

League Lingo

The Catholic Women's League of Canada

London Diocesan Newsletter

Vol. 2

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From the Desk of the Editor

Happy Spring! It has been a cold winter but the warmth of the women hard at work on behalf of The Catholic Women's League of Canada radiates in the pages of this newsletter. We are blessed to have so many talented women in our diocese. Each one of us has gifts that are needed not only in our parish councils but also at the diocesan level. We are about to move into a new term of office, and there is no doubt that there will be more opportunities for women to become more engaged. In this year of the Jubilee, consider how you might bring your *hope* to the work of the CWL.

If you haven't already registered for our diocesan convention/AMM next month, consider coming for at least one day or one event. Find out why it is so important to connect with our sisters across the diocese.

I look forward to seeing you in Stratford.
Happy Lent!

Nelly Kelders,

Editor

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Theresa Ryan: A Heart of Service



My dear sisters, this is my swan song. Very soon I will have completed my term as diocesan past president. I have thoroughly enjoyed representing the women of the London Diocesan Catholic Women's League in my many roles over the last 21 years. I don't even recognize the shy quiet woman I was when I let my name stand for regional chairperson. I have learned so much about our organization, our diocese, and our faith by being with like-minded women. I want to emphasize that I don't have any special qualities other than a willingness to learn. I am a quiet person and I tend to stay to myself. I make an effort to socialize when I am at CWL functions because you are never alone and always welcome to join others. Over the years there have been changes. The biggest one, the average age of our participating members. When I joined the CWL in 1977, I was one of a few women working outside the home in my council. Now it is the opposite. These women are busy and we need to understand that but still try to keep them interested in what we do. Computers and cell phones have made an impact on our lives. Even those reluctant to use computers are being shown how to use cell phones and share pictures by their children or grandchildren.

I am so proud of our women who while we were being affected by COVID, participated in Zoom meetings. What an experience that was!

Our League has made some big changes in organization that will ease the strain that some councils feel in getting women to fill executive positions. The one thing that we don't do very well is mentor each other or give training to those in our council. Maybe they don't want to step up right now but by mentoring you are empowering them for later. There also seems to be a tendency to be afraid to ask for help. We at the diocesan level would be happy to help you. Ask us. The other important issue is that you need to pay your council first before you start donating to everyone else. Just like an emergency on an airplane, we have to grab the oxygen first so that we can help others. You should be budgeting money to send women to the convention(s). The women you send could be the future of your council. Show them your support by backing them. Conventions are not a "vacation" for those attending. It's work.

I have had the privilege of working alongside five different spiritual advisors. They have all been very dear to my heart. I have gained insights and memories from all of them. I am thankful to them for the gift of their precious time.

We need to smile more. Let our faces show that we are having a good time. You can't attract people by looking all mopey. Something that I hope isn't happening at your councils is negativism. Don't knock someone else's way because they don't do things like you want them done. You had your chance to be on council. *Build up, not tear down.*

I don't know what the future holds for me, but for sure I will still be involved with the CWL.

The Catholic Women's League of Canada thanks Theresa for her many years of service at the parish and diocesan levels. Her experience and her wisdom is greatly valued and we look forward to continuing the journey with Theresa in the sisterhood of the CWL for many years to come.

The Power of Heartfelt Words

At Holy Name of Jesus in Essex, our usual method of a membership and new executive drive has been to; send an email to our membership; personally ask ladies to think and pray about joining us; and placing information in our parish bulletin. This past fall, our pastor, Fr. Danny asked my co-president, Pat Kozak and me to speak at our two weekend Masses. We each spoke at a Mass. This was our first time standing in front of the Parish in well over 25 years. Fr. Danny said a few words of introduction before we spoke.

Our talks focused on our 90-year history as a council; what we have accomplished over the years; how important we are to our parish, community; and other ways we have contributed to the parish community. The result was powerful. We ended up filling the three vacant executive positions, including a president-elect plus we gained four new members. Pat Kozak has moved to past-president. We have a president-elect and I will be president for 2025. Our executive works as a team, no position is without member help. We really want to keep it alive.

