



# **The Catholic Women's League of Canada**

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## **Vice-President Handbook**

Revised 2023

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Product Code 610

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# League Objects

The objects of the League shall be to unite Catholic women of Canada

1. to achieve individual and collective spiritual development
2. to promote the teachings of the Catholic church
3. to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life
4. to protect the sanctity of life
5. to enhance the role of women in church and society
6. to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere
7. to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world
8. to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony

# Mission Statement

The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.

# Vice-President's Responsibilities

The duties of the vice-president are to

- perform the duties of the president in her absence or inability to serve
- recruit members and maintain membership
- be responsible for League development and leadership training
- develop League resource material
- ensure that annual reports are completed
- oversee life membership

## Recruit Members and Maintain Membership

The vice-president should be familiar with and make extensive use of the *Welcome Program*, which contains detailed information on membership, including recruitment, renewals, orientation programs, welcome kits, companionship and mentorship programs, and resources.

The vice-president is responsible for

- promoting the League to recruit new members
- identifying the needs of the women of the parish and planning programs to meet those needs
- conducting membership campaigns
- holding a Reception of New Members ceremony as outlined in the *Ceremonies Booklet*
- being aware that membership fees are due and payable on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year
- ensuring that per capita fees are remitted promptly to national office (in consultation with the council treasurer)

The vice-president should

- encourage the use of personal contact for enlisting new members and renewing past memberships
- organize a telephone/email/social media committee to invite members to monthly meetings and special events
- be familiar with the *Welcome Program* available through the national website
- consider presenting new members with a new member kit containing a list of the membership roster together with any other items determined by the council

# Leadership Development

In planning and developing parish council activities and programs, two valuable working tools are the Mission Statement and the *Welcome Program*, which summarize the overall direction and purpose of the League.

The vice-president is responsible for

- presenting orientation and League development programs
- promoting and encouraging attendance of members at League functions, development days, workshops, training days and annual meetings of members/conventions
- being aware of National Development Fund guidelines and applications for subsidies (see appendix and consult the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*)
- promoting one- or two-year planning for officers

The vice-president should contact her counterpart at the next level for assistance in organizing leadership programs for the council.

## Training

The vice-president should plan an orientation program for the council that includes information on League policy and objects, programs offered by the League, and reflects the needs of the members and their council.

While some training can be done within time allotted at regular meetings, it is often more productive to hold a workshop or training day. The atmosphere of a training session should be relaxed but well planned.

The vice-president should assist the president in planning an orientation program for executive members every two years. To provide support and develop leadership capacity, an orientation and training program has been developed for members of the executive. Executive members should be encouraged to attend workshops offered at all levels.

The vice-president should promote attendance at League functions, development days, workshops, training days and annual meetings of members/conventions as opportunities to develop members.

## National Development Fund

Subsidies are available to assist in promoting leadership training and other development workshops, promoting development through spiritual development, visiting parishes without councils and assisting in the organization of parish councils. For information regarding application for the National Development Fund and to determine if your council qualifies, see the appendix. For application and reporting forms, refer to the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* or the national website ([cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca)).

## Planning

It is a good idea for executive members to have a plan for the activities of the council during their two-year term. The vice-president is responsible for promoting council and executive planning. Plans should be made with the involvement of council members. The officers should base their plans on the information gathered from the members, as well as by considering League projects at other levels. Plans should be evaluated yearly for progress toward the goals and direction for the coming year. As well, the process of planning and evaluating the progress will be an asset when preparing annual reports and recruiting members.

## League Resource Material

To ensure that the council operates efficiently and effectively, it is essential to have a good working knowledge of the League.

The vice-president is responsible for:

- ensuring that the council has a copy of all League documents for the appropriate level
- being familiar with, and promoting the use of, League documents
  - *Constitution & Bylaws*
  - *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*
  - *Handbook for Chairpersons of Faith, Service and Social Justice*
  - *The Canadian League* magazine
  - *Welcome Program*
- being familiar with, and promoting the use of, national office resource materials/inventory items

The vice-president should refer to communiqués and/or annual reports from all levels.

