

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 20

Message from our President Dorothy Solomon



Here I am Lord, send me. This is our National CWL motto, and it causes me to reflect on where I am being sent. Let's look at a few mission statements which may help you also to discover where you are being sent. Jesus' mission is to save the lost; restore to the kingdom that which

was first established at creation. The Church's mission is to build communion among people, communion of all people with God, and communion of all people with the larger created universe. You have heard the Diocesan mission call to be oriented to form intentional disciples of Jesus Christ. Our own St. Michael's mission statement is to be a welcoming, Eucharistic community, sharing faith and reaching out to all. One more, the CWL of Canada calls its members to grow in faith and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service. Each of these has a specific purpose that guides a particular audience and is applied to several people.

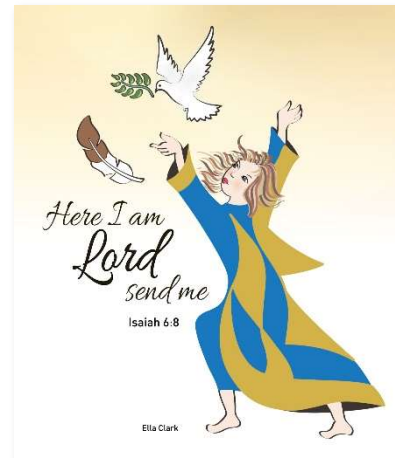
Where are you being sent? Perhaps defining your own mission or goal or assignment will help you answer that question. This exercise defines your values, aids in discovering who you are, guides your decisions, and helps you stay focused on long term goals. It also creates boundaries that make decision making easier. It can assist in allotting time to projects and guide how you interact with others. To assist in creating a guide for your objective you may consider these questions. What is my reason for being right now? What sorts of things give me joy or are important to me? Why are each of these things important? What things do I do well? Of course, this may take a good deal of effort and time to define, but if you like a challenge go for it.

After a few months of creating my personal mission statement, I went back to ask myself - how is the Church and the CWL council different because I exercised clarity in my actions? Did I create changes that will benefit them and what did I learn about

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myself? It led me to discover that my ongoing goal is to identify and develop my leadership skills to help others grow to their full potential.

Our Easter celebrations united us with Jesus in death through our renewal of our baptismal promises, we were reminded of our new life with him because he is resurrected, and we too will rise with him. Jesus claims us for himself and calls us to respond, 'Here I am Lord, send me.'



Prayer Intentions

We have offered specific prayer intentions for each month and we are asking not only each of our members but also all the members of St. Michael's community, to bring these intentions to the Lord. Let us continue to lift one another up in prayer.

April: Keeping in mind the sacredness of life at every stage, let us pray for those health physicians who are legislated to perform euthanasia.

May: Let us pray for those in palliative care and nearing the end of their earthly pilgrimage; and for those who support them.



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National Hospice Palliative Care Week - May 5-11

Marilyn Morgan



As a CWL initiative, members are being asked again this year to participate in **12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care**. It is more important than ever to pray that all Canadians have access to palliative care and for an increase in funding to support compassionate care of patients facing end-of-life situations.

Having more accessible palliative care would reduce the number of people who chose euthanasia.

At St. Michael's we have chosen **Friday, May 3rd** as our day to pray for this intention. Mass will be celebrated at 9:30am and we will have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 10:00am until 3:40pm when there will be Benediction. During the day we will set aside times to pray the Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, the Magnificat and the Litany of Mary.

We hope to have someone present with Jesus throughout the day so there will be a sign-up sheet (in half hour increments) available on the welcome desk if you wish to set aside a specific time. You may also email marilyn.morgan@sympatico.ca ahead of time to indicate a specific time slot. For those who are unable to be at church, we hope you will join us in prayer at home on May 3rd, especially between the hours of 8:00-9:00am and 4:00-8:00pm, in order to have prayers for the entire twelve hours. We need you to sign up or email Marilyn for prayers from home as well as in person, with the time you intend to pray, to ensure that we have prayers being said for both the early and the later times.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has developed a program called Horizons of Hope to help Catholics with end-of-life questions. You can access this information through their website cccb.ca and click on "**Horizons of Hope: A Toolkit for Catholic Parishes on Palliative Care**".

