



November 2021

Transitional Executive

President: Maryse Ristuccia
Secretary:
Treasurer:
Spiritual Development:
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 new website for all matters relating to our church. Use it to register for Masses (after 11:00 a.m. each Tuesday) and for Confessions. It has links to the weekly Bulletin and many other great resources for our parish as well as for the Archdiocese.

Parish YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8pLWrdARlezRMzjHZJv9aQ>

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

Next Meeting

All meetings have been suspended due to pandemic restrictions. From time to time we will be holding online presentations. We will keep you posted.

Pray the Rosary

Every Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. we pray the Rosary online via Zoom. Each week different intentions are announced and anyone can request prayers ahead of time by contacting Maryse or Carmen via their information on the last page of this newsletter. 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. This link below is the same link used every Friday.

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

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

Prayers

Let us remember these fellow sisters in our prayers:
*Noreen Boyle Ulrike Licht Jennifer
Carmel Richard Marlene Libbus*

Message from Maryse - Transitional Council President

Since early this summer I have been reflecting and praying on what our CWL council means to me and to our parish. After 70 years of service to our parish, was it time to let it go? Is there still life in this council? Is it still relevant to our parish and society? How can we move forward during the pandemic? Would members return and new women join to put our faith into action? The council, for me, has been a place to make friends, build a more welcoming parish and help those in need by sharing my gospel values. It is a place to personally grow in my faith. For these reasons I have taken on this presidential role to serve the membership and look to the future as a council. I hope that you will feel the same and keep alive the legacy of St. John's faithful women who have worked so hard over the past seventy years.

Within the next few weeks, the executive will be meeting virtually to discuss our agenda and plans for upcoming Advent projects and how we can continue to work together to better our world. A big task, but many hands make light work. I want to thank the executive

members who have listened to their heart and consented to continue to work together. We are always open to everyone's ideas and suggestions; please don't hesitate to get in touch with any one of us through our contact information on the last page of this newsletter. As Advent begins, think about how you too can do works of faith and love to prepare for the coming of our Lord Jesus. Look into your heart and say 'yes' as Our Lady did.

CWL Prayer for Renewal

*God of new beginnings, ever faithful God,
we thank You for your constant care for
the women of the Catholic Women's League of Canada.
We have sought to serve You in faith by service to your
people.
Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and with the help
of Our Lady of Good Counsel,
we continue to discern Your call to seek justice
and build Your Kingdom on earth each day.
We ask your guidance as we plan the evolution of the
Catholic Women's League St. John's Council.
Grant us wisdom, the grace of discernment, and
strength.
May each of us open her heart and mind to Your will
and welcome the new life You bring to the League.
We ask this through Jesus, Your beloved Son and Our
Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever. AMEN.*

Membership

November is the time when we begin our membership renewal campaign. Due to the pandemic, last year's membership drive was very difficult. This year, although restrictions have eased up, it is still an odd time and we must find appropriate methods to handle new memberships and renewals. A member of the executive will be calling you shortly regarding membership and we look forward to hearing your continued 'yes' as we move into our 71st year as a council!

Wanted

A FEW WILLING HANDS AND HEARTS

Your Executive Council needs women to step into the following roles: Treasurer, Secretary and Spiritual Development.

These positions are very important to our council but are not overly time consuming. We all work together, and you will receive lots of support. Please consider taking a more active role. If you wish to discuss what the roles entail, please contact Maryse or go to this link:

