

Edmonton Diocesan Fall Newsletter 2017



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA



**“INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT,
Women Respond to God’s Call”**

Fall Meeting

September 30th

Onoway Community Hall (4920-49 Avenue)

To register please contact: Dianne Schulte @ 780.967.5062 or Marina Yeomen @780.967.5291
Registration Deadline: **September 21, 2017**

The Fall Meeting is open to all members in the Edmonton Diocese and we especially encourage CWL Parish Council Presidents or their designate to attend this Diocesan Executive meeting.

We look forward to having as many of you as possible. Come meet our new Diocesan Spiritual Advisor and receive spiritual nourishment by his presence and from his remarks as well as by participating in the Prayer Wheel prepared by our new Diocesan Spiritual Development Chair.

Our guest speaker is Sr. Zoe Bernatsky, S.S.M.I. who will be speaking on **“Loved, Called and Sent: Women Living the Mission!”**

Women live out their lives in service and love in ordinary and extraordinary ways. This presentation will allow participants to reconnect with their own sense of God's call and personal giftedness so that they can be the best possible selves as they participate in the mission of the Church!



We are excited to share with you the 2017-19 priorities and action plans as well as closing the loop on our Leadership Strategies. Please plan to attend this day of prayer, sharing and learning while meeting with your CWL Sisters from around the Diocese.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Canada 150 Farewell High Tea – December 31, 2017 – Chateau Louis

Midwinter Meeting – February 3, 2018 – St. Thomas More

Diocesan Convention – April 20-22, 2018 – Fort Saskatchewan, AB

Provincial Convention – June 1-2, 2018 – Okotoks, AB

National Convention – August 12-15, 2018 – Winnipeg, MB

Message from President

I returned from the 97th National CWL Convention held in Charlottetown from Aug. 6th to 9th re-energized, inspired and ready to serve you, as your President, over the coming 2 years. I was honored to be part of 938 convention delegates and guests and grateful for the opportunity to attend this well-planned convention. Thank you for allowing me to represent the Edmonton Diocese!

Margaret Ann Jacobs said “we can’t do anything in life without the motivation of God through the Spirit’. Just look at all of the women who do so much work in the Catholic Women’s League; they are responding to the spirit and they do it so generously.

In his address, National Spiritual Advisor, Bishop William McGrattan, encouraged us to not lose sight of our identity. He said urban and rural are different and we need to work at the parish level. We need to revive and renew. We need to hold on to our values. CWL is known for Service and Social Justice. Our mission is to let Canadian Society be a better place to live.

I was honored to sit with Margaret Ann for the President’s ‘Meet the Officers Lunch’ and I was inspired just listening to her. On your behalf, I have written a letter to the National President inviting her to attend our 2018 Edmonton Diocesan Convention to be held in Fort Saskatchewan from April 20th to 22nd.

I think that it is important that the CWL is an organization that is centered on Christ and that Catholic women enjoy working, praying and supporting each other. We are women of service not volunteers! Strong bonds of friendship can be formed. I smile when I think about the dream we form by being together!

League members have a wide variety of gifts and through mentoring, encouragement and learning about the League; these gifts can be developed and shared with their community, parish and diocese. Allow imaginations to soar and consider what the League can be for Canada and the world through efforts at the parish level and beyond.

JFK said “Change is the law of life; if you don’t change you will miss the future”. I look to the future with optimism and anticipation as we continue our CWL journey together.

I am excited to be on this journey with a new team of Diocesan Officers and our newly appointed Diocesan Spiritual Advisor. I am truly blessed to have such an amazing team!

I hope to see you at the Fall Meeting in Onoway on September 30th!

Cheryl Boom
Edmonton Diocesan President

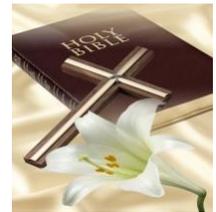
Diocesan Spiritual Advisor - Father Jan Sobkowicz



I would like to introduce our new Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, Father Jan Sobkowicz, the pastor at Holy Trinity Parish in Spruce Grove/Stony Plain since August 2012. He has also been the Pastor at St. Anthony's Parish Lloydminster and for the communities of Villeneuve, Calahoo, Mearns and Rivière Que Barre. He is originally from Poland where he studied Sociology and Theology at The Catholic University of Lublin and was fortunate to have Cardinal Karol Wojtyła, as his Ethics' professor, two years before he became Pope John Paul II.