We are also being encouraged to contact the Prime Minister, federal and provincial Ministers of Health and local Members of Parliament or Legislative Assembly to advocate for more accessible palliative care.

Last call for

Swing Into Spring

Dinner Dance

Tickets

Date: April 20th

Time: 7:00 PM Dinner,
Doors open at 6:30 PM

Cost: \$30.00 per person - Catered by King of Pigs (chicken, ribs, potatoes, salad)

Silent Auction: 6:30-10:00, **Dance:** 8:00 - 11:00

Tickets: Contact Joan Lobsinger at

(519) 438-4909 or

joanlobsinger@sympatico.ca

by **April 16th**

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Spring Friendship Tea, Wednesday May 8th

Darlene Charette

St. Michael's CWL is hosting a spring tea to celebrate women and friendship while addressing loneliness in our community. All women of the Parish are invited to attend. We have also invited women from the long-term care homes and retirement residences in the area. Our own SMUGglees will be playing their ukuleles at this event.

We will need many volunteers to help out with setup, food prep, facilitating at the tables, and cleanup.

All members are invited to attend and bring a guest! Please RSVP to Darlene at dcharrette8101@rogers.com or sign up on the guest list on the welcome desk at the church.



2024 London Diocesan Convention Joan Lobsinger

Thirteen of our members will be attending the Diocesan Convention at the Best Western Lamplighter Inn in London from April 22nd-24th. Monday's highlights are a tour of St. Peter's Seminary in the morning, the Joy of Leadership workshop in the afternoon, Opening Mass at 4:30 at St. John the Divine Parish followed by dinner and then Fun Night at the Lamplighter Inn. On Tuesday our members will listen to the keynote speaker Betty Colenari, National's Vice President; hear reports, participate in the Crowning of Mary; listen to a presentation by Daniela Salcedo from Development and Peace; and attend the Mass of Reaffirmation at St. Justin's Parish followed by the banquet. Fr. Felix, our council's spiritual advisor will join us at Mass and the banquet. Wednesday morning our members will hear more reports and listen to the presentation, "Honouring Our

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History" given by London Diocese Archivist Debra Majer Kennedy. The convention ends with the Closing Mass at the Lamplighter Inn.

June Service Celebration Darlene Charette

Each year, our CWL members are recognized for their service at the June potluck dinner. This year it will be held on **Tuesday, June 4th**. Service pins are given to members who have served for 5, 10, 15, etc. years. This is based on years that membership has been paid, not necessarily the year joined. I will be contacting everyone in May who will be receiving a service pin this year. If you think you should be receiving one and have not heard from me by the end of May, please contact me prior to the celebration so that I may check into it for you.

Also, we are collecting any service pins you may have been awarded in the past that you no longer need. Please bring these to the May meeting so that we can keep costs down for this year's celebration.



Crowning of Mary 2024



Please join the CWL on **Monday, May 6th, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.** as we venerate our Blessed Mother. The celebration will include music, a procession and the laying of flowers, and will culminate with the Crowning. All are welcome to attend and we look forward to seeing you there!

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JOIN
St. Michael's Catholic
Women's League

For a

Spring 
 **Friendship**
Tea Party

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

St. Michael's Parish Hall

511 Cheapside St.,

London, ON



Everyone is welcome!

**Bring your mother, grandmother, neighbour, or daughter out
for tea and company.**

It's free to you, compliments of St. Michael's CWL.



RSVP by April 30, 2023 to Darlene
dcharrette8101@rogers.com or
519-852-5252



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Featured Member Gladys O'Quinn

Gail Brown

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This month, we are pleased to recognize Gladys O'Quinn as a member who exemplifies our CWL values of faith, service and social justice. Also notable with our dear friend Gladys is her outstanding love of family, friends and fun.

