



Care for our

Common Home

2019 ANNUAL REPORTS

Antigonish Diocesan CWL Council

Distributed April 25th, 2020

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Please Note: All reports are intended to be shared with parish Council Chairs

The Catholic Women's League of Canada Antigonish Diocesan Council

President

Annual Report: 2019

of councils reporting: 27 of 40

Sincere thanks to the 27 Parish Presidents who completed the annual reports (67.5% participated)

All 27 councils reported that they have a President chair.

Of these Presidents 20 held this position in the past, and 7 are new.

13 have been League members for over 25 years, and 5 are fairly new with 6 to 10 years of League membership. Age groups for these presidents are: 65-74 (15), 55-64 (6), 45-54 (3) and 75-84 (3)

The top 4 resources reported as being used for sources of information are:

The League Magazine (24), Diocesan Newsletters (21), Parish Bulletins (21) and National Communiqués (20).

Close to 90% of Parish Councils have acted on the League theme "Care for Our Common Home"; that is awesome!! They reported holding meetings, covering materials under various standing committee chairs, newsletters and inviting guest speakers.

The top resources being used by Presidents to help preside over meetings are: Council P&P (19), Constitution & Bylaws (18), Roberts Rules of Order (16), Executive Handbook (14) and National P&P (11). Regarding Council P&P manuals, 14 do not have one specific to their council, and 4 expressed that assistance to create one would be welcomed (*let Diocesan know, if you want help, there is no way for us to know which councils requested help*). Some of the New Policies Developed that were mentioned in the survey were: Paying dues for members over 80, financial support for students to attend Stubenville Conference, donations to funerals, hospitals, local fundraisers, gifts for departing Presidents and gifts to Spiritual Advisors along with updating meeting policies.

Almost all Presidents who participated in this survey have read the **Executive Handbook** to help them better understand the duties for all executive chairs. 80% of them felt that this document was a good help. Over 75% of council Presidents provide a summary of events to members about activities the council took part in.

25 of the 27 Presidents who participated in the survey reported they are a signing officer for cheques that are issued. The expenses to attend Diocesan & Provincial Conventions are covered by their council, for most Presidents. 3 reported that they are given financial support to attend National Conventions.

20 Parish Presidents said their Spiritual Advisor is invited to attend the monthly council meeting, 25 feel they are supported by their Spiritual Advisor, and 2 reported that they feel the Spiritual Advisor is too

busy, and not interested enough to attend. Presidents expressed that they feel very well supported by the Past President, current and former executive members, life members, and personal mentors. All positions face challenges, for the President, it is especially difficult when all executive positions are not filled, recruiting and maintaining members (everyone's job in my opinion), addressing issues in a timely fashion, having enough time to get the work done, and getting new people to help with events and projects. Councils with aging members struggle to do what they used to do, and with changing the way they do things. It appears that the biggest challenges filling out the online 2019-year end survey were accessing the survey, getting the link to open and members not being familiar or comfortable with the use of computers, *but they dug in and got it done, together!!*

The top 4 current National priorities that were introduced & discussed were:

Theme "Care for Our Common Home" (23), Removing Summer Job Program Attestation (19), Rights of the Pre-Born (15) and Medical Assistance in Dying, Palliative/Hospice Care also (15)

Councils are VERY active and are WILLING to help whenever they can in their church, community, Diocese, Province, Country, and entire world. Many councils are participating in strategic planning surveys, some support expectant mothers, help Monastery Retreat Centre and Renewal Centers. Councils strive to keep informed about Health Care Issues and work tirelessly to promote the League with membership drives. Most recognize members with service pins, acknowledging years of dedicated service and certificate of Merit presentations for outstanding leadership and special projects.

Most councils continue to discuss current and past resolutions, human trafficking, pornography and share ways to "*Care for Our Common Home*". One council reported that they installed AED's (defibrillators) in their church & hall. All councils hold fundraising events and support charity, hospital, parish and community fundraisers.

The "**most proud**" section of the survey was the best!! Presidents expresses they are supported, that members work very well together, and that the CWL is a "force" in the parish for change and improvements! Other words that "stood out" were family, friendship, community work, co-operation and always there to help, proud to be a member of such a hard-working group of dedicated women!

Final thoughts

WOW, do I ever feel proud to be part of such an amazing group of Presidents! I must admit, reviewing and summarizing the survey results was a lot of work, but work that was well worth it!! It is amazing how councils, big and small, young and old, work together, for God and Canada. We are all working on projects and events that are changing the lives of so many people!! Being a member of the Catholic Women's League of Canada has been life changing for me!! Belonging to this organization is a Gift, one that should be shared and celebrated. I look forward to meeting, working/caring together, and sharing our love of the League, with each of you. Let us pray for courage, to face the future with confidence, and to be ready, willing and able to embrace the changes, that are needed, for the League to continue for the next 100 years!! Our Lady of Good Council ~ Pray For Us!

This concludes my report.

Janice MacDougall, President, Antigonish Diocesan CWL Council

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Past President

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 17

I would like to thank all the Past Presidents for filling out their Annual Reports. Also a thank you to the Presidents who do not have Past Presidents, and filled out the reports.