Father moved to Canada in 1996 and finished his priestly formation at St. Joseph's Seminary. He completed his internship under the mentorship of Father Don Stein at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sherwood Park and at Sacred Heart Parish in Red Deer. He was ordained to the transitional diaconate for the Archdiocese of Edmonton on March 8, 2001 and to the priesthood on June 4, 2001. As he says, he is a Canadian priest with a Polish accent.

Father Jan sees how important the role of women is in the family, as protectors, nurturers, and teachers of the faith; therefore, they are by nature, gifted to do the same in the Church family. This is mainly evident in supporting and fighting for Catholic values and opposing things that harm the family such as abortion and euthanasia.



Vice-President/Spiritual Development - Belinda Halbach



I am Belinda Halbach, a 17-year member of CWL, from Beaumont St. Vital Parish. I have been married 26 years to my husband Joe, who recently became a fourth-degree Knight. We have two daughters. The oldest is married and living in Devon and studying Psychology. The youngest is studying French Education at the University of Regina. Next year she will attend the University of Laval in Quebec City as part of her program. She is also engaged. I am a student at Newman Theological College. I will complete my Masters of Divinity degree in 2018. I have an undergraduate degree in Education. I became a

Catholic in December 1999 and have volunteered since that time at my parish on parish council, doing sacramental prep and liturgical ministries.

I was pleased to be approached by Cheryl to be on diocesan council as the Spiritual Development chairperson. I look forward to using my education to encourage others in their relationship with Christ and each other.

**"What You Are is God's Gift to You,
What You Become is Your Gift to God"**

Hans Urs von Baltha

President – Cheryl Boom



I have been married to Lewis for 31 years and we have 2 beautiful children, Stephanie is 26 and Brandon is 22. We also have 2 cute little grandsons, Isaac is 5 and Erik is 1½. They are the love of my life and bring me so much joy! I enjoy spending time with them and look forward to our regular Sunday Family Dinners.

I have been with Alberta Health Services for 12 years and I currently work full-time as an Executive Assistant in Talent Management Strategies. I also own and operate a residential framing company which has been up and running for 24 years; Lewis is the head Framer. As you can imagine, work keeps me pretty busy.

In my limited spare time I enjoy camping at our lake lot as well as administering a provincial weight loss support group. I organize monthly support meetings & clothing exchanges which helps me stay focused on my weight loss journey and maintaining my healthy lifestyle. In the last 2 years I have learned to run and enjoy getting out 3-4 times a week. I also enjoy getting away each winter with my best friend for a hot holiday for some well-deserved R & R!

I have been a CWL member for 18 years. I became a member at St. John Bosco Parish in Edmonton in January 1999. I attended my first Diocesan Convention in Three Hills in April that year and was inspired to serve the League! 3 years later I became CWL Parish President and served for 3 years and then 3 years as Past President. I continue to help my parish where I can. In 2009 I moved up to Diocesan level and served 4 years as Treasurer, 2 years as Spiritual Development Chair and 2 years as President-Elect and Organization Standing Committee Chair.

I am honored to serve as your Diocesan President for the next 2 years! I promise to do my very best and I know that with your prayers and God's help I will be able to fulfill this role. I am excited to be working with a group of talented CWL Sisters which make up the Diocesan Officers team and to continue to grow in my faith through service to God and Canada.

CWL is a gift of faith, friendship and support and my focus for this 2 year term is unity and truly working together as a team. I want to effect change and I want to see some changes too! I want to see everyone share their gifts and truly make a difference!

Dear Lord, make me appreciative of the dignity of my position and its many responsibilities.

Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness or impatience.

Please bear with my faults, looking only to my intention, which is to serve You in the person of each member of the Catholic Women's League. Increase my faith, bless my efforts and work "For God and Canada". Amen.

President-Elect/Organization – Mary Molloy



I have been a member for over 25 years, holding executive positions for the last 12 years. I was raised by a very active CWL Mom in Saskatoon, SK. I have always believed I have engrained training from watching and helping her. My own CWL life began at St Joseph's Basilica, Edmonton where I served as President-Elect, President, Past President and Counsellor for the Catholic Girls League at Jean Forest Junior High. Since 2012, I have been one of the diocesan facilitators of "Catch the Fire". I have served 4 years as a Diocesan Officers; two years as Chair of the Resolutions and Legislation Standing Committee and the last two as Vice-President and Spiritual Standing Committee Chair.