The provincial/diocesan vice-president should ensure that all documents are readily accessible, either electronically or in hard copy, to every newly elected parish president and/or vice-president. In addition, the vice-president should be familiar with all items available in the Resource List.

## Annual Reports

The vice-president is responsible for

- annually circulating the Guidelines for Annual Written Reports found in the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*
- ensuring that the guidelines are followed

Annual reports bring accountability and credibility to the achievements of each council and reflect the work of all members across Canada. Annual reports are an important means of communicating to others in the parish, community and country at large the activities that occurred over the past year.

At the national level, the annual report is based on an annual report survey sent to parish councils in the fall parish council mailing, distributed by mid-October. The survey is open for parish council input by November 1st and closes by December 15<sup>th</sup>. Councils having trouble entering their information online may mail their report to national office, postmarked no later than December 15<sup>th</sup>.

The process and method for compiling the annual reports at other levels and the deadlines for doing so are set by provincial executives and communicated within their provincial council according to the best practice in their region. Diocesan and parish councils should seek instruction from provincial executives no later than September to ensure they have the instructions they need to complete their portion of the annual report.

The vice-president must annually circulate the Guidelines for Annual Written Reports found in the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure* to the executive and chairpersons with their deadlines.

Timelines are important in getting reports to the next level and, ultimately, included in the diocesan, provincial and the national annual report. Each provincial vice-president will provide yearly direction and instruction to councils in her region.

## Life Membership

In The Catholic Women's League of Canada, life membership gives to the recipient a permanent place on the national council, has accredited delegate status at an annual meeting of members/conventions, a voice in its affairs and eligibility for a national appointment. Life members are to maintain their membership by paying annual per capita fees through their parish council.

A life member receives notice of the annual national meeting of members/conventions and, at her request, a copy of the minutes and copies of all relevant mailings from national office. Life members generally receive similar notice of diocesan and provincial annual meetings of members/conventions. Life members are responsible for registering for diocesan, provincial and national annual meetings of members and are expected to pay their own expenses.

Life membership is not intended to be a reward for years of service or a retirement gift. Life membership entails responsibility.

Diocesan and provincial councils are the only councils entitled to submit nominations for life membership in accordance with established criteria. The responsibility for making the nomination lies with the submitting council as that council knows the individual's record of service. The national executive/board approves the application for life membership based on the information submitted. Provincial and diocesan councils may add additional requirements regarding when a member may be nominated for life membership, provided they do not contradict national criteria.



National office advises the provincial and diocesan councils and the recipient's parish council of the nomination. National council officially recognizes new life members at the annual national meeting of members/conventions and in the annual report.

The vice-president is responsible for

- being aware of any life members in the council
- being aware of the life member liaison at the next level
- at the diocesan and parish levels, keeping an up-to-date list of life members; note that each provincial council has an appointed life member liaison to assist the vice-president with this

Councils are encouraged to draw on the gifts and experience of their life members. Life members should receive a copy of the annual report.

## Guidelines for Reporting

These guidelines for reporting conform to the *Constitution & Bylaws*. See the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*, which provides detailed information on reporting under the headings “Guidelines for Annual Written Reports,” “Parish Activities” and “Appendix 3: Sample Parish Activities Report.”

If guidelines are provided by your diocesan council, use them.

The vice-president should report under the following headings: (*Included headings only because the details are in the P&P to which they have been referred in the previous paragraph.*)

1. *Recruit Members and Maintain Membership*
2. *Leadership Development*
3. *League Resource Material*
4. *Annual Reports*
5. *Life Membership*

## Resources and References

***The Canadian League magazine***—copies of individual articles are available from national office  
**Communiqués** from the national executive/board are regularly posted on the League website ([cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca)).

