Antigonish Diocesan CWL Newsletter

October 24th, 2026

Ignite Your Passion – Empower His Mission

Laurena Greencorn – ANTIGONISH DIOCESAN CWL PRESIDENT

HAPPY FALL!

As the days get shorter and the evenings are a little cooler, we tend to reflect on the past summer and all the fun we had. We see the leaves changing to a bright array of colour just before they fall to the ground. With children getting back into the school routine, we also tend to get back into the routine of meetings and other events.

Let's remember to make our goal a spiritual fruitfulness—actions rooted in love for God and our neighbor. Don't let the rush of busy schedules crowd out your spiritual foundation. Consider implementing your days with personal prayer.

Try to establish a firm evening boundary (e.g., an 8:00 p.m. mental and digital handoff). Entrust the day's unfinished tasks to the Lord, protecting your health and family time.

Keep your meetings 'mission-driven'; every council, committee, or ministry meeting must begin and end with prayer. Send your agendas out ahead of time, so, your gatherings respect everyone's time and try to remain focused.

Thank you for your tireless dedication, your leadership, and your commitment to making your parish a beacon of Christ's love. May the Holy Spirit guide your meetings, bless your routines, and inflame your hearts with the joy of the Gospel as we begin this new season together.

Yours in Christ

Laurena Greencorn



Fr Danny MacLennan – ANTIGONISH DIOCESAN SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

As your Spiritual Advisor, I want to take a few moments to say thank you for all that you do as members of the Catholic Women's League. I know that much of your work happens quietly, often behind the scenes, and sometimes without the recognition it deserves. But please know that your efforts make a real difference in the lives of people and in the life of our Church.

The National CWL Conference in Halifax was a wonderful opportunity to come together, meet old friends, make new ones, and be reminded that we are part of something much bigger than our own parish. It was encouraging to see so many women gathered together, sharing their faith and their commitment to the League. Events like this remind us that, despite the challenges we face, there is still so much enthusiasm, generosity, and life within the CWL.

I know, however, that it is not always easy. Many parishes are facing challenges, and finding people willing to volunteer and take on responsibilities can be difficult..

Never underestimate the value of a visit, a kind word, the luncheons, a prayer offered for someone in need, or the willingness to step forward when help is needed. These are the things that keep our parishes alive and show others what it means to live our faith.
When I think about the Scriptures, I am reminded how often Jesus calls people to walk together, support one another even when the road is difficult. As St. Paul reminds us, we are all members of one body in Christ. We need one another.

So, please, keep doing what you do so well. Encourage the women around you, welcome new members, and remember that every small act of faith and kindness matters. The Church needs the CWL, and our parishes need your presence, and your witness.

I am grateful to walk alongside you in this ministry. May God continue to bless you, give you strength when you are tired and joy in knowing that the work you do is worthwhile.

Keep the faith, keep supporting one another, and keep moving forward together!

Father Danny MacLennan

Our Mission

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.

Debbie White – SECRETARY



The fall season is a time for preserving the fruits of our gardens.
In my case, I go to our local market and buy the beets for pickling; as well as; the cucumbers, and onions for my mustard pickles. Although I'm not much of a gardener, I can still turn vegetables into something my family enjoys.

It's the same for our councils. Not all of us have the same talents, but all the ladies show up and are ready to help using their own special talents. Maybe not as leaders, but maybe by being part of a calling committee to keep those no longer able to come to meetings informed of what is taking place.

Regardless of your talents, if anything I learned from attending national convention is that we are a sisterhood, from coast to coast, who are rooted in our desire to live our faith, by helping others using the three pillars of Faith, Service and Social Justice.

I am Thankful for each member for showing up!

Debbie White

Doreen Boudreau – VICE-PRESIDENT



Except for my beets, my harvest was sweet
Wild berries this year were really plentiful.
Life is so grand, when God lends a hand,
For His bounteous blessings, I'm thankful.

I have been planting a garden for the past 40+ years. Some years are better than others; but this year was fantastic. I have also noticed that more people are getting into planting. Whether it's because of wanting more organic produce or whether the price of fresh vegetables is getting too expensive, the result is the same. People are investing their time and energy in producing good food for their families. Why not think of our councils as gardens? How?