I was very pleased with 17 out of 40 councils reporting their activities over the past year.

It is very encouraging to see that many of the ladies have been members for over 25 years, attending all the meetings and events; and, called upon for advice. Their presidents feel supported and encouraged by their help.

Most Past Presidents are responsible for the archives in their councils, and records are stored in the church or hall, and they have access to their Charter. Methods of storing used by the councils include: photo albums, filing cabinets, scrapbooks, memory sticks, banker boxes, DVD's, and CD's. Many of the councils keep their Annual Reports for 5 – 8 years, and the Books of Life are kept indefinitely. The financial information is stored for 5 – 8 years; lists of past executives are kept indefinitely, along with membership renewal data. Minutes of executive meetings are not kept. Minutes of the General Meetings are kept indefinitely, as are records of pin and award recipients. The reports of Chairs are not usually kept, nor do councils have a History Book. The Years of Service of Members are kept indefinitely; and, the archives are reviewed as needed.

All councils have labelled photo albums; a copy of the Constitution & Bylaws, referred to several times a year; the National Manual of Policy & Procedure, referenced a few times per year,

Half the councils have their own Manual of Policy and Procedure, updated whenever a policy is changed.

The Past Presidents are very engaged with their council activities including:

Organizing fundraisers and charity events; organizing funeral lunches; representing their council at conventions; chairing the nominations and elections committee; filling the role of a vacant position; organizing social events; promoting their council in the parish and community; chairing executive and general meetings; chairing standing committees and taskforces; checking National and Provincial websites for information to share; preparing agendas; preparing newsletters and correspondence; facilitating workshops; and organizing spiritual events.

Half of the Past Presidents supported the implementation of the envisioned future of the League through Planning Strategically 2018-2020, by various means; such as: hosting a day to go over the structural planning; through prayer; offering to be on the survey committee; checking online for updates and informing members of the progress; listening and sharing the vision at conventions; working on the Ad Hoc committee that determined how well the province was working with our current membership.

Some of the greatest successes of the Past Presidents and their councils were: members getting together to sew and knit and give back to their community; organizing funeral teams to work at receptions; a dinner to raise funds; prayer blanket project; getting together with other past presidents of the council to organize the pictures in photo albums; raising money for stain glass windows in the church; community lunch programs; convened a 50th Jubilee celebration for the parish priest; hosting World Day of Prayer; and many other fundraising projects.

Working within a council can have some challenges: recruiting new members; getting members to take chairs; organizing the archives; compiling the council Policy and Procedure; finding a new executive; providing counsel and advise to various convenorships; getting more members to become active in projects; and familiarizing oneself with the responsibilities of Past President. Completing this survey, because many members are not computer literate and prefer to do the work by hand and have great difficulty with on-line surveys.

Our Past Presidents are extremely busy and actively engaged, not only in their councils, but in their communities. We can be very proud of their good work and know CWL is in good hands with dedicated members like this. Thank you for all your hard work. It is truly appreciated.

So ends my report

Cleo Windsor

**Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Spiritual Development

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 17

Seventeen of a possible 40 councils reported for a participation rate of 43%. All reporting councils have a Spiritual Development chair, 65% of these were by appointment and 41% of members in this position have served the League for 25+ years. If we consider the age of members filling this position, 47% of respondents fall in the 65-74 age group and one member is over 85. Only four Spiritual Development chairs are younger than 65.

Our theme "Care for Our Common Home" was reflected on by the majority of councils with some councils preparing prayer services and having a guest speaker. A small number of respondents reported that they hadn't studied the theme.

The majority of councils spend one-third of their time on the spiritual aspect of membership. Councils have organized a variety of liturgies and programs for their councils including: reciting the League Prayer – 94%, deceased member services/funeral honour guard – 82%, stations of the cross/rosary/living rosary – 77%, Masses – 71%, seasonal prayers – 65%, scripture reflection/ World Day of Prayer – 59%, and many others.

In developing their liturgies and programs, chairpersons mostly use the Living with Christ missal, CWL Ceremonies Booklet and CWL Prays Booklet as their go-to resources. Everyday Epiphanies and Homilies of Pope Francis, The Word Among Us, The Holy Bible and a variety of prayers and reflections found on-line are also common among the responses received.

For their own personal growth, 24% of respondents enrolled in lay formation programs such as Alpha, Catholic Prayer Group, and Lay Formation in the Diocese of Antigonish.

The Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel was celebrated with a Mass in 77% of the councils, 35% reported having a luncheon, while 18% watched the CWL televised Mass. The Spiritual Advisor attends meetings most of the time at 41% of the councils, while only 24% reported that he always attends. Councils reporting that their Spiritual Advisor sometimes or never attends were tied at 18%. Members were able to attend Mass either before or after meetings at 7 of the councils.

47% of councils have promoted an awareness of women's place in church and society found in scripture. Members have taken the following leadership roles in the church: parish committee chairperson – 59%, parish pastoral council – 59%, parish finance committee – 53%, parish liturgy committee – 29% and a variety of other diocesan and pastoral committees. I am pleased to report that all CWL councils and their individual members have participated and/or chaired every lay ministry in their parish church during 2019. Our ladies are in the choir, decorate/clean the church, are lectors, Eucharistic ministers, sacristans, ministers of hospitality/ushers, catechists and facilitators. Great job!

