



Prayers and Workshops
*for Women of
Peace and Hope*

2010

*In celebration of the 90th anniversary of
The Catholic Women's League of Canada*

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Introduction

My Dear Sisters,

As national president of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, it is my pleasure to introduce *Prayers and Workshops for Women of Peace and Hope*. In August 2008, members of the national executive began working together to provide prayers and workshops for use by all parish councils, the impetus being the League's current theme, *Women of Peace and Hope*. The results of this labour of love lie within the pages of this book and exemplify the dedication and commitment of many League members.

Prayers and Workshops for Women of Peace and Hope has been created in response to requests from members. Please use it and say a prayer for those who prepared it with love as you continue to serve the church, community and each other in faith and action. While a theme is the focus of the League for two years, being *Women of Peace and Hope* is a motto for a lifetime. I am very proud of the national executive, the national office staff and of all League members for their efforts in preparing this book.

On this, the 90th anniversary of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, members renew their commitment to share the gift of the League with others long into the future. May Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to intercede with her Son for us as we strive to remain *Women of Peace and Hope*.

Your sister in the League,

Danielle McNeil-Hessian
National President



Liturgies of Peace and Hope

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A Prayerful Reflection on Peace

(This may be used at the beginning or end of a council meeting)

- **Hymn:** “Let There Be Peace On Earth” (*verse one*)*
- **Prayer:** Lord God, please help me to understand and accept that if I want to live in peace, I have to try my best to let it begin with me. Help me to listen closely to the inspirations of my heart under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ.
- **Reflection:** Are there moments in my life when I am not at peace...
 - in my own heart? (*pause*)...
 - with my family? (*pause*)...
 - with my friends? (*pause*)...
 - with people at work? (*pause*)...

What could I do to change things, and bring peace in these situations...

- change the way I perceive others? (*pause*)...
- realize that I might be the cause of friction or conflict? (*pause*)...
- try not to speak the angry word on the tip of my tongue? (*pause*)...
- try to see the other person’s point of view? (*pause*)...
- hold out a hand in friendship or understanding, realizing that, as I wish that others would do to me, so must I do to them? (*pause*)...

- **Prayer:** Let us pray:
For the times we fail to understand each other...
Response: **We ask for your mercy, Lord**



For our lack of forgiveness, openness and sensitivity...**R**

For the times we are too eager to be better than others, when we are too rushed to care, when we are too tired to bother, when we don't really listen, when we are too quick to act from motives other than love...**R**

● **Closing**

Prayer:

Loving God, we thank You for Your love, for the gifts You have given us and especially for the precious gift of each other. Help us to show our gratitude by loving each other as You love us, with understanding, patience, and forgiveness, and with generosity in sharing the joy and strength we can offer each other. We ask this through Your Son, Jesus Christ and with the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel.
Amen.

● **Closing**

Hymn: “Let There Be Peace On Earth” (*verse two*)*

**In light of the context of this prayer, perhaps the word “brother” in the hymn could be replaced by “sister”.*

Contributed by Lorette Noble, National Past President 2008-2010



Come and Journey

- **Preparation:** *Materials needed: a bible, contemplative background music, a focal point in the centre of group with candles and statue and a collection of paper doves and butterflies, inscribed with gifts such as “Love”, “Faith”, “Patience”, etc. to distribute near the end of the program for reflection. See Appendix 2 for sample graphics*
- **Leader:** Place yourself in the presence of God, relax, sit comfortably in your chair, and close your eyes, concentrate on your breathing. Take a few deep breaths; breathe in and out slowly. Let all your thoughts of the day leave you.

We are becoming calmer within ourselves. The only thing we are aware of is our breathing more and more slowly. We feel God’s presence. Today we begin our journey with our Saviour. He has called us from our birth, washed us in the waters of baptism, and loved us on the earth.

- **Reading:** Matthew 28.16-20
- **Reflection:** In this reading Jesus sent his disciples out to baptize people everywhere and make them His disciples. What does the sacrament of baptism mean to you? In baptism we have been called to be disciples. Reflect on the sacrament of baptism and how you have answered the call to be disciples of Jesus.

As in the words of “Come and Journey with A Saviour” we sometimes have to “come and seek Him deep within”.



- **Reading:** 1 Corinthians 12.4-11
- **Reflection:** We have to reach deep within ourselves to realize our gifts from God. We have to strive to recognize our personal gifts and how they can be best used in our daily lives to serve God and others. Take a moment to think about your own gifts and how you share them with others.