In my professional life, I worked for the City of Edmonton and then a utility company responsible for government affairs, protocol and public consultation. At the moment, I am the Family Services Outreach Coordinator for Habitat for Humanity Edmonton. Besides CWL, I serve on the Board of the Edmonton Catholic School Foundation, Catholic Social Services Society and just completed a year on the Board of E4C, a community organization. Over the years, I have served in various capacities within the community and church. I was Chair of St Joseph's Basilica's Parish Pastoral Council, Co-Chair of the Cornerstone of Faith Campaign, serve as a past Provincial General of the Friars of Edmonton, sat on the Board of Governors at St. Joseph's College and was a member of the board at Success by Six.

I am married to David McKinlay, like many of you; he is my go to guy whenever I need assistance with my CWL activities and a sounding board after one of "those" meetings. I sometimes think we need an honorary membership for those behind the scenes family members.

Where should I begin this journey as the Organization Chair? Some of you, will be new to the position in your own council & might feel the same or are continuing in the position and thinking what to do in the coming year. Let the planning begin!

I am looking forward to the next two years, working with Zone Chairs and Organization Chairs in each Parish. We will continue the Parish Buddy calls, teaming each council President with a Diocesan Officer or Zone Chair to keep in touch and provide information about coming events, retreats or just to touch base to see where you might need some assistance.

In closing, I invite each of you to think about one sister in the league that has inspired you and to say a prayer for them. You might contact them to say thank you for their involvement in your life. Now think of someone you would like to inspire and invite them to join you at your next CWL meeting or event. Think about what you inspired you to become a member.

God Bless and see you at the Fall Meeting in Onoway.



Past President – Mary Hunt



I am happy to serve as Past President for Edmonton Diocesan Council during 2017-2019. I have completed three terms on the Diocesan Executive serving as Education & Health Standing Committee Chair, Organization Chair & President-Elect and President. I have been a CWL member for almost 22 years with most of those years as a member of the Good Shepherd Council in Edmonton and currently am serving as the Education & Health

Standing Committee Chair for the Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council. In addition, I am the Spiritual Development Standing Chair for my home council.

For many years, the CWL has been an important focus in my life and my involvement has served to help me grow in my faith through service to the people of God. In addition to the CWL, I am the Liturgy Committee Chair at our Parish, Coordinator of Lectors (& a Lector), Co-Chair of the Six Churches Soup & Bun Ministry during the winter months, served 12 years in various positions on Parish Pastoral Council, founded a book club at our Church in 2007 which continues to meet (over 50 books read) and am the Co-Chair of the *Sharing Our Faith; Securing Our Future Capital Campaign* whose goal is to raise \$436,000.00 for various improvements at Good Shepherd Parish.

I took early retirement from 26 years of employment with the Government of Alberta; during that time, I served six of Alberta's Lieutenant Governors. Married to Larry, we have two adult children and are proud grandparents to Sierra, Kael and Hanna who are a great source of joy.

I love music, the theatre, reading, writing (on and off I have been writing a novel for the past 6 years), gardening, challenging myself with Lumosity "brain games", walking and gatherings with family & friends. I appreciate the opportunities that volunteering provides and it is gratifying that my other family members are volunteers too!

During my time as Past President, I hope to establish a committee to update the historic display panels which were assembled for our 100th Anniversary Celebrations and displayed at the 2012 National Convention. The display represents a great legacy for our Diocese. I will continue working on the Bellelle Guerin project which involves gathering information about recipients of the award in the Edmonton Diocese. In addition, I would like to update the ***We Remember*** booklet that provides an overview of the history of all councils in the Diocese.

I am happy to share with you the news that National will have 2017 Annual Report Questions posted on the national website by mid-September.

I look forward to chatting with you at the Fall Meeting in Onoway on September 30th. I invite you to contact me with any questions and look forward to supporting you in any way that I can.



Secretary – Pat Keith



I was born and raised on the family farm in Wilkie, Saskatchewan with 2 brothers and 3 sisters. I graduated from Providence Hospital School of Nursing in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan and moved to Barrhead Alberta to seek my fame and fortune. It was there I met my future husband Jim. We married and relocated to Fort McMurray where we lived for 30 years raising 5 beautiful children. I continued working the Nursing field for 47 years, casual/part time/full time as family commitments dictated at the time.

