

St. John's Catholic Women's League (CWL) Newsletter Community in Action



April 2022

Transitional Executive

President: Maryse Ristuccia Secretary: Celestine Hall Treasurer: Joan Beal

Spiritual Development: Open

Community/Family Life: Jenni Commanda

Dorothy Currie

Education: Corinne Santianni Health: Krysia Theriault Geri Crisci

Communications: Carmen Vanderreest

Contact information for the executives can be found at

the end of this newsletter.

CWL Websites

National: www.cwl.ca
Provincial: www.cwl.on.ca
Diocesan: www.cwltoronto.ca

The Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) is a sisterhood, rooted in Gospel values that, "Calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service". The CWL is guided by its motto "For God and Canada".

Patroness of the CWL is Our Lady of Good Counsel whose feast day is April 26th.

Parish Website

https://stjohnsto.archtoronto.org

This is the website for all matters relating to our church. Use it for all contact information and its many links such as the weekly Bulletin and other great resources for our parish and for the Archdiocese.

Parish YouTube Channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8pLWrdARlezR MzjHZJv9aQ

Use this link to view all videos posted by our church including Sunday Masses. Be sure to "like" the channel.

Next Meeting

Finally, after a 2 year absence we will come together, in-person, for our May meeting!

We are waiting on a confirmed date within the first few days of May and will send that out as soon as we receive it!

Pray the Rosary

We pray the Rosary every Friday night at 8:00 p.m. online via Zoom. Prayers matter, prayers support and uplift. If you have a special prayer request for our Rosary night please let Maryse or Carmen know. Cameras do not have to be on and everyone will be asked to mute their microphones at the beginning of prayers. Only those leading the prayers will be heard. Everyone is welcome to follow along. The link below is the same link used every Friday:

https://zoom.us/j/94327881622?pwd=UWpCTjR4cjFldGc5Yjk4bE5nbEg0dz09

If needed: Meeting ID: 943 2788 1622

Pass code: 263230

Dial up: +1 647 374 4685 Canada

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

Prayers

Let us remember these fellow sisters in our prayers:

Dianne Williams Noreen Boyle Marlene Libbus

Carmel Richard

Help is Here

We have members who are happy to help anyone needing assistance with grocery shopping, errands or appointments. Please contact Maryse at: maryse.ristuccia@gmail.com

Aid for Ukraine

As the war on Ukraine continues there is an urgent need for humanitarian help. Prayer is needed as are financial donations which can be made through these secure links:

The Archdiocese of Toronto
<a href="https://www.archtoronto.org/en/contact-us/donations/donate-pages/donate-to-humanitarian-us/donate-pages/donate-p

relief/

Canadian Red Cross

https://donate.redcross.ca/page/100227/donate/1?locale=en-CA

1...

Message from Maryse

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! Happy Easter to you and your families. It is so wonderful to be able to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist together this year in a more normal way. Thanks be to God that slowly we are returning to the opportunity to go to church without having to jump through so many hoops. For me this Easter it is a more joyous expression as the choir is singing, continuing with masks, but singing out our joy that Christ is risen.

It is exciting to see spring begin to show signs of blooming, and our CWL is blooming with plans and projects that are in progress or soon will be. Our sale of reusable produce bags will be coming up on the weekend of April 24/25 and we need all hands-on deck. These bags will help reduce the amount of plastic we use, and the funds raised will be put to good use in various ways in our church and community. Please support this project by purchasing the reusable bags and volunteering to help with the sales.

I am so thankful that we have been able to keep the CWL group going over these long months via Zoom but am very excited to be able to have our next meeting in person! Sharing time together in person is such an important aspect of our group, praying together, learning together and sharing fellowship, in person, is very uplifting. I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at our May General meeting.

Message from Our Clergy

This space is shared by Fr. John-Mark and Deacon Paul on a rotating basis.

Guilt Free Binging by Deacon Paul: Episode 2

Dear Sisters in Christ. In episode one of Guilt Free Binging, I wrote about an amazing TV APP called The Chosen. I would love to hear from you if you have started to watch it. I continue to watch the "reruns" and yes, I continue to tear up every time Jesus performs a miracle. The initial episodes of season three, should be streaming by Christmas.

