Timmins Diocesan Council

The Catholic Women’s League

President’s Report to Convention

April 30, 2022

**EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

**Theme**

**Precepts - Participate in Evangelization (#7)**

The precepts of the Church are the very minimum of what we have to do to live our lives as Catholics. It is not all that we have to do. These are not the ends or goals of living a Catholic life, but constitute the basic minimum requirements to begin living a Catholic life. These precepts “are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life.” (CCC #2041)

What is assumed but not explicitly stated is that these are the bare minimum actions involved in a **RELATIONSHIP**. What is understood as most important is that to be a Catholic is to be in a relationship with God and with the Church. *St. John Vianney Catholic Church, Fr. Troy – Feb. 2017*

The simplest way to say what evangelization means is to follow Pope Paul VI, whose message *Evangelii Nuntiandi (On Evangelization in the Modern World)* has inspired so much recent thought and activity in the Church. We can rephrase his words to say that evangelizing means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself.[6](https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/evangelization/go-and-make-disciples/what_is_evangelization_go_and_make_disciples.cfm#Ibid_no_18) At its essence are the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ and the response of a person in faith, which are both works of the Spirit of God. *USCCB*

If someone were to tell you that you need to evangelize other men, what would be your reaction? Perhaps, it might be, “I evangelize by example not with words. That’s what priests and deacons do.” Or maybe, it would be, “I would like to, but I’m not trained or knowledgeable enough to do it.” Or maybe, “That’s something Evangelical Protestants do, not Catholics.” We as Catholic men have to get over the notion that evangelism is for Protestants. This notion is totally untrue – evangelization is the “essential Catholic mission.”

Just before he ascended into heaven, Jesus told the apostles: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Beginning on Pentecost, the apostles did just that, and the work of evangelization continues to this day. It is a calling that has not changed over the years, as Pope Paul VI affirmed in his letter on “Evangelization in the Modern World.”

The 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* lists five precepts. Other lists had 6 precepts and another 7 precepts (Evangelization). Whatever their number, the purpose of the precepts has always been to preserve good order in the Church, to maintain discipline within the Church, and to establish a specific Catholic identity.

Catholic Exchange.com

Evangelization is not an optional add-on. It is at the very heart of what it means to be Catholic followers of the Lord. Yet, in spite of this clear mandate, we may still be tempted to respond to this call to evangelization by saying that “Catholics evangelize with how they live their lives, not by our words.” We may even quote the words attributed to St. Francis of Assisi: “Preach the gospel at all times; use words if necessary.” But this doesn’t mean that we can choose between proclaiming and living the gospel, as if they both accomplish the same thing. Paul VI went on to explain in “Evangelization in the Modern World” the important interplay between word and witness in this way:

The Good News proclaimed by the witness of life sooner or later has to be proclaimed by the word of life. There is no true evangelization if the name, the teaching, the life, the promises, the kingdom and the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed.

Listening to everyone’s report today, I felt encouraged and reminded of various elements of our Catholic faith. The National theme of “Catholic and Living It” will provide an opportunity for CWL members to look into our beliefs more in depth over these next 2 years. I hope that parish councils will arrange for speakers or bible studies, etc. so that we can all growth as Catholics and as Christians.

This ends my report,

Annette Kelly

Timmins Diocesan President 2019 – 2022

**Precept –Support of the Church**

I selected one of the Precepts of the Catholic Church. I selected the 5th one. “You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church”. Well, first lesson was to learn what the precepts where before I could start and then understand the one, I selected.

Well, most of us know these precepts but may not know they are considered binding on the faithful. There are only 5 of them in our present times.

So, the 5th precept means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to their own ability. So, we just have to give our weekly offering and we are done. But I am sure there is more to it. As well as the question, how much are we to give.

We may wonder where the direction for this precept came from. If you look in the Old Testament: Numbers chapter 18 speaks to this in that the Lord tells Aaron that he and his family are to take care of the holy place -the Church and the Levites are to help and bear responsibility for it. As well as this will be come law and apply to their descendants as well. In verse 21 the Lord commands Moses to tell the Levites that what they receive as income they must give a tithe of it to Aaron for the Church. Tithe which in Hebrew means tenth.

Some churches call it alms or tithe and go by the rule of 10% of your income and expect that from you. However, in this precept of the Catholic Church it says you are obliged to assist with the needs of the Church but does not say it must be a tenth of your property or income but according to your ability. This is good as there maybe different times in a person’s life that the ability to give can change.