I joined CWL St John the Baptist Council in Fort McMurray in 1993 at the insistence of my friend and neighbor Alvine Menard. I enjoyed working and praying with these wonderful women. I was elected President in 2004 and accepted a second term in 2006. However, we relocated to Sherwood Park in fall of, my term incomplete. I was President of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Council in Sherwood Park from 2012 for two terms.

I find it very fulfilling and joyful to work with of these like-minded women, I met many new friends. I am now enjoying retirement, spending time with grandchildren, gardening, travelling, and golfing. I am looking forward to the next two years working with the Diocesan Council.

Treasurer – Jean Ashdown

Money



It is my pleasure to serve again as Treasurer for the Edmonton Diocesan Council. Prior to being Treasurer, I served the Diocesan Council as the chair for Christian Family Life. I joined CWL at St. Agnes parish in 1990 at the encouragement of my mom who has been a member for over 60 years. I am currently a member of St. Thomas More Council in Edmonton. I have been Chair of Christian Family Life, Community Life, Communications, Organization, President, Past-President, and Secretary. I am also a leader with our Catholic Girls' League.

I was born and grew up in Red Deer and came to Edmonton to study at the University of Alberta. I have a B.Sc. in Medical Lab Science and a B.Sc. in Home Economics. I have been married to Chris for 36 years and we have two adult children. I retired three years ago from my job as a Laboratory Manager at Canadian Blood Services. Since then I have been pursuing some of my interests including sewing, furniture refinishing and re-upholstery, photography, watercolor painting, and travel.

This summer we went to the Netherlands, Belgium and northern France. I have been a sponsor for RCIA for the past 3 years and am part of our parish's Prayer Shawl Ministry. I am also supporting my husband during his formation to the Permanent Diaconate.

The money part of any organization is, for many people, a boring part that they would rather not hear about. However, it is always important to be good stewards of the funds entrusted to us. For this reason, we need to have good accounting of our funds and to ensure the membership is aware of how we are spending them. A short report should be made at the general meetings of your individual

Councils and important decisions should be voted on with a motion. More detailed reporting can be done at the Executive level. Donations to our Diocesan funds should be accompanied by the Parish Remittance form which can be found on our Diocesan website.

If any Treasurer requires help or needs an Excel program for the accounting of your funds, please contact me and I will be happy to help.



Community Life – Patti Heck



I was born in Provost, Alberta. After graduating from high school, I moved to Edmonton to attend NAIT, where I graduated as a medical transcriptionist, a career I worked in for 30 years prior to retirement.

In 1974 I married the love of my life, Harvey Heck. We have three children and six grandchildren, two from each! Four grandsons and two granddaughters. Being Grandma is the best title I have had in my life!

I joined the CWL in 1981 at St. Theresa's Parish in Edmonton, and over the years have served in many different positions, including President on more than one occasion. Working with the CWL is one of my great passions. I am a Eucharistic Minister and a funeral luncheon coordinator at my home parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sherwood Park.

I have many hobbies, including quilting, golfing, traveling, and reading. I am an active member of a book club that meets monthly. Having moved around several times over the course of our marriage, we love our retired life in Sherwood Park and Palm Springs, and are grateful for the community of friends we have built. Our family is very close and spends a lot of time together. Raising kids that are best friends with each other and us is one of my biggest parenting wins!!



Christian Family Life – Jessie Sandmaier



I grew up on a farm at Rimbey, AB and was a farmer's wife for 37 years. I am a retired widow and live in Lamont, AB. I have one daughter and three grandchildren. Religion has always been an important part of my life. I was a chartered member of St. Gregory's CWL in Holden since 1976. I now belong to St. Michael the Archangel in St. Michael and received my 40-year service pin last year.

I love people in general and I like dancing, playing cards, gardening, socializing and travelling. Over the years I have held all the executive positions at the parish level and been the Zone 3 Chairperson for 2 two-year terms.

This is my first time on Diocesan Council. Challenge so far has been learning the computer but with support from family friends I will try my best.

My focus is to become familiar with my role and share my knowledge with Parish Presidents and my goal is to have all the seminarians adopted this year. They really need our prayers.

Resolutions & Legislation – Doreen Kelly



I was born in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, and am the eldest of three, with two younger brothers. I attended school in Meadow Lake and at the Convent of the “Child Jesus” in North Battleford. My post-secondary education was in Regina at the Grey Nun’s Hospital School of Nursing where I received my RN certification.

