

League Lingo

The Catholic Women's League of Canada

London Diocesan Newsletter



Vol.2 No. 4 September 2025

From the Desk of the Editor

Wow! There is so much news to share with you in this issue, it was hard to squeeze everything in. Contributions from our sister councils remind us of the ongoing work in our diocese in the areas of service and social justice.

We kicked off July by hosting the provincial convention in London. It was a rewarding experience for all involved. We worked hard but we got a chance to play hard too!

The national convention in Toronto was an amazing opportunity for members to experience the CWL at this level. It was wonderful to see so many ladies from our diocese in attendance.

In many ways, September seems like the beginning of the new year as councils are busy planning fundraising events, setting budgets for 2026 and inviting ladies in the parish to join our sisterhood through faith, service and social justice activities.

Happy Reading,
Nelly Kelders
Editor



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Diocesan Executive Council 2025-27

President: Denise Lalonde Morris
Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Paul Kim
Past-president: Theresa Ryan
Vice-president: Nelly Kelders
Treasurer: Mary Clare Latimer
Secretary: Colleen Kelly
Interim Faith Chair: Jeanne Lauzon
Service Chair: Bea Taylor
Social Justice Chair: Linda Van Raay

From the President's Desk



A Full Diocesan Executive Council

At the end of our Annual Meeting of Members in April, our diocesan executive council had a vacancy as well as elected members, experiencing health issues. I would like to address the changes in the executive that have come about as a result of these circumstances.

As Mary Bannon passed the president's gavel to me, she should have become our past-president. Due to medical issues, Mary realized she would not be in a position to fulfill her duties in this office and has tendered her resignation. Thus, a vacancy was created.

Theresa Ryan, who stepped down from the past-president's position in April, graciously accepted our invitation to return to the past-president's position for another term. We thank Mary for her service to the League and continue to pray for her good health. We welcome Theresa back to the executive council and thank her for her continued support.

Since the position of secretary was left vacant, the executive council was able to appoint a person to this position. We are pleased to welcome Colleen Kelly from St. John the Divine Parish in London to our executive table. Her experiences in the area of administration and her knowledge of the CWL will enhance our council.

Shirley Ann Beecroft, who was acclaimed as a committee chairperson during the election, and who was subsequently appointed Faith Chair, has had to take a leave of absence from her role due to medical issues. In the interim, Jeanne Lauzon has been appointed interim Faith Pillar chairperson. Jeanne is the former regional chair for Essex Region. We welcome Jeanne back in this new interim role. Please join us in keeping Shirley Ann in your prayers, that she too may have a speedy recovery.

I hope over the course of the next year, our executive council will get to meet many of you so that you in turn, get to know us. One of the best ways to do this is to attend one of our three Diocesan Development Days this fall and to join us at our Convention/Annual Meeting of Members, April 20-21, 2026 in Chatham. Also remember, we are just a phone call or email away, if you have a question or need help.

Our Lady of Good Counsel pray for us and our endeavours.



A Family's Love and Support

By Mary Paradine

May 11, 2025, was a joyous day at St. Mary's Parish in West Lorne, as family and friends gathered to celebrate Rev. Clare Coleman's 50th anniversary to the priesthood. It was fifty years ago that he stood in that same church to celebrate his first mass as an ordained priest. Now retired, Fr. Clare lives in the West Lorne community. The St. Helen's CWL Council of Wallacetown, with the help of ladies from St. Mary's Parish, prepared Father Clare's reception at St. Mary's Parish Hall where many memories were shared.

Joining him to celebrate this milestone were his five cousins, the daughters of his aunt, Helen Coleman Van Vaerenbergh. Helen Van Vaerenbergh was a CWL member and president of St. Helen's Parish Council, Wallacetown in the 1950s and 1960s. During her shortened life, she instilled in her daughters the positive work of the CWL. To her it was an obligation we have as Christians, to God and country, and to give to and help others. The power of prayer was and continues to be a great source of comfort to her daughters. They give thanks for the commitment shown to them by their parents.

The five sisters who were all present at Fr. Clare's ordination in 1975 are today all CWL members having served in many capacities in their councils. They have passed on their love of the League to the next generation; Mary's daughter, Cathy Paradine and Joan's daughter Patty Friedrich are also CWL members.



From left to right:
Mary Paradine, St.
Patrick's, London,
Joan Friedrich, Mary
Immaculate, London,
Father Coleman,
Fran Stortz, St.
Helen's, Wallacetown,
Barb Handford, and
Judy Corneil, both
members of St.
Patrick's, London.