Plant the seed: Invite someone to your next function or event. Let her see what the CWL is all about. Ask if she would like to belong to this wonderful sisterhood. You might be pleasantly surprised.
Water and nurture: Give her a task and make her feel part of the team. Acknowledge and praise her efforts. We all like to feel useful and appreciated.
Gather the harvest: Your council has now grown by one member and likewise so has the Catholic Women's League of Canada.

I encourage everyone to help grow our League. Happy Gardening!

Doreen Boudreau

Rita Wojtyniak – SOCIAL JUSTICE

I have transferred from Service to Social Justice for the next two years. The collaboration between Faith, Service and Social Justice has increased, resulting in more group projects, workshops and fellowship.



We have begun a review assist group to oversee the resolution process. Women that are interested in helping to present a thorough, balanced, complete resolution by offering assistance and oversight as necessary.

The National Convention in Halifax in August was a busy informative time. Five Resolutions were presented, discussed and passed, and will require follow up. The Fall issue of the League Magazine will have all 2026 Resolutions and Action Plans. A workshop: Building the House on Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace about Conflict Transformation was presented as part of Social Justice. A useful reference book by John Paul Lederach is called *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*.

The Resolution on Canadian Blood Services still requires more letter writing and follow up. Expanding a Blood Collection service to Cape Breton Regional Municipality would greatly increase total units donated to Maritime supplies.

Rita Wojtyniak

Louise Campbell – SERVICE



Regifting – We are all familiar with the term regifting and it has a poor connotation. Many have received that scented candle or candy filled mug that we really have no use for. That is until that Parish fundraiser involving an auction or white elephant table comes up.

I recently read a short essay online regarding regifting. The author made the point that we should consider the action in a more positive light. We are all blessed with some gift or gifts by God and those gifts are meant to be used.

If we do not use our gifts, it is akin to "holding your light under the bushel". However, if we use our gifts, re-gift them, it amplifies the gift. Think of the piano player who does not share his gift with others, or the painter who does not paint the beautiful painting to share with the world. When those gifts are shared with others, we are entertained and awed by the beauty we are viewing.

When we re-gift our particular gift(s), not only are we lifted by the sharing but so also is the recipient. How many times has your day been brightened by a warm hello or smile from a friend or total stranger. So let us consider how we can use or pass along our particular gifts this week. That act is re-gifting in the very best way.

Louise Campbell

Anne McCormick – PAST PRESIDENT



For many of us, the Constitution & Bylaws (C&B) is something we pull out when we have a question about meetings, elections or responsibilities. But the Constitution & Bylaws is much more than a reference book. It is the foundation for how our League operates and conducts its business. It provides a common framework that helps us work together, from the parish council level all the way to national.

It's important to remember that the C&B is not meant to be frozen in time. And here is the exciting part--change can begin with you! Any CWL member, at any level, can propose an amendment to the C&B. You do not have to be a national officer or an expert in parliamentary procedure. If you see something in the C&B that needs to be changed or updated, you can raise the idea.

The process can begin at any level. It can begin, for example, at the parish level with a member and her parish council. The proposed amendment can be presented at a parish council meeting using the official amendment form found on the national website. If the proposed amendment is accepted/approved at the parish level, it moves forward, following the established process, to the next level of the League. For example, if accepted/approved at the diocesan level, it moves to the provincial level.

Proposed amendments that have been accepted/approved at the provincial level are sent to the National Constitution & Bylaws Amendments Committee. If approved by this committee, they are circulated by national council to the membership in every parish council in every province to be voted on following the "Instructed Vote" process. Provincial voting delegates carry the Instructed Vote to the National Annual Meeting of Members. Amendments adopted at the national AMM are submitted to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops for approval. Once approved, the changes are incorporated into an updated version of the C&B booklet.

It may sound like a lengthy process, and it is! The amending process, from submission to Instructed Vote, and implementation, can take up to two years for completion.

This process should sound familiar to us. This past year, 10 proposed amendments were circulated to the membership at every parish council. Members voted on these at the parish level and presidents carried these votes forward as an "instructed vote" to the next level. Those who were fortunate enough to attend diocesan, provincial and national conventions were able to follow the amendments through the Instructed Vote at those levels.

The process demonstrates something very important about the League: every member has a voice in changing the C&B. Firstly, you can be the person who starts the conversation. You can ask: "Should this be changed?" Secondly, you can vote on proposed changes; the voice of parish members is reflected in the Instructed Vote. The Constitution & Bylaws belongs to all of us! It
grows and changes with us!

