

Restructuring of CWL Explained

St. Boniface Diocesan Council President, Lacey Bernardin, hosted Manitoba CWL members who were needing clarification about the new changes to the executive structure of the CWL. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Lacey explained the reasons for the changes, how they would affect different aspects of the council, and then went through the changes step-by-step, continually assuring attendees that the changes were not so daunting. Finally, Lacey announced that she would share the presentation and notes with all councils.



St. Boniface Day of Reflection

The St. Boniface Diocesan Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada hosted its Day of Reflection, "Catholic and Living It!" on Saturday, October 22, 2022. The half-day presentation featured three different ways that people are or have been "Catholic and Living It!"

The first presentation featured Fr. John Sianchuk from St. Joseph's Ukrainian Church in Winnipeg, accompanied by Lesia Sianchuk, Shrine Administrator of the *Bishop Velychkovsky National Martyr's Shrine*, who kept us enthralled with the life story of this future saint. On June 27, 2001, Pope St. John Paul II beatified a number of Ukrainian martyrs who gave up their lives for Christ under the Soviet Union's atheistic regime during the 20th century rather than deny Jesus Christ and His Church. One of those priests was a Redemptorist Bishop, Vasyl Velychkovsky, who was exiled to Winnipeg. Bishop Velychkovsky died a martyr's death on June 30, 1973 and was buried in All Saints Cemetery in Winnipeg. After being beatified, his body and holy relics were enshrined at St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church. Many pilgrims come and pray before Blessed Vasyl, seeking his powerful intercession. Fr. John completed his presentation by blessing us all with holy oil.

The second presentation came to us from Fr. Francois Paradis, a Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblate of Mary Immaculate since August 15, 1967. He was ordained in July 1972 and his entire priestly ministry has been with the Ojibwa First Nations communities of Southern Manitoba. In 2007, Returning to Spirit became his full-time ministry. Fr. Francois Spoke about his experiences while ministering to the indigenous people of Manitoba, as well as his work in promoting reconciliation in Manitoba.

The morning was rounded off with beautiful music from the Youth Choir from the parish of Mary, Mother of the Church, headed by Jason Cegayle. The choir plans to travel to Portugal in August 2023 for World Youth Day and is currently raising funds for that pilgrimage.

Special thanks to the St. Emile Catholic Women's League Council for hosting us in their parish hall and for providing delicious refreshments. Also special thanks to members from the Winnipeg Diocesan Council, the Provincial Council and the Kee-Pas Diocesan Council who made a special effort to attend.



Day of Celebration by Donna Candelaria, St. Peter's CWL Council

The **23rd annual Manitoba Provincial CWL Day of Celebration** was held virtually on **Feb. 12th**. Opening after a half hour of socializing, the morning liturgy was led by Spiritual Development Chairperson Con Marks at 9:30am.

The first guest speaker, Dr. Zita Somakoko, a pastor, a mom, a business owner, a recipient of the "Manitoba 150 Honour", and God's humble servant, spoke on **Domestic Violence against Women**. She shared her personal story of ten years of domestic violence, and how she has evolved into now helping others facing this trauma. Arriving as a refugee to Manitoba in 2015, she shared some stories of how she reached out to help so many women in need (personally/through other agencies/etc.) and she has not stopped advocating for them as "**domestic abuse is not OK**". Statistics of domestic abuse are very high in Manitoba.

She spoke of "**The Rave Project**" (an initiative that seeks to bring knowledge and social action together to assist families of faith impacted by abuse) and shared with us the presentation "**Welcome to the Stained Glass Story of Abuse**" by Dr. Nancy Nason-Clark, Professor Emerita at the University of New Brunswick. Each picture of the stained glass window showed the different stages: the beginning; the chaos; the aftermath, rebuilding, renewal, and new beginnings.

The second guest speaker, Slobodan Mitrovic, a worker at **Welcome House**, spoke about raising the awareness on issues faced by new Canadians. The **Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. (WELCOME HOUSE)**, is located at 521 Bannatyne Avenue where some refugees/immigrants live in suites on the top floor, but many others access help in the offices on the main floor. Known as Slobo, he shared his personal journey as a refugee and how he, his wife and two young sons were welcomed and helped after arriving in Winnipeg in 1994; thus his desire to repay the generosity of the so many who helped them.

He discussed the six main **SERVICES OFFERED** at WELCOME House: Reception; Settlement; Life Skills Training; Volunteer; Sponsorship; and In Canada Protection.

He explained the **Definition of a Refugee and an Immigrant**; and the six basic **differences between them**: Reason for leaving; Returning home; Language; Financial Resources; Personal; and Hope.

Also discussed were the many **Challenges for Refugees; What is Cultural Adaptation** (stages of) people adjusting to a new country in a positive manner); and the four **Stages of Cross Culture Adaptation**: Honeymoon Phase; Challenges and Crisis; Recovery; and Adjustment.

MB Provincial President-Elect and Chairperson of Organization Crystal Reiter led the Town Hall on "**Breaking the Barriers of Apathy in the League**". Using her experience as a member, and one of the many new Resources (Series 600 and 800 available at www.cwl.ca), Crystal explained how she reached out to others to help her in this presentation. She asked for members input, and it was an insightful time with many good ideas shared.

Closing remarks from President Janet Brunger thanked the speakers and all members for their input and for attending; and in these different times, encouraged us to maintain contact with each other, stay engaged as an organization, and be visible in our parishes. Con led us in the closing prayer "A Franciscan Blessing" and the enjoyable day ended at 2:10 pm.

Manitoba



Premier's Volunteer Service Award: Group

This award is presented to individuals, youth, and community groups who have improved the quality of life in our province through volunteerism.

The Notre Dame de Lorette Catholic Women's League has spent 32 years significant impacts in their community by fundraising money to support those pay for critical surgeries and supplies. In total, from 2015-2019, the council fundraised a total of \$130,000. Additionally, the group initiated an ongoing collection of items to support houseless and marginalized communities in need.

*Celebrate
our Volunteers!*

VolunteerManitoba.ca/awards



Celebrate our Volunteers!



2021

AWARD RECIPIENT

*The Notre Dame de Lorette
Catholic Women's League*

LORETTE MB

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Congratulations to Life Member Dr. Rayleen De Luca on being recognized by the Nellie McClung Foundation as one of 150 Manitoba women who have the distinction of being a “trailblazer” in our province.

For anyone wishing to know a bit more on the topic, check out the Nellie McClung Foundation website. Rayleen received the Order of Manitoba in 2011 and the Order of Canada in 2016.

<https://www.nelliemcclungfoundation.com>