

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Manitoba Provincial Council**



ORGANIZATION

DATE: September, 2017

Communique # 1

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call

TO: Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils)
Diocesan Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Organization (for information)
FROM: Janet Brunger, Provincial Chairperson of Organization

Greetings to all of my CWL Sisters in Manitoba! Hope you all had a marvelous summer - hope you've had time to rest and recharge, have had time with family and friends, gardening and flowers, traveling to National Convention, and whatever other pursuits may have been on your radar. And now welcome back to another busy, fruitful year in the CWL!

My name is Janet Brunger, and I am honoured and humbled to have been elected to the position of President-Elect on Manitoba Provincial Council. As such, I also assume the role of Organization Chairperson for the next two years. I started my League journey at St. Emile Parish in the early '80's, then crossed the river to Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Charleswood, where, regrettably, I did not renew my membership for approximately 12 years, due to studying and small children. I resumed active membership in the late 1990's and have hit the ground running every year since then, serving in various capacities at Parish, Diocesan, and now Provincial level. I was also the General Chair for the 2008 National Convention Planning Committee, which was held in Winnipeg. Aside from the CWL, I also happily serve in many capacities in my Parish. Through my League involvement, as well as outside of it, I have enjoyed travelling throughout this wonderful province, and indeed, throughout Canada. Our idea of "a nice little road trip" is a 12-hour run up to Alberta to see our son and his family on a week-end – and then back again – usually a 3-day round trip, but we have done it in 2 days, on several occasions.

My husband, Gerald and I have two sons and 4 grandchildren. We have a large, productive vegetable garden, and our flower gardens are definitely a work in progress, although they turned out very well this year. We have also undertaken various renovation projects throughout our married life, and have learned to work really well together. I am a major shareholder in Shopost Ltd., a steel fabrication company located in St. Boniface, just recently having celebrated my 40th anniversary with them, and no, I have no plans to retire any time soon!

The Objects of the League shall be to unite Catholic Women of Canada:

- 1. to achieve individual and collective spiritual development*
- 2. to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church.....*

Our primary focus in the CWL is the spiritual growth of our members. To that end, there is a wealth of resources available on the CWL website that will assist you in this respect. In conjunction with the Spiritual component, under the Organization Standing Committee, we are expected to provide the leadership tools needed to our counterparts on

Diocesan and Parish levels. During my term, my short-term goals are to continue the processes laid down by my predecessors, to educate and encourage strong and vibrant leadership within the League. I plan to increase visibility and to be as approachable as possible. I intend to work with members of the League to make the process of annual reports more user-friendly and to foster better understanding of the usefulness of this tool. My long-term goals are to explore ways and means of igniting enthusiasm within the League in an effort to rejuvenate the League and thus increase membership within Manitoba.

Recruit members and maintain membership

The demographics of our membership are changing – our current membership is aging and is not being replaced by new and younger members. Our challenge is to create a resurgence in enthusiasm and thus in membership. This process has already begun at the National level, and it will be coming down through the different levels over the next two, three, to five years. The responsibility for our Organization Chairpersons at the Parish level is to maintain existing membership levels, continue to recruit, and work to increase visibility within the parishes. Be bold! Approach people! Invite them to join in your various activities!

Leadership development

Catch the Fire! and *S'Mores* are valuable tools for both leadership and recruitment – have you attended one or both of these workshops? Consider joining with another Council in your area to present it to your members – I've attended several, and although they follow the established format, each time I learn something new and find different and interesting tidbits that I had never realized before! In reviewing the evaluations from conventions over the past several years, our members are constantly asking for leadership tools – well, here they are! Consider this valuable gift to you and your membership! The facilitators for both of these workshops are ready and willing to travel to your area – we await your call!

League Resource Material

In addition to the sheer volumes of resources available on the CWL website, every Council should have the *Constitution & Bylaws*, the *National Manual of Policy & Procedure*, the *Executive Handbook*, *Leading the League*, and the *Handbook for Organization Chairpersons*. Avail yourself of these resources, they are valuable tools!