Catholic Missions in Canada – 9 councils have a subscription to the magazine and 5 reported supporting Canadian missions financially.

A small number of councils have invited women of other denominations or faiths to joint prayer services, council meetings, social events and as joint speakers. Most of the councils reporting participated in World Day of Prayer and 47% participated in Prayer for Christian Unity.

What is your biggest challenge as chairperson of spiritual development and how do you plan to address it? Some of the responses are:

- New and interesting presentations
- Getting support from members to attend a special event – will encourage members to participate more fully
- Getting members to listen and participate
- No particular challenges; however, trying to engage younger members to participate
- Deciding what topic to speak about and where to get good and interesting information.
- This is a lot of work for one person. I'd set up one chairperson with several members as helpers to take on specific tasks or to work on them together.

What was your biggest challenge in completing this survey?

- No challenge
- I don't have a computer and don't have access to literature that I would need to provide programs for members – questions 31 to 36 were missing
- Opening the email and the survey. I thought it was going to be time consuming and complicated but turns out it was quick and simple.
- Getting in to the survey, initial difficulty with signing on, technology
- A lot does not apply to small councils
- Had problems getting in but National Office helped
- Remembering everything we did during the year.

General comment:

It was noted that Altar Server was not listed as one of the ministries. Also, special events were added: Relic of Padre Pio, Statue of our Lady of the Rosary in parish for two weeks, and participated in Advent mission at our Parish.

CONCLUSION:

It is said that God works in mysterious ways. However, it is no mystery that the members of the Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of Antigonish are very spiritual people. Keep praying. Keep the faith. Keep encouraging younger women to join us as we continue to do God's work to Care for Our Common Home and its people. May our Lady of Good Counsel guide us in our efforts!

Doreen Boudreau
Spiritual Development Chairperson

**Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Organization

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 20

20 Councils completed the report. 16 councils had the position filled; 4 councils- the chair was vacant. Most were filled by election but some were appointed to the position.

Membership:

Members Participation In:

Fundraising: most councils reported that about half of their members assist in fundraising events;

Attend Meetings: 1/3 councils have about 40% of members attend; 1/3 have less, 1/3 have more

Social Events: majority of councils have 40%- 60% attendance, and a few councils have even more, up to 100%

Spiritual Events: most councils have 60% -80% of members attend spiritual events.

Total New Members: 32

Did Not Renew: 14- due to age, ill health, moved from area, or inactive and felt they no longer can participate.

Membership Recruitment: 80% of councils use personal invitation, or parish bulletin. Other methods of recruitment were mass presentations, social events, breakfast or lunch meetings, parish display, priest support; gift members and through parish collection envelopes;

Councils Keep in touch with inactive members: visit, send cards, phone, send invitations to events

Members Recognition: all except one council, presented pins for years of service, Maple Leaf Pin or Bellelle Guerin award. Some councils hold special events to give awards, gifts, new members ceremony

Welcome New Members: introduced and welcomed at meetings; ask to participate at events; some councils give out new member's kit.

Welcome Women of diverse cultures: invite to social events; one council invited women to share an activity from their culture; personal conversation and assisting with their needs (winter clothing, food)

Membership Fees: Half council do it online and other half send manually to national office

How members are informed that membership fees are due: 80% use church bulletin and phone calls. Other methods are CWL envelope in parish envelope box; announce at mass/meetings or email reminder.

Leadership Development:

Diocesan Convention: (75) all councils, except one reported attending diocesan convention

Provincial Convention: (28) half of the councils reported attending provincial convention

National Convention: (5) from 4 councils

National Strategic Planning Sessions (at conventions or separately): most did not, 4 councils participated in planning sessions at conventions.

Members at other levels of the League: 7 councils have members on diocesan or provincial level

90-minute meetings, including Faith Fun Fulfillment: Half of the councils do follow this format however half do not. 2 councils limit meetings to 1-hour, with mass before or after meetings; 2 councils have 2-hour meeting with mostly business discussions /"too much business content".

Life Members: councils with life members reported that they are used infrequently but LMs do readily offer assistance and information when requested

Resource Materials:

All except one council reported that they have league materials: Constitution & Bylaws, Policy & Procedure manual, handbooks for executive. Some also have prayer booklet or download resources from national website.

Most Councils purchase pins, brochures, other league materials for members.

Completing Annual Reports:

Most councils executive meet together to complete the reports, using council minutes, and executive reports. Some distribute the forma and executive complete on their own.

Final Thoughts from members:

Success stories that lead to new members: monthly birthday socials to get to know each other; former member has returned due to retirement and has actively participated in events; casual coffee-craft morning has led to parish women getting to know us and some have become members; Lunch, teas and special dinners are very popular and some parishioners have joined our CWL.

