

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

April 2023

Message from our President Dorothy Solomon



The purpose of the CWL is to unite Catholic women to grow in faith, and to promote social justice through service to the church, Canada and the world. The envisioned future of the League is that through these unifying efforts, we

will become an inclusive and engaged community of Catholic women inspired by faith. We the members will be vital participants in the church, valued partners for social justice, respected advocates at all government levels and connected to the world. Each newsletter is a witness to the ways in which we are Catholic and Living it.

As a League, we are evolving and the National Council has developed a fresh approach as to how we live these unifying efforts. As I wrote in the February issue, we have seven standing committees and I invited each of us to consider how we may incorporate at least one action. Once again, I ask us to review where we can best use our resources in the CWL. Our new model is simplified under the banners of Faith, Service, and Social Justice.

Faith, hearts in prayer – Uniting Catholic women to grow in faith. Spiritual development is the essence of the CWL. The League was established in 1920 as a lay organization of Catholic women who worked and advocated for social justice but who also valued their spiritual development. The League was officially recognized by the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops as a lay association of women in 1948.

Service, hands that share – Service to the church, Canada and the world. We serve those in need, in our parish, in our community, in the country and in the world. Our League prayer states that we are taught to share with others at home and abroad. We are in a constant search to discover and re-discover a means to do this. Individuals and councils address the corporal works of mercy and follow the example of Jesus who came to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

Social justice, minds that dare – Actively involved in society. The CWL sets out to be a respected advocate at all government levels. Exemplifying the Christian

ideals by upholding and defending Catholic education and values, protecting the sanctity of human life, recognizing the human dignity of all people and contributing to the understanding and growth of religious freedom are all foundational in achieving social justice. This is a core value that facilitates the League affecting change in areas like politics and legislation within various levels of government.

As you continue to read this newsletter, be challenged to participate in some way to grow your own faith, service and social justice. Help make our envisioned future a reality by joining in our unifying efforts to become an inclusive and engaged community of Catholic women. Blessed Easter. He is risen! He is risen indeed!



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.

CATHOLIC
and **LIVING IT!**

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

April 2023

From Our Spiritual Advisor Fr. Sekar Raj



Dear CWL Friends,

Once, three sons left home, went out on their own and prospered. Getting back together, they discussed the gifts they were able to give their elderly mother.

The first said, "I built a big house for our mother."

The second said, "I sent her a Mercedes with a driver."

The third smiled and said, "I've got you both beat. You remember how mom enjoyed reading the Bible? And you know she can't see very well. So, I sent her a remarkable parrot that recites the entire Bible. It took elders in the church 12 years to teach him. He's one of a kind. Mama just has to name the chapter and verse, and the parrot recites it."

Soon thereafter, mom sent out her letters of thanks:

"Milton," she wrote one son, "The house you built is so huge. I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house."

"Gerald," she wrote to another, "I am too old to travel. I stay most of the time at home, so I rarely use the Mercedes. And the driver is so rude!"

"Dearest Donald," she wrote to her third son, "You have the good sense to know what your mother likes. The chicken was delicious!"

Friends, let us not miss out on the central message of Easter! Christ's passion, death and resurrection liberate us from all the bondages and calls for the intentional discipleship with Christ. Further, we the followers of Christ won't stop at Lent and Easter. Rather, the enriched faith enables us to encounter Jesus more closely in our daily lives. Let the love of Christ enable us to love and serve one another!

My prayers and blessing to you CWL!

Fr. Raj

Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly Webinar

Joan Lobsinger

I attended via zoom, the CWL National "Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly" Webinar presented by Sr. Susan Scott on Wednesday, March 28th. It was a very thoughtful and informative webinar. It helped me to better understand our core value of Social Justice. I learned about the Catholic Social teachings of the Church and why this is important for me as a member of the CWL. I learned about the six kinds of justice: Distributive Justice, Economic Justice, Environmental Justice, Restorative Justice, Biblical Justice and Catholic Social Justice. Sr. Susan emphasized that social justice is rooted in scripture and in Vatican II. We are called to live the church's catholic social teachings. I am so grateful this webinar was recorded so I can view it again and also share it with you. You simply copy this link and fill in the information to watch it.