Congratulations to St. Louis Parish Council, Louisdale, for taking that first step and submitting the proposed amendment related to changes to our crest! This proposed amendment, with nine other proposed amendments, was adopted at the National Convention in Halifax in August

Anne McCormick

Mary Myers – TREASURER

Some thoughts about treasurers, thanks to Google:



"Your money, my responsibility."
"Every dollar has a purpose."
"Money matters, but integrity matters more."
"To a good spender, God is the Treasurer."

Hello, Sisters in the League,

My first six months as Treasurer has been a journey for sure. A step by step learning process, a taking-on of responsibility for OPM (Other People's Money), and a growing confidence that I am doing what is required of me because of the guidance provided by former treasurers and approved procedures and guidelines well documented by CWL. To all council Treasurers, both new and returning, I recommend reading the "Guidelines for Treasurers" and reviewing it occasionally to keep fresh in performing your duties.

I will continue serving our Diocesan council as Treasurer, and should anyone performing the duties of Treasurer in her council require assistance or help I will do the best I can to support her.

God Bless, ***Mary Myers***

Save the date!

Diocesan Spring Convention – St. Andrews, St. Andrews – April 24, 2027
Nova Scotia Provincial Convention – New Glasgow - June 4, 5, 6 2027
National Convention – Winnipeg, Manitoba – August 8-11, 2027

Check out our Antigonish Diocesan Website @ https://antigonishdiocesancwl.ca/.
It's chock full of pertinent information.

Paula Cassidy - FAITH

Well, that was fast! Summer scooted by without even a second glance back to see how we were doing. Here we are emersed in, as some call it, "Sweater Weather." And although cooler, I am reminded there are lots of beautiful scenery, events and celebrations to enjoy.

As the new Faith Chair for our CWL Diocesan Council, I want to share some ideas on ways we can celebrate, in a Catholic way, "Hallowe'en" with you.

First a little background. "All Hallows Eve" is where the name of Hallowe'en comes from. A hollowed person is another name for a saint. We call October 31 – All Hallow's Eve because it is the eve of All Saints Day which is on November 1. The night before Nov. 1 became known as All Hallowe'en, which was short for "evening before All Hallows Day". It was shortened to what we now know as Hallowe'en. The Mass that the Catholic Church celebrates on Nov. 1 was called "Allhallomas". This means Mass of all the hallowed (saintly people). It is commonly called All Saints Day.

Nov. 1 is a special day called the feast of All Saints. It is the day the Church celebrates with all the people who have died and have now gone to God. Everyone who has lived and died in Jesus' love is a saint. Nov. 2 is a special day called the feast of All Souls. It is celebrated in honour and remembrance of the souls of our dearly departed loved ones, and an opportunity to pray for others that still need our prayers.

How can we celebrate Halloween with a Catholic flair?

- Encourage our children to dress up as Little Saints. We can do our best to remind everyone that this day is the eve of the feast of All Saints by dressing up as a favourite Saint.
- Take time to visit the graves of our family and friends who have gone to God. You may want to leave a prayer, a flower or a candle on their grave in thanksgiving for their love.
- On Nov. 1 and Nov. 2, attend Mass, if possible, to give thanks and to honour those who have gone before us helping to light our path to God.

So, on this Hallowe'en these are the things I wish for you:
May the only ghost that comes your way, be the Holy Ghost - to guide your way.
May the only spirits you chance to meet be the spirits of love and kindness sweet.
These are my Hallowe'en prayers for you: May God bless you in everything you do.
It's no trick, I just want to say; it's a treat to know you in every way.



Paula Cassidy

Life Membership

Being a CWL member has been one of the greatest blessings in my life. Shortly after I got married one of the ladies in the neighborhood invited me to join St. Ninian Catholic Women's League. Little did I know where this would lead and how it would affect my life. Much has changed since I joined 62 years ago but the fundamental reason for the existence of the Catholic Women's League remains the same. Members are called “to grow in Faith and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.”

Over the years I served on various committees at all levels of the League. Each position offered opportunities and challenges. Many times I felt out of my comfort zone but with the support of my sisters in the League I grew in faith and confidence and would actually tell myself: “you can do it.” I have had the privilege of serving alongside many dedicated and faith-filled women who have supported me and offered advice.