Gladys was born in North Sydney, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, the third child in a family of four. Her early Catholic faith development was nurtured for eleven years at school with the Sisters of Charity. She also had an early love of music and took piano lessons from grades four to twelve. With no piano at home, Gladys practiced at the convent every day at lunchtime under the watchful eye and ear of Sister Cecilia Joseph. Popular songs were not allowed. When Gladys was caught playing one, she was quickly told to return to her practice piece. After high school she attended teacher's college in Truro, Nova Scotia and then took specialized children's education courses at Dalhousie University.

Gladys and her husband John were childhood sweethearts and have been together since Gladys was in grade nine. They first met at an ice-skating rink when John reached out to keep her from falling as she skated by. Now married for 63 years, he grabbed her by the hand that day and they have been a couple ever since.

John joined the military when Gladys was in grade eleven. She left her beloved Cape Breton when they married in 1961 and John was posted to London the same year. Their two sons, Ian and Darby, were born in London, and the next 33 years were spent with the family moving back and forth between London, Germany (twice) and CFB Galetown in New

Brunswick, depending on where John was stationed. London was their home base and they have lived here permanently since 1998. Yet, their ties to the Maritimes remain strong, and they spend most summers with family at their cottage on Cape Breton Island.

Gladys's religious training and teacher education were put to good use over the years. She always taught primary grades in the separate school system while in London, and in West Germany she was in charge of teaching religion and sacramental preparation for Catholic students at her non-denominational school. It was a big responsibility and a challenge to cover everything needed to prepare the students as she saw them for only one day each week. With her abiding love of children and of music, she loved teaching music classes the most.

Upon returning to London permanently, Gladys first attended the Catholic church on the base at CFB London, and then St. Andrew's, before making St. Michael's their regular parish. She had been introduced to the CWL while stationed in Germany, where she had been asked to play the piano at CWL functions, but she wasn't an official member. After having moved so much over the years, Gladys joined the CWL in 2004 hoping to make new friends and engage in the parish community. Since then, Gladys has regularly attended meetings and been a frequent participant in our CWL bazaars and bake sales. For many years she served as a reader at weekday masses and has been involved in parish activities like Oremus and other bible studies groups.

Gladys loves the CWL and enjoys being in the company of other women who share her Catholic faith and beliefs. Our St. Michael's CWL members were friendly and welcoming when Gladys first joined, and she has learned much about her religion from them over the years.

Being around Gladys is just plain fun. She's a great east coast storyteller and an avid hockey fan (Maple Leafs forever!). She loves her kids and her six grandchildren and hosts big family dinners to celebrate every occasion. She learned to play the guitar as an adult and in 2018 she joined the SMUGlees and started playing the ukulele, where she happily leads the singing of some of her favourite east coast songs.

We are fortunate that Gladys settled on St. Michael's as her home parish, and blessed to have her as one of our members.

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Enlarge the Tent

Gerarda Smith-Hillier

“Enlarge the site of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back” (Isaiah 54: 2)

On March 9, 2024 several women from the St. Michael's CWL attended a CWL presentation at Holy Angels Parish in St. Thomas. The guest speaker was Linda Staudt, one of four Canadian Lay Delegates to the XVI Synod of Bishops in Rome. Linda began as a Co-Chair for the Diocese of London's Synod Committee. She was then selected by Pope Francis to go to Rome to be a lay representative of the voice of the people. Linda brought a woman's perspective, as well as the unique perspective of the needs of youth from JK to gr. 12 as she is a retired Director of Education for the London District Catholic School Board.

Linda was in Rome from Sept 28, 2024, until Nov. 22, 2024. The delegates began with a retreat to get to know each other. As Linda said, “Without prayer there would be no Synod.” Those of us who have been following the Synod and who have participated in our local synodal sessions are aware that silence and listening are key to the Conversation in the Spirit Methodology. This is also the methodology used in Rome. Linda learned that “if we really listen, our ready-made answers will evaporate.”

There were hopes and concerns as the Synod began, especially that the Synod will lead to renewal of the Church and not to division. There had been some concern that there would be competition for authority between the bishops and the lay people. Linda discovered during the process that “we all have authority, but differently,” through our baptismal anointment as priest, prophet, and king. The 365 delegates (of which 70 were lay people) learned that the Spirit of Truth renounces the need to control and the Spirit leads to truth.