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/3560404898290573312>

Sr. Susan also pointed out that there are many resources available on National's homepage cwl.ca. and I encourage you to check them out. They are under Quick Links: Strategic Planning Resources and Updates.

Spring Friendship Tea, Thursday May 11

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. If you have a teapot that we could borrow for that day, please let us know. 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.

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

April 2023



JOIN

St. Michael's Catholic Women's League

For a

**Springtime
Friendship Tea
Party**

Thursday, May 11, 2023

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

**St. Michael's Parish Hall
511 Cheapside St., London, ON**

**All CWL and non CWL members are welcome.
Bring your mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and daughter
out for tea, and company.
It's free to you, compliments of St. Michael's CWL.**



THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

Featured Member Marilyn Morgan

Stephanie Gasparotto



Marilyn Morgan is a welcome sight at St. Michael's, always ready to pitch in and help when needed or just take time for a friendly chat. Our Marilyn seems to be familiar with every parishioner, every family, and every priest of St. Michael's past and present. In addition, as an elementary teacher of over 30 odd years, there appears to be not a single person, student, colleague or family that has escaped her notice.

Respected by her students as a marvellous teacher, organized, thorough and engaging, she also won the admiration of her colleagues for her kindness, commitment and the genuineness of her Faith. These qualities are not surprising given her upbringing as one of five children in a devoted Catholic family from Bathurst New Brunswick. It is said that "You can take the woman out of the Maritimes but not the East Coast out of the woman." This becomes patently apparent when you hear her charming 'down home' speech when talking about her beloved husband Steve, her family and above all her Catholic Faith.

Marilyn takes most seriously her devotion to the Catholic Women's League. A member of St. Michael's CWL since 1991, she has dedicated herself to its mission and values by serving as the convener of the Health and Education Committee for two terms, the Spiritual Development Committee and the Christian Family Life Committee, as well as Secretary, co-captain of funeral luncheons, and facilitator of the Honour Guard for funerals of members and the annual 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care. For over a dozen years, she has taken Communion to residents at Chartwell Nursing Home and has served meals with Hospitality North. Marilyn gives her time to prepare sandwiches monthly for our homeless brothers and sisters, in addition to praising God as she

April 2023

beautifully proclaims His Word at Mass weekly and on the weekend. There is nothing she hasn't done or wouldn't do. Outside of her CWL activities, Marilyn has played and coached a variety of sports, volunteering at both the Ontario and N. B. Jeux du Canada Games, the Memorial Cup and the Drew Doughty Jr. Knights hockey tournaments.

Marilyn and her late husband Steve travelled the world together visiting every continent except Antarctica. An inveterate storyteller, in the tradition of those who hail from the Maritimes, I'm sure that she regaled her students with tales of going on safari in one of her favourite places, Botswana. Well read, well travelled, yet Canadian to the core, Marilyn is fiercely patriotic and politically astute. In this capacity, she represents the Southwestern Ontario Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association.

She speaks with deep affection of her 50 maternal cousins. Unfortunately, there are not any on her father's side because her two uncles were taken prisoner by the Japanese in the Battle of Hong Kong. One uncle died in the prisoner of war camp while his brother survived but died at the age of 42 from illness brought on by the inhumane conditions of his incarceration.

In short, Marilyn is a beautiful friend. She is well-named and much loved. We are grateful for her example of our CWL values Faith, Service and Social Justice.

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 6. 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.

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

Conversational Tools: Pro-Life 101 Dialogue Training

Veronica Solis



On Tuesday April 4th, the CWL had the privilege of hosting a vibrant and knowledgeable local Pro-Life advocate and speaker, Maria McCann. The topic was "Conversational Tools: Pro-Life 101 Dialogue Training." More

than 40 members of the CWL and KofC, as well as other visitors attended this challenging and enjoyable evening workshop.

Maria's presentation was concise and thorough. Attendees learned some shocking facts about abortion in Canada: There are NO LAWS against having an abortion. A child may be aborted at any time during the full nine months of pregnancy - for any reason or no reason at all. Presently, there are about 300 ABORTIONS PER DAY in Canada. Abortion was made legal in Canada in 1969.

