

The Catholic Women's League of Canada Manitoba Provincial Council Spiritual Development		
February 2020		Communiqué 3
<i>Care for Our Common Home</i>		
TO:	Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils) Diocesan Chairpersons of Spiritual Development	
CC:	Provincial Executive (for information)	
CC:	National Chairperson of Spiritual Development (for information)	
FROM:	Con Marks, Provincial Chairperson of Spiritual Development	

“Prayer is good when accompanied by fasting, almsgiving, and righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than much with wrongdoing. It is better to give alms than to treasure up gold.” Tobit 12:8

On Ash Wednesday we began our Lenten journey. We have 40 days to prepare ourselves for Easter and Christ’s resurrection. We are encouraged to pray more, fast and give alms to those in need. In order to prepare myself I use “The Year in Our Church from Loyola Press” as one source of information and inspiration.

I found that there are eight ways to pray:

1. Make your abstinence a prayer-in-action.
2. Renew yourself through personal reflective prayer.
3. Pray the Stations of the Cross.
4. Meditate on Holy Scripture with Lectio Divina.
5. Reflect deeper on your liturgical prayer.
6. Join or start a prayer group.
7. Pray with children or as a family.
8. Start a practice of daily prayer that will last after Lent.

We are also encouraged to pray for souls in purgatory. I am including **The Chaplet of the Holy Souls** which can be prayed using the rosary:

1. Sign of the Cross.
2. The Apostle's Creed
3. Our Father (x1)
4. Hail Mary (x3)
5. Glory be (x1)
6. On the large beads, pray: **"O Holy Souls draw the fire of God's Love into my soul, to reveal Jesus crucified in me here on earth, rather than hereafter in Purgatory."**

7. On the small beads, pray: "**Crucified Lord Jesus, have mercy on the souls in Purgatory.**"
8. When completed all (5) Five decades, pray **Glory be** (x3).

Prayer of Saint Gertrude the Great for the Holy Souls in Purgatory

A prayer which would release many souls from Purgatory each time it is recited.

O Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere - for sinners in the Universal Church, for those in my own home and for those within my family. Amen.

If you are looking for a good cause to donate to, we are asked to continue our support of Catholic Missions in Canada (CMIC) per National Chairperson of Spiritual Development Shari Guinta's January communique. "These missions are incredibly necessary and in need of assistance and prayers. I ask you to encourage councils to contribute generously to the national voluntary fund for CMIC. All proceeds received up to June 30, 2020 will be released in Montreal at the annual national convention in August." Please use this link to read her entire communique:

<https://cwl.ca/communique-5-spiritual-development/>

May your Lenten journey open your heart more fully to Jesus' saving grace.

The Catholic Women's League of Canada Manitoba Provincial Council Spiritual Development		
November 2019		Communiqué 2
<i>Care for Our Common Home</i>		
TO:	Diocesan Presidents (for information and forwarding to Parish Councils) Diocesan Chairpersons of Spiritual Development	
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Care for Our Common Home includes caring for self. “We care for our hearts, our minds, our souls,” as I stated in my first communique. In the continuum of life we are conceived, born, experience stages of growth and development from childhood to adulthood with our eventual death. As Catholics we believe that we pass from this world into that of our heavenly Father who welcomes us with open arms.

I’ve been experiencing one of life’s milestones...that of dying...of course not my death but the recent passing of my brother. As an ICU nurse I have had lots of exposure to death in its many forms. I’ve experienced my own family deaths and been present for a number of them but my brother’s death bothers me in a much different way. Somewhere along his travels in this earthly life my brother lost his faith. He was baptised, had his first confession and first communion, was confirmed...he even served as an altar boy. So *where* did his faith go?? *When* did his faith go?? I can’t answer that. What concerns me now is what happens to his soul? According to Google “The Catholic conception of the afterlife teaches that after the body dies, the soul is judged, the righteous and free of sin enter Heaven. However, those who die in unrepented mortal sin go to hell.” and “Purgatory, the condition, process, or place of purification or temporary punishment in which, according to medieval Christian and Roman Catholic belief, the souls of those who die in a state of grace are made ready for heaven.”

