

VANCOUVER DIOCESAN CWL NEWSLETTER - *September 2026*

Welcome back!

We hope that you had a restful summer break and are ready for a fruitful year ahead! Sit back with a cup of coffee and enjoy the newsletter.



Faith, Social Justice, Service

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September General Meeting

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend our upcoming diocesan general meeting on Saturday, Sept. 19th at St. Joseph the Worker in Richmond (4451 Williams Road). We will begin with Mass at 9 AM, followed by refreshments and then our business meeting. The diocesan executive team has been working hard to put together an engaging meeting for you. Thank you in advance to St. Joseph the Worker for hosting us and for region 6 in providing the refreshments. We look forward to seeing you there!

Parish Council Election Info

Past Presidents - is your council preparing for an election this fall?

Councils should be conducting elections every two years giving members an opportunity to serve and get involved at the parish level. As past president, it is my honour to assist councils in any way to create a smooth and successful election.

Important Note: In the fall, National Past President, Shari Guinta will be offering a webinar on the election process. Check the national website at cwl.ca regularly for an announcement. I am looking forward to participating!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at pastpresident@vancouvercwl.ca.

- Marilyn Martin

National Website

Have you checked out the national website recently - cwl.ca? There are photos of the recent national convention in Halifax, inspiring stories, prayer reflections, testimonial videos and so much more. You will need your membership ID number to access some of the website. Contact your parish council Vice-President for help if you don't have it handy.

IMPORTANT DATES & REMINDERS

Sept. 19 - Diocesan General Meeting - St. Joseph the Worker, Richmond starting with Mass at 9 AM

CONTACT INFO

Laura Wilson - Diocesan Secretary -
laurawilson@shaw.ca

Invitation to Provincial Convention 2027

Check out the amazing video that Patricia Macdonald put together inviting members from across the province to attend the next provincial convention next June in Abbotsford. This video was shown at the provincial convention in June 2026 in Sidney, B.C.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Mp9V6RBhutSvhv2t4zh8AG2MrWObkAcB/view?usp=drivesdk>

Life Member News

By Sharon Ciebin, Life Member Liaison



A Big Thank You to Everyone Who Participated!

The Life Member Knowledge Contest in July was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate and send in their answers. It was wonderful to see such great enthusiasm!

I am pleased to announce our July winners:

Christine Drake - Our Lady of the Assumption, Port Coquitlam

Betty Rae - Church of the Assumption, Powell River

Congratulations to both of you! Each winner received a copy of *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection.

This Month's Challenge: Can You Match the Photos?

As promised, we have a fun photo contest for you this month!

Below, you will find photos of the eight diocesan Life Members, along with seven photos from childhood. Your challenge is to see if you can match the childhood photos with the correct Life Member.

How to Enter

This contest is open to all members, so everyone is welcome to join in the fun!

Send your answers to sharon.ciebin1@gmail.com.

The member who responds first and the member with the most correct answers will each have a chance to win a prize. Good luck to everyone!

By participating, members agree to have their names and photos published in a future newsletter if they are selected as winners.



1. *Pat Battensby*



2. *Marianna Caldwell*



3. *Sharon Ciebin*



4. *Pat Deppiesse*



5. *Barb Dowding*



6. *Gisela Montague*



7. *Evelyn Rigby*



8. *Angelina Stiglich*



Baby A



Baby B



Baby C



Baby D



Baby E



Baby F



Baby G

Canadian Catholic News Update

A couple of years ago, you generously helped Canadian Catholic News launch our first in-person Catholic journalism seminar. I'm happy to report that *God in the City* took place last August in Toronto and was an inspiring success.

[Here is a short video](#) showing what your support made possible. It's not a professional production, just a simple look back at the week so you can see the impact of your generosity and the wonderful people whose lives were touched by it. Please feel free to share it with anyone who might enjoy seeing the fruit of your donation.

If you'd like to see some of the articles that were produced, you can read them [here](#).

We're excited to be offering the seminar again next month. *God in the City* returns to Toronto even larger than last year's, with students coming from across Canada, the United States and Puerto Rico.

Thank you again for helping us get this initiative off the ground. We couldn't have done it without you, and I'll keep you updated.

In Christ,



Canadian Catholic News

Paul Schratz
Director of Outreach

pschratz@canadiancatholicnews.ca
604-505-9411
canadiancatholicnews.ca

Deadline Announcement

Parish councils should note that the deadline to submit amendments to our Constitution and Bylaws is **November 1st** in order to allow the diocesan executive to plan the upcoming convention agenda accordingly. Thank you for making note of this deadline.

Called to Catechize by the Way We Live – Laura Carandang

As September arrives, many of us return to familiar routines. Parish councils gather again, ministries resume, and another year of faith and service begins. It is a season of new beginnings—but before we ask *what* we are called to do, perhaps we should first ask *who* we are called to be.

Pope Leo has invited the Church to renew its commitment to catechesis. We often associate catechesis with classrooms and formal faith formation, but every baptized person shares in the mission of handing on the faith. As members of the Catholic Women's League, we are catechists not only through what we teach, but through the witness of our lives.

Pope St. Paul VI reminded us in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that people listen more readily to witnesses than to teachers. Our families, fellow parishioners, neighbours, and communities encounter Christ through the way we speak, serve, forgive, listen, pray, and love.