Another way we can support our church is by giving of our time. We can look at many ways to do this. If we take note just at mass, we can see the laity doing this such as ushers, readers and helping with other parts of the mass. There is always a call to help at the church it should be part of our faith building to partake when we can and not shy away and hope someone else will do it.

One thing I read about this precept is both these ways are not simply to maintain the Church but to spread the Gospel and bring others to the Body of Christ which is the Church. What an explanation to think about in supporting the Catholic Church.

When we look at the CWL how do we apply this precept as we are part of the church life. Usually at the parish level it would be easy to do. As a council is aware of the material needs of their parish and may help with it, such as the parish needs a new roof. We have many members that also, help support the Church by giving of their time in many ways. Through National we can help the Catholic Missions of Canada, as we are helping Churches in remote Northern Canada survive.

One thing when you consider this precept, be proud of what you give and do for your Church but do it quietly. We should not judge each other in regard to this precept or boast about how we help.

Peggy MacInnis

**Organization Report - Understanding**

We first receive the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit in the [Sacrament of Baptism](https://www.learnreligions.com/the-sacrament-of-baptism-542130); these gifts are strengthened in the [Sacrament of Confirmation](https://www.learnreligions.com/the-sacrament-of-confirmation-542118),

Understanding is the second gift of the Holy Spirit, and people sometimes have a hard time understanding how it differs from the first gift, wisdom. Wisdom is the desire to know things about God, understanding allows us to grasp, the truths of the Catholic faith. Through understanding, we become more certain about our beliefs.

We should be like the two apostles mentioned in the gospel of Luke (24:31-32). They were talking about Jesus’ death and the disappearance of his body. He came upon them and was talking with them. It was evening and they invited him to stay with them. He was eating with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

From Luke 24:31-32, **With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?”**

These were ordinary men who were given an extraordinary gift of understanding.  It didn’t come to them as a result of long study and hard work.  Rather, it came to them as a result of their openness to Christ’.  As a result, they suddenly understood truths that could never be learned on their own.

The same can be said about us. The mysteries of God are vast but so often we fail to understand. or even want to understand.

There are things in your life now, or in your past that have left you confused.  You need a special gift of the Holy Spirit to make sense of them.  This is the Gift of Understanding.  It’s a spiritual gift that unlocks the many mysteries of life for us.   There is a song with a line that says ‘Some of God’s greatest gifts, are unanswered prayers”. As you think about your life, you remember things you wished for and didn’t receive and after you are so thankful. You understand that what you wanted at the moment wasn’t what God had planned for you.

Without the Gift of Understanding, we are left on our own to try to make sense of life.  This is especially true when we are faced with hardship and suffering.  You wonder how God can allow the good and the innocent to suffer?  How can God be absent at times of human tragedy?

The truth is that He is not absent.  He is centrally involved in all things.  What we need to receive is an understanding of the mysterious ways of God.  We need to understand the Scriptures, human suffering, human relationships, and divine action in our lives.  But this will never happen unless we allow Jesus to open our minds.

Allowing Jesus to open our minds takes faith.  It means we believe first and understand later.  It means we trust Him even though we do not see.  St. Augustine once said, “Faith is to believe what you do not see. The reward of faith is to see what you believe.”

As a CWL member, remember, that to know something is different from truly understanding it. This could apply to our Policy and Procedure Manuals or the changes to our constitution. Pray that God will help you to understand what he has planned for the CWL going forward.

As a CWL member or chairperson, remember, that you can know a lot of facts about someone, but that is different from truly understanding that person. Pray that God will help you understand that a member’s particular circumstances greatly affect their actions and perhaps the role they are best suited for in your council.

*Respectfully Submitted*

*Shirley Gravel, Timmins Diocesan Organization Chairperson*

Timmins Diocesan Council

The Catholic Women’s League of Canada

**Past President/Historian Report for the 2022 Convention**

Madam President, Fr. John and CWL sisters:

As Past President/Historian, I would like to emphasize three action items for our parish councils. 1. That each parish council obtain a copy of the Archive Guidelines for League History and the Archives Brochure. They are found on the National CWL website under the To Organize 600 Series – Manuals. They are easily downloaded at no cost. They are an important resource to help us in deciding what we need to keep and what can be disposed of.