Why do members participate: dedication to what we do; service, enjoyment and obligation/commitment to the League; the feeling of family including love, social activity, fellowship and spirituality; we are a huge part of our parish that keeps our parish functioning. Nowhere else can we meet with women of like interest, all acting with the same intentions, connected through the Church. Spending time with this lovely group is one of the pleasures of belonging to this Council; core group who attend are dedicated; meetings are interesting and short; enjoy keeping up on the league business, supporting social justice and the social aspect.

What do you see as your most desirable asset as a council?

The willingness of our members to work for our council, parish and community. The women themselves, we are like one big happy family. The spiritual and emotional support that we receive from each other is invaluable. Supporting our parish in every aspect we can; most of our members are not interested in provincial or national

Is there a special activity that you engage in that attracts women?

Ladies of the parish are always invited to our parties, annual dinner, and events through the bulletin. Council events include: Epiphany Party; annual Pot Luck Dinner; the Tea and Sale; Prize Bingo; Fall Fair; March Madness event; Annual Christmas Tea & Sale; Annual membership tea with blind auction fundraiser; fashion show.

What is your biggest challenge as president-elect and how do you plan to address it?

- a member for 5 years. I have so much to learn, I am counting on the past presidents to help.
- 4 parishes combined, getting to know each other.
- collecting dues from members who have not paid by year end. We do make calls to remind them of their dues and also advise they can either pay past dues owing or start for the next year.
- President and organization chair as well but we do not want to see our council fold.
- Organization chair but not president-elect. Our council does not have a president-elect, which makes it difficult on the president, for her to step down. If we are able to get someone to take on president, she often has not been organization chair.
- Members are getting older and new members are few.

What was your biggest challenge in completing this survey?

- Getting on to the site was a challenge! The system did not seem to be operating properly. It seemed like every time we saved a page, we lost the report and could not find it
- The reports were too detailed and took too long to complete; we have an aging membership and this format is really not conducive to these members.
- Trying to decide which categories some of our activities fall under
- Many of the executive are not online so they did them on paper, then 1-2 of our members completed the online form for them.
- Not having something exciting to write about
- The deadline for the printed version is quite early.
- Prefer hard copy
- No Issues

Respectfully Submitted, *Julie LeLievre*

The Catholic Women's League of Canada Antigonish Diocesan Council

Education & Health

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 17

Thank you to the chairpersons who took the time to send in their annual reports on the many activities of your councils in 2019. Only eleven of the councils reporting showed a chairperson for Education and Health. Most were previous chairs of this committee, but a few new faces have stepped up for the challenge.

Catholic Education

There is no Catholic teaching in the schools in the Antigonish Diocese, but Religious Education is very well established in the parishes and homes. Chairpersons have become informed of the quality of the Catholic Religion instruction in their communities and have inquired as to how they may support the program. Needs identified within the communities for school improvement were to establish a breakfast and lunch program, field trips, recess supervision, scholarships and bursaries. Two members (1 council) have become involved in the Rites of Christian Initiative program in their parish.

Literacy and Continuing Education

There are no Catholic universities or colleges in our Diocese. Nine of the seventeen councils have a list of scholarships/bursaries available to further educate Catholic women. Fifteen of the seventeen councils provide bursaries/scholarships to high school students and three councils provide for university age. Ten councils contributed to the Coady International Institute. For more information: www.coady.stfx.ca

Wellness and Sickness/Disease

Many members have taken action on resolutions under the Education and Health heading by inviting guest speakers to speak on School Plus program; signed and sent petitions and letters to government representatives.

Many councils have contributed to National Organizations such as Canadian Cancer Society; Relay for Life; Canadian Red Cross; Heart and Stroke Society; Children's Wish Foundation and locally to the VON and local hospitals. National Hospice Palliative Care Day was well represented by the councils reporting. Some held 12 Hours of Prayer inviting other councils to join; prayer services were held at homes and parishes across the diocese; some free will offerings were donated to local Hospice Palliative Care; informative brochures were distributed about Palliative Care; councils welcomed and supported members who wanted to share their experience with Palliative care.

Environment

The CWL Water Pledge Challenge Campaign was very successful. Very creative pledges were submitted by over 2000 members to show how to conserve water and encouraged family members to get involved. People were encouraged to become aware of the future of our environment and not be wasteful and to be conscience of water quality.

Councils have addressed many environmental issues in 2019 by recycling, reducing the use of Styrofoam, reducing water use, eliminating plastic bottles and bags; and composting. Resolutions that interested the councils this year were 2004.07 Water in Use in Canada and 2001.04 Water Quality in Canada.

Genetics

Eight councils rated their knowledge of advantages and disadvantages of technology to alter genes in light of the teaching of the Catholic Church as *good*. The councils with *poor or fair rating* stated more research is needed. Councils are not informed of the current issues in bioethics.