I inherited my love for CWL from my mother who was a convert and staunch member of the Catholic Women's League. My husband and I moved to Hay River, NT in 1963. We raised two boys and two girls in this northern community. I was the instituting secretary for CWL in Hay River, and was there for sixteen years.

When we moved north we were planning on staying only for one winter, but 37 years later we finally moved to Bittern Lake. It was here where my husband spent his last days. I then moved to my condo in Camrose and have been a member of the Camrose CWL for the last 17 years. I have served in various positions including secretary, spiritual development, organization, president and now past president. Together with Ann L. and Gwen E. we have developed the Camrose CWL by-laws as well as its periodic updates. Presently we are in the process of the construction of a new church.

Some of my community involvements include: being a member of the Grand Trunk Landing Condominium Board, a board member of the Camrose and District Social Services, a member of the Hospice Society of Camrose and District, a charter member of the Canadian Royal Purple Society, and a member of the Seniors Society in Camrose.

The goals I have for the Resolutions and Legislation position for the upcoming term are: To make this committee approachable to all members, to work with all levels of CWL, but especially at the parish level where resolutions originate and to encourage action activities.

res·o·lu·tion

/,rezə'looSH(ə)n/

noun

1. a firm decision to do or not to do something.
"she kept her resolution not to see Anne any more"
synonyms: intention, resolve, decision, intent, aim, plan; **More**
2. the action of solving a problem, dispute, or contentious matter.
"the peaceful resolution of all disputes"
synonyms: solution to, answer to, end to, ending to, settlement of, conclusion to
"a satisfactory resolution of the problem"

Education & Health – Mary Pat O’Neill



I was born in Cobden, Ontario, a small town in the Ottawa Valley. I have one younger brother, Thomas John. I was married to Brendon for 40 years and am now a widow. I have one daughter, Catherine, and two grandsons, Evan and Brian. I have a Bachelors of Education, Religious Studies after degree and a Masters in Technology. I am a retired Alberta College Teacher and Principal from Grand MacEwan College.



In my spare time I enjoy volunteering golfing, curling and volunteering. I received Volunteer Citizen of the Year 2015 in St. Albert as well as the Rotary Integrity Award 2013.

I initially belonged to Sacred Heart Parish in Edmonton and currently belong to Holy Family Parish in St. Albert where I am a member of the funeral luncheon team. I have completed 2 terms as Diocesan Secretary and now am Standing Chairperson for Education & Health. My goals and objectives are to provide workshops and training to parish councils. Catch the Fire & S'Mores; personalized for each portfolio.

Communications – Carmen Routhier



I have taken on the challenge of communications chair for these next two years. It is both an honoring and humbling experience. I look forward to completing the newsletters and getting information out to the league members in a timely fashion by updating the Diocesan Website. I would also like to explore other social media as different venues for keeping connected.

I am from a very close family of six girls and two boys. We were raised in a pastor's home and have lived in places like Winnipeg and Minnesota, to name a couple. Recently I have retired from over 30 years of teaching Home Economics and Social Studies at the Junior High School. I have been married to Denis for almost 37 years. We have a wonderful family of Mario (son) and Genelle as well as Gabrielle (daughter) and Adam and Sofia our sweet Granddaughter.

Presently I am the past president of the CWL at St. Theresa's Parish. I have been a member since 2009 when I joined as a new member of the Catholic Church. Since that time, I have taken on the roles of secretary, organization and president. I initially joined the CWL as an opportunity to interact with women of the church. Throughout the past years I have found many different venues in which to connect. What I so value in this organization is that it both allows and encourages relational, spiritual and leadership growth for each and every woman.

When not involved with family, church or CWL I enjoy spending my time quilting, sewing, reading, taking my new puppy for a walk and in summer picking Saskatoon berries in my own back yard.



Diocesan Convention Highlights 2017

by Mary Hunt



The 2017 Edmonton Diocesan Convention was held at the beautiful new Catholic Parish of Corpus Christi in Edmonton and attracted 238 participants who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to attend and were treated to a wonderful opportunity for renewal and inspiration. We were honored to have Bishop Gregory Bittman preside over the Opening Mass and address us during the Opening Ceremony. The Convention Planning team did a great job and the attention to detail was apparent. Special thanks to convention co-chairs, Margaret Korte and Bea Salmon for their tireless dedication to the success of the gathering.

