



Care for our

Common Home

2021 ANNUAL REPORTS

Antigonish Diocesan CWL Council

May 14th, 2022

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-------|
| President Annual Report | 2-3 |
| Organization Annual Report | 4-5 |
| Past President Annual Report | 6-7 |
| Spiritual Development Annual Report | 8-9 |
| Education & Health Annual Report | 10-11 |
| Treasurer Annual Report | 12 |
| Christian Family Life Annual Report | 14-15 |
| Communications Annual Report | 16 |
| Community Life Annual Report..... | 18-19 |
| Secretary Annual Report | 20 |
| Legislation Annual Report | 22 |
| Resolutions Annual Report | 24 |

Please Note:

All reports are intended to be shared with appropriate parish council chair.

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

President

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 17 of 37

Sincere thanks to the 17 parish presidents who completed the annual reports for 2021.

All of the 17 councils who participated in this survey reported that they have a president chair. A warm welcome to the 7 presidents who are “new” to this role of president and thanks to the 10 presidents who said “yes” again! Thanks to each of you for saying yes, for your service & your dedication!!

- 5 have been League members for over 25 years
- 6 have been League members for 16-20 years
- 2 have 21-25 years of membership in the League
- 4 have 11-15 years of service in the League

Age groups for the 17 presidents who participated in this year's survey are:

- 65-74 (8), 55-64 (5), 45-54 (2) and 75-84 (2)
- None of the 17 presidents who participated in the survey are under 45 or over 85

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

- Diocesan newsletters (16), national communiques (14), provincial website/newsletter (12), *The Canadian League Magazine* (13), national website (13), parish bulletins (7), google searches (3), Canadian Conference Catholic Bishops (1) and Catholic Organization for Life and Family (1)
- Three quarters of the 17 councils have discussed and acted on the League theme “Care for Our Common Home”
- Just over half of the councils focused on Bill C-7, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (MAID-Medical Assistance in Dying)

The top resources being used by presidents to help preside over meetings are:

- *Constitution & Bylaws* (11), *Roberts Rules of Order* (8), *Executive Handbook* (6), Council Policy & Procedure (5), *National Manual of Policy & Procedure* (5), and *Parliamentary Procedure* (2)

15 of the 17 presidents who participated in the survey reported they are a signing officer for cheques that are issued. 11 signed bank documents, 10 reported writing letters within the CWL, 4 wrote letters outside of CWL, and 3 reported signing petitions.

Attendance of the spiritual advisor at council meetings varied: monthly (7), rarely (6), annually (2), weekly (1) and never (1). Support and guidance from the parish spiritual advisor was reported by 16 of the 17 presidents who completed the survey.

When asked if the national theme and or logo were helpful, 13 replied saying yes and 4 said no. The current practice of changing the national theme every two years was favorable with over 90% of the presidents who responded to this question.

Presidents reported that they represented their councils by attending church functions, sacramental events/special masses, community events, fundraising dinners, World Day of Prayer, conferences and anniversaries. One president met with her local politician, attended a Pro Life event and a retreat. Councils slowly, but surely, got back in the swing of things by hosting funeral lunches, fundraising, providing scholarships/bursaries, visiting members, holding their annual tea and sale/bazaars, holding social events and making donations.

The greatest challenges listed for 2021 were: not having a full executive, feeling overwhelmed, recruiting, keeping members informed and interested, finding time, feeling inexperienced, resistance to change and to new ideas, chairing meetings and delegating duties. Some presidents also struggled with public speaking, lack of confidence, organization skills and too much correspondence. Most presidents shared that they were supported by their sisters in the League in many ways! I believe there has always been, and will always be challenges facing councils.

Now for the “most proud” and “best” section of this survey!! Presidents shared that their members are willing to help and to work together for their parish, community, people in need and the well being of all members. In several councils, it is the dedicated, enthusiastic members and strong core groups that keeping “things” rolling by doing whatever they can. Sisterhood, friendship, spiritual companions, unity, teamwork, setting goals and working towards them are the experiences in most councils. It fills my heart to know that despite the many obstacles that have been placed in our paths, councils have been able to carry on for God and Canada!

Final thoughts! For my third and final year, as diocesan president, I am amazed at the resilience of many council presidents, who despite the pandemic, were able to keep their members updated and informed. It is for sure that technology has been a challenge for some members and councils; but technology was the “glue” that kept us connected and in the know! The world, as we knew it, has been changed. COVID-19 has given us the opportunity to make changes going forward. It is my wish that each council make changes that will help keep their members interested, engaged and active in the League! More than ever the League needs each and every member to work together, in harmony, with compassion, engaged in actions and with love, for all of God’s creations.

