

League Lingo

CWL London Diocesan Newsletter

Vol. 1 No. 2 Spring



From the Desk of the Editor

Welcome to the second issue of our diocesan *League Lingo*. In this edition we focus on the events that took place at our 2024 Diocesan Convention and Annual Meeting of Members in London in April.

There are also contributions from some of our councils on activities they have engaged in, to further the mission of the Catholic Women's League. We hope these stories inspire you as your councils plan their events.

Does your council have an interesting story to tell about a new project or event or has a member who has done outstanding work in your community in relation to one of our pillars? Share it with us!

Do you have a question about the Catholic Women's League? Would you like us to write about a certain topic? Ask us! Send your requests, articles and comments to secloncwl@gmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Nelly Kelders
Editor



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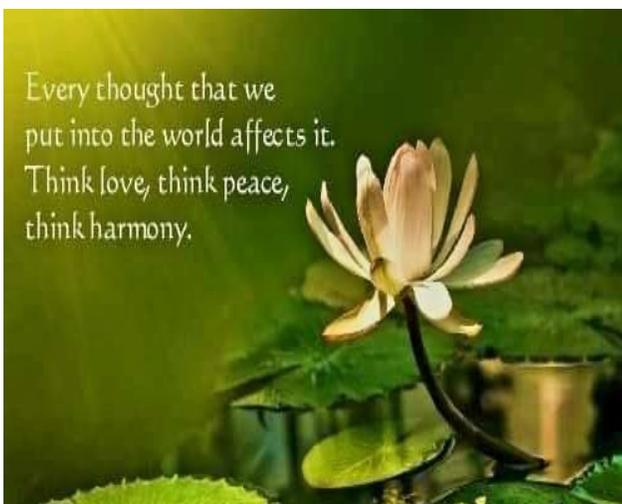
CWL Websites

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

Faith

Service

Social
Justice



London Diocesan Annual Meeting of Members

April 22-24, 2024

London, Ontario

President's Message



President Mary Bannon

As I said last year, God always surprises me and I know God laughs when he does it. I was thinking way back when I was young, about 30 years old. I was invited to coordinate a three-day Cursillo weekend, a short course in Christianity. The reason this came into my mind was that so many years ago I had chosen the theme, "Here I am, Lord". Then in January of this year SMACK! The National theme was basically the same. Coincidence? No, I call it a God-incidence. Have you ever been aware of God-incidences in your lives? We need to recognize God's forever presence in our lives; God's many gifts; and his abiding and amazing grace.

God has challenged my executive, my team and myself this year, in many ways. That is why I pray five Hail Marys each day for the seven regions in the diocese. Have you picked up the call I made at last year's convention of one Hail Mary each day? The Hail Mary a-thon.

One of the challenges is the change in the structure of the executive. The diocesan executive has experienced cutbacks on the team, from 28 to 15, including the Regional Chairs. We have had to look at how closely our Faith, Service and Social Justice Pillar Chairs can best collaborate in their work. We need people like you to serve on these committees as well as communications with our secretary. Invite our Life Members to provide mentoring for you. I know that I have special mentors for me from this group of women.

Secondly, we really enjoyed the opportunities we have had to meet with you in the Unity Project. Your recognition of your gifts was heartwarming. So often we don't appreciate our personal gifts; you know, it's not bragging to recognize our talents; it's giving glory to God who has gifted us with these treasures. It was also great to hear your ideas about what you needed and also did not. All these comments have been sent to National CWL. We look forward to visiting you again to provide you with assistance. That's why we are here, to provide help and encouragement for you. Feel free to contact us and invite us to come and see you. Sadly, we have had councils disband. Please contact me or an executive member for help. We are eager to support you and provide creative solutions which, in some cases, have worked.

Denise Morris, our vice-president, was impressed with the way many of our councils worked to *Make a Difference*, the provincial theme and delved into projects in their area. As an executive council to *Make a Difference* we listened to your request for more communication and your expressed need for a revival of our newsletter. Our Secretary Nelly Kelders and her committee have worked very hard to compile the League Lingo which many subscribed for a hard copy in colour no less; three issues a year for five dollars. Or you can access it on our website cwllondon.com.