Annual Reports

Last year was the first year for online annual reporting, and although there were hiccups and burps, overall it went very well. Once each chairperson accessed their respective website, it really was easy, and there were a lot of ideas to be gleaned from it. This year's online forms are still in the process of being modified, and thus are not yet available. More information about the Annual Reports will be available in the Fall parish mailing.

Life Membership

Nine new Life Members were welcomed at the National Convention in Charlottetown in August. We are so blessed to have all of these wonderful ladies in our midst! Please be mindful that there have been changes to the Life Membership process, in that there is a new requirement to submit *Notice of Nomination for Life Membership* by September 15th and that the completed *Nomination Form for Life Membership* and *Life Member Nominee Questionnaire* Forms are to be sent to National, postmarked by December 15th. Finally, the *Life Membership Checklist* along with payment must be forwarded to National Office by February 1st.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time with your questions, concerns, or comments – I welcome all of it. Grateful thanks are extended to all Organization Chairpersons, at all levels, for your dedication and for sharing your gifts. May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, protecting and guiding you!

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Manitoba Provincial Council**



ORGANIZATION

DATE November, 2017

Communique # 2

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call

TO: Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils)
Diocesan Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Organization (for information)
FROM: Janet Brunger, Provincial Chairperson of Organization

Greetings to all of my CWL Sisters in Manitoba! Now that the yards and gardens have all been cleaned up in preparation for winter, we are able to turn our attention to other matters; namely, Parish functions, CWL events and fundraisers, preparations for Christmas – and – ANNUAL REPORTS!

Annual Reports

Because I referred to it in my opening paragraph, this is where I will start. National Office has been hard at work, tweaking and working out all the bugs in the system. The result is a much nicer, streamlined reporting tool. And the REALLY good news is that for the Parish Level, it can be accessed as early as November 1st to enable you to do your annual report on YOUR schedule. The deadline for annual reporting is December 15th for Parish Council Chairpersons, and Executive – including Presidents, secretaries, treasurers and past presidents. Treasurers, please check with your Diocesan counterparts for the deadline to remit monies due, as that date is likely earlier than December 15th. Diocesan Chairpersons – your reports are due on February 15th. Please ensure that when doing your annual reports, you would have to use the data (statistics) collated by National Office as a result of the Parish online reporting. To access this year's annual report form, please visit the secure site, survey.cwl.ca. Please be sure to enter this URL exactly as stated into your browser's address bar, NOT a Google search bar. Your user name will be your CWL membership ID number, as indicated on your permanent membership card. Your password will be your membership ID number, followed by the first initial of your first name and the first initial of your last name. For example, Bellelle Guerin, member ID number 7654321, would enter 7654321BG as her password. Councils are encouraged to work together and support each other for Annual Reporting, and if anyone does not have access to a computer or the computer skills to do their annual report, they have several options available to them;

- Ask another member of your Executive for assistance
- Ask a family member for help (does not have to be a CWL member)
- Computer services are available for use at your local library

And if you're the person that is being asked to help out, please try to make yourself available. Last year, in Manitoba, only 51% of our Councils participated in online annual reporting. This year, let's aim for 100%!!

Recruit members and maintain membership

Most Councils will be having membership drives over the next couple of months – plan to do something fun and interesting in this area – offer coffee and doughnuts, offer small join-up rewards, plan a ladies' night out to welcome the new members! Remember, personal, face-to-face invitations work the best. A reminder that interested women can

now join the League online by clicking on the drop down menu on the CWL website that says “Join”. Once they fill in their information and submit it, National Office will direct them to the CWL Council closest to their home address.

And now a few words about you! We are always beating the drum on recruitment and maintaining our membership, but I have a few questions that you can ask yourselves.