Janice Rounding President
Holy Name of Jesus CWL



November at St. Michael Parish in Bright's Grove is always the month our Catholic Women's League really ramps up the call to invite women to return to our council and new members to join us.

Like other councils, we employ many of the same tactics to get the message out; bulletin announcements; CWL newsletter; word of mouth; and our table at the annual Christmas market.

We were given the opportunity to speak from the pulpit at the end of mass, on the first Sunday of November 2024; something we have been doing for many years.

President Mary van Delft was given the task. She spoke from the heart, telling parishioners about her CWL. What it meant to be involved in the various activities through the pillars of faith, service and social justice.

The woman who became a member more than 35 years ago would never have been able to stand up here and speak, and she certainly never wanted to be president, but sometimes God leads us where we never thought we would go.

As a result of Mary's talk, we were able to increase our membership by nine women and entered 2025 with a full executive.

Nelly Kelders, former past president



A Spiritual Bouquet – A Gift Like No Other

Jeanne Lauzon, Regional Chair, Essex

How many times have you been asked to sign a Spiritual Bouquet? I have done it many times. After I sign it, I soon forgot what I had committed to doing. I have good intentions, but sadly a poor memory. I then feel a little sad and guilty. I'm sure I'm not the only one.

Spiritual Bouquets, which sound so beautiful, are a Catholic tradition of presenting prayers or acts of charity, mercy or devotion that someone has or will offer for someone else. These gifts can be given from an individual or group to express joy, sorrow, or best wishes often in commemoration of a special event. Any prayers or offerings can be included in a spiritual bouquet, for example: having a Mass said, praying the Rosary, completing a novena, spending time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, an act of kindness, sacrificing on behalf of another. A Spiritual Bouquet is usually accompanied by a card or note to the person we are praying for, including the sender's name and the number of times each offering was or will be made.

Messages on the card could read:

- With love and gratitude, I offer you a “Spiritual Bouquet” of the following.
- “The following prayers/devotional acts” have been offered up for your intentions...
- “I have offered prayers/devotional acts as a “Spiritual Bouquet” in your honor.

Offering a Spiritual Bouquet is a wonderful gift and blessing to those who receive it. Maybe when asking members to sign one, we should provide a slip of paper to write down their offering. I know I would truly appreciate this so I can take it home as a reminder of the commitment I have made.



A Book – The Best Gift Ever



At Christmas, parishioners of the Sarnia Bluewater Family of Parishes were gifted with a book. It was called **33 DAYS to EUCHARISTIC GLORY** and written by Matthew Kelly, a well-known author of Catholic motivational books. It is the first ever guide to Eucharistic Consecration. I picked up a copy, to add to my growing pile of books I really would like to read, when I have time. That didn't happen until the end of the first week of February when I finally decided to crack the cover and find out what this book was all about. It takes 33 days to read and after the first few days, I wished I had started sooner.

Matthew Kelly reminds us that *life is a pilgrimage, a sacred journey toward our eternal home with God*. The book has a precise format: a story that carries an important message (usually 3-6 pages); a Lesson; Virtue of the Day; and the Spiritual Communion Prayer. We get to journey with saints such as Mother Teresa, John Paul II, Thérèse of Lisieux, Maximilian Kolbe, Thomas Aquinas, Sister Faustina, the Children of Fatima, and Mary the Mother of God. The hardest part about the journey was my desire to read ahead. I wanted to read the book cover to cover as soon as possible, but that is not how to read this book. Read each day and reflect upon the message and the lesson. To order, visit the Dynamic Catholic website, dynamiccatholic.com and search in Books & Gifts.

In Our Councils

Supporting Our Parish

During Advent, the Faith Team of St. Peter's Catholic Women's League in Goderich held a church fundraiser. Memorial ornaments were created from recycled Christmas cards and were made available for purchase by donation. The names of loved ones were written on the back and then placed on the Christmas tree. Rev. Tom Donohoe was joined by several CWL members for the blessing the ornaments and tree. Through the generous support of our parishioners, our council was able to raise \$436.70.



