

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 28

CWLstmichlon@gmail.com

August 2025

Message From Our Vice-President

Stephanie McIntyre



A warm welcome back to all of our members of St Michael's CWL council. As we start with the beginning of a new fall season, we have the opportunity to share our summer holiday

experiences - a time that might have been filled with enjoyable visits and celebrations with family and friends, perhaps trips to favourite campsites or trips to other provinces.

Now we return to sending our children and young adults off to school or maybe signing up for courses for yourself at the university or college, or registering for a leisure course or activity for yourself and some friends. Autumn is a time of transition from warm days to cooler ones, days that continue to shorten with earlier nightfall. It is also the beginning of planning for the year ahead, as our council returns from summer vacation, and we start to plan, prepare, and arrange for the upcoming year. We have a wide variety of activities to plan for and work on.

At this time, we can step back and discern the many ways we can offer our talents, strengths and capabilities to our council. Focus on what the gifts are that encourage me to say, "Lord here I am, send me." There are numerous activities to take part in within the council.

For example, those who can't come to monthly meetings can participate as prayer members. Others can volunteer to bring snacks to our meetings. You can also take part in the Christmas Market by helping with organizing and planning the event, contributing your arts, crafts, and baked goods, and of course your time and help on the day itself.

There are many ways of contributing to the three pillars of the Catholic Women's League: Faith,

Service, and Social Justice. There are a lot of ways to offer your gifts and talents. These are just a few examples when asking yourself in what way you can fully participate in our council.

An important event taking place in December is the election of a new executive. This role involves much discernment and prayer. This is an excellent opportunity to share your skills with the council, parish and greater community. Being a part of the executive as vice-president this last year and a half has been a humbling, empowering and growth-filled experience for me personally.

The support given and received from executive members is affirming and greatly appreciated. The previous executive members provide support and guidance and prayers, so start thinking now as to what role you can be part of. Take stock of your God-given gifts and offer them to one or many of our pillars, sub-committees, events and activities for the upcoming year.

"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.

August: For elected officials who are asked to make decisions that support the sanctity of life.

September: For those who are experiencing loneliness, in particular the elderly.

Did you know... You don't have to be a member to attend a meeting. Bring a friend to enjoy an evening and see what the Catholic Women's League is all about.

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MEET & GREET YOUR CWL LONDON DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for
refreshments and visiting

St. Michael's Parish Hall

Join us for an engaging evening
with your CWL Diocesan Council!

Enjoy refreshments, quizzes, table
discussions, and a Q&A session.

RSVP by Thursday, September 11th
to Dorothy at

519-204-2931 or
dorothysolomon41@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you
there!



St. Michael's CWL Council 2025 Coming Events

Tuesday, Sept 9th – Membership Meeting
and Welcome Back Social

Wednesday, Sept 10th – Christmas Market
Crafting Social

Tuesday, Sept 16th – Meet and Greet
Diocesan Council

Sept 24th-Nov 1st – 40 Days for Life

Saturday, Sept 27th – CWL Diocesan
Development Days, Strathroy

Sunday, Oct 5th – Life Chain for the
Unborn

Monday, Oct 6th – Membership Meeting
and Social

Saturday, Oct 18th – CWL Diocesan
Development Days, Sarnia

Monday, Nov 3rd – Membership Meeting
and Social

Saturday, Nov 8th – CWL Christmas
Market

Saturday, Nov 15th – CWL/KofC Trivia
Night

Tuesday, Nov 18th – Pie Making

**Saturday and Sunday, Nov 29th and
30th** - Membership Drive and Fall Bake
Sale after all masses

Saturday, Dec 6th – Daytime Membership
Meeting and Christmas Celebration

**Please check bulletins, website and
emails for further details**

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Featured Member Teresa Johnston

Joan Lobsinger

Teresa Johnston is 81 years young and is still a very active member of St. Michael's CWL. She has been a member of the Catholic Women's League of Canada for ten years and received her 10-year service pin at our June potluck. Teresa readily volunteers for clean up at our funeral luncheons or other CWL social events. She serves as a hospitality minister/usher at the 10:00am Mass, was a Eucharistic minister to homebound parishioners and to nursing homes from 1998 to 2020, and she participates in Bible Study courses including, St. Paul and the Corinthians, James, No Greater Love (Christ's Passion) and Women of Grace. Teresa is also involved in the Social Justice Committee and promotes Development and Peace initiatives.

