

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
ALBERTA MACKENZIE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

PROVINCIAL COMMUNICATIONS STANDING COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2015

Annette deB.

Communications Standing Committee

Calgary:	Jan M.
Edmonton:	Sr. Susan S.
Grouard-McLennan:	Donna P.
Mackenzie-Fort Smith:	Kathryn L.
St. Paul:	Vacant

Diocesan Councils Reporting: 5 of 5

“To announce and communicate, by words and action, the Good News of the gospel”

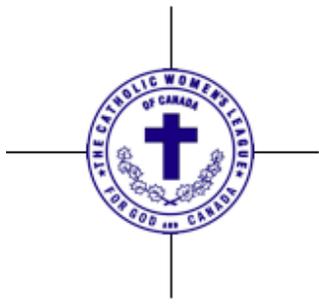
Communication today is increasingly electronic – through email, Facebook, Twitter, www.cwl.ca, www.cwl.ab.ca, diocesan websites, parish council websites, CWL Forum!

Many of our members have embraced the new technologies, but many others have continued to hold fast to the “tried and true.” Both ways are right and neither way is wrong. We must meet the needs of our members and prospective members by blending the old and the new. Reports from our councils indicate that we are doing just that!

“The Canadian League” and “Be League”

The Canadian League magazine is utilized as a resource throughout the councils in all dioceses. Members read the magazine on their own; however, Chairpersons often brought articles to meetings for in-depth discussion – articles on refugees, Development & Peace, and our national theme One Heart, One Voice, One Mission were specifically mentioned. Ladies enjoyed playing League magazine “Bingo” and appreciated their “Companions in Prayer.”

Articles were submitted and printed in the *Be League*. Members are becoming more aware of this wonderful online tool for sharing with their sisters across Canada. Where internet access is an issue, printed copies are made available (at least for the issues where their councils are featured).



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Use of Media

All manner of media is utilized by our ladies.

- Parish bulletin / websites
- Email
- CWL websites at all levels
- Posters
- Newsletters

Subscriptions to Catholic publications include the *Western Catholic Reporter*, *Marion Helpers*, *St. Anthony's Messenger*, *Word Among Us*, and *Prairie Messenger*. EWTN is watched. At least one council mentions monitoring media and discussing it at meetings.

Local newspapers are used for advertising events – Tea and Bake Sales, Garage Sale fundraiser, Christmas Free Box (scarves, toques, mittens), and sometimes articles are submitted and published on CWL events. One council advertises a Nativity Tea and displays nativity sets as part of their decorations.

Communications with Members

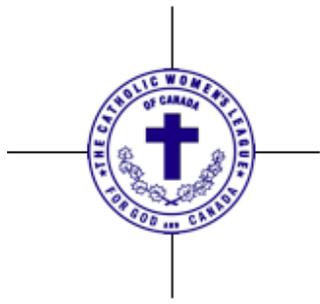
All councils reported the use of at least one of the following means of communication with its members.

- Parish bulletin (all councils) and/or parish bulletin boards, parish announcements.
- Phone call reminders of meetings and events.
- Emailing of meeting reminders, minutes and notes, updates, and communication from other levels of the League.
- Use of parish websites for CWL postings of meeting dates/times and minutes.
- Incorporating a Facebook page for their council.
- Distribution of minutes to members, either through paper or email.
- CWL newsletter(s).
- Celebration of membership milestones.

Communication from Other Levels of the League

Be League and **The Canadian League** enjoy a substantial readership, and communiques from the various levels are seen as good information and resources. The national theme is often used as a focus for events including use of the logo as part of their signature on emails and printed materials.

A great deal of effort has been given to encourage members to visit CWL websites and improvements in website looks and ease of use for members are appreciated. CWL Facebook, CWL Forum, and Twitter are promoted.



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Promotion of the League in the Parish and Community

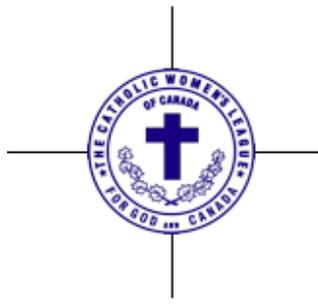
- Members are encouraged to wear their CWL scarves and pins, and many councils have made sashes or blazers that identify them as CWL for events in the parish and community.
- Cards were sent to seniors at Christmas and Easter, baby cards, get well cards, cards and gifts to First Communion and Confirmation candidates. Visits were made to seniors and shut-ins.
- Gifts or scholarships to graduating students.
- One council had their parish priest speak on the CWL theme, and invited all ladies of the parish to come.
- CWL participation in parish events – annual picnics, feast day celebrations, potlucks. CWL members are active in liturgy and music ministry.
- Posters are placed on bulletin boards both in church and in the community to advertise CWL events – Tea and Bake sales, Garage Sales, etc.
- Attendance at local Remembrance Day celebrations.
- Members entered a float in their local parade and are a member of their local Chamber of Commerce.
- CWL representative attends all Parish Pastoral Council meetings.
- Hosted a retreat and opened it to all women in the community.
- Participation in the World Day of Prayer with other churches in their communities.

Pornography Hurts Campaign and Other Social Justice Actions

We continue to promote Pornography awareness and support the agencies that are working towards its elimination through the Pornography Hurts postcards. Letters were also written to the new government regarding:

- Mental health issues and access to proper treatment.
- Seniors' Advocate
- An online petition was circulated to register objections to Euthanasia and Doctor-Assisted Suicide.

Members participated in a White Ribbon campaign, showed videos on Human Trafficking, hosted the annual Walk for Life in October, joined prolife organizations, donated and assisted at their local women's shelters.



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Personal Comments:

Communication is the act of keeping our many members connected – to each other and to the greater organization; and to help them become more aware of the greater community we all live in. “Becoming more visible in our parishes and keeping our members, priests and parishes informed of activities and current issues is critical” (quote taken from Calgary Diocesan report).

A great number of our councils do not have Communications chairpersons, but it appears that we are finding ways to get our information to members. If we want to attract the younger women to our councils, we need to open ourselves to communicating with them in the manner to which they are so accustomed – through social media and promotion of ourselves online. For those members who are interested, but not able to attend meetings, we can bring the CWL to them – by being available online with minutes, informative articles, and invitations. Let's remember that once upon a time the telephone, TV, fax machines were all new technology that we take for granted today!