2. I recommend that each parish council executive take time at an executive meeting to read through the brochure and guidelines and discuss what they have been archiving in the past and what they want to add or delete from their archives. They should also discuss where their archives are kept and if they need to invest in proper storage containers to prevent damage to the archives.

3. I would love to see parish councils display their photo albums and scrapbooks at every opportunity. You may consider putting pictures on a stick or other electronic device. They could then be easily put on the diocesan or parish websites. Past presidents as Historians can also give reports at monthly meetings of an historical fact of the council or diocese.

The sacrament I chose is The Anointing of the Sick. It has had many names in the past; Extreme Unction, Last Rites, Viaticum.

It is defined by Wikipedia as being administered to those “Who having reached the age of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age”. Its purpose is to bring spiritual and physical strength to one who is ill.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1499 states “By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them. And indeed she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the people of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and death of Christ.”

We see in the gospel narratives that Jesus himself was the great healer who loved those who were sick into wellness and forgiveness of their sins.

The Council of Trent stated “This sacred anointing of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord as a true and proper sacrament of the New Testament. It is alluded to indeed by Mark, but is recommended to the faithful and promulgated by James the apostle and brother of the Lord.” End of quote.

And it is written in the book of James “Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.” James 5:14-15

The Anointing of the Sick can be received by anyone who is facing serious illness, a change in health, surgery or old age. We can receive it more than once in our life. It is a healing sacrament which can affect our body, mind and spirit by giving us renewed strength, peace and courage to overcome the difficulties of illness. The Catechism calls it a *particular gift of the Holy Spirit.* The Spirit will renew our trust and faith in God and helps us defeat the temptations of discouragement and anguish and lead us to healing of the soul and of the body if it is God’s will.

The Apostolic Constitution states that “The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given to those who are seriously ill by anointing them on the forehead and hands with duly blessed oil – pressed from olives or from other plants – saying, only once: “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

Only priests, bishops and presbyters can minister this sacrament. It is often celebrated within the Eucharist and it can be preceded by the sacrament of Penance. Many parishes have healing Masses with the opportunity for parishioners to come forward to receive the sacrament.

The Anointing of the Sick is not only for those who are dying. If you or a loved one is facing a grave health issue, ask your parish priest for the sacrament – because we are ***Catholic and Living it!***

End of Report

Audrey Shelton; Past President/Historian

**Blessed are the Poor In Spirit**

**Beatitude-** comes from the Latin word beatitudo, which means blessing or happiness. The Sermon on the Mount begins with “Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven”. Jesus teaches us qualities or moral choices that can help us attain happiness. We find joy comes and goes with circumstances or experiences in our life. With God, regardless of what our circumstances are, we have internal joy. “Blessed is the person who realizes they are completely destitute, spiritually helpless, and realize their absolute need for God” Poor in Spirit is when you realize you can’t get this on your own. It is not aggrandizing the ego but emptying it out. John 5:17“Amen, amen, I say to you, the Son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; In Luke 18:9-14, the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, while the Pharisee proclaims to God his own righteousness, the tax collector “would not even lift his eyes up to heaven, but beat his breast saying “God be merciful to me a sinner!” It was the poor in spirit tax collector who “went down to his house justified, rather than the Pharisee”. Thomas Aquinas says that we know that we need God. However we tend to fill up on something less than God. Such examples are wealth, pleasure, power and honour. t Thomas Aquinas specified if you want the perfect exemplification of the Beatitudes, specifically “Blessed are the poor in Spirit” look to Christ crucified. Despise what Jesus despised. Love what Jesus loved on the cross. What did He despise? Those 4 things in which we typically seek our happiness. Wealth-He had none of it. He is stripped naked. Pleasure-He is at the limit of physical and psychological suffering. Power-He has none. He is nailed to the cross and can’t even move. Honour- they mock Him as he’s publicly displayed crucified at the end of His life. What did He love on the cross? He loved doing the will of His father. His life was an immediate response to the will of God, a displacement of His own concerns’ is hunger for righteousness made Him the ultimate peacemaker. He is the ultimate bearer of divine mercy. Jesus crucified brings us freedom and joy. To be “Poor in Spirit” is to empty ourselves and trust in the Lord. First we must know Him.

Frances Freeman, Communications Chairperson.

