

## Official Prayer of the Congress

God our Father,  
We bless you and give you thanks  
For your Son Jesus, the gift of your love  
For the life of the world.

Watch over your Church as it celebrates in joy and hope  
The 49<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress.

Renew our faith in the Holy Eucharist,  
The memorial of your Son's death and resurrection.

May your Holy Spirit shed its light upon us  
And grant us strength  
To serve as faithful witnesses to the Gospel.

Nourish us with your Word and your Bread of Life  
So that united with Mary,  
The Mother of your Divine Son and Mother of the Church,  
We will bear much fruit  
For the salvation of the world.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



## The Catholic Women's League of Canada



## Spiritual Program

***FAITHFULNESS:***  
**A NATURAL PART OF THE HEART**



## FAITHFULLNESS:

### A NATURAL PART OF THE HEART

LEADER: "A Natural Part of the Heart" prayer is based on the story of Ruth, which speaks of a faithfulness born of her own loving and righteousness. It reminds us that we too are called to recognize and respond with inner godlike qualities - for our very hearts know the one true God.

READER: Ruth remained faithful to her mother-in-law, who was without husband or son to care for her. Through Ruth's very selflessness, we are introduced to a model of love and discipleship that we need to mirror in our own life. Oftentimes, we do not directly reflect on the goodness of God in our daily encounters, and yet we are called to act with an awareness of God's presence, which we claim as our own. It is important to deepen our prayer life so that our hearts can respond faithfully with a naturalness when circumstances face us.

*Oh Woman*



*Great is your faith*

### OPENING PRAYER

ALL: Loving God of our ancestor Ruth, be present to each of us as we come before you to enter our quiet place apart. Help us to realize that you are one with us, as you were with Ruth. Give us grace to act naturally out of unselfishness and faithfulness because you who are all generous and faithful dwell within us. Allow us the awareness that each time we are faithful to those you have placed in our life, we are evolving into true disciples. We see your favour in this and all things.  
AMEN

## CLOSING PRAYER

ALL: God, Creator of each human being in Your image and likeness, help me to see the face of Christ in friend and stranger alike. Give me an open, listening mind and an understanding heart, so that I may be a true companion to everyone I meet, as I try to answer Christ's call to *Love One Another*. May Your Holy Spirit guide my thoughts and actions and those of my sisters in The Catholic Women's League of Canada so that, through us, Your light will illumine our world. I ask this in the name of Jesus, Your Son, our Lord. Amen

ALL: 49th International Eucharistic Congress Prayer (back cover)



Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha

WOMEN OF FAITH

## LITANY OF PETITION

At times when someone is being alienated or ostracized and kindness is lacking...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

For those situation in which another needs to be defended or protected...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

During moments when others are grieving and need to be comforted...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

At any time when gossip is harming another's reputations...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

When a moment of our own witnessing and shared faith may make a difference

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

During times when we are faced with difficulties, darkness and despair...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

During times when we want to hold a grudge...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

When others are hungry for food, company, or a kind word...

ALL: May faithfulness be a natural part of our hearts

**ALL:** Blessed God, you have made us in your image and filled us with every grace and blessing. We are a people desiring more and more to be faithful servants. Make faithfulness to you a natural part of our hearts. We ask this through Christ our Lord. AMEN

## LEAGUE PRAYER

## SCRIPTURE READING

READER: A reading from the Book of Ruth (1:15-18)

So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

<sup>16</sup>But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. <sup>17</sup>Where you die, I will die— there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!" <sup>18</sup>When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her. The Word of the Lord.

READERS: A woman called Naomi is grieving for her dead husband and her two dead sons. She is standing outside her small cottage, leaning tiredly against the doorway. Her shoulders are heaving. Her moaning is heartbreaking. Her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, are trying to comfort her. It is hard for them because they are mourning the loss of their husbands. They discuss their decision to leave their country of Moab where there is famine. They say it is time to return to Naomi's homeland of Judah that they hear is blessed with food. Thy sigh and pick up the baskets and bundles of possessions that they will take with them. They travel a worn path with other refugees. People are quiet because they are hungry and tired. Not far from home, all at once, Naomi stops, puts down her baskets and bundles and turns to her two daughter-in-laws and says: "Dearest daughters, go back to the homes of your mothers. And may the Lord show kindness to you as you have shown to me and to our dead. May the Lord grant each of you another husband."

The two young women drop their belongings and begin to weep and protest. Orpah says with anguish “NO, NO!”

Ruth argues lovingly, “we will go back with you to your people.” Naomi shakes her head. There are tears in her eyes as well. “Return home. Will I have any more sons that I can give you as husbands? No, I am too old. You have a chance of finding new husbands. It is more bitter for me than for you. My good life is over.” Naomi begins to wave them off. Hesitantly Orpah leans down and picks up her things. She moves closer and kisses her mother-in-law good-bye. She hugs Ruth and she quietly walks down the path in the same direction from which she came.



Ruth turns back to her mother-in-law and clings to her, sobbing. Naomi strokes her hair and whispers, “Look your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Go with her, my daughter.”

Ruth lifts her head off Naomi’s shoulder. With tears streaming down her face, she says, “Do not urge me to leave you. Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.” Where you die I will die, and there I will choose to be buried.”

Naomi gasps at the love Ruth is offering her and reached over

to hold her daughter-in-law. Ruth quietly puts her arm around her mother-in-law. You sense from the look of patient understanding in Ruth’s face that she will stay with Naomi as she has promised. You continue to witness Ruth’s loving embrace supporting Naomi as Ruth walks with the older woman.

LEADER: Discipleship is a faithfulness that is a natural part of the heart that knows God. Discipleship means being faithful even when you could be doing something else. Jesus reminds you that Ruth stuck with Naomi even though she had turned into a bitter woman for a while who blamed God for bad things. You know who the people are in your life that you would follow anywhere if the circumstances arose. Jesus asks you to care for the people in your life whom you find hard to stick with. Pray that you will know the words and actions to be more faithful to your role as disciple. How you might treat others with the same acceptance and patience that Ruth offered Naomi.