Being an active member of the League has many options. Not everyone needs to, or wants to do everything, but I believe that everyone needs and wants to do something! Learn and share, invite and welcome, pray and participate, and most of all, be kind and caring! I look forward to continuing to “*Care for Our Common Home*” while “Caring For Each Other”.

Let’s continue to build the League by “doing what we can, when we can!”
May the blessings of the Lord be always upon us. Our Lady of Good Counsel ~ Pray for Us!

***Janice MacDougall,
President, Antigonish Diocesan Council***

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

Organization

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 13 of 37

Organization Chair

11 councils reported the position was filled, 2 were vacant. 2/3 were appointed, 1/3 through election; most chairpersons have held the position previously.

Recruit Members and Maintain Membership

Members: Councils were asked to identify members' race/ethnicity. Many councils answered 'unknown'; of those that reported, most members are of European/North American descent and a small number of members were identified as Latin, African and Asian. Most councils felt their membership does represent the culture of their parish community. Councils were asked to identify the age of members; approximately 90+% of members are over 35 years of age, reflecting the age of their parish community.

Members Participation: Council activities were vastly curtailed this year, due to the pandemic.

Fundraising: approximately 60-80% of members assist in fundraising events.

Attend Meetings: approximately 40-60% of members attend meetings.

Social Events: approximately 60% -80% of members attend social events.

Spiritual Events: approximately 40% -80% of members attend spiritual events.

Councils use bulletin announcements, personal invitation, council website- social media, phone calls, mail and conversation-social time after meetings to encourage members' participation and to keep members informed. Two-thirds of councils use online membership.

Recruiting New Members: Personal invitation continues to be the best method to recruit new members. Parish bulletin announcements, social events and presentation at mass were also used. One council reported a new member.

Members Recognition: Most councils present 'years of service' pins to members. Some councils present other awards to members, such as the Maple Leaf Service Pin, certificates, gifts and cards for special occasions.

Leadership Development

Executive: Most councils have a mix of elected and appointed executive members. Councils 'make it work' with less executive members averaging 8-10 positions filled. A few councils have all executive positions filled.

Council Activities that attract and engage members:

- Friendliness of our members; members are genuinely happy to see one another
- Annual Christmas luncheon with fun games and prizes, which many of our members attend
- Outside tea party/prayer circle
- Lunch for families of deceased members
- Social time after meeting to get to see and talk with members (especially due to fewer events due to pandemic, members are happy to be together when we are permitted)
- Since we were unable to hold our annual fall fair, we had a raffle and sold tickets only after mass
- Held a lunch fundraiser with pick-up and delivery only (due to restrictions), which turned out to be a big success
- Unfortunately, most events were not held this year due to gathering limit restrictions

Life Members/Executive: Some councils who have members on the diocesan or provincial executive, and/or life members, readily ask these ladies to assist with disseminating information and sharing their CWL knowledge.

League Resource Material

National Information, published by national, to assist councils to welcome members and keep them informed: *“Embracing Diversity: Tools for Councils Use”*; *“Welcome Program”* and *“Executive Orientation”*. Approximately half of the reporting councils were aware of these new membership tools but none have made use of them. 40% of councils are aware of the latest activities of the *“Strategic Plan Implementation Committee”*.

Annual Reports

Challenges as Parish Council Organization Chair and Completing the Survey:

- Difficult to do any recruitment activities, with low church attendance
- Challenge to hold events; members are hesitant to attend meetings
- Holding the instructed vote was long and tedious
- There was very little opportunity to actively engage in regular meetings and activities
- Online membership- the national remittance list deletes names and I have to re-enter names and other information
- Not comfortable using technology, not computer literate; another member did it for me
- I found some of the questions in this survey difficult to complete. (Ethnicity of members: What is Oceania? North American? (Many members consider themselves Canadian/ North American)
- I found the survey straightforward and easy to complete

Activities by diocesan chair:

- o Attended Zoom meetings for diocesan, provincial and national conventions/AMM
- o Compiled and sent 2 memos this year re: #6 Welcome Program, Membership Fees; #7 Membership, Strategic Plan Updates and Annual Reports.
- o Submitted articles for spring and fall issues of the diocesan newsletter
- o Attended the 7 diocesan (Zoom) meetings held this past year
- o Prepared reports for diocesan (Zoom) officers’ meetings held Feb, June and Sept
- o Contacted 6 councils to complete diocesan ‘Staying Connected Survey’
- o Received access code from national to monitor the completed annual report surveys. I had many phone calls and emails to councils to assist in completing annual reports. The final surveys are forwarded to each diocesan officer.
- o Visited the CWL website frequently to stay up to date with new initiatives and resources; completed national surveys
- o Member of strategic plan committee on *Training and Development Using Technology*

Julie LeLievre,

Organization Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council

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

Past President

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 13 of 37

Thirteen councils responded with reports, with 11 of these councils having the position of past president filled.