Teresa was born in Glasgow, Scotland. Her family immigrated to London in 1951 when she was 7 years old. She attended Fanshawe College and received an Accounting, Office Procedures diploma in 1964. She has had many different jobs, but her favorite was Michaels Arts and Crafts, where she worked for seventeen years as a cashier. She left there at the age of 73.

Teresa was married to her husband Gord for 56 years and have three sons, Bradley who lives in Orillia, Jimmy, and Gordon Daniel who both live in London. Sadly, Gord passed away after a short illness on July 1, 2021.

Gord and Teresa were both very involved in their community. In 2006, when the London InterCommunity Health Center opened their satellite, the Northeast Community Engagement Committee (NELCE) at the Huron Heights Plaza, Gord and Teresa went door to door inviting the residents to join the Community Group and invited residents, especially immigrants, to join the Community Kitchen. They also attended meetings with the city to get a playground and a splash pad for Ed Blake Park on Barker Street. They petitioned riders at the bus stops to increase bus service earlier on Sunday mornings. Gord and Teresa served refreshments at the Beacock Library for seniors drop in (card games) and Line Dancers. They were also involved in establishing a Community Garden and planting vegetables especially peppers and of course they also helped look after this garden by pulling weeds and watering it weekly.

I am truly in awe of Teresa. She is devout in her faith and service. Teresa feels that St. Michael's CWL is a welcoming, faith filled accepting group, that accomplishes many good initiatives. We feel that we are the lucky ones to have her here at St. Michael's.

September Welcome Back Social
Tuesday, September 9th, 7:00 pm
St. John Paul II Room

All women of the parish, 16 years and up, are invited to the Catholic Women's League Welcome Back Social and General Membership Meeting, to celebrate the start of our fall season. Come and share in special refreshments provided by the CWL executive and enjoy the opportunity to socialize after the summer break.

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78th Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League



I had the pleasure of attending my fourth provincial convention, held this year at the Four Points Sheraton in London from July 6th – 9th. The London Diocesan CWL hosted the convention and many of us from St. Michael's had the opportunity to volunteer as hostesses, or at the hospitality and registration tables. It began with lots of fun at Saturday night's Games Night where I got to catch up with some old friends and meet some new CWL sisters. On Sunday afternoon, I participated in the Resolutions Dialogue. Three resolutions were presented. Later that evening I attended Opening Mass and Opening Ceremony at St. Justin's parish. On Monday the provincial executive gave their reports and they were very creative in their

delivery as you see for yourself at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rw83W0f3vZ4>. Tuesday's keynote speaker, Dr. Josephine Lombardi, gave an interesting talk on Mary as a "synodal way" and "accompanying witness" to the spirit's guidance of the synodal process. The convention ended on Wednesday afternoon with the Closing Mass and the Reaffirmation ceremony at St. Peter's Cathedral. The convention was a great success rooted in faith, fun, and formation. Next year it is in Thunder Bay. Road trip anyone? – **Joan Lobsinger**

It was an honour to participate in the 2025 Provincial Convention of Catholic Women's League held right here in London, Ontario. Kudos to the organizers for helping to deepen our faith, to build community, and to remind us that we can bring change in the world. – **Anita Rodrigues**

The sunflower always turns towards the sun for maximum exposure to sunlight and to attract pollinators. We too need to always face the Son so that we get maximum exposure to His grace and facing the Son the shadows fall behind you. The theme for the Provincial Convention was "Here I Am Lord, Send Me, Joyfully!" The sunflower was used in many reports and presentations to remind us to always be ready to change direction in order to get the most benefit. The days were full and I most appreciated that we had daily Mass, and that the morning and afternoon sessions opened with prayer. The twilight retreat was an evening of meditation and an opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation. The Prayer Room was beautifully arrayed with statues and reflection materials, and the Blessed Sacrament was present in the tabernacle. – **Dorothy Solomon**

Continued on page 5

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 28

CWLstmichlon@gmail.com

August 2025

Continued from page 4



**St. Michael's CWL members surrounding
OPC President Colleen Martin**

Attending the 78th Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League was a truly uplifting experience. Centered on the theme "Here I Am, Lord, Send Me," the convention brought together women from across the province in faith, fellowship, and shared mission. As a first-time attendee, I was deeply moved by the joyful atmosphere, spiritual depth, and well-organized sessions. From the opening Eucharist to the closing day, every moment reflected the spirit of unity and purpose.