Now we are asked to journey outward, telling others of His name, telling of His glory, of the Cross and of the shame.

Let us now reflect on “St. Teresa of Avila’s Prayer”

Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes through which He looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.
Christ has no body now but yours.

Can you feel Christ’s presence within you? What is he calling you to do? How do you use your body to show Christ to the world? Does your faith shine through with your actions? How will you journey outward with Jesus?



- **Reflection:** We are all going to choose a gift from this collection, think about how it fits you. How can we bring these gifts forward in some small way to make our lives and that of those around us a life that God wants for us all?

Would anyone like to share how this journey has touched them? Has it helped you in anyway, to be the disciples that Jesus has called us to be?

- **Hymn:** “Come and Journey with A Saviour”

Contributed by: Marion Marshall, Prince Edward Island Provincial Council President 2008-2010 and Jacqueline Waye, New Brunswick Provincial Council President 2008-2010



Women of Hope

- **Greeting:** In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- **Leader:** To our God who shares divinity with us.
To our God who unsettles and inspires us.
- **All:** Let us give praise and thanks. Amen.
- **Prayer**
- **Left:** O God of the entire universe, we praise and thank you for all the good gifts that you have given us and especially for the gift of light to see with hope-filled eyes.
- **Right:** We ask that you will renew our sight, so that we may envision a new heaven and a new earth, a world in which all women and men will work together joyfully in cooperation and love.
- **Left:** These are new and challenging times in the church and in the world. Give us wisdom so that we may be always conscious of tradition yet open to the new ways in which the Spirit calls us.
- **Right:** Guide us as we learn from the wisdom of each other. Give us a spirit of trust so that we may more fully collaborate with our sisters and brothers.
- **Left:** May our lives be those of priestly people, a people who are filled with hope because of your presence in our midst, a people who recognize that it is in serving each other that we serve you.



- **Right:** We ask you all these favours because you are the giver of life and light, the one who enlightens our vision, touches it with wisdom, and gives it strength and brilliance.

- **Reading:** Romans 8.24-28

- **All:** **Thanks be to God.**

- **Litany of Hope:** Blessed be Eve, the first woman of our tradition, whose very life gives us a lesson in hope for the future of humanity.

- **All:** **The first woman of our tradition**

Blessed be Sarah, partner of Abraham, whose ability to remain open to laughter, love, and the miracle of creation gave her a son in her old age.

- **All:** **Partner of Abraham**

Blessed be Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother, who knew pain and humiliation yet never lost faith.

- **All:** **The Mother of God and our Mother**

Blessed be Priscilla, collaborator with Paul, whose faith and hope enabled him to minister.

- **All:** **Collaborator with Paul**



Blessed be Teresa of Avila, doctor of the church, whose experience of the awareness of God teaches all generations the value of prayer in times of doubt.

● **All: Doctor of the Church**

Blessed be Dorothy Day, cofounder of the Catholic Worker Movement, who has given hope and witness to the church of the poor and the oppressed.

● **All: Co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement**

Blessed be *women* religious, vowed celibates, who have served the church tirelessly through all the ages and have never lost faith.

● **All: Women religious, vowed celibates**

Blessed be single women, mothers to many, who by their unique call offer time and talents to all God's family.

● **All: Single women, mothers to many**

Blessed be wives and mothers, who have nurtured children and families in a spirit of joy, hope, and self-giving.

● **All: Wives and mothers**

Blessed be widows, who in sorrow and loss are signs of fidelity, strength, and perseverance.



● **All:** **Widows**

Blessed be poor women and women who are abused or oppressed, for they give to all of us a lesson in determination and hope.

● **All:** **Poor women and women who are abused or oppressed**

● **Prayer**

● **Leader:** Creator God, you who have given us these strong yet gentle women, help us to draw strength from their lives so that we may be ever faithful. Help us to embrace a life of mercy and compassion as we rejoice in the hope of the promises made by Your Son, Jesus. Living in joyful hope for the coming of the Lord, we go forth in the peace of Christ.

● **All:** **Thanks be to God.**

● **Candle**

Ceremony: *Candles have been distributed to each on the tables. The leader lights her candle, passes the light to the next person, and so on until all candles are lighted. Hold lighted candles during the closing hymn.*

Hymn: “People of Peace”

(Extinguish the candles at the end of the hymn.)