When Theresa Ryan, Denise Morris and I visited Bishop Fabbro, we shared a lot about what was happening with the CWL. We talked about what Catholics think about the many ways they serve. Bishop Fabbro shared his perception that Catholics think and call these actions "helpful" whereas, in reality they are our response to discipleship and evangelization. When we have a food drive, we are answering Jesus' call to discipleship; when He says that when we feed the hungry, we are actually his followers feeding Him. When we support a family through *Save a Family Plan*, we are disciples. Our pastors need us to remind them that all the CWL does is in response to the call to evangelization and discipleship. Do not be afraid to use these key words. After all, in the word Church, if you only have ch at the beginning and ch at the end, what is missing? U R. You are the Church. C.S. Lewis says, "The Church exists for nothing else but to draw humanity into Christ."

Treasurer's Report

Mary Clare Latimer delivered the annual treasurer's report to the membership. She highlighted the donations made by councils to the National Voluntary Fund, Standing Committee and Parish donations. Revenue and disbursements were reviewed as well as the investments held by the diocesan council for bursaries and projects. The financials had been sent out to parish council presidents prior to the convention.



Life Members' Report



Marie-Therese Lamphier is the current Liaison of the Life Members with the diocesan executive council. Our diocese currently has eleven Life Members. Each has been the president the diocesan council. She has been a member in good standing for ten years and has been willing to put her name forward for provincial level elections. She is willing to serve on committees, prepare briefs or facilitate workshops if asked.

The Life Members gather together from time to time to maintain their relationships and to offer assistance to the CWL where required.

Marie-Therese invited all councils to consider inviting Life Members to their meetings to assist them in any way possible.



Provincial Report



Provincial Vice-president, Colleen Martin brought greetings from Provincial President Linda Squarolo. The Bee the Difference project was embraced throughout the province and was very successful.

Colleen is looking forward to becoming provincial president in July. She shared her vision for her tenure from 2024-26:

The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.

Rejoice in the Lord always!

Philippians 4:4

She went on to share with us two diagrams, shaped as wheels, portraying how the League works; National as hub and another where the parish council is the hub.

Colleen reminded members that London Diocese is hosting the 2025 Provincial AMM and Convention at the Four Points Sheraton in London, in July 2025. She encouraged all members to use this opportunity to attend the provincial AMM if they have never done so before.

The Ontario Provincial Council has a monthly newsletter online. It can be found at cwl.on.ca. It can be found under the heading NEWSLETTER at the top of the page.

National Report



Betty Colaneri, National Vice-president brought a report on behalf of National President Shari Guinta.

From her report:

The **planning strategically initiative** that began over five years ago is winding down. More than 80 resources were created as a result of consultations on the plan.

The **Unity Outreach initiative** was a positive experience and a success. The data received has been instrumental in our future planning.

The **reduction of committees** from eight to three will be finished this year. Feedback has been positive and is working well.

Membership continues to be a concern and was, even before the pandemic. The good news is that there are councils re-activating and new councils starting up.

The **new Constitution and Bylaws** has been printed and distributed.

There have also been many revisions to the **Policy & Procedure Manual**. (Both manuals are available on the National website at cwl.ca under Resources Manuals)

A meeting with the Federal Government was held in February 2023 and was very successful. The February 2024 meeting was cancelled as parliament was just resuming after the winter break. A meeting is planned for the fall. The **2024 national convention** is being held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan from August 11-14. The format is different for this convention: resolutions dialogue on Sunday; plenary sessions on Monday and Tuesday; and the annual meeting of members on Wednesday.

An **Indigenous Relations Ad Hoc Committee** has been formed at the national level to continue work on awareness and relationships concerning Truth and Reconciliation.

Honourary Life Member, **past national president Barb Dowding** of British Columbia was elected as Vice-president for North America at the World Union of Catholic Women's Organization (WUCWO) international conference in Assisi, Italy in 2024.

Life Members' and Past-Presidents' Social Justice Award

Each year parish councils are able to nominate a member who has done outstanding work in her council, parish and/or community in the area of social justice. The award is presented at the Annual Meeting of Members. This year's recipient is Donna Stewart, a member of St. Michael CWL in Bright's Grove, ON.



Donna is a retired high school teacher and guidance counselor from the St. Clair Roman Catholic School Board. Her sense of social justice was evident in her educational career. She always went above and beyond the scholastic needs of her students; recognizing many of their social issues. Donna was able to develop collegial relationships with most of them and able to assist them in their journeys as appropriate to her role as mentor and teacher.

She is very active in her parish. As a Eucharistic Minister, her primary role is to bring communion to homebound parishioners. She is also a member of the Baptismal Team and is a co-chair of the parish Caring and Sharing Team. In this latter capacity she works closely with the staff at Sumac Lodge Long-Term Care Home to ensure residents are able to retain their connection with the church community.