How do you portray yourself to others? Do you:

- a. Whine and complain about others in your Council or about everything you have to do for the upcoming bazaar, or do you smile and demonstrate enthusiasm?
- b. Shoot down new suggestions, saying, “We’ve never done it that way or tried that”, or do you say, “That’s an awesome idea, we tried something like it years ago, maybe it’s time to try it again, with a different angle, as you’re suggesting”
- c. If you don’t like how Susie handles her Standing Committee, do you gossip and complain about it, or do you offer your assistance to Susie or ask to take on one of the tasks she does to help out?
- d. Do you constantly wear a frown and slouch your shoulders as though you’re carrying the weight of the world, or do you generate smiles and greetings wherever you go?
- e. When someone asks you a question about the CWL, do you shrug and say, “I have no idea”, or do you say, “I’m not sure – let’s go and ask Mary – she’ll have the answer”, or better yet, educate yourself, so that you can respond clearly and confidently.
- f. When you are asked to do something, do you respond, “Well, I guess I can do that, not sure when, but..”, or do you put yourself forward, be upbeat, and say, “I’d be happy to do that!”

Just small things such as demonstrated above will make such a difference in your Council. No one will want to join a group that exudes negativity – everyone wants to be part of the winning team, and if our members are happy, vibrant, and do fun things together, that alone will speak volumes!

Leadership development

Have you considered hosting a *Catch the Fire!* or *S’Mores* workshop? Perhaps you can join with another Council in your area to present to your members? Did you know that funding assistance is available through National Office League Development Fund to help offset the costs of putting on one of these workshops? These are valuable tools for both leadership and recruitment – I urge you to consider participating in one or both of these workshops. We have facilitators for both of these workshops right here in Manitoba, and we are ready and willing to travel to your area – please don’t hesitate to call on us!

May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, protecting and guiding you!

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Manitoba Provincial Council



ORGANIZATION

DATE September, 2018

Communique # 3

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call

TO: Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils)
Diocesan Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Organization (for information)
FROM: Janet Brunger, Provincial Chairperson of Organization

As summer's heat is waning, and we are embracing the beautiful season of fall with its cooler nights and vibrant colors, and we prepare to celebrate the bountiful harvest we've been blessed with, my heart overflows with thanks for the work of God in every area of our lives, in every fibre of our being, and with every breath we take. Let us channel our gratitude to avenues that will benefit those in need.

I felt, that with conventions behind us, and the beginning of a new year of CWL endeavours, it would be appropriate to revisit what we've accomplished this past year, what we hope to achieve this year, and where we are at right now.

The Objects of the League shall be to unite Catholic Women of Canada;

- 1. To achieve individual and collective spiritual development*
- 2. To promote the teachings of the Catholic Church*

What have you done in this respect for your members in the past year? Have you checked out the CWL website for the resources they offer? There are many and varied workshops available for your use. One of the responsibilities of the Organization Standing Committee is to provide the tools for leadership within the League – those are available on the website – I encourage you to take a few minutes to see what's all offered, and structure these to your own Council.

Anne Gorman, outgoing Organization Chair, in her oral report, stated, “*And how did you keep motivated this past year? You went into the deep when you were weary and frightened, with companions for support and encouragement. You used the resources that our predecessors had the vision to establish. Yes, this is the organization all of us love and will continue to make as viable and vibrant as possible.*” These words resonated with me, as they reflect what we all think and feel from time to time. Alone, we're but one small thread, but together with our sisters in the League, we can achieve great things! Look for Anne's full oral report in the fall issue of your League magazine.

Recruit members and maintain membership

Plan to set a goal this year to increase visibility within your parish, whether it's by means of parish bulletin, or a community builder, or some fun activities for the CWL – whatever it is, make people in your parish sit up and take notice! Be the fun group that everyone wants to be part of! Do the unexpected! And don't forget to include your

Spiritual Advisor in the planning and implementation of these happenings – it's the best way to bring your S.A. into the fold.