Crafting Socials for Fun and Purpose

Darlene Charrette, St. Michael's Parish, London

Imagine a room filled with laughter, colourful materials, curious hands, and the gentle hum of creativity; a place where artistry meets friendship and inspiration flourishes in every corner. These are our Crafting Socials, where St. Michael's CWL members have been gathering this summer to make items to sell at the annual Christmas Market. Twelve to twenty-five people attended each of the four sessions:

1. **Planning Session:** potential projects were presented, donated materials explored, and a plan made for upcoming sessions.



2. **Sewing Session:** lavender neck warmers, aprons, coasters, and bowl cozies were made. Non-sewers helped by cutting out fabric, pinning and stuffing while the sewers worked the machines.
3. **Card-Making Session:** three members presented a variety of card-making techniques and options. Each participant made several cards including Christmas, birthday, sympathy, thinking of you, and other cards.
4. **Decorations & Kits Session:** where we will work on creating Christmas centrepieces, bows, and kits for gift-giving.



Each Crafting Social promised an afternoon of collaboration, learning, and socializing with other members, and they certainly delivered. From seasoned artisans to absolute beginners, everyone found a welcoming space to share skills, swap stories, and celebrate our ability to create together. All the items made will be sold at the Christmas Market in November.

Proceeds will be donated to Hospitality North which provides weekly dinners to people in need, the St. Vincent de Paul Housing Project, and other initiatives and charities supported by the CWL

Happenings in the Diocese

LENTEN PROJECT FOR 2025

Holy Trinity Catholic Women's League (Woodstock, Ontario) Lenten project focused on supporting those who have experienced abuse. Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO) is committed to ending gender-based violence and helping families make the transition to lives free from violence and abuse. Holy Trinity parishioners generously donated and St. Michael's Elementary School held a food-drive.. On May 14th two SUVs, loaded to the brim, delivered the items to DASO.



Shrove Tuesday Proceeds

During their CWL meeting on March 11, 2025, Linda Proctor, Ste. Anne CWL President (Tecumseh), presented Mike Rovers of Second Chance Ministry with a cheque of \$1200 from the proceeds of our recent Shrove Tuesday Sunday Pancake Breakfast.



Messages of Love

Most Precious Blood CWL in Windsor remembered their homebound members and those in nursing homes by sending them home-made cards on St. Patrick's Day and Mother's Day.

Happy Birthday to You

Ste. Anne CWL member, Ursula Benoit, recently celebrated her 100th birthday. During her birthday party, President Linda Proctor pinned Madame Benoit with her 75th year CWL pin. What an amazing woman! Happy 100th birthday! Bonne fête!



Truly Faith in Action!

By Linda Van Raay

On October 18, 2023, St. Helen's Catholic Women's League Council, Wallacetown, hosted a Truth and Reconciliation evening with Kathy Furlong, chair of the London Diocese Roman Catholic Truth and Reconciliation Committee.

Inspired by Kathy's talk, the council enquired about the needs of the local Indigenous community. On May 14, 2024, the council visited the Oneida Nation of the Thames to meet with Mandi Fields, project manager of *Imagine Build*, a housing project for the homeless and needy on the reserve.

With donated construction materials and fundraising efforts, Oneida has been able to build homes without relying on government funding. An Indigenous committee selects the recipient and the construction crew. A professional contractor oversees the construction of each house. In the spring of 2025, they were constructing their fifth house.

Realizing that this was an opportunity to show we care about our local Indigenous community and fulfill the



Truth and Reconciliation objective, St. Helen's Council approached the chair of their CWL Region to invite Mandi to speak at a regional meeting. At the May 2025 meeting, council representatives heard about *Imagine Build* and the fifth house. During a Q&A period, the councils learned that funding was needed for the roof. Seeing an opportunity to do something concrete regarding Truth and Reconciliation, council presidents the message back to their members.

On July 24, 2025, representatives of the London Regional Council presented Mandi Fields with donations totaling \$7,450.00 towards the roof of the fifth house. A CWL member made and donated a quilt for the young daughter of the family receiving the house.

We hope that this is just the beginning of forming a relationship with our Indigenous communities in the London Diocese. We hope to continue to educate and inform our membership about the needs of our Indigenous neighbours.





Mark Your Convention Dates Now!

**BE
JOYFUL**

Our sisters in Chatham/Kent look forward to your presence at our 106th convention and Annual Meeting of Members.