Final thoughts

Antigonish Diocesan Education and Health chairpersons have certainly displayed their Care for the Common Home with all the good work they have shared with their CWL members, families and communities:

- One council organized a Heart & Stroke canvassing in their community
- One member sold fruit cakes and donated the proceeds to the MS Association.
- Three members from one council donated blood using the Partner ID in the Canadian Blood Services Partner. Learn more about this organization: www.blood.ca/joinpartnersforlife
- Four councils celebrated United Nations World Water Day March 22 2019.
- World Union of Catholic Women's Organization promoted an Earth Action Initiative in Sep. 2019. One council held a Cleanup Your Ditches week in support of WUCWO. Read more at www.wucwo.org
- Councils wrote letters of support to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and government officials in relation to Resolution 2006.05 GST Exemption of Funeral Services
- Awareness/discussion and prayers for International Women's Day
- Work on de-prescribing medications
- Made fidget quilts for dementia patients in senior's care facilities
- Attended meeting of concern for closure of ER's and hospitals and doctors leaving Nova Scotia
- Councils supported families in times of bereavement through prayers at the funeral homes, honor guards at funerals, offering receptions after the funeral.
- also provided receptions for Confirmation, First Communion and Alpha

Other worthwhile initiatives were shared, as education & health is a very important purpose in our society. Members should be praised on the use of their Gifts bestowed on them by God, through our Lady of Good Counsel. We appreciate all you do for God and Canada. Keep up the good work! This concludes my report.

Earlene Landry
Education & Health
Antigonish Diocesan Council

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

TREASURER

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 22

TOOLS USED BY COUNCILS TO TRACK RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS:

Check books (22), Bank statements (21), deposit book (17), ledger columnar book (14), receipt books (9), disbursement book, (3), excel spreadsheet (1), Other- computer software (1), credit cards (2), on line banking / statements (1).

OTHER FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS:

Books updated frequently (22), all receipts are retained (22), account books reconciled to bank statements monthly (22), financial statements and account books are retained on file for five years (22), accounts paid by cheque (22), preparing a monthly budget (17), the budgets are presented in the months of January and November, books examined by an independent individual experienced in accounting procedures (12), an accountant (3), experienced bookkeeper (3), Other-CPA (1), councils still receiving cancelled cheques (7).

SIGNING OFFICERS:

Treasurer (22), President (22), Recording Secretary (7), Past-President (3), Corresponding Secretary (2), Vice-President (1), Standing Committee Chair (1), a member of good standing (2), President-Elect (1), two signatures required on all cheques (22).

MEMBERSHIP:

All of the councils were aware of the per capita fees for 2019 (22). The bulk of per capita fees were sent to national in the months of: December, January, February, March and November. The councils collect the bulk of their per capita fees in the months of: December, January, November, February, October and September. All treasurers assist with the collection of per capita fees in their councils.

AVERAGE YEARS AND AVERAGE AGES OF MEMBERS:

Years: More than 25 (6), 6-10 (4), 11-15 (2), 16-20 (2), 21-25 (2), less than five (1), members that held the position of treasurer previously (14).

Ages: 75-84 (2), 65-74 (9), 55-64 (4), 45-54 (1), 25-34 (1), 85 (1).

CHARITABLE DONATIONS BY STANDING COMMITTEES NOT INCLUDING NATIONAL VOLUNTARY FUNDS:

Amount donated to Parishes:	\$55,211.00
Organization:	\$02,373.00
Spiritual Development:	\$07,989.00
Christian Family Life:	\$09,971.00
Community Life	\$10,856.00
Education & Health:	\$12,727.00
Communications:	\$01,759.00

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY FUNDS:

National Bursary Fund:	\$115.00
Catholic Near East Welfare Association:	\$135.00
Euthanasia Prevention Coalition:	\$135.00
Cody International Institute:	\$660.00
Catholic Missions in Canada	\$835.00

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES:

Funeral lunches (14), annual bazaar (10), bake sale (10), lottery/raffle (9), catering (8), tea/luncheon (5), dinner and entertainment (3), silent auction (3), banquet/gala (2), fall supper (2), rummage sale (2), card party (1), craft show (1), fashion show (1), turkey burger sale (1), roast beef dinners (1), Others-exercise programs, Celtic colours concert, Feast day supper, Christmas supper, book sales, selling legion wreaths, mass for shut-ins, mass for all souls.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN COMPLETING THE SURVEY-COUNCILS SHARED:

The majority of the councils found the survey easy to complete. Some had difficulty trying to log in. Organizing and breaking down council donations into categories was a challenge. Not receiving an updated form (National Voluntary Funds) from national office by years end. Everyone should know about their organization's books/a variety of members should hold this position. Some of the councils do informal budgets to assess how much fundraising is needed.

This information was provided by the 22 councils who submitted their year-end reports.

Respectfully Submitted
Kathleen Campbell-Diocesan Treasurer

**Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Christian Family Life

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 15

We have 40 councils in our diocese. Out of those 40, only 15 councils replied to the annual reports. Out of those 15, 13 were filled and the majority of them were appointed and not nominated.

Our committee chairs are between the ages of 35-84 with majority being between 65-74. Most have been members for more than 25 years with only five having served between 6-10 years. Nine of the 15 have held this position previously.

Marriage and Family- We have only a couple councils who offer marriage preparation courses, encounter, and engaged couples weekends.

Although no council celebrate National Family Week, a couple celebrate Mothers, Fathers day and special anniversaries including liturgical celebrations for married couples. Six councils did not participate in any of this.