Donna has a calm, gentle demeanor, but her work for social justice speaks loudly. She is actively involved in many social justice disciplines including Habitat for Humanity, the Sarnia Bluewater Family of Parishes Homelessness and Affordable Housing Ministry, the Sarnia-Lambton Migrant Worker Ministry, Truth and Reconciliation, Development and Peace

and our Family of Parishes Refugee Ministry, welcoming and supporting refugees into our community. It is not possible to do justice to all the work Donna does but St. Michael Council hopes they can convey how much she does to address the injustices in our community and our world.

Habitat for Humanity: After serving her maximum number of years on the Board of Directors, Donna continues with the organization as the chair of Habitat for Humanity's Family Partnering Committee, working directly with families to help them achieve quality affordable housing. She is also involved as a participant and a volunteer in Habitat's Coldest Night of the Year annual fundraising walk that raises funds to help people experiencing hurt, hunger and homelessness.

Migrant Worker Ministry: Donna plays a lead role in the Sarnia-Lambton Deanery Migrant Worker Ministry which provides monthly Spanish masses and dinners for migrant workers in our community. This also involves providing transportation for the workers to these events and simply befriending workers and providing meaningful relationships and support for them.

Development and Peace: Donna has helped her husband, Greg, navigate Development and Peace and the "Reel Justice" film series, in collaboration with the Hamilton Diocese Development and Peace Board. She has taken it upon herself to become informed and educated by participating in online courses on indigenous issues and other social justice concerns.

London Diocesan Council congratulates Donna on receiving this award and thanks for her work in social justice. She embodies the true meaning of servant leader and is an inspiration to all of us.

A donation has been sent to Habitat for Humanity – Sarnia on Donna's behalf.

London Diocesan Convention 2024

The 104th Annual Meeting of Members and Convention took place at the Lamplighter Inn in London. The event was hosted by the councils of London Region. The co-chairs for the three days were Life Member Lucy Hendrikx and London Regional Chair Linda Van Raay. Over the course of the three days, our CWL sisters had opportunities to participate in a workshop on leadership; attend three masses, hear three guest speakers and socialize.

Betty Colaneri - Keynote Speaker



National Vice-president Betty Colaneri started the Convention with an inspirational talk entitled *The vineyard of the Lord*. In her address, Betty compared the vineyard with Jesus. He is the vine and we are the branches. Betty reminded us that Jesus was the best storyteller of all. People love to hear stories they can relate to. She noted that when people come into her family's winery, they too want to share their stories. Some thoughts to ponder from her presentation:

The donkey was an insignificant animal until Jesus. Did you know the donkey is the only animal in the world with a cross on its back? Mary Magdalene's life was forever changed after she met Jesus. Her life was one way before He entered and changed after they met. He was the difference.

Vine roots have to dig deep to find water. How long do our words linger after a meeting or conversation? How do we make others feel? Every day is an opportunity to serve God's people. Have you shared your faith journey? Do you tell others about the Catholic Women's League?

Act justly, walk humbly and love tenderly. We may fail but God understands and gives opportunity for retribution. "Do you love me?", Jesus asks. "Yes". "Then come follow me". Invite women to follow us and join in our action and faith.

Development and Peace/Caritas Presentation by: Daniela Salcedo

Daniela is an energetic young woman who came to Canada as a student from Ecuador. She is passionate about the work that Development and Peace does around the world and especially in south and central America.

Through her activities she wanted us to see that we all have different perspectives on things, even the way the world looks.

She talked about the *Stand for the Land* campaign and how the fight against mining companies has cost people their lives. Canadian mining companies are all over the world destroying and polluting land, in the name of greed.

Development and Peace helps people in need; finances projects to renew the land; works for justice for women; and gives humanitarian aid. People may say, "Where is God?" but Daniela reminded us that the right question is, "Where are God's people?" Daniela invited us to become members and volunteers for Development and Peace in our communities or to donate what we can to the cause.





The Women, A Bishop and A Princess



Our final guest speaker of the convention was Debra Majer, archivist for the Diocese of London. Debra is a passionate historian and cares deeply about preserving the history of our Catholic institutions.

The title of her presentation immediately captured our attention. How were all these women connected to that bishop and a princess? We were enthralled. Who knew that our Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of London had just an interesting beginning!