Note: Parts of this prayer service were used with permission from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Contributed by Tillie Aessie, Saskatchewan Provincial Council President-elect 2006-2008



Prayer Service for Peace

- **Theme:** *Peace needs to be lived at all levels. In this prayer we ask for the deepest kind of peace that comes from God.*

- **Preparation:** *Needed are a leader, reader(s) and five candle bearers. Materials needed: a bible, five large candles and holders, a sheet of paper cut in the shape of a dove for each participant, a selection of pens or pencils and a bowl or brazier where the paper can be safely burned.*

- **Hymn** “Peace” verses 1, 2, and 3

- **Leader:** In the opening procession the Word of God will be enthroned, followed by five candle bearers representing:
 - Peace in self
 - Peace in the home
 - Peace in community
 - Peace in the country
 - Peace in the world

- **Gathering Prayer**

- **Leader:** Loving God, source of our peace, hear the prayers that come from our hearts. We offer You the works of our hands as a sign of our commitment to peace. Bless us and all those who strive for peace in our world.

- **All:** **Amen.**

- **Reading:** Isaiah 11.6-9

- **All:** **Thanks be to God**



- **Responsorial Prayer**
- **Response:** Bless the Lord, O my soul.
- **Reader:** I bless You, Lord, with all that is within me. Blessed is Your Holy name. **R**
- **Reader:** I bless You Lord, and I do not forget all your benefits – how You forgive all our iniquities, how you heal all our diseases. **R**
- **Reader:** For You crown us with your steadfast love and mercy, You satisfy us with good as long as we live, so that our youth is renewed like the eagles. **R**
- **Reader:** Lord, You are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. As a father has compassion for his children, You Lord have compassion for those who fear You. **R**
- **Gospel:** Matthew 5.38-48
- **All:** Praise be to You Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Intercessions:**
- **Response:** Lord God, we come to you in our need.
- **Leader:** Lord God, we come to You in our need: create in us an awareness of the massive and seemingly irreversible proportions of the crisis we face in the world today and a sense of urgency to activate the forces of goodness.



- **Left:** Where there is blatant nationalism, let there be global, and universal concern. **R**
- **Right:** Where there is war and armed conflict, let there be negotiation. **R**
- **Left:** Where there is stock piling, let there be disarmament. **R**
- **Right:** Where people struggle toward liberation, let there be no interference. **R**
- **Left:** Where there is consumerism, let there be a choice for a simple lifestyle and sharing. **R**
- **Right:** Where there is reliance on external activism, let there be a balance of prayerful dependence on You, O Lord. **R**
- **Left:** Where there is selfish individualism, let there be openness to community. **R**
- **Right:** Where there is the sin of injustice, let there be guilt, confession and atonement. **R**
- **Left:** Where there is paralysis and numbness before the enormity of the problems, let there be confidence in our collective effort. **R**
- **Leader:** Let us pray together:



- **Prayer for Peace and Hope**

O Lord our God, You are the source of peace, inspire the women of the League to live in peace by acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with You, our God.

We pray that You enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we may see what hope Your call holds for us.

May we be firm in the hope we profess and always be ready to give the reason for the hope we have.

- **Leader:** On your table are paper doves, one for each person. I invite you to write a petition for peace on it, fold it in half and bring it up to the table putting it in the burning bowl, as a sign of your prayers rising to God. We will do this while we sing our closing hymn.
- **Hymn:** “Peace” verses 4, 5, 6, & 7.

Contributed by Tillie Aessie, Saskatchewan Provincial Council President-elect 2006-2008



Knowing God is Life Changing

- **Preparation:** *Place a tree branch in a bucket of sand and place in the centre of the room. Make butterflies and caterpillars ahead of time out of paper or whatever material works for you (pipe cleaners, craft pom poms, etc) Place a piece of string on each one to hang on the tree. Each person is given a caterpillar or butterfly when they enter. Butterfly people are directed to the right, caterpillar people are directed to the left. As each person says their part of the script, they place their caterpillar or butterfly on the tree.*

- **Opening**

- **Butterflies:** *O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to live in peace by acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with our God. (Mic 6.8)*

- **Caterpillars:** *We pray that You will enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we may see what hope Your call holds for us. May we be firm in the hope we profess and always be ready to give the reason for the hope we have.*