<https://ottawa.cwl.on.ca/files/1%20Duties%20of%20the%20Officers%20Answers.pdf>

Message from Fr. John-Mark

"It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."
(Second Maccabees 12:46, Douay-Rheims translation)
This year, for the month of the Holy Souls, I did something for the first time. I made a one-page list of all the people I have known who have died. It was a good spiritual exercise. It was easy to list family members and close friends, but I also wanted to include people that I had gotten to know, and of whom I have fond memories of good conversations and interactions. As I listed the names, I found myself grouping them into different stages of my life, and different ways they were associated with me. It took a few columns on that one page, but there was my life laid out on the paper along with those wonderful people who now are much closer to the Lord than I am. The page is full of memories, and my first reaction is one of thanks to Almighty God who brought all these beautiful people into my life. I had intended it to be a list of people to pray for, but this happy side-effect of thanksgiving seems to be a real gift. It says so much about the Communion of Saints which we profess every time we say the Creed. I might remember the dead, but God has added a great gift to my failing memory: he has added communion in spirit, uniting me with my deceased friends and relatives through the miracle of prayer. It is by God's gift that the dead remain united with us in prayer. We pray for them, they pray for us, and God allows our prayers to bring each other comfort, strength and hope. My thoughts of thanksgiving increase, as I see God at work in the Church in the connections he makes between all of his children. This November, consider how you might renew your prayer life as you pray in communion with all the Faithful Departed, knowing that God is bringing us all together through our November prayers, and desires to bring us all together in a new heaven and a new earth for a great reunion in the Resurrection which we all await.

Month of Remembrance

In recognition of Remembrance Day the CWL poppies were put in the church gardens a week before Nov. 11th.



November is traditionally a month identified with remembering the dead; All Saints Day on the 1st, All Souls Day on the 2nd, National Aboriginal Veterans Day on the 8th and National Remembrance Day on the 11th. In continuing to bring us together while still apart we asked you to share stories about a deceased person you remember and why. It could be anyone; a family member, a friend, neighbour, colleague or someone unknown to you but remembered for an act or gesture or contribution of some sort. Following are the submissions:

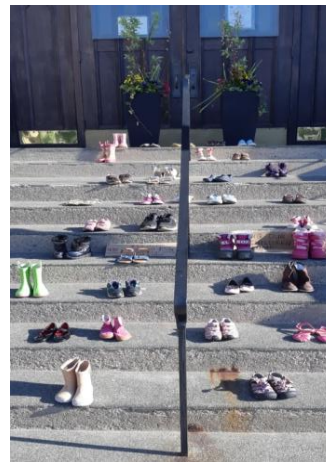
Maryse Ristuccia wrote, "November was always the month that my mother requested Masses for her deceased parents and close family and friends, and she always had a candle and my grandparents' picture on the buffet in the dining room. She would set this up on the first day of November and lit a candle every evening and prayed for the repose of souls in purgatory every night throughout the month. As a teenager I always thought it was not of any use, but I did admire her faithfulness and self-discipline. As I grew in my faith, I would remember this November practice and think that I should do it too, unfortunately I was not as disciplined as my mother. In more recent years I have begun to follow her tradition again and find it a connection with my parents, who unfortunately are long deceased, as well as my parents-in-law, also even longer gone from us. It's a quiet time to pray and think of them; a time also to pray for those who may not have anyone praying for them.

Someone I always pray for is a special young man in our lives, Danny Kassap, a Canadian marathon runner and wonderful person who escaped death and left his family behind in the Congo. He came here as a refugee to find a better life and pursue his dream of running but it was not to be. He died suddenly just shy of 29 years of age. The whole running community across Canada was in shock and all pitched in to lay him to rest with honour and love. After a month I requested a memorial Mass at St. John's to pray together with some of his closest friends for the repose of his soul. He was like a son to us and we will never forget him. In his short life he touched many people with his positive attitude and wide smile. He rests at Mount Pleasant Cemetery, where he would often do his training runs. Each time we visit his grave there is always a new race ribbon or medal from someone who has dedicated a race to him or was inspired by him to run. I keep him in my prayers and know that someone so good and kind is now resting in peace. I hope that his family in the Congo are well and that they may feel the prayers that I dedicate to his memory.

November is a cold, grey month but this tradition of remembering loved ones gone from us brings me closer to them and I remember the good times and warmth we shared and November's greyness loses its bite."