Sanctity of Life is from beginning to natural end. Some of the events that members have participated in are 40 days for life, chain life, march for life including pro-life walks, masses, and dinners. Less than half donated monies or gifts toward Euthanasia, pro-life, pregnancy and family support services. Most do not have a copy of the pro-life brochure that is available to us from National and only a couple have it available in the church. More than half have written letters to legislators about our resolutions on abortion and euthanasia. We pray regularly for the protection of life.

We wrote to the prime minister and minister of justice, educated members on the importance of protecting the unborn child, raised awareness of the day of prayer and monitored the governments response to this.

Ministry to Youth- We have religious ed programs for the young in our parish. We participate in Girl Guides, NET, Stuebenville, summer camps, and World Youth Day. They are encouraged to participate in ministry including lectors, ushers, choirs, catechists, cleaning and serving at special events.

Ministry to Disabled and Seniors- We bring communion, sent cards, called, visited, provided transportation and prayed for the disabled. We involved them in CWL events and invited the women to join.

Ministry to Widowed, Separated and Divorced- We have arranged memorial services and funeral lunches, provided prayer and send cards. One council have provided brochures “Annulments Today- Merciful and Just” in their parish church.

Vocations- We have adopted and supported seminarians, hosted luncheons for priests offered and participated in prayer for vocations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurena Greencorn

Christian Family Life

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Communications

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 16

As I begin my first annual report for communications, I would like to thank all who took the time to do their year-end reports in your councils. There were only 16 out of a possible 40 councils for 40 % that reported. We are not sure if the councils that did not report don't have a chair or have just not filled their reports.

The League Magazine is an important publication used for all of our CWL members. 50% reported that it was a very good educational tool and 38% reported it was a very good spiritual resource. High on the councils list of articles was "Jesus The Best Communicator" in the winter 2019 edition. A suggestion that was mentioned as something to see in future publications was the need to tell stories of members and councils and celebrate their achievements and address the council's challenges.

In the question on Evangelization the mass for shut-ins is reported by 94% as the media most supported to assist in the mission to evangelize. The National Convention speakers made available for at home viewing on cwl.ca "What is Our Common Home" and "The League of the Future" but they were not viewed by many at all maybe just 25%.

Media newsletters are not being done by many councils 69% said that they do not produce a newsletter. The small percentage that are done are done by either the communication chairs or secretary and are done either annually or quarterly. They find that it is challenging to get them to members because many don't have email and it is too expensive for printing to make hard copies to pass out to everyone.

Under Media to promote the League the councils are encouraged to use the cwl.ca website to keep informed. The communiques are very helpful in doing reports. There are many links attached to the website that give you lots of information. The types of media that has been used to advertise the council's activities and events are the church bulletins, the local media such as radio and the newspaper. Email is used but the use of calling committees is also well used for the members that don't have email.

Resolution 2017.02

Mandatory Age Verification Mechanisms for Adult Pornography pertaining to mechanisms to prevent minors from accessing pornography has not been Acted upon by the majority of the councils.

Resolution 2002.11

Responsible Internet Use for Children when asked if the councils have encouraged the federal government to continue supporting research and development of tools to protect children against offensive content on the Internet 88% said no. On the question have you encouraged members to educate themselves and their families on safe, wise and responsible Internet use 63% said yes.

Strategic Planning Information was not very well covered by the councils. Only 50% shared with their members the information. 75% said they did not cover the information on the national website or the planning information printed in the League magazine with their councils. The majority of the councils are not reciting the Renewal Prayer found on the national website.

As a new Communications Chair I have a lot to learn. I have been learning about the website trying to make sure all new information is updated and all the older content is removed. I attended my first Fall Conference as a member of the diocese executive in October of 2019 which was a great learning experience. I also published my first newsletter with the help of my fellow sisters.

With the Grace of God and the help of my sisters in the League I will continue to grow in this chair and as a CWL member.

Respectfully submitted,

Helena MacLeod, Communications Chair

**Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Community Life

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils Reporting: 18

I received 18 annual reports from councils and of those 15 councils had chairpersons. Thank you to everyone who took time to fill out their reports.

Dignity and Rights:

The majority of councils are aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They show their support for those suffering from homelessness, incarcerated, poverty, human trafficking, bullying, domestic violence and indigenous women. Councils contribute to these minority groups with donations, volunteering, hosting guest speakers and workshops. Four councils have discussed Bill C-262 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and two councils have invited Indigenous Women to be guest speakers and lead workshops. Six councils discussed works of the Kairos Organization.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship:

Less than half of councils are informed about Canada's official immigration and refugee policies. The councils are aware of the understanding needs for the immigrants and refugees in their community. The councils rate their knowledge from fair to very good referring to the availability of employment services, English courses, financial assistance for food and rent, number of immigrant and refugees in their community and country of origin. Councils are very aware of the difference between temporary foreign worker, immigrant and refugee. One council commented on attending a citizenship ceremony. All councils showed great attendance at Remembrance Day services and support wearing the Royal Canadian Legion's poppy. Eight councils reported wearing red on Fridays in support of Canadian troops. Resolution 2016.01 Equal Access to Permanent Resident Status, An Amendment to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act at this time was only addressed by two councils with one council inviting a guest speaker to their meeting.