Maria stressed the importance of loving and caring for people who do not support life and that we must avoid being judgemental. To be wise communicators we must sincerely try to understand where each person is coming from. We should love people genuinely and offer new perspectives for them to appreciate the miracle of life.

Most people in favor of killing a baby in the womb do not realize this reality: From the very moment a human egg is fertilized by sperm, a living, growing human being exists and deserves to have all human rights. If we believe all humans have the same rights, so do these babies.

To dialog with people who face these challenges in life we must:

- Find common ground (this will open the channels of communication) "I agree that rape ... "
- Find an analogy (the very same situation applied to a toddler)
- Ask "Is the 'thing' in the womb a human being? Are her parents human? Is it growing? Then is it alive?"
- Should she deserve to have human rights? Should she have the right to live?
- Ask questions that challenge people to think and discover the truth by themselves: Who shall have human rights?

April 2023

Once people agree and accept that all human beings shall have human rights, we will be able to overcome many life situations that make it hard for people to respect the life in the womb, like poverty, incest, rape, and lack of education.

Finally, one more objection is that even when a baby is human, people do not accept that is yet a person. According to history this kind of arbitrary distinction has led to inhuman discrimination for women (being a human + gender), people of color (human + ethnicity), and for babies (human + age).

Most of all, we must not remain silent! We must make the effort to have effective dialogues with each other to stop the killing of unborn children! We should not try to win arguments, but to win hearts. We should protect life from conception to natural death. The most important part of the workshop was to teach us to show this reality when we speak to people. Do not Tell Me! Show Me!!

From a group of women who attended the workshop: Agnes, Marilyn, Marg, Veronica



THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

April 2023

Feast Day of Our Lady of Good Counsel, April 26

Gail Brown

We humbly pray You, O God our Father, to bless The Catholic Women's League of Canada... This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ and the intercession of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel.

We ask for the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel as part of our opening prayer at every meeting. But how many of us know how the Blessed Mother was given this title? The answer dates back to the 1400's in the small Italian village of Gennazzano, and a beautiful painting of Our Lady with the Christ Child. Tradition says that this beautiful fresco was suddenly revealed during the restoration of a thirteenth century Augustinian church in Gennazzano. An article from the Catholic University of Dayton, Ohio explains:

According to legend, the entire town was participating in the yearly feast in honor of St. Mark the Evangelist. The church was still unfinished and roofless when the image of the Madonna and Child was transported there from its former location in Scutari, Albania. Around four o'clock that afternoon, the multitude of people saw a mysterious cloud descend upon the church. The church bells rang of their own accord and the cloud parted revealing the portrait. The image, fifteen inches wide by seventeen inches high, came to rest on a narrow ledge in the church and remains in that position to this day. The painting is a fresco, painted on a thin layer of plaster as thin and fragile as an egg shell.

It was later determined by art experts consulted during a restoration conducted between 1957 and 1959 that the image of the Madonna was once part of a larger fresco that covered the wall and had later been covered over with plaster and probably was painted around the time of Pope Martin V (1417-1431).



The picture of Our Lady was at first called "La Madonna del Paradiso" and is now better known as "Madonna del Buon Consiglio" (Our Lady of Good Counsel).

In 1910, the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO) was organized in Brussels, Belgium, and Mary, under the title of Our Lady of Good Counsel, was chosen as its patroness. In 1920 the Catholic Women's League of Canada was invited to affiliate with the WUCWO, and at the annual CWL national convention in 1923 in Halifax, a resolution was passed to adopt Our Lady of Good Counsel as the League's patroness.

Wednesday, April 26 marks the 2023 feast day of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. As Catholic women, let us promise to honour, invoke and imitate our patroness on this blessed occasion. [Feast Day of Our Lady of Good Counsel - The Catholic Women's League of Canada \(cwl.ca\)](#)

*Annual Spring Potluck Dinner - The St. Michael's CWL will hold our annual potluck dinner on **Tuesday, June 6, at 6:30 p.m.** in the parish hall. The evening will include brief business reports, the awarding of anniversary service pins, and the special CWL National Unity Presentation.*

THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

2023 Crowning of Mary



Please join the CWL on **Monday, May 1st, 2023 at 7:00 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!