In this episode of Guilt Free Binging, I am going to talk about two of my favourite "guilt free" POD casts. I will admit, right up front, that after ignoring PODS casts for several years, I developed a bit of a "pod cast addiction" early in covid. There are just so many free and interesting pod casts to pick from. I learned (yet again) that too much of a good thing, can be a bad thing. Please don't forget to always set aside some time every day to listen to God speak to you. You will find Him in silence.

The Catholic church believes that there are many saints in heaven. Some are quite famous, like St. Anthony who is the patron saint we can pray to, when something is lost. Some are more modern Saints like St. Teresa of Kolkata, or St. John Paul II, who we may have even seen in person. But what about the other 10,000 or so saints, recognized by the Roman Catholic Church? If you want to know more some of them, check out the 'Heroes of the Faith' pod cast. This pod cast is the work of Isaac Longworth, a soon to be ordained seminarian with the Companions of the Cross. So far Isaac has created almost 70 short 20-30 minute pod casts, each on a particular saint. They are easy to listen to and filled with interesting facts.

My second guilt free favourite POD cast is Bishop Barron's 'Word on Fire'. There are 331 episodes, with new episodes being added weekly. There are, of course, a lot of episodes on our faith, but equally impressive are the QnA pod casts Bishop Baron often does with children, university students, and even Google engineers.

Each episode is well done, and I often learn something about our faith that I did not know. I highly recommend it!!!

Feel free to email if you would like to discuss either of the above, or share with me what guilt free pod casts you have been listening to lately!

rpm@paulmccourt.com

God is love...dp

2022 Membership

To date 47 members have said 'yes' and paid their dues for 2022 – thank you for believing in the many good works of our council.

Any female 16 yrs or older is welcome to join! If you have yet to renew or are interested in joining, the \$25 annual fee can be paid in one of the following ways: e-transfer to our new council account at:

jaybeescwl@gmail.com or mail or drop off a cheque to Maryse Ristuccia at 87 Coalport Dr. M1N 4B5 or to Joan Beal at 25 Ferncroft Dr. M1N 2X3. Cheques are payable to "St. John's CWL". Please include your name, address, phone number and email address if you have one. If these payment methods are not convenient for you, contact Maryse to pick your payment up:

marvse.ristuccia@gmail.com

We look forward to this 61st year as a council!

Spiritual Development

By Maryse Ristuccia

Spring has sprung and we are all so in need of spending some warm, sun filled hours outdoors. Spending time outside in God's creation and taking in the beauty around us can bring us closer to God. Sometimes when we pray it is hard to concentrate but I propose to you to

try a Rosary Walk. Take your Rosary beads with you into the sunshine as you stroll along and pray the Rosary as you journey. April is Earth month, and it is perfect to go out and pray in nature. We are so fortunate to have many parks and trails within our neighbourhood where we can take in nature's reawakening beauty and pray as we go. Look around and absorb all that God has made and pray that we will safe guard it and treasure it.

A Rosary Walk is something that I was doing without knowing that it was "a thing". When my husband and I started taking long walks every day I would begin to feel so tired and think that I couldn't make it back and then I began to use my fingers to pray the Rosary as I went. My tiredness was pushed out of my thoughts, and I just focused on the words of the prayers and looked at the changing landscape as we walked along.

I recently learned that just north of Toronto in King City at the Marylake Retreat Center; there is the largest Rosary in the world! It was made to line the 1.5 kilometer Rosary Walk pathway on their beautifully kept grounds.

Perhaps we can plan a trip to go there together. In the meantime, try your own Rosary Walk in one of our many parks or trails.



Memorial Mass for Deceased CWL Members

On the Feast Day of our Patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel, a memorial Mass will be celebrated in the church for our departed CWL sisters. All members are asked to join in this celebration where family members of our deceased sisters will be invited to attend. We hope to hold a brief social time in the Hall after the Mass; a chance to say hello in person! Join us Tuesday, April 26th at 7 p.m.