Geri Crisci wrote, "We're all familiar with photos of groups of Indigenous children, often in uniforms, standing in front of a school. Most of us knew none of these children personally; we do see and recognize familiar emotions in their expressions: the innocence; fear; "blank stares"; stillness. We can see vulnerability and be drawn into sorrow for the lives led and loss of life and future. Let us pray for them, and perhaps most importantly (as these children have long been in God's arms) let us pray for their families and for their descendants, who continue to struggle today as a result of this horrifying history.

Pray, that each of us who do not know this suffering, will grow in our awareness, knowledge and compassion for our Indigenous brothers and sisters. May we commit, each of us, to use prayer, skill and strength to help in whatever way we are able. May we be resolved to address the ongoing racism that continues to plague our brothers and sisters."



Celestine Hall wrote, "We are asked to speak and write about a person who is deceased and the positive impacts they have had on our lives.

Most of us would write about our father, mother or another relative who was dear to us. I know my parents always encouraged me to be the best person I could be in my life. I am forever grateful for their love and guidance. However, I realized that as I grew up and was out in the world, many individuals came into my life who made a difference in how I carried myself and how I moved forward in life's journey.

I am coming up to my fifty years in the CWL, next year 2022, my mom started me early! In those years I have

had the privilege of knowing many great women who have served both God and Canada in their capacities as leaders and members in the CWL. Many of these ladies encourage me to strive to do my best and to grow in my faith. Large and small actions made the difference in my growth in the CWL, in my personal and my professional life. I can truly say that those actions contributed to who I am today. I remember those kind souls not just in November, but all year long. Just as those ladies were our mentors in the past, we must realize that by our actions we are the mentors of our future leaders in the CWL. Let us hope that someday in the future, when November comes around, those ladies that we mentor will think of us and give thanks for our contributions to their lives.”

Carmen Vanderreest wrote, “Like most, I pin a poppy to my coat when November comes around as a visible remembrance of the ultimate sacrifice paid by so many during all war times. It’s a time I also think more on my deceased parents; my father, a Dutch WWII navy veteran who served onboard submarines and my mother, working with the Dutch resistance fighters running messages and helping to move hidden Jews through the network of the Dutch underground. Remembrance Day has deep meaning and is of true importance to me yet it is All Souls Day that moves me most as I think on those who have died who have no one to pray for them. I have known three such people and though I think and pray for them from time to time it is in November that I focus prayers on all the lonely souls from our world without prayers.”

Spiritual Development

Martyrs’ Shrine has a prayer service on their website: *Praying about Residential Schools – The Way of the Cross*. The passages dealing with Residential Schools are mostly direct quotes from The Truth and Reconciliation of Canada Report. To view this moving hour long video go to:

<https://martyrs-shrine.com/a-way-of-the-cross>

St. Augustine’s Seminary is holding an online Advent retreat titled: *Praying with(out) Images: Devotion to Icons and the Practice of the Jesus Prayer in Eastern Christian Spirituality*. It will be held on Saturday, December 11th from 9:30 am - 1:00 pm. Full details at: <https://staugustines.on.ca/events-listing/advent-retreat>

Our own parish is holding an Advent Mini Retreat hosted by Deacon Paul. It will begin Wednesday, November 24th via Zoom using Formed’s *The Search*.

A video or two will be watched each session and then reflected on and discussed as a group. For registration and full details email: rpm@paulmccourt.com

We have been praying the Rosary on Friday evenings during the pandemic. In October, Month of the Rosary, Fr. John-Mark joined us on the last Friday. At the end he led us through a short reflection bringing to light how Mary’s heart gave life to the heart of Jesus; that the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus are perfectly in tune, in unison, like sympathetic vibration with God being the tuner. He went on to say the most beautiful music we can make is being in tune with Mary and Jesus and with each other.

