**The Catholic Women’s League of Canada**





**Edmonton Diocesan Council**

**Spiritual Development Chair’s Report**

**96th Annual Diocesan Convention April 21, 2018**

**Normandy Room, Fort Saskatchewan**

Madame President,

In his new apostolic exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate, Pope Francis invites us to realize that “a great cloud of witnesses” impels us to advance constantly towards the goal. These witnesses may have been our own mothers, grandmothers, or other loved ones. Their lives may not always have been perfect, yet amid their faults and failings they kept moving forward and proved pleasing to the Lord. (GE 3)

May we always be encouraged to intentionally live our lives as women of Christ in our relationships: as religious sisters, as mothers, as grandmothers, as single people; and in our chosen vocations as a reflection of our personal relationship with Jesus, who calls us to lead holy lives.

In February, I accepted an invitation to join the Diocesan Mission Council. On this committee we work in our partnership with the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith. Locally, we support the Holy Childhood Mass which will be held at Holy Family Parish in St. Albert this year.

On March 2nd and 3rd Newman College’s sponsored the Anthony Jordan Lecture Series at the Pastoral Centre which featured talks by Dr. Matthew Levering. He spoke on the topic “Exploring the Catholic Theology of Marriage”. His talks looked at marriage and the cross, marriage and the resurrection, and marriage as indissoluble. These talks will be able to be found on YouTube soon.

The CWL of St. Maria Goretti Parish in Devon hosted a brunch in March where a courageous lady from Leduc shared her story of her relationship with her daughter, who triumphed over drug addiction. Which brings to mind the words of Pope Francis in his Easter message. Death, solitude and fear are not the last word. There is a word that transcends them, a word that only God can speak: it is the word of the resurrection”

The Wilberforce Pro Life banquet was held on Saturday, April 7. What a privilege to be a part of group that values life and is actively working to promote pro-life legislation. Let’s show our support for life at the Pro-Life walk on Thursday, May 10th in downtown Edmonton.

On April 9th Pope Francis revealed his newest Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete et Exsultate,* which calls each and every one of us to live our own unique holy life in accord with God’s plan. May we be challenged to read it and make it the beginning of our own path to holiness.

I am currently in the process of writing my final synthesis for my Masters of Divinity Degree at Newman Theological College and my comprehensive exam is set for May 22nd. Our diocese is privileged to have this college and I encourage our members to take advantage of the various learning opportunities available online and on campus.

This concludes my report. Are there any questions?

Respectfully submitted,

For God and Canada

Belinda Halbach

Spiritual Development Chair

Edmonton Diocesan Council