The bishop was Bishop Michael Francis Fallon. His tenure in London was from 1910 – 1931. He served as the Chaplain to Catholic soldiers in Europe, during World War I. While in England, he first encountered the CWL in action. Upon his return to London, ON, he set about establishing the CWL in his diocese.

The princess is Princess Franziska (Fanny) von Starhemberg, of Austria. She was a member of the Upper House of the Austrian parliament. Sometime around 1920 she and the bishop developed a relationship. Fanny needed Bishop Fallon's help with a relief effort for the crisis in Austria following the end of the war.

Bishop Fallon looked to the ladies in the CWL to help with the crisis. They gathered clothing to send to Austria as part of the relief effort. They were "the women" in the above photo. Their action could have been the earliest known social program the diocesan CWL was involved with. Other activities:

- Establishing Girl Guides and Brownies; summer camps for girls; scholarships to attend Brescia College
- School programming including medical and dental clinics; nurses, health inspectors, a sick bed and first aid kit, and clothing drives for children. Milk programs and committees to encourage school attendance.
- Working with other agencies to create homes for unwed mothers; child welfare and juvenile courts.
- Social outreach through book clubs; current event clubs; spelling and oratory clubs.

Editor's Note: Diocesan CWL looks forward to working with Debra to develop the history of our diocesan CWL so that it can be shared with all councils.

Fun Night – A Down East Kitchen Party



Rejoicing in the Lord



Bishop Sherlock Bursary

By Theresa Ryan, Diocesan Past-president

In honour of Bishop Sherlock's ever encouraging and constant support of the Catholic Women's League in the diocese of London, the London Diocesan CWL established a bursary in his name. The fund has been established for the purpose of assisting seminarians in the Diocese of London in need of financial assistance. This award is given annually to a seminarian who, when ordained, will work in the London diocese. It is awarded on the recommendation of the Rector to the CWL executive council.

It gives me great pleasure to announce this year's recipient, Deacon Matthew Sawyer. He will be ordained on April 27, 2024. We were pleased to present him with a card at our January Diocesan executive meeting at St. Peter's Seminary. Deacon Matthew is my husband's nephew.

Deacon Matthew regaled us with stories about Bishop Sherlock and his great respect for the late Bishop. He said,

"Bishop Sherlock had a presence in the Seminary until the end of his earthly life. He would join us for Mass at the seminary multiple times a week and join us for dinner as well sometimes. One of the responsibilities assigned to us would be to go over in pairs to his house and celebrate Mass with him in his chapel and have breakfast with him, and we would be regaled with stories from his priesthood and his time as bishop of London. He taught me a lot about humility and a deeper sense of devotion to the Eucharist."

Deacon Matthew also proclaimed that he was so glad that the schooling was soon coming to an end. He was looking forward to returning to parish life where he is able to walk with the people and to be a spiritual "Dad" to them as he officiates at the sacraments.

Note: Deacon Matthew was ordained on April 27, 2024 and has been assigned to Lucan Northwest London Family of Parishes, effective July 1, 2024. Please keep him and our two other newly ordained priests, Rev. Tony J. (TJ) Vandermeer and Rev. James Prins in your prayers



President Mary Bannon presented Deacon Matthew with the Bishop Sherlock Bursary.

Celebrating our Members

Theresa Regan, a long-time member of Our Lady Help of Christians CWL Council in Wallaceburg, Ontario is shown receiving a floral bouquet from then President Margaret Cushman in May, 2023. Theresa celebrated her 96th birthday in December and has been a CWL member in good standing for 78 years at the end of 2023.

Theresa was born at home on Pointe Line, Port Lambton, on December 30, 1927 to Catholic parents, Norman and Verna (Myers) Johnston. Before her mother was married she had become a president of the Catholic Women's League at Our Lady Help of Christians parish, and so Theresa was introduced to the CWL at a very early age. She helped to wash dishes for the suppers put on by CWL at the Knights of Columbus Hall, and since she was not very tall, they set her on a stool so she could reach the sink. At age of 16 it was automatic to become a member of the CWL, no questions asked (as were her sisters). Meetings were held at one of the ladies' homes at first, then later at the K of C Hall. A lunch was served and often they played cards after.