Still Needed

There is one position left to fill on our executive. We hope there is a member interested in taking on our Spiritual Development chair position. Is it you?! Executive positions are very important to our council but are not overly time consuming. We work together and provide lots of support. Please consider stepping up for this role. If you wish to discuss what the role entails, please contact Maryse or go to this link: https://ottawa.cwl.on.ca/files/1%20Duties%20of%20the%20Officers%20Answers.pdf

Fundraiser

Our parish-wide fundraiser is planned for next weekend, April 23rd / 24th! We will be selling packs of environmentally friendly produce bags for only \$5 after each of the Masses. Please support your CWL!

Mental Health and Wellness Corner

By our Health co-chairs Geri Crisci and Krysia Theriault This month's topic is "Social Support".

One basic definition of social support is "having friends, family or others to turn to in times of crisis or need". Having others to turn to can provide a broader perspective from which to view your situation and can also offer you a more positive view of yourself. Studies have shown that available and reliable social supports enhance the quality of life in addition to providing a buffer against adverse life events.

Many articles on the subject define four different types of social support:

- > Emotional support which includes expressions of empathy, love, trust and caring.
- > Instrumental support which includes tangible aid and/or services.
- > Informational support which can include advice, suggestions and specific information.
- > Appraisal which is providing information that is useful for self evaluation (example: you're very upset about a major change in your life; a friend who has known you a long time, reminds you of how well you have managed major change in the past, which helps you evaluate your situation differently).

What kinds of support do you currently need? What kinds of support have you needed in the past? Do you have people in your life who are helpful? It's a good exercise for each of us to periodically do a support systems check in, answering the above questions. Many of us are in a position where we are providing support to many others in many ways, so...especially for the "supporters" out there, we ask

"Who supports YOU?!"

Now if you are a helper by nature, particularly a competent helper, we have more questions for you to consider!

Are you clear about your needs? Have you let your support person/people know your needs? Have you gotten a commitment from your person/people that they are able/willing to support you when you need them? Even people, who love us dearly, can't read our minds! The clearer and more specific we are with our loved ones, the easier it is for them to support us. For example, Geri shares, "When I need to complain about a hard day or situation, I just want to complain! I do not want advice; I do not want someone to tell me what I should have done or what I should do. I'd like total empathy! Bonus: offer to get me an iced espresso!

It is our hope that this column has provided some ideas for thought and has been useful (or at least brought a smile, which we all know is very good for our mental health!). Please feel free to let us know what you think! Remember: open invitation to do a guest appearance in this column. All feedback welcome as are subject ideas. A heartfelt Happy Spring and Happy Easter to each and every one of you!

Harbingers of Spring

The calendar tells us spring 'arrived' four weeks ago even though it has not felt like it, yet. Members were asked 'What is your harbinger of spring?' How do you judge the arrival of spring; what is it that signals spring has sprung for you? Is it a sight, a sound, an event, or perhaps a combination of things? Following are the replies received:

Corinne Santianni wrote: "My mother was a big proponent of finding the first harbinger of spring. She would always point her 'find' out to us, her children. It was usually a beautiful spring day, where she would declare...."Smell that everyone! That smell of damp earth and new grass is the harbinger of spring!" Or, the first sighting of a robin, "There it is! That fat robin is a true sign that spring is here!"

I must say, I carry on her tradition of declaring the arrival of spring....whether is be the smell of damp earth or crocuses bursting through the dirt, a fat robin sitting on my back deck, or the warmth of the sunshine bringing new life and colour.

Spring, in my opinion, is the shortest season, so we have to notice it with all of our senses."

Carmen Vanderreest wrote: "It's the birds! Yes, there are crocuses and the lovely blue scilla and extended daylight but for me it's the birds. To hear the call of that first red-winged black bird, to see the first flash of

yellow and black of a male American gold finch; the short bursts of a woodpecker drumming for territory and a mate and the disappearance of juncos from my yard as they migrate north – spring is here!"

Eileen Pyne-Rudzik wrote: "My harbinger of spring is the small patch of snowdrops beside the birch tree in my garden. No matter how much crusty snow and debris remains elsewhere, these tiny blooms tell me that better days are coming."