One of the highlights of my CWL activities was my involvement in the WUCWO Conference held in Antigonish in 1983. Irene LeFort asked me to be in charge of the Information desk for the two weeks of the Conference. This was the first time that the World Union of Catholic Women's Organization held their Conference on North American soil. It was a very busy time for all the volunteers who interacted with the delegates, answered questions, booked hundreds of return flights, rerouted people, made phone calls to places we had never even heard of, etc. It was a great opportunity to meet women from different countries, each with their own unique cultural background. It was like going on a two-week vacation without leaving home. What a witness of faith in action!

As I write this article, I am reminded of the question in the Baltimore Catechism: Why did God make you? Answer: To know him. love Him and serve Him.(may not be the exact words). I often think of this as I contemplate my involvement in the CWL. For me, the more I learned about the wonderful work being done by the CWL, the more I loved the organization and the more willing I was to serve. This brings me to the importance we should place on educating our members, teaching them leadership skills so that they too can grow in faith and in their service to God's people. Each member has her own special gifts that she can use in service to the League. When we tap into these gifts and match them up to the different activities, we see members flourish and councils grow in faith and service. Every member is good at something. What is your “something”?

Let us continue to call upon Our Lady of Good Counsel to inspire us to *“Ignite Our Passion, Empower His Mission.”*

Toosje Van de Sande, Life Member



Council Submissions

St. Louis, Louisdale –



St. Louis Catholic Women's League in Louisdale held a 'Living Rosary' on Wednesday, September 30, 2026, in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Neighboring councils - St. John the Baptist, River Bourgeois, St. Joseph's, Petit de Grat, Our Lady of Assumption, Arichat, husbands and community members also took part in the Rosary in English and French. We were challenged to continue to listen to Indigenous voices, honour the survivors and families affected by residential schools, and choose actions that foster healing, respect, justice, and right relationships. A light lunch followed in the parish hall. Thank you to all who were able to be a part of this moving experience.







Submitted by Joan Bona, President, St. Louis CWL

St Theresa's, Sydney –**Where did the summer go?**

Our new executive took office in January, and we hit the ground running. Feast Day in April with Bishop Kirkpatrick celebrating Mass followed by a turkey dinner. The evening was highlighted by award of service pins, a Merit award and a Maple Leaf pin presentation. We were very pleased to present the Maple Leaf Service Pin to Denise Forgeron. Well-deserved Denise.



No rest for the wicked, we hosted the Diocesan spring AMM and convention April 25. With a beautifully decorated hall, we welcomed our sisters from various councils to enjoy good food and had a very successful day together.





We weren't done yet as a number of St Theresa's CWL were on the National planning committee. Off to Halifax mid-August where we met old friends and were introduced to future friends. I am pleased to report that we had 12 members attend National.

We thought we would have a break but planning for our Fall Fair, which will take place November 19 from 7 to 9 pm at St. Theresa's Parish Center, ramped up. All are welcome for an evening of fun and friendship.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you and your families from St. Theresa's CWL. Safe travels.

Maureen Campbell, President St Theresa's Sydney

Council Submissions

Our Lady of Assumption CWL - Arichat



Sometimes we are in the background and not seen as active but in many ways, many of us are quite active. Some of our members volunteer at the local nursing home where we sometimes celebrate the residents who have birthdays within the month by bringing birthday cake or cookies and organizing music for the residents.

Some of our members bring the residents in their wheelchairs to Sunday mass. Others bring communion to the residents who wish to receive. Some of our members will take elderly community members for their groceries, to do their banking and to medical appointments. Members do the church collection, ministries, teach religion and prepare children to receive the Sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. Some members work at the bi-weekly food bank.

On Thanksgiving Monday, we hold our Annual Acadian Meat Pie Supper in conjunction with Celtic Colours.







At Christmas we gather, bake cookies, pack and deliver boxes to the sick and shut-ins in the community.

Submitted by: Brenda Boudreau, President, OLA Arichat

Holy Name, Westville



On May 8, 2026, we had a bowling party followed by cake and ice cream to celebrate our CWL members who turned 80 this year. Pictured are: Katy Fitzpatrick, Gerry Cameron, Father Peter MacDonald, Anne Mattie, Belle Bourque, and Audrey O'Neil who are active and greatly appreciated CWL members of Holy Name Parish in Westville.