Of our members in this diocese, 46 % have been with CWL for more than 25 years; 55% have been past presidents before.

The majority of our members are between the ages of 65 -74; a number of ladies are between 75 – 84.

Most of our past presidents have always attended executive meetings, general meetings, social events, spiritual events, and are often called upon for advice. Their presidents all feel supported by their help.

The majority of past presidents are responsible for archives in their council. The information is most commonly stored in a room in the church, using filing cabinets, photo albums, memory sticks, DVDs and CDs. The location of their charter is known by almost all past presidents.

Annual reports are kept indefinitely by most councils, as is the Book of Life, deceased members histories, the list of past executives, membership renewal data, minutes of executive meetings, minutes of general meetings, records of pin and award recipients, and a record of service of members.

Financial information is usually kept from 5 – 8 years. The councils review the archives as needed, keep a history book, photo albums, have a copy of the *Constitution and Bylaws*, all of which are reviewed on a regular basis. All councils have a copy of the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*, which is referred to regularly. A number of councils have their own manual of policy and procedure, and it is updated by most of the councils when a policy is changed; help from the diocesan council is sought when the councils are developing their own policy and procedure manual.

The assistance of the diocesan council is asked for on other matters, throughout the year. Most councils reported they rarely sought help from the provincial or national councils.

The councils seek advice from their spiritual advisor on a monthly basis. Councils rarely seek advice from their Bishop. Advice from life members is sometimes requested.

Other duties performed by the past presidents at the request of the president include: chair the nominations and elections committee; organize a fundraiser or charity; organize funeral lunches; represent the council at conventions; check national and provincial websites for information to share; organize a social event; promote the council in the parish and community; chair executive or general meetings; fill the role of a vacant position; organize a spiritual event; chair a standing committee or taskforce; facilitate a workshop and prepare agendas.

Most councils are usually satisfied with the communication they receive from national, provincial and diocesan and usually find it relevant.

The communications are found to be clear and concise. When requests come from other levels, there is not always enough time to participate.

Reflecting on their term as president, they offered the following suggestions when in the role of past president: offer advice and guidance when requested; be available when the president needs assistance; help out as needed; support in all ways; remind the president to rely on her executive to accomplish tasks.

Three past presidents took part in the implementation of the envisioned future of the League through Planning Strategically 2018-2020. They passed the information along at meetings, but members are getting tired of the long process.

COVID-19 has all but shut down many of the usual activities of the councils. However, treat packages were delivered to seniors living alone; prayer blankets for sick parishioners were made; funeral honor guards and receptions for members were held; fun events were added to social events so members felt welcome and wanted to continue to attend; a fall fair with COVID-19 protocols in place was held.

It has been a great challenge to stay in touch with members because of the pandemic. Members are feeling burnt out, because of not getting any new members to take over. Members are trying very hard to keep CWL alive in the hearts of their ladies and are looking forward to returning to meetings and fund raising, which keeps members together and centered on a common goal.

Respectfully submitted,

Cleo Windsor
Past President, Antigonish Diocesan Council

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

Spiritual Development

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 12 of 37

Twelve of a possible 37 councils reported for a participation rate of 32.5%.

Of these, 10 councils have a spiritual development chair - 5 were elected and 5 appointed.

Councils increased their knowledge of our theme "*Care for Our Common Home*" by reading articles in *The Canadian League* magazine, studying *Laudato Si*, setting up displays each week during Lent on the corporal works of mercy and collecting recyclables which they cashed in to buy milk for elementary schools, collecting used and new clothing for Community Cares and personal toiletries to donate to Transition House, and by having prayer discussions on the subject.

67% of councils spend one-third of the business meeting on spiritual growth programs and activities. The other 33% said that they had spiritual development but not for the prescribed amount of time.

Councils have organized liturgies and programs for their members. These included reflections in person and on-line on various topics. They held a Lenten retreat, Scriptural Rosary, attended weekly mass, offered prayers at funerals (when possible) and a prayer service for deceased members, provided gifts to children receiving First Communion, and provided opening and closing prayers at meetings.

Councils celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel by wearing their CWL stoles at Sunday Mass on April 25th, by offering special intentions for members with some members participating on line, by encouraging each other to remember Our Lady of Good Counsel in prayer and service, and by following Fr. Patrick O'Neill live on Facebook. Some councils recited the rosary, said prayers at their meeting, and watched mass on Salt & Light TV.