Norma McCleverty wrote: "Ah! Spring

- time to put the boots, jackets, hats, scarves, gloves away **?**
- seeing the first Robin on my tree in the front yard
- loving the birds singing
- -gentle spring rain, how good it smells and suddenly there are bulbs ₹
- -children playing and laughing outside
- -the smell of neighbourhood barbeques
- -Feeling blessed to have seen another winter end 🚣"

Maryse Ristuccia wrote: "The last patch of ice has melted in front of the back fence in the yard, the day lilies are showing little points of green through the soil and a fat robin is hopping on the deck railing, but for me, I still don't believe that spring is here. We might get another snowfall, or we will wake up to frosted roofs and winter really is hanging on this year. For me, the real start of spring is when I see and hear the red winged blackbirds calling to each other, then I know that spring has arrived. Living across from the Quarry Lands these red-winged blackbirds come back every year and settle in that open marsh space and from there make forays into all the yards around. The sound of them and the flash of their red markings say spring."

Geri Crisci wrote: "Every year I look forward to the changing of the clocks. I mark that date in my calendar on the day we turn the clocks back in the Fall! All eyes ahead toward March. For me, this is the first step in walking toward Spring.

Next, I listen for the birds; their songs, an increase in their activities, the gatherings in bushes, geese and ducks flying in formation overhead. Sigh, it's happening. The extra hour of daylight at the end of the day, and finally, the appearance of snowdrops, crocus and the other beauties, pushing through the surface of the soil.

It would be nice to have warm temperatures arrive and stay! However, that's not been my experience. So, I savour any and all reasonable days and cheer the arrival of rain instead of snow and ice.

Happy Spring, everyone!"

Lenten Project

Thank you to all those who donated the many board games collected for Native Child and Family Services. While these games provide family fun they also help children improve memory and cognitive skills, increase processing speed, develop logic and reasoning, improve critical thinking, etc. Our Community / Family Life cochair Jenni Commanda will deliver the games on our behalf.

Guest Speaker

April is Earth Month so we went looking for a guest speaker who could present us with something related to the natural environment. We did not have to look further than our own council where we asked member Eileen Pyne-Rudzik to speak to us about "Oleh's forest", or "Grandad's forest" as his family lovingly calls it. Oleh Rudzik was Eileen's husband for more than 45 years. He passed away in 2018. They met at the University of Toronto when Eileen moved here from Australia. She had graduated with a Masters in marine studies and came to Canada to pursue her PHD. Eileen told us "Oleh was a graduate student in immunology in the Zoology department" when she met him. In August of 1967, Canada's Centennial Year, Oleh bought property within Hastings County (located along the border of Eastern and Central Ontario) where he started his own centennial project. The property was 70 acres (just over 28 ha.) and about 14 km east of the town of Bancroft. The property had been farmed for generations but little evidence of that activity remained. Along the property boundaries was some natural mixed forest and the large central part of the property was abandoned meadow. It was this meadow where Oleh's project took shape. The region is marginalized farmland and the meadow had been overgrazed as pasture for years and in danger of erosion. With advice from what was then, the Department of Lands and Forest, Oleh set out "to control the erosion by planting trees". At the time, Lands and Forest had a program to fight erosion which landowners could access if they had an acceptable plan. Through this program they could purchase seedling trees grown by provincial-run nurseries for just one cent per seedling! Oleh got to work in the spring of 1968 by ordering "5250 trees made up of 4000 red pine, 500 red oak, 450 Carolina poplar and 100 each of white pine, white cedar, and silver maple". Another 500 trees were ordered in the fall which "included 100 Scotch pine and 100 European larch". Oleh's plan included diversity of species. From 1969 to 1973, more species were included: Jack pine, white ash, black walnut, black locust, and basswood.