All are welcome to join in praying the last Rosary of November on Friday, November 26th at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. We will be praying for all souls in purgatory including those in our St. John’s CWL Book of Life. Join us and bring the names of loved ones you would like to have included in the prayers.

This is the Zoom link:

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

Special Congratulations!

We are happy to bring you news that member Magreth Magonza has received her Canadian Permanent Residency! As many of you know Magreth arrived in Canada as a refugee claimant from Tanzania in 2015. Desperate, frightened and alone she stayed in a motel not able to sleep and stressing over what she should do. On the third day her money ran out and she found herself on the street.

In tears, Magreth approached a taxi driver and not knowing English somehow managed to communicate that she needed help. The driver made some calls and told her to call Matthew House, a Toronto shelter that provides a range of support services to help refugees establish new lives in Canada. The driver gave her the coins for the pay phone and the number and after the call drove her to the House for free. There she slept on an office couch for one week before moving into a bedroom because the house was full. The struggles, disappointments, loneliness, challenges and frustrations have been many for Magreth over these past six years but her deep faith has kept her centered and moving forward. Today, Magreth has her own small apartment, a steady job and is still working on improving her English. Congratulations Magreth! God bless you.

Gardens

The “gardening angels” are members Anu Herath and

Carmen Vanderreest and they thank those members who kindly donated funds for the church gardens this year. Thanks also to Grand Knight Noel Baszak for all his help watering. Lots of compliments were received from both parishioners and community members on the colourful display of flowers and plants. The gardens are bare now but underneath are planted many bulbs to usher in the springtime of next year!



November Celebrations!



Happy birthday to everyone celebrating a birthday this month including:

- **Roseanne Nihtila**
- **Peggy Roach**

Congratulations to:



Doris Cecchini on her recent retirement!

Knights of Columbus Lottery

Each year the Knights of Columbus sell tickets for their annual Knights of Columbus Ontario Charities Foundation which supports many charitable programs and organizations locally and provincially. In the past, prizes have ranged from cash and cars to boats and trailers. Due to the pandemic they have moved their fundraiser online and have changed it to a 50/50 raffle with quarterly draws. New tickets must be purchased for each of those 4 draws. Tickets are 15 for \$10, 40 for \$20 or 100 for \$40. Ticket numbers are computer generated and emailed to the buyer.

Tickets for this last quarter draw are on sale now. The payout prize grows daily based on ticket sales. Currently, it stands at over \$20,000! The winning ticket will be drawn on December 31st and there is an early bird draw on December 1st!

There is a drop-down menu under "Organization" to choose a parish council – St. John's Council number is

"Scarborough Beaches 7008".

For full details and to purchase your tickets go to:

<https://www.kofcontario5050.com>

Calendar



November 28th is the first day of Advent

Catholic Family Services

A wide variety of programs and services are offered through Catholic Family Services of Toronto. Due to the pandemic they have moved to online assistance. 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>

Virtue of the Month

From the Toronto Catholic District School Board:
November's virtue is Peacemaking.

- "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." – Matthew 5:9
- "Do not be afraid to take a chance on peace, to teach peace, to live peace..." – St. John Paul II
- "It is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organize the peace." – Aristotle
- "Peace begins with a smile." —Mother Teresa
- "When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace." —Jimi Hendrix

Milk Bag Project

Because Maryse is the only one crocheting these mats she now has a surplus of milk bags to work with so we will **stop collecting the bags until further notice.** Any that you have saved until now can still be dropped

off to the porches at either:

87 Coalport Drive or **66A Osborne Ave.**

Milk bags **must be clean and dry**, inside and out – no milk residue. Please fold them up to make it easier for the measured cutting process. Thank you!

Maryse is asking anyone to help with the crocheting, it is a very simple chain stitch and says help would be most appreciated. Please email Maryse at:

maryse.ristuccia@gmail.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.

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 (**CATH011269**) 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 (CCC) 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/>

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