Faith and Culture

On February 20, 2025, Good Shepherd CWL, Lakeshore, hosted a talk by Fr. Bernard Akum SDV, Associate Pastor of Windsor-Lake St. Clair Catholic Family of Parishes. He did a presentation on how the Catholic faith is lived in Cameroon. The country is located in Central Africa on the shores of the Gulf of Guinea. French is the predominant language. The majority of the population are Christian and of those 38.4 percent identify as Catholic.

What a wonderful opportunity to learn about the priests in our Family of Parishes! Many thanks to Good Shepherd Catholic Women's League for organizing this event and inviting their sisters from Ste. Anne in Tecumseh. The evening concluded with a time for social interaction where coffee, tea and delicious desserts were served.

Pictured below with Fr. Bernard are members from St. Anne: Ozelle Case, Catherine Zold and Ann Campeau.



Visitation CWL, Comber is Full of Heart

Inspired to engage and intrigue our general membership to attend monthly gatherings for more than just business items and information sessions, our executive members strive to provide social activities at every gathering. In honour of Valentine's Day, the ladies in attendance at our January gathering crafted diligently to create 130 pocket hearts for seniors in our local manors – Hudson, St. Joachim and Tilbury. These handmade tokens of love were delivered in time for February 14th by Council President Susi Dupuis and Vice-president Mary Masse. We were fortunate to squeeze in some visiting time, as well as spread a little love within our communities!

Opposite picture: President Susi Dupuis with Member Doreen Reaume at one of the local manors.





105th Annual London Diocesan Convention and Annual Meeting of Members



Join Us as We Celebrate this Special Year of the Jubilee

Have you marked your calendar yet? April 28 – 30, 2025, in Stratford, we will gather as a sisterhood to pray, work and celebrate who we are as Catholic women! Our hosts, the ladies of Huron/Perth Region, have been putting their many creative gifts and talents to good use, as they prepare for our arrival. Come and experience the beauty of the area and all it has to offer.

Our headquarters for the convention and AMM is the Best Western Arden Park! This is a return visit for us; it's like coming home to old friends. There is so much to tell you about these days, but here are some of the highlights.

April 28

Are you ready to tour St. Mary's, located at the junction of the Thames River and Trout Creek?

Did you know:

- Its nickname is *The Stonetown* due to the abundance of limestone in the area;
- A large number of the buildings and homes in the town are built from limestone;
- It is home to over 7,000 residents;
- It's the home to the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum; and
- The burial place of Canada's 9th Prime Minister, Arthur Meighen.

You will have plenty of time to browse in the unique shops on Main Street before heading to Holy Name of Mary Church. The beautiful church is made from local stone with lovely stained-glass windows. It was blessed and opened on September 11, 1892.



Following the tour, nourishment will be provided in the parish hall in the form of a build-your-own sandwich buffet. Don't worry, there will be something for everyone. Then, it's back to the hotel for some inspirational learning.

Opening Ceremonies and Mass

Join us at 4:30pm at St. Patrick's Church in Kinkora, for our opening ceremonies, mass and dinner.

Come early and enjoy the tranquility and beauty of this church, often referred to as the Cathedral of the North. It was built in 1882 and the rectory in 1904. The parish hall, across the street, was built in 2006. Extensive restoration work on the church was completed in 2005.

This is truly an inspirational site to begin our journey of prayer, learning and building relations in our diocesan CWL.



Wait, there is more! The Prom is tonight at the hotel!

Proms through the Eras Fun Night

Here is your chance to live the prom of your dreams. Be a princess for the evening and dress in any era attire that suits your fancy; from Roaring 20s to Hippie 60s to today. Who cares as long as you are there.

Did we mention, bring your date. He can be big or small, tall or short, skinny or poufy! He can be a teddy bear, a doggie, a tiger or cat, a hippo or a giraffe. We can't wait to meet your special guy. All stuffies are most welcome. Spend the evening, spinning around the dance floor with your Stuffedie. ♡



Did we also mention, you can't take your date home. Sorry, it's not allowed. At the end of the evening, your stuffies will be collected and donated to the Children's Hospital in London to brighten the lives of little people facing some very tough challenges. Be sure to have your photo taken with your special date so that you can treasure the memory. Who knows, maybe you will be crowned Queen and King of the Prom.