Two councils reported that their spiritual advisor attends all their meetings; the other spiritual advisors attend on a fairly regular basis. Most of the councils include their spiritual advisor on their agenda. He fills various roles within councils—he offers prayers and reflections, supports, encourages and promotes the League, advises on faith and religious matters when we are unsure, attends meetings, prepares prayers for liturgy committee meetings, and officiates at ceremonies. He encourages other women to join and supports CWL activities.

In their survey, spiritual development chairs have reported that to develop their personal spirituality, they have read spiritual books, recited the rosary daily, made novenas, studied the bible, journaled, did the Liturgy of the Hours, recited the Divine Mercy Chaplet, had a prayer partner and made a retreat. They found inspiration by watching TV mass and inspirational and educational videos on YouTube, reading spiritual materials such as *Living with Christ*, *The Word Among Us* and *Living Faith* (daily reflections), from research, people they met and from observing nature.

Only 3 councils reported using the national website resources. Of these, they found prayer services and communiqués helpful resources. They encouraged council members to study and discuss Catholic teachings at meetings by sharing what they have read and encouraging members to read relevant articles in *The Canadian League* magazine and the *Catholic Press*.

Ten councils reported that they participated in Pope Francis' request to pray the rosary daily in May to end COVID-19.

CWL members are very active in the church, taking leadership roles on parish pastoral councils, parish committee chairs, parish finance committees, diocesan council/committees, and as pastoral associates. CWL members have served in every lay ministry in the church and have chaired or organized many of these.

Catholic Missions in Canada has not been a high priority for many councils this year; however, we have provided financial and prayerful support. Other missions which received financial assistance were: Development and Peace, Esk-Omi Mission, Chalice, TV Mass for Shut-Ins, Diocesan Seminarian Association and Christmas Daddies.

One or two councils have reached out to women of other faiths/churches to join in prayer, meetings, social events or as speakers. Eight councils participated in World Day of Prayer; however, participation in the other ecumenical activities was low.

It was heartwarming to hear that councils are interested in learning more about this position and I appreciate your suggestions for training topics. Among these were: workshops at the diocesan/provincial levels on topics and resources for making presentations at monthly meetings, how to access resources for prayer services and reflections, facilitating memorial masses, feast day mass, funeral honour guards and vigil prayer services, and a workshop on how to develop our new theme.

I read your success stories. COVID-19 has certainly forced us to “think outside the box”. But councils have come up with inventive ways to show their love of neighbour: serving on COVID-19 protocol committees to keep churches safe for daily mass, assisting others in the community with basic needs, holding a prayer service for deceased members including mass, candle lighting and lunch for family and friends, providing Lenten candle prayer bowls for seniors and candy bags for an adult residential centre. I am sure that the Holy Spirit guided your efforts and strengthened your own faith.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the 12 councils who took the time to respond to this survey. I know it might seem that we haven't been able to do anything during the various lockdowns and all the restrictions, but as you can see from this report, the CWL in the Diocese of Antigonish is alive and active. COVID-19 has given us a chance to step back and focus on the importance of prayer and our neighbour. May Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to give us strength and direction.

Respectfully submitted,

Doreen Boudreau
Spiritual Development Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council

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

Education & Health

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 10 of 37

Councils have reported on a quiet year for 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to thank you for sending in your annual reports letting us know some of the activities your members were able to attend in 2021. Only seven councils reported a chairperson for education and health (four elected and three appointed). Three education and health chairs are vacant. Seven of nine councils reporting have a chairperson who held the position previously. Those who have been members for 25 years or more seem to prefer this chair.

Catholic Education: The majority of the councils try to keep informed of when religious education will be in their parishes and have encouraged parents to stay informed and participate in religious education programs. Catholic education is not a curriculum in the Antigonish diocesan schools.

Literacy and Continuing Education: Six councils provided bursaries for high school students and 2 provided a bursary for university/college students. Some councils specify that *children of CWL members* be considered for the bursaries.

If you are interested in information about the National Bursary, the application form is available online at www.cwl.ca. Applications must be submitted to the national office and postmarked by May 15th. The successful applicants are notified by letter and an announcement is made by June 30th on the CWL national website and in *The Canadian League* magazine. In support of the National Bursary Fund, a council suggested that members include a legacy in their will. Four councils contributed to the Coady International Institute in 2021. www.coady.stfx.ca

Wellness and Sickness/Disease: There are no activities reported on resolutions under education and health. Only two councils showed interest in the CWL Mental Health Postcard. Four councils have not supported national organizations that focus on health and wellness of Canadians, due to lack of funds, but many members supported the organizations on an individual basis. Support was given to some national organizations such as: Alzheimer's Society; Canadian Cancer Society; Canadian Red Cross; Canadian Diabetes Association; MaterCare International; Heart and Stroke Foundation; Ronald McDonald House; Children's Wish Foundation and Kidney Foundation of Canada. Local schools were supported as well and some local organizations: Transition House; Parkinson's Society; St. Vincent de Paul and Hospice Palliative Care. Only one chairperson was aware of the Canadian Blood Services Partners for Life Program.