Provincial President Colleen Martin and the executive team led with grace and efficiency. Committee reports—from Communications to Justice & Peace—highlighted the incredible work being done throughout Ontario.

A highlight for me was the spiritual enrichment offered by Bishop Alan Campeau, whose reflections reminded us of our core mission: to grow in holiness together. Equally impactful was Dr. Josephine Lombardi's workshop on Synodality, especially her insight into Mary as a Model of Synodality, which resonated deeply. The convention concluded joyfully with a banquet full of laughter, stories, and sisterhood. I left inspired, renewed, and proud to be part of this vibrant community of Catholic women. It was more than an event—it was a blessing. —**Angela Ezugwu**

I attended the morning session of the CWL Provincial Conversion with keynote speaker Dr. Josephine Lombardi. Dr. Lombardi spoke on the topic of Marian Approaches to Synodality. That sounds like an academic and complicated subject, but Josephine explained that "synodality" means the process of the Church journeying together and listening to one another in order to discern God's will and live out the Church's mission. That is certainly what the Blessed Virgin Mary did throughout her life. Josephine pointed out that listening may not seem like an act of strength, but Mary shows us that when we listen to God, acting on his promises takes courage and strength. Mary answered God's call to be the mother of Jesus not knowing what would happen as an unwed mother. She stood strong when during her pregnancy she had to journey to Bethlehem where she gave birth in a stable and then had to flee Herod to protect her baby Jesus. During Mary and Joseph's return from the Passover festival, they lost Jesus and could not find him for three days. At some point she became a widow. What must it have been like to stand at the foot of Jesus' cross when almost everyone had abandoned him. Mary listened to God and fulfilled her mission on earth with strength and perseverance. — **Connie Cote**



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Issue 28

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August 2025

Crafting Socials For Fun and Purpose

Darlene Charrette

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:

- A Planning Session -- where potential projects were presented, donated materials explored, and a plan made for upcoming sessions.
- A Sewing Session – where we made lavender neck warmers, aprons, coasters, and bowl cozies. Non-sewers helped by cutting out fabric, pinning and stuffing while the sewers worked the machines.
- A Card-Making Session – where 3 of our 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.
- A Decorations & Kits Session – where we will work on 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.

In 2023 we donated \$1,500 and in 2024 we donated \$5,000, for a total of \$6,500 to Hospitality North. These community meals not only provide meals but also hospitality and community. This summer, meal organizer Howie Wright was kind enough to send this thankyou:

Hi Dorothy,

I just wanted to thank you and St. Michael's CWL for your very generous gift to support Hospitality North Community Meals. We had our last meal on June 9, 2025, and over the last year we served meals to 1405 individuals at a total cost of \$5252.15 (average \$3.74/guest).

We could not have accomplished this without CWL's generosity and commitment to this ministry.

We thank you and our guests thank you. - Howie



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CHRISTMAS MARKET NEWS

CWL Christmas Market 2025

November 8, 9:00 – 3:00

St. Michael's Parish Hall

The Christmas Market is only 3 months away!

1. We are looking for donations of larger value items to put in our silent auction and draw tables for the Christmas Market. These must be new items only. You might consider asking at work for a donation or making something yourself. We need to have these items by Oct. 25 to use them in the Christmas Market. Contact Judy Devlin (519-878-5992) if you have items to donate or leave them at the church office. Drop-off bins will be available in the narthex in the fall.
2. The summer crafting socials have been a success! There is one more scheduled for Wed., Sept. 10, 1:00-4:00 p.m. in the JPll Room at the church. This one will focus on decorations. This would be a good time to bring any hand-crafted items you wish to donate. If you are unable to attend, contact Darlene at 519-852-5252 for pickup of items or leave them at the church office. Drop-off bins will be available in the narthex in the fall.
3. We will be accepting Christmas items, jewellery, and children's toys that are second-hand to sell at the Christmas Market. However, these items need to be clean and in 'almost new' condition. If you wish to donate any of these items, contact Darlene (519-852-5252) for pickup of items or leave them at the church office. Drop-off bins will be available in the narthex in the fall.
4. The Christmas Market is an important fundraiser that contributes to Hospitality North, SVDP Housing Project and other CWL initiatives. It requires many volunteers. Consider volunteering to help set up, sell, or cleanup. Please contact Veronica (519-488-6265) to volunteer.



THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 28

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Come One Come All

CWL Christmas Market
St. Michael's Parish Hall
511 Cheapside (at Maitland), London
Saturday November 8, 2025
9:00am to 3:00pm

Look for UNIQUE GIFTS made by Parish Crafters, including:

- ♥ Hand-crafted Wooden Items & Yarn Crafts
- ♥ Hand-made Cards, Bookmarks & Decorations
- ♥ Hand-sewn Items & Clothing
- ♥ Homemade Preserves, Baked Goods & Candy
- ♥ Ready-to-give Gifts
- ♥ New & Re-purposed Items perfect for Christmas giving

We will also be hosting a **Draw Table and Silent Auction**
which will offer wonderful Gifts and Prizes for all ages!

★ Enjoy beverages and light LUNCH
at our Christmas Cafe ★

Find something for everyone on your list!

❄️ **Cash Only For All Purchases** ❄️

Proceeds to support
St. Vincent de Paul Affordable Housing,
Hospitality North and other CWL charities & initiatives.

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August 2025

Jubilee Year 2025 Pilgrims of Hope - Designated Pilgrimage Sites



Pope Francis declared 2025 as a Jubilee Year with the theme Pilgrims of Hope.

On June 23, 2025, almost 200 women met at the Our Lady of the Rosary Shrine in Merlin. It was indeed a beautiful day well worth our pilgrimage from London to Kent County.

In the quiet of the tree shaded sanctuary we had the opportunity to reflect and pray and worship together.

As the Mass was celebrated by Father Paul Kim, our CWL spiritual advisor in this diocese, butterflies flitted back and forth overhead as the trees gently waved in the breeze.

We prayed the rosary together which was a very moving experience.

In our region eight churches have been designated as

pilgrimage sites. They include St. Peter's Cathedral Basilica, London along with churches in Sarnia, Goderich, Windsor, Ingersoll, Stratford, Chatham and Merlin.

If any one is able to, I recommend visiting one of these sites to experience peace in this troubled world. - **Margaret Riehl**



This photo was taken in Bruges, Belgium at the Basilica of the Holy Blood. The church is "a Gothic masterpiece housing one of Christianity's most sacred relics, the vial of Jesus' blood." According to tradition, the blood of our Lord was collected by Joseph of Arimathea and brought from the Holy Land by Thierry of Alsace, Count of Flanders after a Crusade in 1150. – **Gerarda Smith-Hillier**

The Sanctuary of Fatima in central Portugal, renowned for the 1917 apparitions of the Virgin Mary to three young shepherds—Jacinta, Francisco, and Lucia, is a designated pilgrimage site. CWL member **Joan Roffey** visited there in February and shared this beautiful photo.



You're invited to share photos of yourselves at any of the pilgrimage sites around the province, country or world for the next newsletters. Email your photos to gail-brown@rogers.com and show our members how you are observing Pope Francis' Jubilee Year.

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Issue 28

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August 2025

Imagine Build Oneida Dorothy Solomon



Imagine Build is a housing project for the homeless and needy on the Oneida First Nations Reserve just west of London. With many donated materials, labour and fund-raising efforts Oneida has been able to build five homes without having to rely on government assistance. An Indigenous Committee selects the recipients. The construction crews are from their own residents, which allows them to develop their skills under the supervision of a professional contractor. At the CWL London Regional Presidents meeting in May we heard about the need for the fifth home to have a roof at the cost of \$5,000.00. The request was brought back to the 19 London regional councils and at St. Michael's June meeting it was decided that we would donate \$500.00.

On July 24 I was able to attend, along with five other CWL members, plus several other groups who either donated funds or materials and labour, for a special presentation to Imagine Build. In total, so far the London area councils have given \$7,500.00. The surplus money will be used as a start-up fund for house number six.

We hope this is a good introduction on forming a relationship with our Indigenous neighbours. We can also continue to educate our membership about social justice concerns. This is truly faith, service and social justice in action.

Planted in Faith, Growing in Hope

Margaret Riehl

Prior to the start of the CWL Provincial Convention on July 6th, two burning bush trees were planted at St. Peter's Seminary by CWL representatives (Provincial and Regional) along with Seminary Rector Rev. Denis Grecco, to show support for the vocations programs offered at the Seminary. Rev. Pio Beorchia blessed the trees which will be a beautiful red colour in the fall. Rev. Michael Prieur then gave an impromptu tour of the Chapel which fascinated everyone. CWL ladies from across the region were in attendance.