Can't wait to see you there; 8pm in the Ballroom.



Learning in Different Dimensions

Everyone loves to have a good time when they are away from home and as described above, there are opportunities to do that during the convention. There will also be time for us to learn and to share experiences as members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada. We start on Monday afternoon with two workshops. It would be great if those attending from the same council split up so as to benefit from both workshops.

Creating Resolutions Workshop

Calling all Social Justice Pillar chairpersons! Join Diocesan Treasurer, Mary Clare Latimer, as she walks participants through the process of how to create a resolution at the parish council level. Her informative workshop will delve into the various components involved with researching and developing a resolution that meets the standards set by our National Council. Timelines will be discussed as well as the importance of choosing a topic that meets the goals and mission of our League. Participants will become more confident about "where to start" and will learn how to access available resources that will assist their parish council to develop viable and timely resolutions.

The Joy of Membership Workshop

Together with Regional Chairs Jeanne Lauzon, Laurie Lassaline, Linda Van Raay, and Service Pillar Chair Lori Alexander, participants will explore the importance of engaging women in their councils and parishes.

In this participatory workshop, there will be opportunities to share and explore what works in parish councils across the diocese and some brainstorming for new ideas. Bring your joy and love of the League to this hour of encounter.



Wait! There is more to learn on the next page!



105th Annual London Diocesan Convention and Annual Meeting of Members



Monday, will be spent socializing, learning, praying and more socializing. It was a preview of what to expect on Tuesday. This is our convention day and will be full of interesting and informative presentations. As always there will be time for prayer. The Prayer Room will be open and available throughout the convention/AMM. The business of the Diocesan Council will take place on Wednesday morning. Our guest speakers will give us much to think about and ideas to bring back home to our councils. Be prepared for a day of discovery.

The Synod and the Conversation of the Spirit

We welcome our first speaker of the day, Linda Staudt, a life-long learner as a Catholic educator and administrator. Nominated by Bishop Fabbro, Linda was appointed by Pope Francis as one of four lay people from Canada to the 16th General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome as a voting delegate. She was the co-chair of the Synod Committee for the Diocese of London and Chair and Lead writer of the Synod Synthesis Team for the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario.

Linda has spent the last two years sharing her experience of the Synod locally, provincially and nationally. She has facilitated sessions with a variety of groups, promoting the implementation of the synodal process of listening and discernment, in order to become a more participatory and missionary Church.

Truth & Reconciliation

Kathy Furlon has brought her 35 years in Catholic and public education to the position of Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee for the Diocese of London and has held that position since September 2021. Throughout her career Kathy was involved in Indigenous Education. She is passionate about the need to make right our relationships with the Indigenous people of this land. She will be joined by Gwen Waeijen, an Anishinabeg woman who is a member of the Chippewa of Nawash First Nation. She is a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and an active member of subcommittees for National Social Justice, Public Policy Dialogue and Development, Indigenous Sharing Circle, and formerly the Multi-Cultural and Diversity sub committee. Gwen is also a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee for the Diocese of London. She is passionate about social justice and in particular safe drinking water for all Indigenous peoples.

Mental Health in Elders

Frances Taylor will complete our day of learning with a presentation on mental health in elders. A timely topic for all of us. She is the Registered Nurse Team Lead with the Huron Perth Seniors Mental Health and Addictions Response Team. A registered nurse for 23 years, Frances is passionate about educating and advocating for the needs of adults living with dementia and mental health concerns and she takes pride in helping older adults and their families navigate the health care system to find the resources necessary to meet their needs.



We look forward to learning more about how the Synodal process can make a difference for us as well as hear about Linda's experience in this process.



Both Kathy and Gwen are active members in their CWL councils at Mary Immaculate in London and All Saints in Strathroy.



We look forward to hearing her insights into this important topic.



105th Annual London Diocesan Convention and Annual Meeting of Members



Wednesday, April 30 Annual Meeting of Members

This year, we are introducing the new format, introduced by the National Executive at their AMM in Saskatoon in 2024. Members will hear from our Diocesan President Mary Bannon, Vice-president Denise Morris and Spiritual Advisor Father Paul Kim. Treasurer Mary Clare Latimer will give her report on the state of our finances and the Auditor's Report. This year there are no resolutions to present to the membership.