That witness begins with relationship. Before Jesus sent the disciples out to proclaim the Gospel, He first called them "to be with him" (Mark 3:14). Our service bears fruit when it flows from prayer and from hearts continually being formed by Christ.

The Catholic Women's League has long understood that faith and service belong together. We pray, learn, advocate, accompany, and serve—not simply because there is work to be done, but because Christ has first loved us. Every meeting, parish project, conversation after Mass, visit to someone who is lonely, or quiet act of kindness can become an opportunity for another person to encounter Christ.

As we begin this new ministry year, perhaps we might carry one simple prayer:

"Lord, let someone encounter You through me today."

When we begin there, catechesis becomes more than a program; it becomes a way of life.

Faith in Conversation

This year, I invite councils to consider setting aside **10-15 minutes at a meeting to pray and reflect together** on the monthly Faith reflection. It does not need to be complicated. Read the reflection aloud, allow a moment of silence, and invite members to share as they feel comfortable. Listen to one another without discussion or debate, trusting that the Holy Spirit can speak through each person's experience.

For September, consider:

- **Where have I encountered Christ through the witness of another person recently?**
- **How is God inviting me to be a living witness this year?**
- **What is one way our council can help others encounter Christ through our service?**

As you finish, pause together and ask: **What invitation from the Holy Spirit did we hear today?**

Let us pray:

Loving God, form us as disciples and witnesses of your Son. Deepen our faith and open our hearts to one another. May our words, actions, and service reveal Christ to those we encounter. Guide our councils by your Holy Spirit, that together we may grow in faith and become joyful instruments of your love and peace. Amen.

National Convention in Halifax– Aug. 9-13



Betty Colaneri, our national president, speaking at the convention. She is an engaging, humorous and inspiring speaker.



Inspiration Corner

One day, a man went to visit an older friend known for his wisdom. The moment he sat down, he began complaining.

"Everything in my life seems to be going wrong," he said. "I'm surrounded by jealous, difficult people. Someone is always criticizing me, disappointing me, or ruining my mood. I feel like all I see around me is negativity. What am I supposed to do?"

The old man listened without interrupting. Then he looked around the room and said, "Take a good look around and try to remember everything in this room that is brown."

The man thought it was a strange request, but he did as he was told. He studied the wooden table, the bookshelf, a leather chair, picture frames, and several other brown objects. There were plenty of them, so the task seemed easy.

After a minute, the old man said, "Good. Now close your eyes and tell me everything in the room that is blue."

The man frowned.

"Blue? I don't know. I didn't notice anything blue. You told me to look for brown things, so that's what I was paying attention to."

The old man smiled. "Open your eyes and look again."

The man did—and suddenly he noticed a blue vase on the shelf, a blue book on the table, a blue pattern on a pillow, a painting with a bright blue sky, and several other things he had completely overlooked.

"There's actually quite a lot of blue in here," he admitted.

"Exactly," the old man replied. "The blue things were here the entire time. You simply didn't see them because your mind had been instructed to search for something else."

Then his expression became more serious.

"Life works much the same way. If you constantly look for rude people, betrayal, unfairness, mistakes, and reasons to be disappointed, you will always find them. And the more you focus on those things, the more they will begin to feel like the whole world."

He continued, "When you train yourself to notice only what is wrong with people, their flaws become larger in your mind and their good qualities slowly disappear from view. Soon it starts to seem as though everyone is selfish, dishonest, or difficult—not necessarily because that is true, but because that is what you have taught yourself to notice."

The man sat quietly, thinking.

"This doesn't mean you should ignore real problems or pretend harmful behavior is acceptable," the old man added. "But don't allow what is wrong to become the only thing you can see. Look for kindness too. Notice loyalty, effort, generosity, humor, beauty, and the people who quietly make life better without asking for recognition."

Then he smiled and said, "Whatever you repeatedly search for, your mind becomes very good at finding."

So be careful what you teach yourself to notice.

If you spend your days looking only for what is broken, the world will eventually seem like a very dark place. But if you also make room to notice what is good, decent, and beautiful, you may discover that much of it was there all along—you simply weren't looking for it.

Diocesan Executive Retreat – Aug 28-30





The diocesan executive team recently gathered for a weekend of spiritual reflection, business meetings, and planning for the upcoming year. We had time to get to know each other better and share many laughs. A special thank you to Sherray for being our chef and to Gisela for presenting a workshop on writing communiques and oral reports.

**THE VANCOUVER DIOCESAN COUNCIL,
CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE**



Invites You to Share Your Ideas for Upcoming Workshops!

**Your Voice Matters –
Help Us Plan!**

**We appreciate all upcoming
workshop ideas!**

Pour your enthusiasm for our faith forward with
participation as part of the building of the Catholic
Women's League -
Archdiocese of Vancouver.

Contact us at: secretary@vancouvercwl.ca

**Join us in shaping meaningful,
engaging gatherings.**

Does Your Council Use Social Media?



Does Your Council Follow Vancouver Diocesan on Social Media - if so which platform?

How comfortable are your members on Social Media?



@Vancouver Diocesan CWL



vancouvercwl.ca



@vancouverdiocesancwl



Private group Vancouver Diocesan
CWL Group

We would love to hear from you!



Let's Talk Social Media