The theme of the convention was ***'Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call'*** which was discussed by four dynamic speakers which included *Archbishop Richard Smith* who encouraged us to listen to the whispers of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our service to the League, *Edmonton Catholic School Board Superintendent Joan Carr* who spoke about how her faith had empowered her career, *Madam Justice Debra Yungwirth* who credited her faith in strengthening her to be more effective and just as a member of the Alberta Court of Queen's Bench as well as a member of the Office of Alberta's Seniors Advocate who spoke about their mandate to serve Alberta's seniors. *Sister Susan Scott* prepared an excellent follow up workshop on the Leadership Strategies discussion which had the room buzzing with ideas and punctuated with laughter.

The Closing Memorial Mass and Installation of Officers for 2017-2019 was graciously presided by Pastor Joseph Vadassary. The Closing Banquet and entertainment was enjoyed by an appreciative room of ladies and their guests.



Provincial Convention Highlights 2017 by Cheryl Boom



It was an honor to co-chair the 70th Annual Provincial CWL Convention which was held on June 9th & 10th at St. Charles Parish in Northeast Edmonton. There were 238 delegates in attendance over the two days and the feedback received was positive. The venue was great, the meals were amazing, the hospitality team went above and beyond and the speakers were well received.

We began Friday morning with the Kairos Blanket Exercise in the church. This is a teaching tool to share the historic and contemporary relationship Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. For me, this was a powerful experience. Through the Blanket Exercise, I learned about other aspects, beyond the residential schools, of this long term abusive relationship between the government of Canada and Indigenous peoples. There is also theft, broken agreements, double dealing, deceit, and extortion, infringement of human rights, forced relocation, mass unlawful confinement, coercion, obfuscation, and needless delay. And it's still going on.

I've also become aware that Indigenous people in Canada have done a tremendous amount of hard work to find and implement ways recover from trauma, to get past anger, to recover traditions, to rebuild community, to stay strong, and to be ready for and open to dialogue with the rest of Canada. It was an emotional experience.

Then Fr. Jerome Lavigne from Calgary gave a talk on *“Called - But for What and How?”* He asked *“What is God calling you TO DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL embracing life in a parish through the Apostolate of the Catholic Women's League?”* He said there are a lot of other things you could be doing with your lives and with your time. There exist many other ways that you could use your GOD-GIVEN GIFTS to express your Faith and make a difference in people's lives – **BUT** – you've chosen this path. He closed by saying “If you plant HONESTY, **you will reap Trust**, If you plant GOODNESS, **you will reap Friends**, If you plant HUMILITY, **you will reap Greatness**, If you plant PERSEVERANCE, **you will reap Contentment**, If you plant CONSIDERATION, **you will reap Perspective**, If you plant HARD WORK, **you will reap Success**, If you plant FORGIVENESS, **you will reap Reconciliation**...And if you **plant LOVE** in everything you do and with everyone you meet **you will reap the fulfillment of your MISSION STATEMENT** as CWL members. His talk was video-taped so you may go watch the whole talk if you like here: <https://st-peters.ca/video-library/> .

Twelve Spiritual Advisors graced us with their presence and they had lunch together hosted by Fr. Andrew and Judy Look. After lunch, we had a workshop on the National Theme “Inspired, We Will Respond” followed by three Provincial Officers workshops: Easy Council Planning, Leadership Strategies Workshop and Spiritual Planning Workshop. All were well attended and appreciated. Friday evening, we had the Official Opening Mass & Reception.

Saturday we began with the Memorial Service for Deceased Members. In 2016 Edmonton Diocese had 83 Sisters pass away – eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. The Business meeting began and continued throughout the day.

Elections were held and the slate of officers is full. Congratulations to the following:

- June Fuller – President
- Judy Look – President-Elect/Organization
- Ruth Boden – Vice-President/Spiritual Development
- Betsy Fletcher – Secretary
- Gwen Elliott – Treasurer
- Cathy Bouchard – Past President
- Carol Schlachter – Christian Family Life
- Sr. Susan Scott – Community Life
- Mary Hunt - Education & Health
- Annette deBoer – Communications
- Linda Vandenberg – Legislation
- Sharon Malec – Resolutions

We attended the regular parish Mass and shared the celebration with a group of young children making their First Communion before the Installation of Provincial Officers. It was a special Mass for sure! After Mass we had the closing Banquet and celebrated the success of the convention. Jeanne Leguerrier was presented with the 2017 Elsie Yanik Award. After the delicious meal and all the thank yous, we said our good-byes to our Sisters from across Alberta MacKenzie!