Once the business is completed, we will hear from our president-elect Denise Morris, Provincial President Colleen Martin and our sisters in Chatham/Kent who will host the 2026 convention/AMM. Our final piece of business will be the election of the new executive for 2025-2027.



We end the day and the AMM with mass and the installation of the new executive at Immaculate Conception Church.

Convention Tips

- **Registration Deadline is April 1st, 2025!** Don't wait. Register now!
- All the masses are off-site, so consider car-pooling with your sisters. Note that they start at 4:30pm.
- Dress according to your comfort level – bring a sweater if you tend to get cold, or wear lighter clothing if you are always warm. It's hard to get the temperature right in most convention halls!
- Bring money. We will have Share the Wealth draws, vendors and raffles. The CWL golf shirts and cardigans will be for sale too.
- There will be a collection for charities in the area, as is our custom.
- We do not record or take notes of the guest speaker presentations so bring a notebook to jot down key points.
- Presidents, don't forget to bring a bag of hygiene products for the homeless, as part of the procession for the Crowning of Mary.
- Wear your CWL pin throughout the convention/AMM.
- Make sure you bring your date for Prom Night!

Pray For Us

Whether you are attending the 105th Convention and Annual Meeting of Members or not, please keep all of us in your prayers. In the National League magazine for the Winter of 2025, there is an insert in the middle (pages 9-12) of the Novena for Members. Consider starting this prayer on April 19 and finishing on April 27. How powerful it would be if all our sisters in the diocese said this Novena prior to the beginning of our gathering.

We wish safe travels to all who are attending and look forward to meeting with you in Stratford!



Reduce, Reuse & Recycle

Joanne Doherty, President

The St. Peter's Goderich CWL Luncheon & Our Closet Fashion Show was initiated by Evelyn McDonough three years ago and has become an annual sold-out event. It aligns with *Laudato Si's* teachings, specifically incorporating the actions of reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Ladies modelled gently-used clothing, footwear, jewellery, and accessories donated by the local community.

The Fashion Show commentator said the clothes would speak for themselves, and she would instead talk about the models. The audience was entertained with stories of inspiration, volunteerism, talent, faith, and empowerment.

The lunch was prepared by the CWL and served by the Knights of Columbus. After lunch, raffle and Share-the-Wealth tickets were sold. The *Our Closet Boutique* was open for ladies to try on and purchase the donated items. One-third of all monies raised were donated to St. Vincent de Paul (\$1,718.) as well as any unsold items.



A Teacup Full of Love

Sacred Heart CWL, Wingham

What can we give to our members who can no longer attend our CWL meetings? We came up with an idea. Following our November meeting, members prepared tea cup Christmas gifts for them and any other parishioners who are confined to their homes. Thanks to Marjorie who spearheaded this labour of love, gathering the materials needed and patiently instructing members on how to cut out, assemble, and decorate their paper tea cups.

Those making the tea cups enjoyed a creative evening together with their sisters in the League. It was a pleasure for our member, Mary Lou, to distribute these gift tea cups, which contained tea and sugarless candy, while she visited our sisters and parishioners in their homes.

Our Council received many positive comments and thanks from those receiving the tea cups.



To learn more about the Catholic Women's League of Canada, check our websites:

Diocesan Website	cwillondon.com
Provincial Website	cwl.on.ca
National Website	cwl.ca

Answering the Call!

Dianne Tucker, Immaculate Heart of Mary

Winter isn't easy for anyone and it is especially difficult for the Homeless. In January, Ark Aid Mission in London, ON put out an appeal asking for help for the homeless.

At Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Grand Bend, we responded to this appeal and for the next three weeks collected items needed to help the homeless survive this cold winter. The response by our parishioners was amazing! As these items are needed on a daily basis, each Monday a van load of blankets, boots, sleeping bags, tarps, tents, jackets and winter clothing plus financial donations were delivered to Fr. Michael Bechard and the staff at the Ark Aid Mission in London.