I believe that God loves us and forgives us because we are weak and prone to making not the wisest of choices at times during our lives. I pray that in the dark when my brother was alone and on the verge of passing he asked God for forgiveness of his transgressions. I hope to see my brother again.

This leads on to care of self. What can we do to nourish our souls? Of course there’s prayer which many find *Lectio Divinia* in particular very helpful. Here is a link to “*Lectio Divina: A Step-by-Step Guide*” by Fr. Dennis Mancuso <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJpT1pLRcKQ>

The Sacrament of Reconciliation can be so up-lifting when you are carrying such awful things in your heart. Celebrating Eucharist every Sunday and truly being present while participating inspires us weekly. Of course you can think of the many things you do in your daily lives which celebrate God and His goodness...taking care of the vulnerable and unfortunate, sharing your many gifts and talents for the good of others, giving of your most valuable time, simply having patience with others because the line in the grocery store, at the traffic intersection, at the entrance to a football game, etc. is moving slowly. In short, your entire day from sunup to sundown can be about doing for God. I feel that a good deed is more rewarding for me than for the recipient. They may be very grateful for what you did if it was done in front of them (think paying the few dollars they are short for their groceries) or even if they don't see it (donating to charities) but I personally find that I receive so much more...my heart is bursting with love, I feel a lightness in my step...you get the picture.

There are so many ways in way you can enrich your prayer life, bible study, prayer groups, various programs, retreats, adoration. Look around and find something that speaks to you. Make time in your busy day to give to God because He gives us so much more in return.

"We become what we love and who we love shapes what we become."

Clare of Assisi

The Catholic Women's League of Canada Manitoba Provincial Council Spiritual Development		
August 2019		Communiqué 1
<i>Care For Our Common Home</i>		
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I love our national theme! When you are caring for your common home, you can encompass so much. We care for our hearts, our minds, our souls, where we live as people of God, how we take care of the gifts He has given us.

Our hearts let us know if what we are doing is a right fit for us. Is it right or is it wrong? If it's right we continue doing what we have been doing but if it's not, if it doesn't make you feel right, we have the opportunity to change this behaviour. As people of God we have the opportunity to wipe the slate (our souls) clean by attending the sacrament of reconciliation and start over on a new path. Doing so helps our hearts, minds and souls. This is an inward focus. No one else can see innermost you but God.

An outward focus would be how we care for others and our world in all its glory. Caring for the poor and the marginalized is of utmost importance. Caring for our world is also a concern. Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* contains words of wisdom that can guide us on the right path if we are unsure. I personally have only looked at bits and pieces of this document. Here is the link: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html I also found a summary of *Laudato Si'* which can be used as a guide if you are searching for something in particular. This link is a summary for bishops: <https://www.catholic.org.au/commission-documents/bishops-commission-for-justice-ecology-and-development/laudato-si/1711-encyclical-summary/file>

At national convention, keynote speaker Sr. Dorothy Ederer, a Grand Rapids Dominican sister and Catholic chaplain at Holy Cross Services, presented "What is our Common Home? We care for our homeland, our homes, our hearts." She kept repeating trust in God. She did and was never let down. She also asked God what she was supposed to do and to guide her. Her life has been a series of tasks put before her and she fulfilled them moving from one to another as she was led. She was very inspirational and moved our hearts by giving us glimpses of her life's journey.

“God, who calls us to generous commitment and to give him our all, offers us the light and the strength needed to continue on our way. In the heart of this world, the Lord of life, who loves us so much, is always present. He does not abandon us, he does not leave us alone, for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. *Praise be to him!*” *Laudato Si’ paragraph 245 Pope Francis*

I leave you with two prayers from Pope Francis...

A prayer for our earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.

A Christian prayer in union with creation

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.

They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,
through you all things were made.

You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,
you became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.

Today you are alive in every creature
in your risen glory.

Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light
you guide this world towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You also dwell in our hearts
and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!
Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.
God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.