National Convention Highlights 2017

by Cheryl Boom



It was a privilege to represent you at the 97th National CWL Convention in Charlottetown from Aug. 6-9th. I was honored to be part of 938 convention delegates and guests from across the country!

Saturday evening began with a 25 minute bus ride to New Glasgow Lobster Dinners for an original PEI Lobster Supper. I shared my table with Calgary Diocesan Sisters and Kay, our tour guide from PEI. The chowder, fresh buns and all the mussels you could eat was heavenly! It was a great opportunity to meet with other members from across our beautiful country.

Sunday morning there were three choices for members; a Tour of Eastern Lighthouses and Rossignol Winery, City of Charlottetown Tour on a Double Decker Bus or a Walking Tour with a Father/Mother of Confederation. Due to bad weather the Walking Tour was rescheduled to Tuesday after the business day ended.

Sunday afternoon began with a Resolutions Dialogue where members were led through an overview of what a resolution is; the resources needed to write one; where resolutions can be directed; the purpose of a brief and action plans; and what happens with the finished product. Members reviewed four proposed resolutions at their tables which generated much discussion.

Sunday evening was the beautiful opening Eucharistic Celebration at St. Dunstan's Basilica and the official opening of the convention by National President Margaret Ann Jacobs. The procession of the bishops, priests and National Executive filled me with pride just knowing I am part of it. After the Opening Reception there was a very lively 'Kitchen Party' back at the hotel with lots of entertainment, music and dancing.



Monday morning began with a Eucharistic Celebration followed by keynote speaker, Ken Yasinski, who spoke on "Gift of Virtue & Gratitude, Becoming a Living Thank You" and "A Catholic Identity Crisis". He was a dynamic speaker and I enjoyed listening to him. He said Jesus is calling us to be something. He talked about gratitude being a virtue and how to grow the gift of gratitude. Gratitude is a matter of choice and love is a choice. He said to throw away the blame list. He encouraged us to keep a gratitude journal

and each day write down 5 things we are grateful for. Gratitude promotes better memories, relationships, less depression and longer life. He encouraged us to express our thanksgiving, love and gratitude and to nurture peace and joy in our life and to open complaining kills gratitude and we need to manage our change and our hearts to receive the blessings from God. He asked us to share our lived experiences with others and to pray spontaneously with someone who is encountering pain.

I attended the 'Meet the Officers' lunch for Presidents and was privileged to sit with our National President, Margaret Ann Jacobs.

The afternoon session opened with a beautiful Memorial Service for Deceased Members and Spiritual Advisors. The business session followed for the afternoon where I enjoyed hearing the reports from each Provincial Presidents and closed with a prayer service 'Restoring Awareness'.

Monday evening I took part in the 'Canada, Our Dear Home Dinner' and the entertainment was outstanding! Conductor Leo Marchildon and the Strathgartney Chamber Orchestra were brilliant! Comedian Patrick Ledwell was so funny I didn't want it to end. A highlight for me was meeting the new parish priest from my home town in Nova Scotia. I think things happen for a reason!

Tuesday morning began with a Eucharistic Celebration followed by keynote speaker, Dr. Reginald Bibby, who spoke on Canada's Catholics. This was my least favorite part of the convention. This was a statistics presentation and Dr. Bibby indicated that Christianity and the Catholic Church were alive and well. He said that people join organizations that they find significant and that there has been a major cultural shift as we have moved away from obligation to gratification. Dr. Bibby expressed optimism for the future of the Catholic Church in Canada. He challenged League members to reach out when people need someone to be with them. He closed with a comment: "You have much to bring. You need to bring it!"

He shared the following observations regarding CWL and our crisis of membership:

- Solution does not lie merely with recruitment
- Women are pressed for time and money and need to find their involvement worthwhile
- The heart of the solution is conscious, complementary ministry

Then we jumped right in to the country wide Town Hall meeting 'Building on Foundation, the League of the Future'. At each table there were one or two delegates with their electronic device connected in with others from across the nation. This was the first time they tried this forum and it was a success.

Members from all across Canada, then joined us in a town hall conversation about the Strategic Plan of the future of the League, or Planning Strategically, as was also suggested. Modern technology is quite wonderful, as the following 6 questions were posed and members from all across the country were able to enter their comments.