Resolution and Legislation Chairs Report 2021

In writing this report, I am highlighting one of the gifts of the Holy Spirt **“Knowledge”.**

**Knowledge is the ability to judge correctly about matters of faith and right action, so as to never wander from the straight path of justice (II/II.9.3).**

Knowledge is defined as acts, information, and skills acquired by a person through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. "a thirst for knowledge". Knowledge is powerful and our members thirst for more knowledge to keep them informed. I gained knowledge myself by researching and writing the directives for these positions.

The first—and only—place in the entire Bible where these seven special qualities are listed together is Isaiah 11:1–3, in a famous Messianic prophecy:

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.”

Resolutions play a major part in the League’s work. Knowledge is power and we the women of the Timmins Diocese of the CWL can influence what happens in our province and country.

In the five “Resolution Directives” and four “Legislation Directives” in 2021, I supplied our CWL members’ knowledge that they required:

* + to understand and learn about what a resolution is and how to write one; and
  + to know about the legislation Bills provincial and federal governments were

debating and voting on and how the members could assist in influencing their

elected officials.

The CWL members were active in letter writing, e-mails and phone calls to our MP’s and MPP’s on Bill C-7 an Act to amend the Criminal Code (medical assistance in dying) and on Bill 14, Time to Care Act (Long-Term Care Homes Amendment, Minimum Standard of Daily Care).

Respectively submitted,

Colleen Landers

Resolution and Legislation Chair

**The Catholic Women’s League of Canada**

**Timmins Diocese**

**Education and Health Standing Committee Report 2022**

**Chairperson: Bernice Duncan**

**Activities:**

* Attended presentation by Wayne McKenzie, a member of Timiskaming First Nation
* Registered for the De Veber presentation “ Mental Health and MAID”

**Report:** on Precepts -“Sunday Duty”

* Precepts of the Catholic Church are a description of the absolute minimum actions required of Catholics regarding the Church.
* The Church uses the precepts to remind us that Christian life requires a commitment to prayer and active participation in the liturgy and sacraments. If we cannot fulfill the minimum requirements then we cannot consider ourselves a Catholic
* Sunday Duty is one precept which says;
* You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labour.
* We must “sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord” the day Sunday and holy days of obligation.
* This requires attending Mass, and by resting from work and activities that distract us from God.
* In Canada the holy days of obligation are: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (January 1) and Christmas.

Respectfully submitted

Bernice Duncan

**PARISH PRESIDENTS REPORTS**

**St. Anthony of Padua CWL Annual 2021 Report**

At St. Anthony of Padua CWL, we are coping quite well with 91 members for 2022 and have held meetings by virtual and in person methods. We have performed the following activities that have brought our members Hope over the last year:

* Calls and visits to our members living alone and those isolated due to COVID;
* CWL newsletters by e-mail giving lots information & links. We print copies and hand deliver for those not having e-mail;
* Prayer service in-person with installation of the new executive, service pins and certificates presented. This was a special event that was well received by our members and has been incorporated in our policies and procedures for every year. Those who could not attend received a visit from a member to deliver them so they felt included.

**The Importance of the Virtue of HOPE:**

Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life. We are at our happiest when we place our trust in Christ’s promises and rely not only on our strength, but on the help of the grace from the Holy Spirit. Hope is God’s gift to us at Baptism and unites us with the risen Christ. Hopeful people work for peace and justice on earth despite facing many obstacle. They trust that God’s plan will be fulfilled, even if not in their lifetime.

Hope is visible in our CWL whenever we find prayer, trust in God’s faithfulness and work for justice and peace. It is hope above all that gives us strength to live and to continually try new things even in conditions that may seem hopeless. “Life is too precious to permit its devaluation by living pointlessly, emptily, without meaning, love and finally without hope.” Lord, you know my dreams, and I know it is a lot to ask to realize those dreams when others have so little, but I ask that you hear my prayer of hope. I would like to think that my hopes and dreams are all part of your plans for me, but I trust that you will always know better. I put my dreams in your hands to mold and fit to your will. I surrender my hopes to you. Amen

A hopeful person:

* Inspired and inspires others
* Optimistic
* One who seeks good in the world
* Someone who sets and sticks to goals
* Someone who works for peace and justice
* Someone who sees the good in others even when they make mistakes
* Someone who works to include others
* Someone who works at creating a better world
* Someone who knows that God is in control and will being about what is

Respectively submitted

Colleen Landers, President St. Anthony of Padua

**The Virtue of Charity**

The virtue of charity is the last and the greatest of the three theological virtues; the other two are faith and hope. Charity depends on faith, because without faith in God we cannot love God, nor can we love others for God’s sake. Charity is, in that sense, the object of faith, and the reason why Saint Paul in Corinthians 13:13 declares that “the greatest of these (faith, hope, and charity) is charity”.