Linda revealed that the same themes kept coming up all the way from our local parishes to the seven continents of the world. Her main take away from the Synod is the need to be inclusive and to make everyone feel welcomed. Our local churches need to “enlarge the tent” by finding ways to welcome

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people back, especially our youth and those who feel marginalized. We need to make sure people don't feel judged and that they want to come into the “tent,” - our parish church.

I was struck by several things from Linda's experience. Firstly, Linda revealed that on the days when the synthesis of the 34 tables of participants was to be read out, Pope Francis attended the whole day in person. He wanted to be there to hear directly what was said. This points to the sincerity Pope Francis feels in the importance of listening to all Catholics and to where the Holy Spirit is leading the Church. Secondly, Linda thinks that the role of women is on the “Pope's radar,” and that there is much support for a female diaconate. Thirdly, Linda believes that the results of this Synod will be equal to that of the Vatican II.

Linda is looking forward to returning for Part 2 of the XVI Synod of Bishops in October 2024. She left us with this reflection: What opportunities might there be to use the Conversations in the Spirit Methodology in our parish and its groups? Where and when can we “enlarge our tent,” that is, to invite others in and make everyone feel welcomed?

If you would like to read the Synthesis Report from the XVI Synod 2023, it can be found on the Diocese of London's website

[Synod 2021-2024 - Diocese of London - London, Ontario \(dol.ca\)](https://www.dol.ca/Synod-2021-2024-Diocese-of-London-London-Ontario)



Stephanie McIntyre, Linda Staudt, Dorothy Solomon

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A recent study at Rutgers University found that flowers are one of the few gifts that elicit a powerful and immediate response. Receiving flowers elicited a genuine smile with responses of happiness and gratitude, and these positive impacts lasted long after they were given. It also created a connection between the giver and the receiver.

The Power of Flowers

Darlene Charette

In January, the CWL hosted an evening with Geraldine Peters, a local florist, who taught us how to arrange flowers and care for them. She donated the arrangements to our group and we were able to raise some money for the CWL by selling them off that evening at cost. The group who attended decided to use the funds raised to try making our own arrangements for various events.

On February 23rd, a small group of members made 17 flower arrangements which were then delivered to some of our members who are elderly, shut-in, or who had lost their husband this year. We used donated containers and about half of the money raised in January to purchase fresh flowers. Other members



helped to deliver the flowers. We hoped to spread a little sunshine at a gloomy time of year. It was wonderful to see the surprise and smiles on the faces of the recipients!

Our next project will be to create centrepieces for the Spring Friendship Tea. Hopefully our little group of 'flower girls' will grow as we find other ways to use our new knowledge. Thanks to all the members who helped by donating, arranging and delivering the flowers!



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World Day of Prayer 2024

Gail Brown

The 2024 World Day of Prayer service was written by the World Day of Prayer Committee of Palestine and the theme was *I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love*, found in Ephesians 4:1-3. This year's date was Friday, March 1st and it was St. Michael's turn to host and celebrate the event in North London.

Marg Riehl, Megan Young and Dorothy Solomon did a wonderful job of organizing the event under the direction of Past-President Maggie McGee, and with the help of committee members from Colborne Street United Church, St. John's Anglican, Trinity Lutheran, New St. James Presbyterian, and the Sisters of St. Joseph. Joan Lobsinger and her team decorated the parish hall and served refreshments for the reception, and the SMUGlees ukulele group provided the music during the service.

Fr. Felix led the entrance procession and said the opening prayers, followed by scripture readings and stories from Palestinian women in Gaza. The highlight of the service was guest speaker Mirna Saliba, a Palestinian Christian now living in London, who shared the emotional story of her family's journey to Canada and her family members still in the middle east.

It was a successful event with over 90 guests from 21 different churches in London, and a donation of \$790.00 was collected for the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada.



Maggie and guest speaker Mirna Saliba