

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



**SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT
Communiqué # 4**

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

Date: January 13, 2017
To: Diocesan Chairpersons of Spiritual Development
CC: Parish Council Chairpersons of Spiritual Development, Provincial Executive,
National Chairperson of Spiritual Development
From: Judy L., Provincial Chairperson of Spiritual Development

MESSAGE

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



Happy and Blessed New Year

The new national theme “Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God’s Call” will be our guiding light for the next two years. One Voice, One Heart and One Mission encompassed the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy and gave us the opportunity to revisit what it means to be a Christian woman in these most challenging times. We started to realize that the works of mercy both corporal and spiritual are still in fashion; they are as important today as in the time of Jesus as he taught, healed, forgave and gave his life. We began to understand that if we are to be an “alive” Church we have to get out of the church building and go to the people; that our actions must mirror Christ’s and that we must see the face of Jesus in everyone we meet; we are not exclusive but inclusive. The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy centered on relationships ... relationship with our God, ourselves and our neighbours. In many ways the Jubilee year of Mercy was our first cup of tea. We now must move to sip from our second cup of tea...the cup that will give us some understanding of how we can inspired by the Spirit be women of action.

As Spiritual Development Chairs, we play a major part in helping our CWL ladies respond to God’s call through well prepared and thought-out spirituals, as well as educational information about their faith. Often more time is spent on the prayer services and very little time is allotted for education. This year let’s make a consolidated effort to spend some of our time educating our ladies about some aspect of the faith. Our meetings are to be 1/3 spiritual, 1/3 business and 1/3 social. Only part of our 1/3 should be opening and closing prayers as well as the League Prayer; the other part of the 1/3 **needs** to be a time of growth through education.

One area of focus could be the sacraments. As there are seven sacraments and at least 10 general meetings in the upcoming year, the education component could be information relating to them. Beginning with the initiation sacraments ... the first Baptism, followed by Confirmation, etc., study the meaning of Baptism outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the regulations around Baptism in your Diocese, how your parish celebrates Baptism, and the impact of Baptism on people's lives. Once you have compiled the information, present it to your membership in the allotted time (the 1/3 part of the meeting given to spiritual) for your report. At the end of the report, engage the ladies with questions such as "How do you live out your Baptism?" Give them a few minutes for individual quiet reflection followed by a two-on-two sharing. The opening and closing prayer could be related to Baptism, tying the whole spiritual program together. The same process could be followed for the other sacraments in the subsequent meetings. The sacraments are actions that call for full participation and the more we study them, the more we see the ways they reflect God living in us and we in God. We have a responsibility to understand our faith so we can share, communicate and defend it.

Now this takes courage as many of us have never approached this committee in this way. We will need to activate the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit at our own confirmation in order to inspire us and give us courage to study, learn and embark on this new way of doing things so that membership has the opportunity to grow in knowledge of their faith in order to respond in an informed way to God's calls to work for God and Canada.

Prayers

You might like to use one of the following two prayers for the Opening Prayer of your meeting followed by the League Prayer.

This prayer could be tied to the Sacrament of Confirmation, Reconciliation or Healing:

World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO) Prayer – Suffering Women 2017

Lord, you call us to share your table and also your cross of anguish with our sisters who are suffering. We pray for all who are being abused, violated, oppressed, and in situations that deprive them of their dignity. We pray for mothers yearning for adequate, clean drinking water and proper sanitation, sufficient food, and health care for their families. We pray for those struggling for survival, those broken and alienated, refugees and visible minorities experiencing repeated discrimination, bearing the brunt of indifference and oppression. We pray for the day when women who are equal in ability have equal rights and can live in peace, joy and harmony. We ask all this with the hope that only You provide.

This one could be tied to Confirmation:

"Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call" Prayer

Spirit of the Living God, open our hearts and minds
to experience the unconditional love of God.
Empower us with the gifts of your Spirit
so that we may respond to God's call in joyful service.
Inspire and bless the members of the Catholic Women's League
so that the fruits of your Spirit may be evidenced in all that we say and do. Amen.

Educational Component for Spiritual Program

Copy and share with your membership, discussing it and concluding the discussion by asking how can we live this theme in our council and our everyday lives.

The Logo for “Inspired by the Spirit – Women Respond to God’s Call”



Explanation of Symbols

Dove	Holy Spirit – advocate, counsellor, intercessor
Cloud and Light	living, saving God of glory
Fire	transforming energy of Pentecost
Disciples	CWL members, responding joyfully to God’s call in word and action
Cross, Anchor & Heart	Faith – lived, professed, witness and spread
	Hope – strength to sustain and preserve us
	Love – the first and greatest of all virtues

Action

- Check out the Installation of Spiritual Advisor and Reaffirmation or Installation of CWL Officers.
If possible have the installation take place at a Sunday Mass to put a face to the Catholic Women's League in your parish.
- Check out the Diocesan websites for the latest activities that your members might like to attend.
- Check out the Provincial and National websites for updates , re: this standing committee.

Resources:

- *Ordo*, the Liturgical Calendar from Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. You can order one from their website <www.cccb.ca>.
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- Catholic Missions In Canada website <www.cmic.info>
- World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations website <www.wuwco.org>.

Have a great month and remember:

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it"
and take every opportunity to be the face of Christ for someone.