National Hospice Palliative Care week was May 2-8, 2021. Councils were invited to participate in "12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care". Due to COVID-19, parish councils were asked to organize members, by asking each member to pray for one hour for a total of 12 hours, utilizing the resources in the kit. Of the councils reporting, 50% did not take part in this program, but 50% did take part: Two councils encouraged all members to pray for palliative care; one council arranged for 12 members to pray for palliative care in their homes for one hour; one council provided members with the 12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care Kit and one council held a virtual event. The Palliative Care postcards were only used by one council this year and one council provided information on advance care planning.

Councils in other provinces are familiar with an emergency response information kit through their provincial governments. I am researching what Nova Scotia has available as an emergency response information kit and will pass on the information.

Environment: 60% of the councils continued to participate in the “Care for Our Common Home” initiative with 30% participating in plastic reduction and waste cleanup. In River Bourgeois, ten people participated and collected 50 bags! Another council cleaned the cemetery and their community ditches. Members of seven councils committed to eliminating the use of plastic bags, plastic straws and reducing their garbage. Four more councils planted a tree in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the League:

- One council planted a tree in the cemetery.
- Another tree was planted in front of the parish hall where the CWL meetings take place. A plaque was installed on the outside wall behind the tree commemorating the 100th anniversary of the national CWL and the 80th anniversary of their council. There were 14 members present.
- Another council planted two bushes on the church grounds and also planted a tree to commemorate their 75th anniversary.
- Another council planted a tree in front of their church hall with 3 members present.
- Some haven’t planted yet due to COVID-19 restrictions but hope to do so in the spring.

United Nations World Water Day was celebrated by 50% of the reporting councils by trying to use less water, especially on that day. Due to the pandemic, few members met to discuss some ideas for conserving water. Members have addressed environmental issues during the year, such as: reducing the use of Styrofoam cups; eliminating plastic water bottles & plastic straws; recycling and using green bins for organic waste; staying aware of climate change and reducing paper use.

Genetics: Four councils have good knowledge in regard to the advantages and disadvantages of technology to alter genes in light of the teaching of the Catholic church. One council has excellent knowledge of the technology. The councils who reported fair or poor knowledge on the topic hope to do some research and read more about it in the coming year.

Closing remarks from the council chairpersons: Councils would like to learn more about palliative care and assisted suicide. A council gave a personal opinion saying “the archaic thoughts on fertility and IVF treatment will limit the growth of attracting young people to join the church/CWL. Another council wanted to learn more about LGBTQ2 in the Catholic church. Reporting councils asked “Are those with varying views on sexuality welcome in the Catholic church?” They feel that this is a topic of interest to youth and adults alike.

Over the past year it was very important to keep the membership informed on vaccines, test kits, and anything related to masks or COVID-19 protocols. It has been very challenging physically, mentally, spiritually and in many cases financially, for many members and their families. Meetings and fund-raising were put on hold for most of the year. This meant little money to donate to charities.

COVID-19 has made it difficult for councils to get involved in community events. We are all hoping for a brighter year to come when we can all meet in person. Let’s stay positive! Our Lady of Good Counsel will guide us, as we help to protect the environment and keep people aware of the education and health available in our communities.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” – Nelson Mandela

***Earlene Landry
Education & Health Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council***

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

Treasurer

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 14 of 37

Tools Used By Councils To Track Receipts And Disbursements:

Cheque books (14), bank statements (13), deposit book (13), ledger/columnar book (12), receipt book (4), disbursement book (2), computer program (1), excel spreadsheet (2).

Membership:

All of the councils were aware of the per-capita fee amount for 2021.
The minimum range of the membership was \$22.00.

National Voluntary Funds:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Catholic Missions in Canada | \$ 262.00 |
| Coady International Institute | \$ 290.00 |
| Euthanasia Prevention Coalition | \$ 70.00 |
| Catholic Near East Welfare Association | \$ 70.00 |
| National Bursary Fund | \$ 90.00 |

It was reported, by the councils participating in the 2021 annual year end treasurers report, that a total of \$16,290.00 was donated to help their parishes.

It was also reported by the same 14 councils, that a total of \$ 9,357.14 was given to causes that are not listed above.