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You Asked Us

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- 1. Our Parish administrator has asked our CWL council to provide a certificate of insurance that specifically names our council on it. How do we do this?**
 - Contact the person responsible for issuing insurance certificates; Melanie Patill info@patillstjames.com
 - If the parish council is inquiring about adding an additional insured to their certificate, a Certificate of Insurance form needs to be fully completed and returned to info@patillstjames.com.
 - If you need assistance or have questions regarding the form please call Melanie Patill at St. James Insurance at [204-889-6681](tel:204-889-6681).
 - Melanie Patill can also answer any questions you may have about insurance.
 - The Certificate of Insurance form was sent to all regional chairs. Contact your chair for a copy.
- 2. My daughter is turning 16 in two months. When can she sign up for a CWL membership?**

She can sign up at the beginning of the year she turns 16 so that she is able to enjoy a full year of membership.
- 3. My council does not have a Policy and Procedure Manual. Why do we need one and how do we get it?**

Every council should have a Policy and Procedure Manual (P&P). It is the guide to how you run your council, make decisions and spend money. The National, Provincial or Diocesan P&Ps can be used as a starting point. Some councils have already created their own P&P. You can ask to borrow one to get started. Ask for a few volunteers on your council to create the first draft; two or three is bigger enough. Once the draft is completed it needs to be reviewed by the executive council and then brought to the general membership for consensus. Everyone on the council needs to understand the P&P. If you want help, ask a member of the diocesan executive council to help. We can set up Zoom meetings as a method of meeting or face-to-face, if that works.

In the Year of the Jubilee, We Have Mary's Yes!

It is the end of the first full week of Lent. The rain had been falling on and off throughout the early morning, yet that did not deter 120 women from finding their way to St. Benedict's Church in Sarnia. They came from all seven regions of the Diocese of London. The parking lot was full. What was drawing them to this place of worship in the south end of Sarnia so early on a damp Saturday morning?

The answer is simple; prayer and sisterhood. On March 15th we came together for the annual Lenten Retreat of the Diocese of London Catholic Women's League. Our hosts for the day, the ladies of St. Benedict's CWL, of the Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes, greeted us with warm smiles as we gathered to celebrate in song and prayer.

Our Spiritual Advisor, Father Paul Kim celebrated mass with us, reminding us of the importance of the Jubilee. Fr. Paul spoke of the meanings of the symbols in the Jubilee logo and how they relate to our own journeys in life. The music throughout the mass was uplifting as we were led by a choir of women from St. Benedict's. Hearing 120 voices lifted in song and prayer is truly an awesome and powerful experience. Following mass there was some time for reconnecting with women we have not seen since our last CWL diocesan event, all the while, we were being nourished with delicious baked treats, prepared by our hosts.

Our morning session was led by Laura Lee, Pastoral Minister with the Elgin Roman Catholic Family of Parishes. She continued the theme of the day, Pilgrims of Hope. *Hope does not disappoint.*

This is a time for us to re-establish relationships. The theme of Jubilee is liberation. Jesus promises us freedom from sin and death. Laura talked about hope and that hope is Jesus. We need to trust in His promises.

In the second half of her presentation, Laura unpacked the sacrament of confession and why it is such a beautiful sacrament – a place for healing and victory. We ended the morning in the church to pray a forgiveness prayer and then for those who wished, an opportunity for confession. Thus ended our morning.

Christine Bresette, Faith Pillar Chair with St. Michael CWL Bright's Grove, was our afternoon presenter. She reminded us of *Mary's Perfect Yes* at the Annunciation and all that that meant. She posed the question; *was Mary the first pilgrim of hope?* Christine led us through the mysteries of the rosary where Mary was involved and how she reacted each time with hope.

We were reminded again of the importance of prayer; *everything begins with prayer*. The novena to the Holy Spirit is one way of continuing the mission. Luke 11:9 tells us again to ask God for what we need. We can only do this if we spend time with God and talk to him.

Then before we knew it, the day was over. The smiles and chatter as we departed were a good indication that it was a very good day. We are so thankful to have such talented women in our midst willing to share their knowledge with us! Thank you, Laura and Christine, and St. Benedict CWL for hosting us!