Submitted by Lynn Fahey

Stella Maris, Pictou



Members of Stella Maris CWL attended the Pictou Town 2026 Volunteer Awards reception and were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for CWL community service. From left: Marilyn McCarthy, Donna Collins, Laurena Greencorn, Mayor Jim Ryan, Sandra Landry, Valerie Cyr and Doris Scanlan.

Council Submissions

St. Ninian, Antigonish

Members of the St. Ninian Catholic Women's League have been active on a number of fronts since the summer. In the first instance, five members of the executive (Toosje Van de Sande, Past President, Helen Kennedy, President, Betty Farrell, Treasurer, Janet Bekkers, Social Justice Chair and Bonnie Gillis, Faith Chair, had the privilege of attending the National Convention in Halifax this past August.

Members are now actively involved in executing an ambitious fall agenda, including a fall bazaar and the launch of a theological book club. Ongoing activities continue with the oversight of the Opportunity Shop, catering to funeral receptions and diocesan events, such as the upcoming Vicar of the Founder lecture at St. Francis Xavier University this October.

Submitted by: Helen Kennedy, President, St. Ninian CWL

St Peters, Port Hood

St Peter's Parish CWL in Port Hood, Cape Breton had a very busy year under new President, Deb MacDonald. Each year our council donates votive candles to St. Peter's Parish, Church, which in turn raises money for the Parish coffers. In order to raise the necessary funds, a Bi-Weekly Lottery was started in March of 2026. To date, we have purchased and donated over $4,000 worth of Votive candles as well as new glass votive holders.





In June, we partnered with our very own Mary Janet MacDonald from Tunes and Wooden Spoons, and held a fund-raising event called, "High Tea and Tunes". This event was a sell out and was enjoyed by many as you will see in our photos. Many thanks to all who attended, all who donated their time and\or decorations, and who worked tirelessly to ensure our event was one of fellowship and love! Particular thanks to Mary Janet, who is a dedicated member as well as Past President of our CWL. It really does take a Village!!





Our organization has also been giving back to the Community by offering free information sessions on topics such as Will and Estate Planning, Healthy Living and strengthening Exercises through Yoga.

We ended our spring meetings with a Holy Hour at the Church chapel offered for Health Care workers and all who care for our aging population.

As the fall and winter approaches, we are looking ahead and forward to planning and partnering with a local business to offer a free hot meal once a month to the seniors in our parish community. We hope to be able to update everyone on this plan in the Spring Newsletter.

Blessings to All! Deb MacDonald, President, St. Peters CWL, Port Hood

Council Submissions

Our Lady of Lourdes, Stellarton –



Here at Our Lady of Lourdes CWL, we are "FALLING" into a time of festivals, fun and future plans. The month of September saw us present a $500.00 bursary to Myla Skoke Woods for her continued studies at Queen's University for medicine.



On September 20th the new executive of our council was installed at Mass. Tara Rodgers president for 2026- 2028 led our first meeting for this term with a commitment from our executive to continue promoting Human Trafficking awareness.

Membership is in the forefront of our council's efforts this year as well. Recently we took advantage of our Parish Picnic to set up an information booth to speak to parishioners at our gathering. We displayed some of the highlights of the CWL and handed out pamphlets to welcome prospective members. Treats were provided and a Jellybean Guessing Jar challenged parishioners' guessing and counting skills. Our goal of course was to invite new members and to raise awareness about the Catholic Woman's' League and how it relates to our three pillars, Faith, Service and Social Justice

The National Conference awarded six of our members the opportunity to experience the CWL at its immensity. We were privileged to hear expert speakers so committed to our faith, prayerful and inspiring liturgies and to share with woman and men committed to the mission of Christ. Sharing insights, gathering around the tables for discussions, meals and prayer was indeed a sacred time.

Submitted by Paula Cassidy Past President Our Lady of Lourdes Council. Stellarton/ New Glasgow

Meet your new Diocesan Executive Officers for the 2026-2028 term

President – Laurena Greencorn
Past-President – Anne McCormick
Vice-President – Doreen Boudreau
Secretary – Debbie White
Treasurer – Mary Myers
Faith Chair – Paula Cassidy
Service Chair – Louise Campbell
Social Justice Chair – Rita Wojtyniak

We are here to serve you.
If you need any assistance, please reach out.
If we don't have the answer right away, we will find it!