Financial Applications:

Budgets are prepared yearly (3), two signatures are required on all cheques (14), books examined by an independent individual experienced in accounting procedures (9), financial reports distributed to members at each meeting (14), a yearly report is provided (14)

Fundraising Initiatives:

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, fundraising was minimal. However, councils have been able to maintain their necessary commitments.

Communication:

The focus of the 2021 treasurer's annual report, was communication.

Nine of the fourteen councils reporting specified that they did not receive the communiques distributed to their local parish council from the national, provincial and diocesan counterparts.

***Kathleen Campbell
Treasurer, Antigonish Diocesan Council***

Page Left Blank Intentionally

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

Christian Family Life

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 12 of 37

10 of the 12 councils reported having a chairperson; of those, half were elected and half were appointed. Half of the chairpersons have been a CWL member for over 25 years. Four have held this position previously. Their ages ranged between 55 & 75+, with the majority in the 65-74 age category.

Due to COVID-19, only a very small number of councils were able to promote marriage preparation courses and programs for families. Most councils (83%) reported they concentrated on other topics.

The majority of councils were not able to attend workshops or seminars on the topic of family life or celebrate or organize events for National Family Week.

Two councils reported that they have a way to support people suffering from domestic abuse.

None of the councils hold a membership in a local pro-life organization. One council attended a pro-life walk, one attended a march for life, another attended a life chain and another attended a pro-life mass.

Reporting councils did not attend a presentation on Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body or plan any events to recognize the year of "Amoris Laetitia Family" proclaimed by Pope Francis from March 19th, 2021 to June 26th, 2022.

Fifty percent of the reporting councils donated money or gifts to organizations that advocate for sanctity of life such as, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, Campaign Life Coalition, Pregnancy and Family Support Services and local pro-life organizations.

Three of the twelve councils reported that they ensure every member has a copy of the current pro-life brochure, available from national office. Two councils reported that copies of the current pro-life brochure are available in their church vestibule. None of the councils who participated in the survey met with pro-life legislators.

With regard to letter writing, less than half wrote letters to inform legislators of CWL positions on abortion and euthanasia. The majority of councils reported that they regularly pray for the protection of life.

When asked about the responses to the action plan, regarding the resolution Canada to Honour its Commitment to the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, councils responded as follows: 6 councils educated members, 6 councils monitored the federal government's response to the resolution, 5 councils recognized the day of prayer for the legal protection of unborn children and 4 councils wrote letters to the prime minister.

One council reported that they have started to promote the next World Youth Day, which will be held in Lisbon, Portugal in 2023.

Five councils have reported that they participated in programs for young people. One council reported they have a Catholic Girls League. Councils have supported the youth in their parishes through religious education programs, NET Ministries, World Youth Day and Catholic Christian Outreach.

Most councils have reached out to the disabled, seniors, widows and widowers through the following activities: sent cards, brought communion to the sick and shut in, prayed with them, called/visited, provided transportation, shared a meal, involved them in CWL events, gifted them with CWL membership, arranged memorial services and or funeral lunches, invited them to attend meetings and organized social events.

One council sponsored/attended a presentation on the annulment process and one council purchased copies of the brochure *Annulments Today - Merciful and Just* for their church vestibule.

The majority of councils participate in prayer for vocations. Five councils reported they support seminarians. Two councils hosted luncheons for priests/religious, two invited priests/religious to speak on vocations and two viewed the World Day of Prayer for Vocations website. One council sent a spiritual bouquet.

Laurena Greencorn
Christian Family Life Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council

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

Communications

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 13 of 37

Thank you to everyone who took time to fill out their reports for the communications chair. We heard from 13 councils, 11 of which had a communications chair and 2 were vacant.

The Canadian League:

The Canadian League is used by the majority of members to keep informed of what is going on. However, we have some members who were not able to read the magazine because of the issues being on-line only and they don't have access to a computer. The presidents' messages followed by the national spiritual advisors' articles are the ones people found most relevant.

Evangelization:

Resolution 1978.03 Catholic Press encourages members to subscribe to and promote Catholic newspapers and magazines. Mass for shut-ins is voted 100% the best way to assist them in their mission to evangelize.

Keeping Informed:

The CWL website is a very good tool to use to keep informed on the national level. The councils rely on their telephone committees and emails and, before COVID-19, their church bulletins, to keep their members informed. One council prepared a newsletter and sent it out by mail.

Pornography:

There was no activity on the issue of pornography this past year; no one has distributed the pornography hurts postcards. These postcards can be accessed through the national CWL website and mailed to members of parliament free of charge.

Strategic Planning:

Most councils are aware of the strategic planning updates on the national website but only about half of the councils share the information with their members.