Leadership development

Any time that our membership is asked what they would like to see made available to them, they invariably say, "Leadership Workshops and skits". Again, the CWL website is an invaluable tool that's free and available to everyone to use within their own Councils – check it out. Also, *Catch the Fire!* and *S'Mores* workshops are available to any Council, or group of Councils in an area; facilitators are available, and funding assistance to host one of these workshops is also available through the National Office League Development Fund.

League Resource Material

In addition to the resources available online, do you or does your Council have available for use the *Constitution & Bylaws*, the *National Manual of Policy & Procedure*, the *Executive Handbook*, *Leading the League*, and the *Handbook for Organization Chairpersons*? More to the point, do you regularly refer to these resources? I encourage you to familiarize yourself with them and use them in your League work.

Annual Reports

Much information has come out of the online Annual Reporting. That information has been used by National Executive in the Strategic Planning, the results of which are starting to be rolled out for all of us, and that information has been relayed back to us via the CWL website. We, in Manitoba, are not exactly shining stars when it comes to annual reporting, with only just over ½ of our Councils reporting. Let's try to do better this year! Talk to someone that has a computer, and make your voice heard! Even if you think you don't have much to report, please know that you've been missed and your comments matter!

Life Membership

Congratulations to the 10 new Life Members that were welcomed at National Convention in August! These ladies are a blessing and a gift to all of us! They are always ready and willing to lend a hand, to mentor and encourage, and to work tirelessly to advance the ideals and the work of the CWL!

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time with your questions, concerns or comments – I welcome all of it. Grateful thanks are extended to all Organization Chairpersons, at all levels, for your dedications and for sharing your gifts. May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, ready to protect and guide you in all of your endeavours!

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Manitoba Provincial Council



ORGANIZATION

DATE March, 2018

Communique #4

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call

TO: Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils)
Diocesan Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Organization (for information)
FROM: Janet Brunger, Provincial Chairperson of Organization

We have now closed the book on February, and welcomed March; and it appears that March has come in like a lamb. In reflecting on this analogy, I am drawn to the many references in Scripture of lambs, and particularly during this season of Lent, when we are called to open ourselves to the Lord and the many gifts He offers to us; we are encouraged to be trusting and to give of ourselves without reservations. This Lenten season, let us strive to be welcoming, gracious, tolerant and kind, to oppress any negativity or short-sightedness that may be within us. And then, let us welcome Easter and all that it holds with joy and a new-found tolerance and respect for those in need of our support.

Annual Reports

Parishes Council chairpersons' online annual reports are now a distant (and hopefully a fond) memory, National office is now compiling all of this information, and it is scheduled to be sent to the dioceses in late February. This means that there will be a delay in diocesan and provincial chairpersons' completion of their written reports this year.

Therefore, the adjusted deadlines for this year are:

Diocesan Chairpersons to Diocesan President & Provincial Chairpersons - March 15, 2018

Diocesan Presidents to Provincial President - March 31, 2018

Provincial Chairpersons to Provincial President & National Chairpersons - March 31, 2018

Provincial Presidents to National President & National Office - April 15, 2018

National Chairpersons to National President & National Office - April 15, 2018

National President to National Office April 30, 2018

Remember to refer to the guidelines outlined on pages 66 & 67 of the *National Manual of Policy & Procedure* for more information on completing your Annual Report. Please be mindful that Secretaries and Treasurers also are now required to give an annual report, in addition to their financial statement and report of donations – this is new, so if you're a Secretary or a Treasurer, these are the new requirements. And finally, for all Diocesan Executive, (Organization Chairpersons take note and pass this info on) the *National Manual of Policy & Procedure* contains excellent guidelines for giving oral reports at Conventions – check out page 85 for more information.