CWL Lenten Retreat

Megan Young

Often when we think of the Lenten season we think of sacrificing our favourite desserts, or that delicious doughnut we indulge in each time we visit Tim Hortons. Although those are good things to “give up” for Lent, it can also be a time of year that many Catholics dread, when it is meant to be a time the Lord calls us to use to draw us closer to himself, as well as to one another. This is one of the many reasons why the CWL gathers each year as a Diocesan Council for a time of reflection, prayer, and a time of unity as sisters in Christ at the annual Lenten Retreat. This year, this

April 2023

gathering took place in St. Michael's Parish Hall on Saturday, February 25th, 2023.

As I began to reflect on this retreat, I was struck by the extra sense of joy as the room was filled with the sounds of warm greetings and laughter between dear friends. My first thought was because we were gathering at my own home Parish, but I soon realized that it was because this was the first time we were able to gather in person as a council since the beginning of the pandemic that seemed to make the world stand still in 2020. Although we had not gathered together in what seemed like a lifetime ago, it seemed like no time had passed at all.

We were blessed to have Fr. Jim Mockler as our keynote speaker. Fr. Jim is a former pastor of St. Michael's, so needless to say, he holds a very dear place in the hearts of the Parishioners of our beloved St. Michael's Parish. One point that really struck me was his mention to change our thought process when we first wake in the morning. His challenge to us was to change our thought from “what do I have to do today?” to “what do I get to do today? This change in mindset has the ability to give us a deeper sense of hope, as well as the reassurance that God has a plan that is specific to each and every one of us.

Overall this retreat was a day of reflection, prayer, and sisterhood. What a blessing it was for all of us to gather together as sisters in Christ, to not only share our faith, but to share our life experiences and grow closer as a community. We are looking forward to gathering together once again next year.



THE ST. MICHAEL'S LEAGUE

Issue 15

National Hospice Palliative Care Week - May 7-13

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. At St. Michael's we have chosen

Friday, May 5th as our day to pray for this intention. Mass will be celebrated at 8am and we will have Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 8:30 until 3pm 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. For those who are unable to be at church, we hope you will join us in prayer at home on May 5th.

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.

The Women, A Bishop and a Princess: A CWL Story

Gail Brown

We were excited to welcome Diocesan Archivist, Deb Majer, as our special guest speaker at our March meeting. Deb has a special interest in the history of the CWL in our diocese, and was invited by her former grade six teacher Marilyn Morgan to share her presentation on the topic.

The Women in Deb's title were those working with convalescing soldiers in Europe at the end of the First

April 2023

World War, as well as women here in London; the Bishop was our own Bishop Michael Francis Fallon; and the Princess was Austrian Princess Franziska (Fanny) von Starhemberg – all of whom contributed to the establishment of the Catholic Women's League in London in 1920. Bishop Fallon was in Europe on official duty as the Head Chaplain for English Speaking Catholic Chaplains during the war. There he saw women in action and recognized the need for women to be more involved and have equal opportunity to contribute to society back home in Canada. According to Deb's research in the archives, it's not clear how he became acquainted with Princess Fanny, but after he returned to Canada they continued to correspond and Princess Fanny asked the bishop for help with clothing and financial donations for those suffering in Austria after the hostilities. The Bishop called on the women in the London Diocese to assist with this request and they responded.

Deb explained that Bishop Fallon was a firm believer in the empowerment of women. He established Brescia College to give Catholic women the same opportunities for further education and equal employment as Catholic men, and directly supported the development of the CWL in the London Diocese. He even issued a directive urging parish priests to invite women to get involved and chastised any priest who did not. The CWL we know today evolved from this early start with a focus on social justice and the betterment of the community. Deb's enthusiasm at relating this history was contagious, and by the end of the evening, we were inspired by our history and proud to be members of the CWL.



You can read Deb's own account in the London Diocese Missio newsletter at [A CWL Story](#)