The following resources are available from national office:

- *Personal Letter-Writing Guide*

- Resource list

Be familiar with and promote the use of:

- *Ceremonies Booklet*
- *Constitution & Bylaws*
- *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*
- *Welcome Program*
- *New CWL Programs and Workshops*

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# Appendix: National Development Fund

## Guidelines

1. Check the national website for current funding priorities relative to the National Development Fund.
2. Requests for funding will be evaluated on an individual basis by diocesan and provincial presidents and the national vice-president as outlined on the application form. Councils at all levels may apply for assistance once in a calendar year. Prior to being considered for a national subsidy, councils must explore subsidy opportunities at intervening levels (e.g., a parish council would first approach diocesan, then provincial, then national).
3. Requests for funding may be submitted for the purposes of
  - visiting parishes without councils to present on the benefits of membership
  - assisting in the organization of parish councils
  - assisting parish, diocesan and provincial councils to promote League leadership training and other development workshops
  - promoting League development through spiritual development
4. When planning a workshop, consideration should be given to
  - the structure of the League, its levels, standing committees, responsibilities of officers, parliamentary procedure and effective meetings
  - using League resource materials
  - the development of spiritual programs
  - whether the workshop is being held in conjunction with a diocesan/provincial meeting
5. The following steps must be followed when applying for subsidy.
  - The projected amount of subsidy estimated to effectively conduct the workshop, the completed application form and a copy of the agenda listing the resource material must be submitted providing the information requested on the form.
  - If the workshop is held in conjunction with a diocesan/provincial meeting, then a detailed budget must be submitted for both the workshop and the meeting and a detailed agenda must be submitted for both the workshop and meeting, along with the names of all facilitators/speakers.
  - A completed application form, including budgets, agendas and names of facilitators/speakers for both the workshop and meeting is forwarded to the provincial president for approval and signature and she, in turn, forwards the

application to the national vice-president through the national office for approval and signature.

- National office will forward notice of approval and a National Development Fund – Report of Workshop and Follow Up Summary form to the applicant.
  - As soon as possible after the workshop, the Report of Workshop and Follow Up Summary form must be completed and forwarded to national office in order to receive reimbursement for the expenses. All receipts should be submitted to the national office for the approved refund.\*
6. The fund's purpose is to assist councils that would incur financial hardship by hosting a workshop. Total expenses submitted for reimbursement will be reduced by council profits on the event realized by the charging of registration fees.
  7. In order to encourage maximum participation by members, a claim may be made under transportation to cover car travel expenses to attend the workshop (carpooling where possible).
  8. The diocesan and provincial presidents are responsible for ensuring that the subsidy requested is valid and reasonable.
  9. If the workshop is held in conjunction with a fall or winter meeting, then the following considerations will apply.
    - Workshop participants who are not voting members, accredited delegates or executive members and who attend both the workshop and meeting will have their travel expenses paid according to the criteria above.
    - Workshop participants who are not voting members, accredited delegates or executive members and who choose to attend only the workshop will have travel paid according to criteria above.
    - Workshop participants who ordinarily would attend the diocesan/provincial meeting, such as voting members, accredited delegates or executive members, cannot claim travel expenses to attend the workshop.
    - Expenses for facilitators for the workshop for one night's accommodation and meals will be paid.
    - Travel expenses for the workshop facilitator will be paid if the facilitator is not part of the diocesan/provincial meeting either as a facilitator/speaker or as a voting member, accredited delegate or executive member.

**Note:** The National Development Fund does not cover expenses for decorations, such as banners, flowers, etc.; honoraria for League resource persons; accommodations, meals and refreshments for participants; and paid advertising. It is not intended to supplement a council's budget by providing a means of generating revenue for the council. In the case of a member needing an extra night's

accommodation to attend a workshop attached to a diocesan/provincial meeting, then expenses for one night will be paid based on shared occupancy.

**FUNDING IS AVAILABLE WITHIN BUDGET LIMITATIONS.**

\*In some cases, the council submitting the application may require the funds in advance of holding the event. These cases will be approved on an individual basis, and when funds are given prior to the event, the council will be responsible for returning all unused funds to national office.