When: Mon. April 20 and Tues. April 21, 2026

**Where: John D. Bradley Convention Centre,
Chatham, ON**

Accommodation: Holiday Inn

Have you ever been to Thunder Bay! You are in luck. Our sisters in Thunder Bay and Kenora are preparing for our arrival in July to celebrate the 79th convention and Annual Meeting of Members. Don't disappoint them. Be there!

When: Sun. July 5 - Tues. July 7, 2026

Where: To Be Announced



Why not consider a trip to the east coast next summer. Halifax is calling! The 106th convention and Annual Meeting of Members will be amazing.

When: Sun. Aug. 9 - Wed. Aug. 12, 2026

Where: To Be Announced

It's One for the Books

The 105th Ontario Convention/Annual Meeting of Members (AMM) is now just a memory. What an experience it was for the London diocesan executive council and our sisters in our seven regions as we volunteered time, energy, skills and talents to make sure that we hosted the best convention ever. If there were problems, delegates didn't know because our committee dealt with them seamlessly. According to our provincial spiritual advisor, Bishop Allen Campeau of Thunder Bay, we have raised the bar for provincial conventions. So, ladies, give yourselves a pat on the back, because you deserve it for all your hard work!

Convention Highlights

- It started with the planting of bushes at St. Peter's Seminary in Mary's Garden on Friday, July 4. Rev. Grecco, Rector of St. Peter's was pleased that we included them in our convention and for the support we give to our seminarians.
- Games Night on Saturday, July 5th set the stage for lots of camaraderie, laughter and sportsmanship.
- Sunday's Resolution Workshop set the stage for good discussion throughout the convention. The opening mass at St. Justin's centered us in faith and fellowship.
- Monday morning's presentations included comments from National President Shari Quinta and a presentation by Vice-president Betty Colaneri on membership: *Recruit, Retain, Regain*. The national theme, *Here I am Lord, Send Me*, was a reminder to us all to be joyful and to promote The Catholic Women's League of Canada.
- We also heard from the 12 diocesan presidents as they reported on how their councils' activities have promoted the national theme.
- Dr. Josephine Lombardi was the keynote speaker on Tuesday. She spoke on the role of the Blessed Virgin and how she is the role model for synodality.
- Provincial Vice-president Karen McDonald and Secretary Lisa Henry took to the stage Tuesday afternoon to *Ignite the League*. We have the joy and the power to attract members to the League through our actions.
- There were faith components throughout the convention; daily masses, time for reflections and a mini-retreat with Bishop Campeau.
- Wednesday was our Annual Meeting of Members. We heard from President Colleen Martin, Spiritual Advisor Bishop Campeau and Treasurer Lisa Fillingham. Resolutions were discussed and voted upon. Two of the three resolutions were adopted and moved forward to the National AMM.



A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

All photos of the 2025 Convention/Amm are available on the provincial website at <https://cwl.on.ca/gallery/>



This is us! All 110 London Diocesan Delegates!



Diocesan Presidents



Spiritual Advisors



Passing the banner!

The World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO)

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is an active member of WUCWO and this year we had the privilege to host the North American Conference in Toronto, on August 10th prior to the opening of our own national convention. Honorary Life Member Barbara Dowding was the chair of the meeting. National President Shari Guinta brought greetings and a report to the delegates in attendance.



Barbara Dowding, Monica Santamarina and Shari Guinta

We were honoured to have WUCWO's President General Moncia Santamarina with us for the Conference and she stayed for our convention and Annual Meeting of Members as well. In her report Monica talked about the global network and their mission. WUCWO's membership includes 100 member organizations in 56 countries, representing more than eight million women. It was founded in 1910 and in 2006, WUCWO was established by the Holy See as a Public International Association of the Faithful.

Its mission: To promote the integral development of women and their participation in all areas of ecclesial and social life, encouraging them to live fully their Christian vocation and their commitment to the world

Their vision: We aspire that Catholic women may be active protagonists in the Church and in society, collaborating in the construction of a more just and humane world, based on the witness of their faith and their concrete commitment.

Goals

Listening, accompanying and transforming the lives of women around the world, based on faith and commitment to human dignity.

At WUCWO we work so that the voice of Catholic women resonates strongly in the Church and society, implementing concrete actions born of listening, the experience of our women and fidelity to the Gospel.

Areas of activity

They serve with passion in those areas where women suffer, lead, transform and build bridges. Their areas of work range from the accompaniment of vulnerable women, the promotion of the family, ecology, interreligious dialogue, to formation and active participation in a synodal Church. They believe in the power of networking to amplify the impact of WUCWO's mission. To do this, they work with other related organizations and institutions, religious or civil, at the international, regional, national and local levels.