- 1. Considering all of the League's programs and work, of what are you most proud?**
- 2. What should the League emphasize and promote?**
- 3. What will be the biggest change; challenge or opportunity the League will need to respond to in the next five years?**
- 4. What would you like to see the League do differently?**
- 5. What is the one thing you would like to see the League stop doing?**
- 6. What does the League is the future look like to you?**

The Strategy Plan will involve all levels of the League, from National, Provincial, Diocesan, to the local Parish level. A few of the comments that were received....."very exciting", "great questions", "fantastic", "welcome to the 21st century". I am anxious to talk to those who connected in from other locations to hear their feedback.

Commissioning of new Life Members closed the morning session. The afternoon session began with a reconvening prayer 'Pentecost Fire' followed with the continuation of the business session and closed with a prayer service 'Finding God in Nature'.

Tuesday evening was Provincial Dinner Night. There were 48 Alberta & NWT delegates and friends that enjoyed dinner together at Lobster on the Wharf Restaurant. The lobster, buns, side dishes and dessert were amazing! I think a highlight was seeing the Stanley Cup and taking a picture. There was a

private function in progress at the same time we were enjoying our evening out. There were a lot of excited ladies! Archbishop Smith and Bishop McGrattan graced us with their company and enjoyed a lobster dinner together.

Wednesday morning began with a prayer followed by the steering committee from 'Building on Foundation, the League of the Future' presenting results of the previous day's town hall meeting. They gave a report which provided an overview of the process to date and a 5 year look at the strategic plan or planning strategically.

Rita James, the Chair of the Leadership Foundation gave a brief history as well as a year to date report. They will be accepting applications for the program which begins May 2018. It will be a yearly program operating from St. Paul's University in Ottawa. The course will include 5 days on campus at the beginning, 11 months on-line study and 4 days on campus at the end. There is the potential of 14 candidates per year.

We had a short presentation on the Coady International Institute and then the morning closed with a prayer service 'Lap Quilts of Love and Mercy'. One quilt from each province was processed in and you could clearly see all the hard work and love put in to these quilts which were blessed and will be presented to a palliative care patient.

The afternoon session began with a reconvening prayer 'Pentecost Prayer' followed by the continuation of the business session with the four resolutions presented to the assembly and all were passed.

- **2017.01** Full Implementation of the Supreme Court Decision in R. v. Gladue for Indigenous Offenders
- **2017.02** Mandatory Age Verification Mechanisms for Adult Pornographic Websites
- **2017.03** Zero-Rated Status Under the Goods and Services Tax Provisions of the Excise Tax Act for Child Safety Products
- **2017.04** Protection from Coercion of Conscience for Healthcare Professionals

The afternoon session closed with our Theme Prayer. Finishing a little ahead of schedule allowed for those who wanted to change before the closing Eucharistic Celebration which took us back to the beautiful St. Dunstan's Basilica with Bishop McGrattan as celebrant. The Reaffirmation Ceremony of officers took place before we walked back to the hotel for the closing gala banquet which featured great food and conversation and amazing entertainment from The Dream Catchers musical which took us on a quest to find hope for the future and dared us to believe that no dream is too small.

Thursday morning delegates who stayed on to take in the Island's Finest Tour to the North Shore found themselves travelling through beautiful scenery with good companions to historic and scenic sites. I hear they enjoyed all the sights!



Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Delegates
(Wearing red to celebrate our beloved country, Canada)



As you may know, Calgary will be hosting the 2019 National Convention, and I can't encourage you enough to plan to attend. Mark your calendars now (August 18–21, 2019). If you have attended National Convention before, you'll know what I'm talking about. If you haven't, you will be thrilled to be able to meet women from sea to sea to celebrate the Eucharist together, share ideas, be inspired by guest presenters, be involved in the Resolution process and learn of the future of the League. To laugh together, to pray together, to cry together, ***'Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call'***.

National CWL

www.cwl.ca

The Coady Institute at St. Francis Xavier University

<http://coady.stfx.ca>

MaterCare International

www.matercare.org

Development & Peace (CCODP)

www.devp.org

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial CWL

www.cwl.ab.ca

Edmonton Diocesan CWL

www.edmontoncwl.org

World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations

www.wucwo.org

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton

www.caedm.ca

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

www.cccb.ca

Salt & Light Catholic Media Foundation (TV station)

saltandlighttv.org