- **Leader:** *Hope is a great word in the English language. Like a caterpillar, we hope we will be something more beautiful one day. We hope to become a butterfly.*

- **Caterpillar 1:** *When someone has hope in me, without knowledge of the fullness of my frailties, I am convinced that if she knew my full story she would lose all hope in me. (Put your caterpillar on the tree.)*



- **Butterfly 1:** Maybe the reality is that I am God's messenger of hope for you in that moment. Lord, make me an instrument of your peace, where there is doubt, let me bring faith. (Prayer of St. Francis) *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*

- **Caterpillar 2:** As a woman, I often suffer from depression. Give me a glimmer of hope so I can keep putting one foot in front of the other on this journey of life. *(Place your caterpillar on the tree)*

- **Butterfly 2:** O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to walk humbly with you as we walk with our League sisters in their time of need. *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*

- **Caterpillar 3:** When I have done wrong and hope seems to be in short supply, I need to be reminded there are no hopeless cases, including me. *(Place your caterpillar on the tree.)*

- **Butterfly 3:** O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to live in peace by acting justly (Mic 6.8) *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*

- **Caterpillar 4:** We all have moments of disenchantment when we need people to be Christ in our lives, to shine a little hope our way. *(Place your caterpillar on the tree.)*

- **Butterfly 4:** O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to live in peace by loving tenderly (Mic 6.8) *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*



- **Caterpillar 5:** During the times when my world has crashed around me, and I have suffered a deeply personal loss, I despair and lose hope. I choose to stay in my old skin, stay behind locked doors. (Jn 20.19) *(Place your caterpillar on the tree.)*
- **Butterfly 5:** Maybe for all the times I have sung those words ‘give us hope in despair,’ God has made sure that someone does just that. A friend tells me, “Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.”(Ps. 42.5) *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*
- **Caterpillar 6:** When my commitments are tested in the fires of life, when love is tried as loved ones change, I want to toughen my skin and hide within. It is difficult to forgive. *(Place your caterpillar on the tree.)*
- **Butterfly 6:** Those are the times God grants us a greater experience of His enduring love through listening ears and compassionate eyes. Lord Let me bring pardon to injured relationships within my family. (Prayer of St. Francis) *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*
- **Caterpillar 7:** Lord, when there is conflict within my family I have a difficult time finding you.
- **Butterfly 7:** Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace in the midst of family conflict. *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*
- **Caterpillar 8:** Lord when there is conflict and hatred among countries, it is difficult to see love in the world
- **Butterfly 9:** Lord let me sow love in the world. (Prayer of St. Francis) *(Place your butterfly on the tree.)*



- **Caterpillar 10:** When there is conflict in my workplace, it is difficult to find peace
- **Butterfly 10:** Lord, make me an instrument of your peace in my workplace.
- **Caterpillar 11:** Lord, I see conflict in my parish council and I am hurt when not appreciated.
- **Butterfly 11:** Lord let me be an instrument of peace to my parish council. (*Place your butterfly on the tree.*)
- **Caterpillar 12:** Lord I see despair in my parish council.
- **Butterfly 12:** Lord let me bring hope to my parish council with my encouraging words. (Prayer of St. Francis) (*Place your butterfly on the tree.*)
- **Caterpillar 13:** Lord I see sadness around me.
- **Butterfly 13:** Lord let me bring peace and joy with a smile and a kind word. (Prayer of St. Francis) (*Place your butterfly on the tree.*)
- **Butterfly 14:** Jesus' visit through my neighbour brings a remarkable change in me. This visit shows me Jesus' resurrection proves that He is greater than the greatest obstacles. He can rebuild my life. He brings me peace (Jn 20.19) "He rose! And with Him hope arose, and life and light." C.P. Hia (*Place your butterfly on the tree.*)



- **Closing**

- **Leader:** Our tree started bare like our journey in life. As we travel the journey, we meet others along the way and like the tree, our life fills up with people who give us hope. These people help us to grow, shed our old skins, and become the beautiful butterflies that God intended us to be.

- **Let us pray**

- **All:** Release Your Godly wisdom that I may be a good steward over all that You have given me Father, for I know how wonderful and mighty You are and how if we just obey You and walk in Your word, that You will pour out blessings. I thank You now Lord for the recent blessings I have received and for the blessings yet to come because I know You are not done with me yet. Amen.