The terms “love” and “charity” are frequently used interchangeably. This is understandable since the virtue of charity is in fact a kind of love. The two however, are not identical. Not all forms of love are also charity. When we hear expressions such as “I love gardening” or “I would love to see the Toronto Maple Leafs win the Stanley Cup” – while good in themselves” still fall short of the love that is charity.

What sort of love is charity? Charity is the love of God in which we can participate. Where **faith** is share in God’s act of knowing, and **hope** is a share in God’s desire – we want what God wants, in **charity,** we share in God’s act of love – we are able to love the way God loves.

So, how does God love? God’s love for us is characterized by selflessness and sacrifice, which is manifested by Creation and Incarnation. Creation is described as God loving us into existence. He loves us, and because of this love, we came to be. God does not benefit from creation. Supplying creatures with existence is a pure gift. Creation is an act of love that is selfless. The love which God bears for humanity is exemplified in the mystery of the Incarnation. God chose to become man who suffers the most horrible agonies, dying on a cross and rising from the dead. All this he does for our sake, even though there was nothing for Him to profit from it. Here we see God loving in a manner that is selfless and sacrificial.

Therefore, in the virtue of Charity, our love must embody these two attributes. Of course, the fact that we must be selfless does not imply that we can never consider our own needs. Love is both self-focused and other-focused. Self-focused love involves doing what makes us happy. Other-focused love involves a willingness to work for someone else’s well-being. Much the way a person shows their love for their family, or Mother Teresa showed her love for the poor. Charity, in other words, is other-focused love. It motivates us as Christians to do what is right in order to bring about the happiness of God and neighbour. In charity, we are saying to God and neighbour, “I will do my best to make you happy. I will try to serve you and make your well-being my priority”.

Of course, a selfless attitude always involves sacrifice. When we make someone’s else’s happiness a priority, then we know it isn’t always easy. If we have a selfless love for God and neighbour then we must be willing to suffer in order to serve them. This is the ultimate test of love.

So, what does this mean practically? How can we practice the selfless and sacrificial love of charity? One strategy is to stop thinking about our faith as though it is all about us. We need to keep in mind that our number one purpose is to serve God, to please Him. We must not evaluate our spiritual life on the basis of whether or not we get anything out of it. Doing so indicates a that we are lacking the virtue of charity - that our relationship with God is selfish. Frequent prayer is not based on what we personally get out of it, but that it pleases God. The key point is that it is not just for ourselves, but for God.

This also means that our prayers should also avoid the tendency to be exclusively self-focused. Often times, in our prayers we implore God to “give me this” or “help me with this”. While this is good and necessary, God wants us to tell Him what’s going on with us, there however, should also be prayers which are focused on God – prayers with “Thank you” and “You have done so much for me”. To keep charity alive, we need to remember that prayer is not just petition, but also praise and thanksgiving.

Our standard for charity towards those around us is God’s love. “Love one another as I have loved you”. This is not just God’s advice, but rather a commandment. Whether we have genuine charity for our neighbour depends on whether we are willing to give selflessly and sacrificially for their sake. As Christians we are obliged to be patient with people who get on our nerves and be kind to our adversaries. We are transcending our own personal fulfillment and act on behalf of the other. The virtue of Charity means being generous with our presence, time, and money. Charity allows us to give freely without expecting anything in return. Our Lord Himself declares how closely He associates himself with the poor to whom we are to be generous “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the lease of these my brethren, you did it to me”

In conclusion, the virtue of Charity, is the summit of Christian life and the beginning of everlasting happiness.

References

Adapted from the Catholic News Agency: Charity.

REPORT TO THE 2022 TIMMINS DIOCESAN CONVENTION

OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP CWL

Madam President, Fr. John, sisters in the League;

Our CWL council of Our Mother of Perpetual Help parish is planning for an active year ahead of us. We just celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel and go to her often for guidance and decision making. We lost a few members this past year through death and a few that moved or are not renewing their membership but we are looking after our present members through emails, newsletters and meetings. We have a new council executive with most positions filled to help with a fruitful year of prayers, meetings and activities. This is how we are Catholic and Living it!