Recruit members and maintain membership

At the Parish Level: in my last Communique, I offered some tips and ideas on recruiting new members – were you able to make use of any of it? Was it useful? The goal is to use whatever resources you have to “toot your own horn” – show the rest of the Parish that this is an active, vibrant organization that everyone would want to be a part

of! Let potential recruits know that they are welcome and maybe they can't take an executive position right now due to other commitments, but however small their contribution, it will be welcomed and appreciated. Invite ideas and comments – everyone brings some skills and talents, and if you can manage to work that into your CWL, it will reap benefits down the road.

Leadership development

Catch the Fire! and *S'Mores* workshops are available to any Council; it's recommended that you might like to join with another Council in your area to present to your members. Funding assistance to host one of these workshops is available through National Office League Development Fund to help offset the costs of putting on a workshop – I encourage you to check into this possibility. Gift yourself and your Council with a workshop – they're so valuable, and well worth the investment of 5 or 6 hours! Our facilitators for both of these workshops are ready and willing to go anywhere in the province and are waiting for your call!

May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, protecting and guiding you!

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Manitoba Provincial Council**



ORGANIZATION

DATE November, 2018

Communique #5

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call

TO: Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils)
Diocesan Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Organization (for information)
FROM: Janet Brunger, Provincial Chairperson of Organization

We experienced a very rapid change in seasons, and for a while, I thought we had skipped the season of autumn, going from summer right into winter! However, the weather pattern appears to have stabilized for the time being, and we hope and pray that the harvest can be brought in, and the fall work wrapped up before winter hits in earnest. We often wonder how we will manage our way through a challenge, but somehow, Our Lord, in His infinite wisdom, always provides, and leaves us realizing that it was actually us that were short on faith and trust.

Many thanks to all those Councils who completed the survey I sent out in September – your efforts were greatly appreciated, and your responses were thoughtful and well communicated. We are currently evaluating the responses and will soon determine our response to your comments.

Recruit members and maintain membership

First, some breaking OLD news – our membership numbers are declining. What do we plan to do about this? Now for the breaking NEW news – your Council will be: -

1. Hosting a prospective membership coffee & cookie drive
2. Hosting a get-to-know-you craft or line dancing evening
3. Offering a join-up reward to all new members
4. Other...?

Remember, personal, face-to-face invitations still do work the best. Always be friendly and welcoming, and try to communicate through tone of voice and body language that they are welcomed and valued. Try to demonstrate that you are a happy, vibrant team, enjoy each other's company and do fun things together; watch how others will be drawn to you and want to be a part of this organization!

In the area of maintaining membership, does your Council issue Years-of-Service Pins? Maple Leaf Pins for "outstanding and exceptional service to the League"? Certificates of Merit? Recognition in your Council's newsletter? These are all valuable tools to let our members know that we appreciate and value them. I encourage you to utilize these resources.

Annual Reports

You will very soon be receiving your notice that online annual reporting for 2018 is ready to receive your reports. The deadline for annual reporting is December 15th for Parish Council Chairpersons and Executive – including Presidents,

secretaries, treasurers and past presidents. Treasurers, please check with your Diocesan counterparts for the deadline to remit monies due, as that date is likely earlier than December 15th.

Diocesan Chairpersons – your reports are due on February 15th. Please ensure that when doing your annual reports, you would have to use the data (statistics) collated by National Office as a result of the Parish online reporting.

Councils are encouraged to work together and support each other for Annual Reporting, and if anyone does not have access to a computer or the computer skills to do their annual report, they have several options available to them;

- Ask another member of your Executive for assistance
- Ask a family member for help (does not have to be a CWL member)
- Computer services are available for use at your local library

Although we are advised by National Office that only 51% of our Councils participated in online annual reporting, it's interesting to note that out of 47 Councils in Manitoba, 33 reported that they had participated in online annual reporting, which works out to 70%!!! In addition, there are Councils out there that we know would have participated in online annual reporting, but did not, for some reason, respond to our survey. We just may have a discrepancy here....

