from National are filled with many topics which may be of interest to your parish Faith Chair.

Below are a few:

- CCCB has many resources which are listed in Manual for Faith Chair www.CCCB.ca
- In preparation for the 2025 Jubilee Year 'Pilgrims of Hope', 2024 has been designated a Year of Prayer by Pope Francis. It started on Sunday, 3 December, the First Sunday of Advent.

Strong Catholic Family Faith - was created to empower and equip Catholic leaders to accompany and form faith-filled Catholic families. www.catholicfamilyfaith.org

Alberta Mackenzie Prays the Rosary – Join your CWL Sisters from across Alberta & Canada

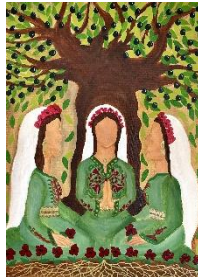
7:00 PM Edmonton Time - Every week on Thursday, until Jan 11, 2024 when a new code will be given

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83965879451?pwd=dk00cmRBTkdrcmRleVlxeW9Fek5wdz09>

Meeting ID: 839 6587 9451 Passcode: 963178

In the New Year after a wonderful time with family & friends, we begin to prepare for Lent.

Ash Wednesday, February 14th, 2024 - First Sunday of Lent February 18th, 2024



World Day of Prayer - Friday, March 1st, 2024

Artist for the World Day of Prayer 2024: Halima Aziz

The theme for the World Day of Prayer 2024 is

I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love

Ephesians 4:1-3

An ecumenical group of Palestinian Christian women have prayed and reflected together over the past several years to respond to the invitation to write the 2024 program.

Their theme is "I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love," based on Ephesians 4:1-7. This program calls us to bear with each other in love, despite all difficulties and oppression.

The Worship Service shares stories of three Palestinian Christian women, who witness to the power of bearing together in love. Their stories illuminate the experiences of Palestinian women from three different generations. The symbol of an olive tree is used throughout the worship service.

This represents the three generations through the trunk, branches, and leaves of the olive tree.

*May the Light of Christ permeate throughout your whole being
as you wait in Joyful Hope for His Birth!*

May you and your families have a very Blessed Christmas and a Wonderful New Year!

Evelyn Dunne

Edmonton Diocesan Council, Standing Committee Faith Chair