The majority of the councils have been inactive the past year because of gathering restrictions due to COVID-19. The main priority for councils has been keeping in contact through phone and emails to support and do wellness checks on their members.

As communications chair, I have kept the website updated and participated in our diocesan Zoom meetings.

Your sister in the League

***Helena MacLeod
Communications Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council***

Page Left Blank Intentionally

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

Community Life

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 11 of 37

I received 11 annual reports and of those reporting, 9 councils have a chairperson. The reports are summarized as follows.

Dignity and Rights:

The majority of councils are aware of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A small percentage of councils supported minority groups (domestic violence, homelessness, human trafficking, poverty and racism) through donations and volunteering. Councils did not support those incarcerated or individuals suffering from bullying. The majority of councils are very aware of the struggles of Indigenous women. Only two councils discussed Bill C-262 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*. Half of the chairpersons are very aware of human trafficking laws and what is being done in the fight against human trafficking and share information with their councils. Public Safety Canada released the 2018 Human Trafficking Consultation Report on January 14th, 2020, *Building a Safe and Resilient Canada*. Only two councils shared the information about the report. February 22nd is marked as Annual Human Trafficking Awareness Day, and February 8th, 2021 was the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking. Two councils reported they prayed the rosary for these causes. Chairpersons did not monitor the Canada Summer Job applications.

Social and Economic Justice:

The majority of councils were able to support their community and local organizations with prayer, financial support and volunteering. Local organizations that were supported included affordable housing, anti-poverty programs, school programs, clothing drives, drop-in centers, emergency shelters for the homeless and those experiencing domestic abuse, employment training programs, food banks, food hampers, soup kitchens, single parent resource centers, wish foundation, restorative justice programs and violence prevention programs. Only two councils supported organizations that assist Indigenous peoples. Three councils reported celebrating National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21st, 2021, through awareness and education. One council celebrated mass and invited the Indigenous community. Half of the councils reported being aware of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation held on September 30th. They showed support with prayer, discussion and promoted the event on their Facebook page. Four councils wore orange on September 30th for awareness of the residential school system and the impact it had on Indigenous communities. Due to COVID-19 councils were not able to take part in prison ministry or restorative justice programs because of visitor's restrictions. One council promoted the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) this year at their meeting. Two councils supported the CNEWA national voluntary fund to help support Christians in the Middle East and Holy Land. Councils did not celebrate the CWL Day of Prayer for Christians in the Middle East and Holy Land.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship:

Only three councils reported being informed about Canada's official immigration and refugee policies. Council members rate their knowledge from very good to poor referring to the availability of employment services, English courses, financial assistance for food and rent, and the needs of refugees and immigrants in their community. All councils are aware of the difference between a temporary foreign worker, immigrant and refugee. Councils did not participate in citizenship ceremonies. The majority of councils participated in Remembrance Day services and supported the poppy campaign. Four councils reported wearing red on Friday in support of Canadian troops. No councils monitored Resolution 2016.01 Equal Access to Permanent Resident Status, An Amendment to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. Councils are very familiar with the League's 1% annual program for Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace; only 2 councils donated to the program.

Developing Countries:

One council supported Mary's Meals through donation. Half of the councils are aware of the conditions of child labour in developing countries. Less than half of the councils are aware of the implications of trade laws, economic difficulties of developing countries or criticized structures that put profit before people. Councils did not host guest speakers from developing nations to their meetings. Councils offered support for Chalice, Operation Christmas Child, Save a Family Plan, Holy Childhood Association, Samaritans Purse and Sleeping Children Around the World.

Comments from Councils:

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a challenge for councils to hold meetings due to gathering restrictions. Councils did stay in touch with members through mail, emails, phone calls and home visits. Councils reported they were able to collect personal care items for shelters, support food banks, visit isolated and lonely in the community, drop off baking to neighbours, support Christmas Daddies, needy families and Chalice Christmas catalogue. One council volunteered at the food bank and helped with church duties. One council shared their success story, providing gifts for needy children (Share Christmas). COVID-19 is the only challenge holding councils back from community projects such as hosting birthday parties at a seniors' home and holding monthly meetings. One council opened a food bank as a new project.

As you can see our councils are addressing the daily concerns during these challenging times. Thank you for sharing your activities over the past year. May Our Lady of Good Council bless and guide us as we reach out to those in our community and across the globe.

Respectfully submitted,

Wanda Bruckschwaiger
Community Life Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council

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

Secretary

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 17 of 37

12 of 17 councils reported having both a corresponding and recording secretary; in 7 of these councils, one person holds both positions. 5 of 17 councils have a recording secretary only. 12 of 17 secretaries have been elected while 5 have been appointed.