When Theresa grew up, she met her husband, Norm Regan and many of their dates took place at the Knights of Columbus Hall where the CWL ladies would serve a delicious supper and there were dances held after the meal. Eventually Norm and Theresa were married, and had four children of their own: Ron, Linda, Doug and Mike. Norm worked at the Lambton Dairy, driving a truck and delivering butter, eggs and milk to customers. Sometimes Theresa would help her father to wrap butter if he needed help. As an adult, Theresa became a nurse and worked in the Nursery Ward at the Sydenham District Hospital in Wallaceburg for 11 years and loved it. In later years she and her husband Norm loved to travel to Montego Bay in Jamaica and returned there for about 35 years. Theresa celebrated her 96th birthday in December 2023.

Theresa Regan has been a CWL member in good standing for 78 years as of the end of December 2023. Although she never held an executive position on her council, she always supported her CWL in every way, and hopes that more young girls will consider joining this very worthwhile group, who stand for God and Canada.



Lenten Project

This year's Ste. Anne's CWL Lenten Project was our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper which raised \$1000. Donations of \$500 each were made to Matthew House and Street Help.

Ste. Anne CWL President, Linda Proctor, presented the donation to members of Matthew House.

Thank you, everyone, for supporting our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! May Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to guide us!

Praying Together



St Simon St Jude CWL, Belle River, Ont.

by Jackie Gomes, President

On March 1st 2024, our council had the privilege of hosting the World Day of Prayer at St Simon St Jude Church with our sisters in our ecumenical group of churches, including: St John the Evangelist Catholic Woodslee, St Andrew's United Comber, Visitation Catholic Comber and Woodslee United, Woodslee.

Together, we presented the program prepared by the Women's Inter-Church Council in an interactive meaningful prayerful service. The theme this year was, "I Beg You...Bear With One Another in Love," in support of the Christian Women of Palestine in their quest for peace for all in their region.

Our Spiritual Advisor, Rev. Mark Poulin shared words of reflection on the Gospel selected, pertinent to this day's theme. With contributions from our event partners, we displayed several items representative of Palestine culture. They included embroidery; plants such as poppies, cactus and jasmine; and food items such as pita bread, hummus, olives and citrus fruit that were shared at the luncheon

It was a rewarding experience of sisterhood and friendship with women of other Christian denominations as we united in prayer for peace in the middle east.



St. Michael Dresden

Our Council's Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Gerard Bedard officiated the Installation of the new officers, following Holy Mass in February. President Norine McFadden is joined with the executive members and members directly working with the chairpersons of the three pillars

Following the First Sunday of Lent Holy Mass, the council hosted a Soup-Dessert Social for the parish. The event was well attended and those gathered in fellowship, enjoyed a variety of seven soups, and as many varieties of dessert. Our council is blessed with our youngest member assisting in this event and supporting our various charities.



National Indigenous Peoples Day June 21, 2023 at Moccasin Identifier Teaching Circle

By Betty Pajor, CWL Secretary, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Waterford

Call to Action #48 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) counsels all faith groups in Canada to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the Declaration as a framework for reconciliation. It began as an attempt at reconciliation but without direction. We forged ahead. Two members of indigenous heritage were most helpful in steering our project. We incorporated the experience with the summer solstice. Our location was on Shadow Lake on the Waterford Heritage Trail Network. We met at the **Moccasin Identifier Treaty Teaching Circle**. The sitting circle is standing on Treaty 3: the Between the Lake Purchase of 1792. The Treaty was signed by the British Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

There was research into the Treaty 3 1792, Moccasin Identifier, reconciliation literature, solstice celebrations, foods and traditions of Solstice as well as Waterford history regarding railroads and the Waterford Heritage Trail system. As people arrived, they were given a questionnaire with five scavenger items they had to locate and answer. We began with a **Prayer for a Better World**. Then in Anishinaabemowin the **Great Spirit Prayer** was sung. A smudging ceremony was performed. The smudging ceremony is a way to purify or cleanse ourselves of negative thoughts, feelings, etc.

Colony Felony, written by Duke Redbird in January 2023 was read. This poem/saga provided history and thus further understanding. *O Canada*, written by Brittney Gratto, from a non-indigenous perspective, was read aloud. One of our members introduced her second cousin Murray Porter, who wrote and sang *Is Sorry Enough* via video on a phone and boom box with the accompaniment of the Saskatoon Jazz orchestra. Thoughts, reflections, stories of survivors were shared throughout the circle. There was some drumming and we learned a few words in Anishinaabemowin. Total participation.

We reviewed a few of the answers of the scavenger hunt, the traditions of solstice around the world, the ribbons decorating the trail and the fruits in our desserts and drinks were all significant. In the setting of the sun over Shadow Lake we began to return home.