Donna Prevost, Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council President 2007-2009
and Judy Lewis, National Chairperson of Legislation 2008-2010



Let There Be Peace on Earth

- **Preparation:** *Materials needed: a bible. Readers needed: one leader and nine readers. Note: The reflections are adapted from “Reflections on Peace” written by Tony Cosentino, Religion and Family Life Education Resource Teacher at the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board.*

Hymn “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

- **Sign of the Cross**
- **Opening Prayer**

- **All:** Eternal Father, we praise You for sending Your Son to be one of us and to save us. Look upon Your people with mercy, for we are different in many ways. Give the Spirit of Jesus to make us one in love. We ask this gift, loving Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- **Reading:** Romans 12.9-19

- **Reflections on Peace**

- **Reader 1:** “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons and daughters of God” (Mt 5.9). These are the words of Jesus from his sermon on the mount. They tell us something about ourselves, and they tell us something about God’s Kingdom. By our baptism, we are called to live in Christ’s peace, and this peace is at the heart of God’s Kingdom.



- **Reader 2:** Before his passion and death, Jesus said to his disciples: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.” He told them to trust in God and to trust in him as he went away to prepare a place for them (Jn 14.1-3). After his resurrection, he appeared to his disciples saying “peace be with you.” The disciples were fearful and in hiding. They had abandoned Jesus in his moment of greatest need. Still, Jesus returned to them with love, understanding and compassion to give them his peace.
- **Reader 3:** We are followers of Jesus. He calls us to trust Him, and to trust that God the Father has a wonderful plan for us. Jesus gives us His peace – a peace that is beyond all understanding, a kind of peace that only he can give – so that we can become all that he has called us to be.
- **Reader 4:** We are all members of His body: the hands, the feet, the voice and face of Jesus. We are called to share His peace – in the classroom, the schoolyard, in our communities, and in the world. Each time we forgive, share with, help, comfort and care for one another, the peace of Jesus and of God’s Kingdom becomes more real for everyone to see.
- **Reader 5:** As we go out into the world, let us remember Jesus’ words “peace be with you” and carry them in our hearts. We ask the Holy Spirit for the courage to share Jesus’ gift of peace through acts of kindness, as a sign of His kingdom’s everlasting peace, where the Father has prepared a place for each of us, beloved sons and daughters of God.



- **Prayers of Intercession**
- **Response:** We pray to the Lord.
- **Reader 1:** For our church communities, that we will continue to grow individually and spiritually, together. **R**
- **Reader 2:** For the Clergy of our parishes, that they will continue to guide us through their ministry. **R**
- **Reader 3:** For the role of women, to be enhanced in church and society. **R**
- **Reader 4:** For Christian ideals, to be exemplified in home and family life. **R**
- **Reader 5:** For the dignity and rights of all people everywhere, be recognized and respected. **R**
- **Reader 6:** For the elimination of violence against all human persons, especially violence against women. **R**
- **Reader 7:** For all who have died, especially those members of the CWL. **R**
- **Reader 8:** For our own special needs, we pray in silence. **R**
- **Reader 9:** For all of us, that we may continue to rejoice in our gifts, live in the spirit of gratitude, and share what we have. **R**



- **The Lord's Prayer**
- **Sign of Peace:** Let us offer each other the sign of peace.
- **Closing Prayer**
- **All:** God of love, you have heard our prayers. Grant that we may be your voice, your hands, and your heart in today's world, as we do your work through our ministry, as Women of Peace and Hope.
- **Closing Hymn:** "Prayer of St. Francis"

Contributed by Peggy Roche, National Secretary Treasurer 2008-2010



The Lord is my Peace and Hope

- **Preparation:** *For each person, prepare a paper dove with a hook or loop of thread for hanging. Place branches in a base to receive the doves. Create a small prayer focal point with a candle, Icon, cloth.*
- **Opening Hymn:** “O God Beyond All Praising”
- **Reading:** Psalms 4.7-9
- **Leader:** Lord we look to You for peace, wisdom, strength, knowledge, hope, compassion, patience and courage. All these can only be mine because of You.
- **Refrain:** **Lord we ask this of You.**
- **Left:** **Peace** to know that my words and actions need to be such that those around me feel peace in their heart and soul. **R**
- **Right:** **Wisdom** to know right from wrong when speaking with my sisters of the League and those I have the opportunity to influence. **R**
- **Left:** **Strength** to continue the journey when the path grows long and heavy from pain or suffering. **R**
- **Right:** **Knowledge** to know there are members around us who are blessed with skills of the League and others who are learning the ways to make a difference. **R**



