

Organization Report to 2021 AGMs
The League Ministry to God and Canada 1982
(where we were, where we are, where we are going)

The main thrust of The Catholic Women's League of Canada has always been, the spiritual development of its members. The activities of the League originally focused on aiding immigrants. By 1982 the emphasis on issues concerned the sanctity of life, social justice, human dignity, and the preservation of Christian family life, in Canada and around the world, influenced the actions of the CWL.

In the 1980's the cold war between the USA and the Soviet Union heated up. The Canadian government announced that in response to a U.S. request it had agreed to allow the testing of air-launched cruise missiles in areas of Canada that were geographically similar to the Soviet Union. CWL members were asked to petition the government against the launching of missiles on Canadian soil.

We saw the League launch a major campaign in 1982 to assist the Grandmothers of Argentina whose goal was to find children stolen and illegally adopted during the Argentine dictatorship. It was estimated that 500 children, kidnapped or born in detention centers, were passed off for adoption by military families and allies of the regime, to avoid raising another generation of subversives. Members were asked to support the Grandmothers of Argentina through letter writing and prayer.

Canada enacted the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The ruling found that the criminalization of abortion and legal restrictions violated a woman's right to "life, liberty, and security of the person". CWL Councils were directed to protest Abortion Laws. Fast forward to today and CWL members are protecting the sanctity of life and are asked to write letters in opposition to MAiD.

At the National Convention, a 1981 report by the CCCB stated that the participation of women in the official pastoral work of the Catholic church in Canada illustrated that the full potential of women in this mission was not utilized. A resolution was passed stating that The Catholic Women's League of Canada work toward the kind of personal development and structural evolution which will enable the church to reflect more fully the partnership of women and men in Christ's mission.

The 35th Provincial Convention was held in Ottawa. It was acknowledged that there was a lack of clergy to take on the role of Spiritual Advisor and as a result, a deacon or a religious sister was allowed to be the Spiritual Director. Today we have parishes that share spiritual Advisors and one council has a female spiritual advisor.

The membership in 1982 was 68 000. The Mass Intention at the opening ceremony was "Increasing membership in the CWL of Canada". One of the goals of the Strategic Planning Committee is to increase membership.

Constitutional changes in 1982 included eliminating the second and third vice presidents. Opposition was voiced because there was a concern young women would be discouraged from becoming involved since there would be fewer opportunities for them to be on the executive. As part of the present-day restructuring, there is a movement to reduce the number of executive positions because membership (young women), is declining and it is difficult to fill positions.

The 47th Timmins Diocesan Convention was hosted by Holy Cross Church in Haileybury, September 27-28. The banquet guest speaker was Bishop Landriault, He spoke on the theme of Faith and Family. He said that faith is a gift and like a flower, it still needs to take root and grow. His message is still valid today.

Respectfully Submitted.

Shirley Gravel

Organization Chairperson