Social and Economic Justice:

The majority of councils are focusing on the works of organization that are caring for those in need, by providing financial and volunteer support with clothing drives, homeless and domestic abuse shelters, food banks, food hampers, soup kitchens and drop-in centers. Prayerful support was also offered for violence prevention programs, wish foundation, restorative justice programs and single parents' resource centers. Two councils celebrated National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, attending a powwow in their community. Four councils supported organization geared towards assisting Indigenous peoples. Nine councils are aware of programs for restorative justice and prison ministry. Catholic Near East Welfare Association was only supported at this time by 1 council with distributing pamphlets and hosting a guest speaker, also 6 councils made donations towards the organization. A low percentage of councils have attended a workshop or seminar on topics related to social and economic justice.

Developing Countries:

A few councils are aware of the conditions of child labor and economic difficulties in developing countries and urging governments to change structures that put profits before people. A low percentage of councils are aware of the implications of trade laws and practices in the global economy. One council invited a guest to speak on developing nations who lived or visited these countries. Councils offer great support to Chalice, Operation Christmas Child, Samaritans Purse, Save a Family Plan and Canadian Red Cross to name a few.

Human Trafficking:

Human trafficking in Canada, an article published in the Fall 2019 addition of League magazine was discussed at councils' monthly meetings. Comments were made that either members attended a workshop on Human Trafficking or plan to host a workshop and invite other councils.

Comments from Councils:

Councils are very thoughtful financially and supportive in their local communities. They sponsor breakfast programs, food banks and Hamper Program, women's shelter (HUG program). Some reported donating to Cancer centers, nursing homes with fidget blankets, school breakfast programs and clothing closets. One council made over 400 dresses, Dresses for Africa and also support Grandmothers for Grandmothers in Africa. Signed sheets for Water Pledge (Care for our Common Home).

As you can see councils are addressing the concerns for their country and communities. Thank you for submitting your reports. With or without a chairperson, councils are addressing the League activities. It is important to share individual activities with your council so it can be included in the annual reports. Your dedication to the League is reflective in your actions, to fulfill the Care for our Common Home.

Respectfully Submitted:

Wanda Bruckschwaiger

Community Life

Antigonish Diocesan Council

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Secretary

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils Reporting: 21

In most councils one person fills the positions of recording and corresponding secretary. Most have been appointed and most have held the position previously. Ages ranged between 55 and 84 and years of service spanned over 25 years.

Recording Secretaries:

All reported attending both executive and general meetings. All take minutes at meetings and ensure that minutes of the previous meeting are available for review and approval. Nearly all maintain a list of their executive contact information, have a copy of the Handbook for Secretaries from national office, bring the minutes books to all meetings for reference purposes and are aware of the location of their council charter. Most receive written reports from the executive and take roll call at meetings. Just over half are signing officers for their council and assist the president with completing the annual report. Most councils do not have a motions book and most do not distribute an agenda beforehand.

Challenges included learning new skills such as learning to record minutes in a concise manner and keep minutes simple but factual and informative or “getting details down properly”. Older members reported a lack of computer skills, difficulties distributing minutes by email due to incorrect addresses, and a preference for the written format. Another reported the biggest challenge was the need to assume multiple roles on her council executive.

A success story shared by one council was “talking up” interest in attending the national 2020 convention in Montreal and the subsequent fundraising for this.

Corresponding Secretaries:

The majority reported notifying members of up coming meetings and events, most commonly by email, parish bulletin and telephone; otherwise members are notified by other chairs. Most councils have a copy of the CWL Personal Letter Writing Guide from national office. One third send out all occasion cards such as get well cards, sympathy cards, etc.

The biggest challenge reported was gathering information from the membership about members.

Success stories shared: one council distributed 33 sympathy cards, 7 get well cards, 2 thank you cards, 2 prayer cards, 6 all occasion cards and received 22 thank you cards. Another council sent out a total of 60 cards last year. What a testimony! One respondent reported that, through her interactions, the secretary gets to know the membership better.

Four respondents reported the biggest challenges in completing the survey were using the computer, getting to the website, and saving and printing a hard copy of the survey.

I wish to thank all those councils who submitted these annual reports. I encourage more councils to submit annual reports in the future; through these reports we celebrate our accomplishments and share our work with others. Please reach out for help to achieve this.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel bless us and guide us as we continue to use our gifts and talents in service to others.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne McCormick

Secretary, Antigonish Diocesan CWL Council

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Legislation

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting: 9

The Legislation convenorship had an interesting and incredibly busy 2019. The October election (which saw Canadians elect a Liberal minority government), and a tumultuous spring in the House of Commons, seem to have taken time away from some important work that could have been done in Ottawa. That being said, several of our councils were able to act on important federal issues as they arose. They also let politicians in our province know how they felt about issues discussed in the Legislature.

Nine councils reported for 2019. Of these nine councils, only five had a Legislation chairperson. Most of those in the chairperson position had been appointed, rather than elected to the position, and a large percentage had never held the position before.

All members who reported were aware of who their federal, provincial and municipal representatives were, and received mailings from these individuals.