Eileen said, "After the first major planting in 1968 about 1000 trees were planted each year until, at the end of 1973, the total was 11,800 trees planted!" Oleh did most of the work himself but enjoyed the occasional planting trips with friends and family. Eileen explained that planting went like this: "dig spade in, push it forward; drop small tree into space; tamp soil back into place; take 3 paces forward and repeat. Plant in parallel rows about 3 paces apart." Not all trees survived so over the years new seedlings of the same species were planted in the empty spaces, or a different species that could grow in the shade of the established trees were also planted; nature would also lend a hand dropping seeds that would grow naturally. From 1974 to '78 Eileen and Oleh lived in Alberta. They would visit the property in summers to monitor growth. In the fall of '78 they planted an additional 1000 trees and from '79 to '87 they lived abroad so the forest was left alone to grow. In the first three years of the '90's an additional 2400 trees were added at a new cost of 10¢ per tree. These seedlings included white spruce, Norway spruce, and Japanese larch. The provincial nurseries were closed later in the 90's which left Oleh to establish his own "home nursery" in their backyard on Silverbirch Ave. He collected seeds from native and non-native trees and started cultivating his own seedlings through various germination methods, often cold stratifying seeds in their beer fridge! He grew the tiny seedlings in homemade cages to protect them from squirrels. Eileen shared that "Oleh would also collect seeds from maple and birch trees and distribute them in likely areas over the property in the hope of natural germination." He discovered a stand of English oak trees in High Park and was rather successful at growing some on the property. He was also successful with ginkgo seeds taken from trees at Queen's Park and from Cosburn Ave. He knew the ginkgo tree originally came from northern China so thought it would do well in the Bancroft area. Two ginkgo seedlings are still in the home nursery waiting to be planted by grandchildren. Eileen told us "Plantings were marked with small markers identifying the species and year planted and Oleh would often use hockey sticks, which made great larger area markers! Sometimes he called the project his "hockey stick plantation". Eileen ended her presentation by telling us "Oleh passed away in September 2018 but he left an established forest and a legacy of love and stewardship of the forest for his children and grandchildren. His tradition is continuing: I planted a few small trees and acorns with a visiting Australian cousin in 2019." Also in 2019 "Our daughter and

grandson started a project to remember Grandad by planting acorns of red and white oaks. They now have their own home tree nursery in Oneonta, New York. They have already shared some 'baby oaks' with family and friends in Iowa and Massachusetts. Oleh, I am sure, would approve."



Oleh Rudzik among his growing trees



Eileen Pyne-Rudzik in Oleh's forest

April Celebrations!



Happy birthday to everyone celebrating a birthday this month!



Congratulations to:

Maryse Ristuccia and her husband Ross celebrating their 44th anniversary on the 29th!



This campaign is underway with 2 more collection Sundays

scheduled for May 1st and June 5th.

Parishioners contributed \$7867 during the first collection in March. Our parish goal has been set at \$73,000. Live the Gospel by providing for those in need. Please give generously.



50/50 Lottery

The Knights of Columbus continue to fundraise for "Food for Families" in Ontario through an online 50/50 lottery

for 2022. Tickets are 15 for \$10, 40 for \$20 or 100 for \$40 for each quarterly draw. Ticket numbers are computer generated and emailed to the buyer. The second quarter jackpot draw takes place June 30th, with early bird draws on May 1st and June 1st. When ordering, there is a drop-down menu under "Organization" to choose the parish council you support - St. John's Council number is "Scarborough Beaches 7008".

For full details and to purchase your tickets go to: https://www.kofcontario5050.com

Synod on Synodality



S y n o d From the Archdiocese of Toronto: 2 0 2 I "Pope Francis has launched the Synod on Synodality, an

ambitious two-year global process of listening to the faithful."

He is "... asking every Catholic to help discern what the Holy Spirit is telling us at this moment as the Church enters its third millennium."

For details and to fill out the anonymous short survey, whether you have good or bad things to say about the Church, please visit:

https://www.archtoronto.org/en/outreach/news/archd iocesan/the-synod-on-synodality-share-your-thoughts/

April Calendar

22nd – Earth Day

23rd / 24th – Produce Bags Fundraiser in the church

24th – Divine Mercy Sunday

26th – Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel & memorial Mass for deceased CWL members in our church 7:00 p.m.

28th/29th – 101st CWL Annual Toronto Diocesan Convention

Milk Bag Project

We now have 3 members crocheting milk bags into mats for the homeless! Please <u>fold or roll</u> clean and dry outer milk bags together instead of crinkling them up to make it easier for the cutting process.