We had people drop in from the trail. They had their stories. We listened. People talked about the experience. There were any requests to do this again.



Marian Pilgrimage

This is during our current Marian Pilgrimage in Lourdes, France. Betty G. and I lit a candle for the intentions of all Canadian CWL isters in Christ. God's Blessings Shirl Gilliland's. Sr. Charles CWL Council.



Movie Night at Holy Trinity, Woodstock

By Fatima Cabral, Holy Trinity CWL president



The movie *Cabrini* was released on March 8, 2024 on International Women's Day. It follows the life of Mother Frances Cabrini and her order as they embark on a trip to the United States in the late 1890's to help Italian immigrants in the poorest area in New York City.

Although she faces many challenges with the Church, the Mayor of New York, local gangsters and with her own health, she prevails. Cabrini built an orphanage and later a hospital to serve the marginalized and destitute.

This movie is a call to one's conscience. The depiction of the unspeakable treatment and conditions of Italian immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is accurate and nothing less than a dark chapter in that nation's history. However, in this spirit, Mother Cabrini's faith in God allows her to do so much.

She later becomes the first American saint. Mother Cabrini provided an inspiring figure as the inspiration of a triumphant movie.

Members of Holy Trinity CWL enjoyed the movie at their local cinema in Woodstock.

Celebrating Catholic Education Week



The Huron Perth Catholic District School Board held its Catholic Education Week Awards Celebrations on Monday May 6, 2024 in Dublin.

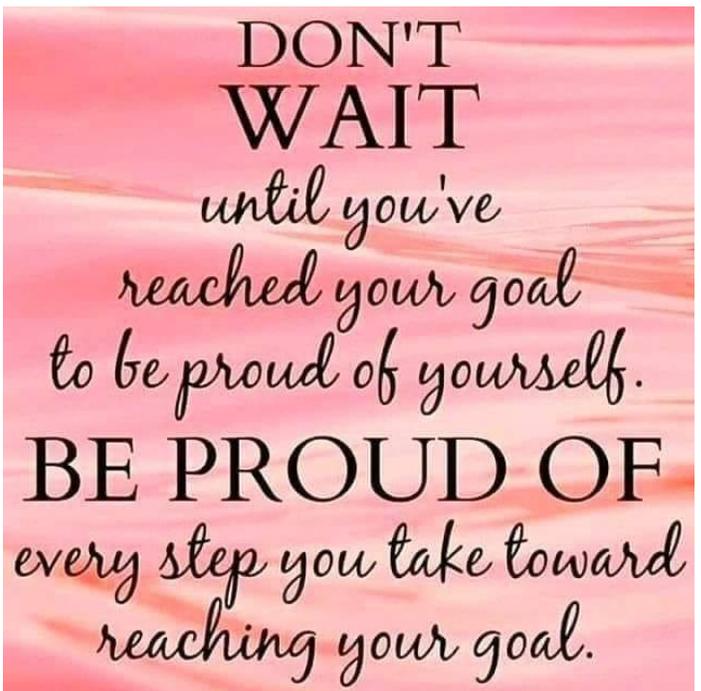
Fr. Tony Laforet, Spiritual Advisor of St. Peter's CWL Goderich, and Denise Lalonde Morris, VP London Diocesan Council and member of St. Peter's CWL are pictured with St. Peter's CWL members; Erma Weernink, recipient of the 2024 Order of St. Andre Bessette and Angela Carter, recipient of the St Teresa of Calcutta Faith in Action Award.

The Order of St. Andre Bessette is the highest honour that the Board bestows upon a member of its community. The award recognizes an exceptional contribution to academia, spiritual life and/or philanthropic achievement. Members of the Order serve as role models for the community.

The St. Teresa of Calcutta Faith in Action Award recognizes exemplary service to Catholic education. The nominees for this award represent all stakeholder groups in Huron Perth Catholic - employees, parent/caregiver/family volunteers, priests, and parishioners.

We congratulate Erma and Angela and thank them for their service to their community.

St. Michael CWL Executive, Leamington





CWL Day at the Shrine

St. Patrick's Church, Merlin, ON

July 24, 2024

9:30 - 10:00 a.m. Meet and Greet

10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Prayerful Reflection

11:00 a.m. Mass

12:00 p.m. Lunch

1:15 p.m. Rosary

Bring your own lunch and lawn chair



Coffee, Tea and Water will be available