Members have attended public forums, such as election debates, and most appear to be well informed of the issues being discussed by government. Several, though not all, felt well informed regarding bills being monitored nationally. These bills included:

- Bill C-57 an Act to amend the Federal Sustainable Development Act.
- Bill C-75 an Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts.
- Bill C-418 Protection of Freedom of Conscience Act.

Councils reported sending letters or signing petitions concerning several bills. One item acted upon was informing members of parliament of their feelings surrounding the legalization of edible cannabis.

Bills acted on federally include:

- Bill S-206 an Act to amend the Criminal Code (protection of children against standard child-rearing violence). This bill would remove a provision of the Criminal Code (**section 43**) that permits parents to use limited, minor physical force for disciplinary purposes.
- Bill C-21 a secularism law now being applied in Quebec which prevents many government employees from wearing religious symbols. While not a federal bill, this has caused increased controversy and many have called for the federal government to intervene.

Members seemed to feel very well informed around provincial issues and have sent letters to the members of the Legislative Assembly regarding pornography; the Boat Harbor Act; and the effects of the Northern Pulp closure.

Bills acted on provincially include:

- Bill 185 Affordable Hearing Aids for Seniors Act
- Bill 123 An amendment to the Sales Tax Act, which would allow for a GST rebate on funerals.

The biggest hurdle members seemed to face with this convenorship trying to understand the legal and political terms that most government websites use. It can be very difficult to wade through these terms when looking for information. As many were new to this position, they expressed trouble with knowing where to go to find the information they needed to keep their members informed.

I would like to thank all those councils who reported this past year. It was wonderful reading about all the amazing work you have done. Although most councils do not have a chairperson for this committee, councils have done an amazing job of keeping members well informed of the legislative issues that concern the Care of Our Common Home.

This completes my report.

Blessings to you all,

Jolene MacLellan

Antigonish Diocesan Legislation Chair

**The Catholic Women’s League of Canada
Antigonish Diocesan Council**

Resolutions

Annual Report: 2019

of Councils reporting:12

This is my first year as chair and the first time reporting in this manner. This report is formulated and based on information received from 12 out of 40 Parish Councils of the Catholic Women’s League for the Diocese of Antigonish. It is based on the statistical analysis of the Resolutions Committee forwarded to Diocesan from National.

Out of the 12 Councils reporting, 7 had this position filled by appointment and 2 by election. As well 5 of these councils share this chair with Legislation and 2 do not share. Five of the 12 councils still have vacant positions. Hopefully these will be filled in the coming months. Of the 12 reporting councils only 4 reported persons who had previous experience in this chair, 5 recorded no experience at all in this field.

The age of the individuals involved ranged from 18 years to 84, and the number of years in the League ranged from less than 5 years to more than 25 years. Sharing of successes in this Chair is very important. The following was shared – placing a moratorium on the licensing of VLT machines; receiving responses from government officials; follow-up and bringing information re: Bill C21 and in general learning more about the politics of our country.

The challenges of this Chair appear to be common for us all – finding ideas to do a resolution and doing the research; promoting interest in Resolutions; doing workshops at the local level; getting up-to-date information; ensuring letters of support are sent for the resolutions; and lastly but not the least challenging is time. A chair is vital to this committee.

Contact with all levels of government is important. This can be done by writing, telephoning or making an appointment with your representative. The resolution you form after your research will determine to what level of government you make these presentations. Of the 12 Councils, the percentage of contact is as follows:

local	60% by letter, 14% telephone and 13% in person visit,
provincial	60% by letter, 17% telephone and 29% in person visits and
federal	67% by letter, 17% telephone and 29% in person visits.

It is extremely important to attend conferences at all levels. You do not need to go to everyone but you should at least during your tenure as Resolution Chair attend to one of each of the levels. The most important of all the conventions to the Resolution Committee is the Resolution Dialogue. It is held prior to the actual convention at the National level of the League. It is a learning experience you will not forget ever – to be communicating with women from all across our country and being able to express your opinion. It is quite something else. Just as important are the development days and workshops put on by Diocese and Provincial. These are learning experiences for all members.

Communiqués and annual reports are being referred from all levels. From the statistical analysis received it appears more work needs to be done in bringing issues forward. There were only two issues of importance to 2 councils and they were abortion and Canada's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Action on these issues were taken by other councils or levels of the League. Out of the 12 councils reporting only 7 have familiarized themselves with the 2019 resolutions that require action as listed on the website – cwl.ca.

Letters, e-mail and newsletters were written to provincial and/or federal members in support of resolutions that were adopted. As well petitions were signed and forwarded to federal and provincial members in support of adopted resolutions. Letter writing sessions were held to address the issue(s) locally. The Child Pornography petition and the Water Challenge Pledge forum were signed.

As stated at the beginning of my report – the very vital part of this committee is the attendance at conventions – in particular the Resolutions dialogue session before the opening of the National Convention. There is so much knowledge shared by CWL women from all walks of life. If you have the chance please take it and attend.

In closing please let me say that this statistical percentage reporting is not reflective of the work that councils do throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann Callahan
Diocesan Resolutions Chair