Any that you have can be dropped off to the porch at either:

Maryse's house at **87 Coalport Drive** or Carmen's house at **66A Osborne Ave.**

Virtue of the Month

From the Toronto Catholic District School Board: April virtue is Justice.

- "God has told you, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)
- "If you want peace, work for justice." (Paul VI)
- "True peace is not merely the absence of war, it is the presence of justice." (Jane Addams)
- "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." (Martin Luther King)
- "Justice is the constant and perpetual will to allot to every man his due." (Domitus Ulpian)

Catholic Family Services

A wide variety of programs and services are offered through Catholic Family Services of Toronto. Their counsellors "are prepared to work with the needs, strengths, values, and goals of individuals and families. We also recognise and sensitively respond to differences in cultural, racial, gender, and religious backgrounds of clients."

Please call **416-921-1163** (Central Toronto office) or **416-222-0048** (North Toronto office) and leave a message with your name and contact information. A staff person will contact you and provide you with further information." You can also send an email to this main address: info@cfstoronto.com

FEE FOR SERVICE:

Counselling fees are charged according to a client's income level. No one is denied service because of

his/her inability to pay fees." For more info go to: https://www.cfstoronto.com

CWL Bursaries

CWL's National Bursary Fund was established in 1990 and provides members with financial assistance while pursuing studies, courses, seminars, workshops and diploma/degree programs in areas of, spiritual growth, adult faith formation, youth ministry, ministry to patients in palliative care, ministry to shut-ins, parliamentary procedure, and literacy tutoring. Members use this bursary opportunity to take online courses and workshops. One thousand dollars can be awarded per year to a maximum of \$4,000 in a member's lifetime. Refer to item #552 on the League's national website for criteria and application information. The League brochure is found at: https://cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/312-National-Bursary-Fund-Brochure-2019.pdf

CWL National Webpage

In ongoing efforts to inspire you in faith, service and social justice the League is happy to introduce a new permanent webpage that has been added to the CWL national website. "To Inspire" is the home for inspirational messaging and videos promoting the League: https://cwl.ca/to-inspire/

The CWL & Canadian Blood Services



Canadian Blood Services is always in need of blood donations.

There is an immediate need for new and returning blood donors. The urgent need for blood continues in our healthcare system.

There are three permanent Canadian Blood Service centers in Toronto: 2 Bloor Street East, 67 College Street, and 163 King Street West. If you're in good health, please visit <u>blood.ca</u> to book an appointment and for the latest updates.

Everyone has the privilege to donate blood and encourage others to donate. CWL members are asked to give the gift of life and to register with Canadian Blood Services "Partners for Life" program using the League's unique Partner ID (CATHO11269) to record donations.

For information on Blood Services go to: https://www.blood.ca/en

Genetics

On the topic of Genetics, you can monitor and study the advantages / disadvantages of scientific developments in light of teachings of the Catholic Church through the Canadian Catholic Bioethics Institute (CCBI). Current information is available regularly on the CCBI website. http://www.ccbi-utoronto.ca/

WUCWO

The Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) is officially recognized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) as a lay association of women and is affiliated with the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO), a world-wide federation holding membership in the conference of International Catholic Organizations. Click here to discover all that WUCWO does and to read their monthly newsletter:

https://www.wucwo.org/index.php/en/

CWL Parish Contact Information

Maryse Ristuccia:

maryse.ristuccia@gmail.com 437-983-0557

Celestine Hall:

cf.hall@sympatico.ca 416-694-8922

Joan Beal:

joanbeal@rogers.com 416-693-4255

Corinne Santianni:

zed28@rogers.com 416-436-0300

Jenni Commanda:

cwajenni@rogers.com 647-346-2040

Dorothy Currie:

dorothy.ghosh@yahoo.com 416-804-1793

Krysia Theriault:

krysiatheriault@gmail.com 416-686-2742

Geri Crisci:

gcrisci@ckmconsultation.com 416-697-4544

Carmen Vanderreest:

vanderreestcarmen@gmail.com 416-691-5165