The virtue I will speak about is Prudence. Before writing this report I could not give a good definition of Prudence but now I see how important a virtue it is.

I watched a You Tube video from Matthew Leonard’s The Science of Sainthood program to learn more about this virtue. Matthew was interviewing Fr. Gregory Pine OP who has written a book entitled *Prudence; choose confidently, live boldly*.

It was an excellent interview that discussed what virtues are and the different kinds of virtues and how they work in our lives.

The dictionary defines Prudent as Careful management; sensible, not rash, exercising sound judgement in practical matters and cautious in conduct.

Fr. Pine defines it simply as Practical Wisdom with three parts; 1) listening to others, 2) using our memory to sort and retain our experiences for future use and 3) shrewdness to know when and how to act.

Prudence gives us wisdom and commands us to act in order to be an instrument for God and to give Glory to God.

As we evaluate our actions and pray about them, we are equipped by God for our life journey. We live in the present knowing that we were made to be here now – wherever that may be. Prudence helps us to apply the love of God in the moment we are presently living. We do that through action – whether it be helping at the scene of an accident, listening to a friend who is suffering or working at a soup kitchen.

So remember that Prudence is ***practical wisdom*** that leads to Holy action! And that will lead to our happiness which as Children of God we are called to be.

Respectfully submitted

Audrey Shelton

**Timmins Diocesan Council**

**The Catholic Women’s League of Canada**

**Holy Trinity CWL Council Report**

**President: Lynne Rowlandson**

Holy Trinity Council is coping well and back to monthly scheduled meetings. We now have 68 members. Events happening now through September will see us planting a tree to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the CWL in Canada, a raffle to raise funds for our council and a 60th Anniversary celebration of Holy Trinity Council to be celebrated in September. Election of officers will be taking place in the fall so hope members will show “courage” by letting their names stand to fill all positions.

One of the Seven Virtues of the Catholic Church I chose to speak on is Courage. Courage (also called bravery or valor) is the choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty or intimidation. Valor is courage or bravery, especially in battle.

Physical courage is bravery in the face of physical pain, hardship, or even death or threats of death. Moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition. It may involve shame, scandal, discouragement or personal loss.

The classical virtue of fortitude is also translated “courage”, but initiates the aspects of perseverance and patience.

In the Western tradition, notable thoughts on courage have come from philosophers; Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas and Kierkegaard, as well as Christian beliefs and texts. In the Hindu tradition, mythology has given many examples of bravery, valor and courage with examples of physical and moral courage exemplified. In the Eastern tradition, some thoughts of courage were offered by the Tao Ti Ching.

Confidence is to know one’s skills and abilities and therefore being able to fight fear or when to flee it. The ideal in courage is not just a rigid control of fear, nor is it the denial of the emotion. The ideal is to judge a situation, accept the emotion as part of human nature and we hope, use well developed habits to confront the fear and allow reason to guide our behavior toward a worthwhile goal. Fear, although it might vary from person to person, is not completely relative and is only appropriate if it matches the danger of the situation. Without appropriate balance between fear and confidence, one cannot have the courage to overcome it.

Two aspects of self-confidence in a dangerous situation which may give one courage: (1) a realistic confidence in the worth of a cause that motivates a positive action; (2) self-knowledge of our skills and abilities.

Courage: the state or quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger, fear or vicissitudes with self-possession, confidence and resolution; bravery.

When reading or studying the history of our Catholic faith one can soon find examples where people were courageous in following Jesus’s teachings. Christians were persecuted for teaching and attempting to spread the Gospel. Christians are still being persecuted in parts of the world today. When reading “The Lives of the Saints”, some saints suffered horrific abuse and horrifying deaths just because they wanted to make the world a better place and to spread the word of God. Practising one’s faith today takes motivation, confidence and courage.

Belonging to the CWL has given me the self-confidence and courage I needed to hold on to my Christian values and to expand upon them. I am more aware of the needs of the people surrounding myself and the community and more willing to do something about it. It also has given me the courage to hold executive positions and parish positions that I once thought I lacked knowledge and ability to do.

I am hoping that fellow CWL members will be courageous and fill positions on CWL councils when asked to share their talents.

Respectfully submitted

Lynne Rowlandson