Leadership development

We currently have one Council express an interest in hosting a *Catch the Fire!* workshop. Once they nail down a date and secure League Development Funding, the word can go out to all Councils interested in attending. Both *Catch the Fire!* and *S'More's* are valuable tools for both leadership and recruitment – I urge you to consider hosting and/or participating in one or both of these workshops. We have facilitators for both of these workshops right here in Manitoba, and we are ready and willing to travel to your area – please don't hesitate to call on us!

May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, protecting and guiding you!

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Manitoba Provincial Council



ORGANIZATION

DATE February, 2019

Communique # 6

Care for our Common Home

TO: Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils)
Diocesan Chairpersons of Organization
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Organization (for information)
FROM: Janet Brunger, Provincial Chairperson of Organization

Already at the middle of February, we reflect on the winter we've been experiencing, the cold, the snow, the long nights, and while winter does have its benefits, personally, I'm ready to welcome March, sunshine and warmth, and longer days. Wrap this in with the onset of the season of Lent, followed by Easter, and I think of darkness into light; we cannot truly experience light until we've travelled darkness (Psalm 23). I'm personally looking forward to Lent, as that's my opportunity to hit "reset" on my spiritual life; my time for prayer, my time for reflection, and my time for meditation. This quiet time allows me to gain perspective, and to follow direction that Our Lord so willingly provides, but we don't always take the time to seek and follow. I pray that all of you, also, may experience all of the blessings of this season of Lent, and following that, the joys of the Risen Lord!

One of the high points during a long winter is our Day of Celebration in February, and in addition to an amazing day, I thoroughly enjoyed meeting, greeting and talking to so many of you over that day. Seeing so many smiling faces makes it truly worthwhile getting out on a cold February morning! My thanks to the ladies from St. Ed's for all of your hard work to ensure a great experience for the rest of us!

Recruit members and maintain membership

To Parish Councils - in my last Communique, I offered some tips and ideas on recruiting new members – were you able to make use of any of it? Did any of it stimulate a discussion in your Council as to what might or might not work for you? The goal is to use whatever resources you have to increase visibility – show the rest of the Parish that this is an active, vibrant organization that everyone would want to be a part of! Let potential and new recruits know that they are welcome and maybe they can't take an executive position right now due to other commitments, but however small their contribution, it will be welcomed and appreciated. Invite ideas and comments – everyone brings some skills and talents, and if you can manage to work that into your CWL, it will reap benefits down the road. In addition, if you are welcoming a member into your midst who is transferring in from another Council anywhere in Canada, the Transfer of Membership forms are now available online – remember to check it out.

In the area of maintaining membership, does your Council issue Years-of-Service Pins, Maple Leaf Pins or Certificates of Merit? Recognition in your Council's newsletter? Many Councils hold a spring tea or other event – can some of these awards be incorporated into these occasions? These are all valuable tools to let our members know that we appreciate and value them. I encourage you to utilize all of these resources, not only to recognize and reward our dedicated members, but also to increase our visibility within the Parish community.

Annual Reports

Parish Council reporting numbers are increasing – congratulations! Your efforts are noted and very much appreciated! Annual reports are so very important to all levels of the League, and while there are still some hiccups and bumps to be worked out, with everyone's patience, we'll all get there!

Leadership development

We are pleased to announce that St. Viator's in Dauphin will be hosting a *Catch the Fire!* workshop on Saturday, March 23rd! If anyone from your council is interested in attending, please contact either the ladies from Dauphin, or myself, so that they can prepare for appropriate numbers. Both *Catch the Fire!* and *S'More's* are valuable tools for both leadership and recruitment, and if you have already attended *Catch the Fire!*, I encourage you to consider hosting a *S'More's* workshop. Funding assistance is available through National's League Development Fund, and both of these workshops are valuable tools that you can use in your own Council. You've been asking – here's a workable solution!

May Our Lady of Good Counsel be always at your side, protecting and guiding you!