To learn more about WUCWO visit

<https://wucwo.org/>

Lori Alexander, Ontario President Colleen Martin and Diocesan Secretary Colleen Kelly

The CWL National Convention and AMM – Always an Inspiration

The National Convention and AMM were held at the Marriott Hotel Eaton Centre in the heart of downtown Toronto. We had three very busy and exciting days, full of beautiful faith celebrations, learning, business and fun. The best way to describe our three days is **JOY!** The presentations and workshops brought inspiration and hope; the prayer services and masses brought spiritual fulfillment; and the opportunity to greet old friends and forge new relationships, priceless.

Annual Meeting of Members

Resolutions Adopted:

2025.01 Federal Government to Create a Unified and Centralized Cybercrime Reporting System for Individuals in Canada

2025.02 Amend the Canadian Criminal Code Section 223(1) defining when a child becomes a human being

2025.03 Strengthen Support for Chaplains to Provide Faith-Based Care to Members and Families of the Canadian Armed Forces

2025.04 Federal Government to Complete the Development of the Office of Palliative Care

Election of National Officers for 2025-27

Bishop Gerard Paul Bergie
National Spiritual Advisor
Betty Colaneri
National President
Glenda Carson
National Vice President
Shari Guinta
National Past President

Alice Noble
National Secretary-Treasurer
Karen Rossiter
National Chairperson of Faith
Madonna Clark
National Chairperson of Service
Jessie Marie Parkinson
National Chairperson of Social Justice



Love Calls Me

God so loved the world, He gave His Only Son
Jesus spent His life for salvation to be won.
The world had hidden God, high upon a shelf,
Mankind forgot his calling, relying on himself.
God so love me, he came in person to say so,
My name he called so gently and his voice I did know.
I too kept God hidden, in church He could stay
Not any closer was he getting, I wanted it that way.
Many times, I heard him call me, a follower of Jesus I did not want to be.
He is asking too much, He wants my all,
For a long, long time with my answer I did stall.
My yes was very timid, yet Jesus understood,
He waited very patiently, knowing it was for the good.
Each day I try and follow in the footsteps of my Lord,
His love will always sustain me, our wills in one accord.
Each day and invitation, will you imitate My lead?
Another yes, I must give Him and for assistance plead.
Jesus, friend and brother, does challenge my decree
He asks "Do you love Me? Will you follow after Me?"

By **Dorothy Solomon**

Celebrating Mary, Our Blessed Mother

By **Jeanne Lauzon, Interim Faith Chair**

The month of May is always dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. We honour her throughout the month by reciting rosaries, singing beautiful hymns and crowning her with flowers. The Catholic Church celebrates the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary on its traditional fixed date of September 8th, nine months after the December 8th celebration of her Immaculate Conception, as the child of Saints Joachim and Anne. The circumstances of the Virgin Mary's infancy and early life are not directly recorded in the Bible, but other documents and traditions describing the circumstances of her birth are cited by some of the earliest Christian writers from the first centuries of the Church.

Birthday celebrations bring happiness to the celebrant as well as to family and friends. Next to the birth of Jesus, Mary's birth offers the greatest possible happiness to the world. Each time we celebrate her birth, we can confidently hope for an increase of peace in our hearts and in the world at large. We could celebrate Mary's birthday with a cake at our September meetings to start the new year with joy and devotion.

The month of October is dedicated to the Rosary. The Rosary means "Crown of Roses". Our Lady has revealed to several people that each time they say a Hail Mary they are giving her a beautiful rose and that each complete Rosary makes her a crown of roses. The rose is the queen of flowers, and so the Rosary is the rose of all devotions and it is therefore the most important one.

The Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is October 7th. The feast commemorates the decisive naval victory of the Holy League over the Ottoman fleet in 1571 when it is believed that Mary intervened when the people recited the rosary.

There are several ways we can honour Mary and the Rosary in October:

- Reciting the rosary at our October meeting
- There are many rosary sites on YouTube. Start your day with one!
- Reflections on the Joyful Mysteries
- Read books about the apparitions
- Watch videos on Our Lady of Lourdes or Our Lady of Fatima
- Present an arrangement of flowers at the church
- A novena to Our Lady
- A cupcake rosary at a meeting (Google it!)
- Instead of a baby shower, have a bridal shower and help Mary set up her house, (towels, cutlery, etc.) (donate to a charity or a needy family)