

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council**

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

November 2017

Communiqué # 3



Inspired by the Spirit – Women Respond to God's Call

TO: Diocesan Chairpersons of Spiritual Development
CC: Provincial Executive (for information)
CC: National Chairperson of Spiritual Development (for information)

FROM: Ruth Boden - Provincial Chairperson of Spiritual Development

Advent begins this year on November 26th and is our time to become more involved, more caught up in the meaning and the possibilities of life as a Christian community. Thus, we are preparing not only for Christmas but also for Christ's Second Coming. This means that when he comes again, we will be awake and watchful. He will not find us asleep.

Traditionally, all great feasts have been preceded by a time of fasting, which makes the feast itself more joyful. Sadly, Advent today has been supplanted by "the Christmas shopping season," so that by Christmas Day, many people no longer enjoy the feast.

While Roman Rite Catholics are no longer bound to fast during Advent, reviving the tradition of repentance during this season can help us better appreciate our Christmas celebration. Pope John Paul II called on Western Catholics to learn more about the traditions of our Eastern brethren, and we can observe Philip's Fast in our own way, by doing the same sorts of things we do during Lent—abstaining from meat (especially on Fridays), not eating between meals, restricting the amount of food that we eat. Combining these practices with almsgiving (this time of year is particularly hard for the poor) and efforts to increase our prayer (and perhaps to spend a bit of time in front of the Blessed Sacrament or to attend weekday Mass when we can), and we can begin to return Advent to its proper role as a season of preparation.

And when Christmas Day finally arrives, we may find that our fast has increased the joy of our feast.

November 21st is the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary which reminds us that Mary's life was dedicated to God from a very early age and that we too are living a life given by God.

On another note, it will soon be time for annual reports. Once again it will be online reporting and I'm anxious to hear from the five diocesan Spiritual chairpersons who will be summarizing the parish council reports.

As we enter this advent season, please keep all your Sisters in Christ in your prayers. There are many who are suffering illness and other strife and those who are gone to God and are in most need of your prayers.

God's Blessing to you all