All reported that they take minutes at meetings and maintain a list of their executive with their contact information. Slightly over half of respondents are signing officers for their council. The majority are aware of the location of their council charter, receive written reports from the executive and have a copy of the *Handbook for Secretaries* from national office. Two thirds of respondents reported their council has a motions book and a copy of the *CWL Personal Letter Writing Guide* from national office.

The pandemic presented a big challenge to secretaries in 2021. Councils reported they experienced a loss of connection with members, the inability to have regular meetings and conduct business, and a loss of fellowship and purpose because of restricted activities. These challenges were addressed by preparing newsletters for members, doing wellness check-ins and regular contacts by phone, sending emails, by having small meetings and gatherings when permitted, and, as reported by one council, by completing one project at a time.

Other challenges included needing help with technology, ensuring that email addresses were accurate and writing minutes accurately and concisely.

Councils were asked about their satisfaction with the communication received from national, provincial and diocesan councils, its relevance, and whether or not the communication was clear and concise. All councils reported being satisfied with the communication received from all three levels and that the communication was relevant, clear and concise. Slightly over half of councils identified that they were “always” satisfied with communication received, that it was “always” relevant and “always” clear and concise. Less than half of councils reported they were “usually or occasionally” satisfied with the communication received and that the communications was “usually, sometimes or occasionally” relevant, clear and concise.

10 of 17 councils reported they “never” receive duplicate information from national, provincial and/or diocesan councils. 3 councils reported they “usually or sometimes” did while 1 council said they “occasionally” did.

16 of 17 councils reported having enough time to act on communications received from another level that invited/requested participation.

In this challenging year, councils were not only concerned about their members but also with their communities. One council shared that they “tried hard to keep the spirit of their community high” and that they mailed letters to front line workers to show their support and gratitude.

I wish to thank all those councils who submitted these annual reports. 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 Council*

Page Left Blank Intentionally

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

Legislation

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 4 of 37

Thank you to all councils who completed annual reports this year, and to those who took on the job of legislation chair. 2021 was another tough year for many councils. Many found it tough to have meetings, and difficult to stay connected with members. However, CWL members are resilient, and councils did what they could to continue to serve God and country.

This year, four councils returned reports regarding the legislation chair. Of those four, only one position was filled, and they were appointed to the position. One member noted that she was aware of who her representatives were at all three levels of government but did not receive emails from these people. Overall, she felt somewhat informed about issues being discussed at each level and had not attended any public forums.

All four councils responded to questions regarding certain bills. All four were aware of Bill C-7 on medical assistance in dying, while 50% each were aware of Bills C-233 and C-268 on sex-selective abortion and intimidation of health care professionals, respectively. No responding councils had reported on monitoring any bills and none had used the legislation workshop "Faith in Action." Councils did share any information they received about legislation with their members.

The biggest challenge reporting councils had in completing the survey was that the position was vacant on their council. They found that there does not seem to be any interest in this position and are looking forward to the new governance structure. Hopefully as meetings resume, and government gets back to more regular business, we can find a way to revive legislative work within the councils.

Jolene MacLellan
Legislation Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council

Page Left Blank Intentionally

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

Resolutions

Annual Report: 2021

of councils reporting: 4 of 37

The challenge of this chair appears to be common for all of us: finding ideas, doing research, promoting interest, getting up-to-date information, ensuring letters of support are sent, doing workshops and lastly, finding the time. Having a chair for this committee is vital for its success.

The basis of this report is formulated on information received from 4 of 37 parish councils of the Catholic Women's League for the Diocese of Antigonish. It is based on the statistical analysis of the information received from the resolution committees and forwarded to diocesan from national.

From the 4 councils reporting, 2 councils had resolutions chairs; 1 of these shared both resolutions and legislation chairs. Two councils had no chairs. It appears the biggest challenge is generating interest for resolutions. There was no contact with elected officials at the local, provincial or federal levels.

There was no opportunity to attend workshops or conventions due to public health restrictions. Issues of strong interest were: euthanasia and assisted dying, home care and human trafficking. Discussion of a resolution took place but the actual formulation did not.

Three of the 4 councils reported being familiar with the *Resolutions Supplement to the Executive Handbook* on the national website (www.cwl.ca). Research and development of a resolution(s) was not considered for the following reasons: council too small, no chairperson, had no issues and/or most importantly, there was no interest. As a result, no resolutions were implemented.

All reporting councils indicated that they participated in virtual meetings for the three levels of the League. They did not conclusively agree that the annual or oral reports on resolutions were helpful to them.

As initially stated, this is a very challenging chair. Hopefully there will be some new and bright ideas come forth.

Ann Callahan
Resolutions Chairperson, Antigonish Diocesan Council