- **Left:** **Hope** to know I may be the instrument for others offering them hope of better things to come. **R**
- **Right:** **Compassion** to understand that Jesus teaches us that true greatness lies in being a servant to others. **R**
- **Left:** **Patience** that is limitless to hear the Lord's words and put them into daily practice. **R**
- **Right:** **Courage** to know that by challenging comments, embracing new ideas, and turning a cheek as needed leads to a solid love of the League. **R**
Amen
- **Leader:** When you think about peace or hope who first comes into your mind? Mother Theresa, Nelson Mandela, local peace keeper? A local soup kitchen volunteer, friend/relative suffering with illness or a hard time? Write that person's name on the dove. Individually go in silence to the branches and hang up your dove.

(after all doves are placed)
- **Leader:** Pray this week for the person you named on your dove. Keep them in your hearts and thoughts so they will continue to have the peace and hope to help with their struggles or that they will enjoy eternal rest.
- **Reading:** Sirach 2.9-11
- **Closing Hymn:** "Peace Is Flowing Like a River"

Contributed by Judy Lewis, Chairperson of Legislation 2008-2010 and Fran Lucas, Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council President 2009-2011



Peace is Flowing

- **Preparation:** *Provide words and music for “Peace is Flowing Like a River” and “Let There Be Peace on Earth”.*

- **Opening**

Hymn: “Peace Is Flowing Like a River”

- **Opening Prayer**

- **All:** Loving and compassionate God, we thank You for our many blessings bestowed on us each day. Help us to open our hearts to all; family, friends, and strangers. We ask for Your guidance as we seek to do Your will.

- **Prayer for Peace**

- **All:** Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may seek not
so much to be consoled as to console; to be
understood as to understand; to be loved as
to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it
is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it
is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen. *St. Francis of Assisi*



- **Psalm:** Leader: Psalm 8:

- **Left:** O Lord, our Lord, Your greatness is seen in all the world! Your praise reaches up to the heavens; sung by children and babies. You are safe and secure from all Your enemies; you stop anyone who opposes You.

- **Right:** When I look at the sky, which You have made, at the moon and the stars, which You set in their places-what is man that You think of him; the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas.

- **Left:** O Lord our Lord, Your greatness is seen in all the world!

- **Reading:** Philippians 4.4-9

- **Reflection:**
- **Leader:** These words of the gospel speak to us as *Women of Peace and Hope* asking us to “always show a gentle attitude toward everyone”. As women of peace, this must be how we let God work through us, with kindness toward others. And we are also told that we need not worry, but as women of hope, we pray, “ask God for what we need”, give gratitude and trust in God. God will keep us safe. God will give us peace.

- **Prayers of Intercession**

- **Response: Loving God Hear Our Prayer**

For the church, standing in solidarity with all people, especially the downtrodden. We pray to the Lord. **R**



For a new and lasting commitment to peace in our families, our parishes, our community, and our world. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For political leaders, at all levels, that they may truly work for the betterment of all citizens. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For our community, welcoming the stranger, with unconditional love. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For greater cooperation, for greater understanding and respect among the world's religious faiths. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For all Christians, called to recognize the image of God in the stranger. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For people who struggle to believe they are made in God's image. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For all young people eager to follow Christ. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For all children whose physical, emotional and educational needs are not being adequately met. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For the grace to recognize Jesus in the most unexpected places. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For eyes that we may see You, ears that we might hear You, and lips that we might speak of You, and hearts that are filled with Your great love. We pray to the Lord. **R**



For The Catholic Women's League of Canada and all its members, that God will bless and guide us as we strive to live out our call to holiness through service to the people of God. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For all deceased members, who have journeyed to their heavenly home. We pray to the Lord. **R**

For the intentions of all those present here today, those that are in your hearts, and those you may wish to express. We pray to the Lord. **R**

● **Closing Prayer**

● **All:** Heavenly Father we thank You for the many gifts You have given us our faith, our families, our church, our community, and our friends. May Your Holy Spirit continue to guide us in all that we do, we ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

● **Closing**

Hymn: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

Submitted Marion Marshall, Prince Edward Island Provincial Council President 2008-2010 and Jacqueline Waye, New Brunswick Provincial Council President 2008-2010



Peace and Hope

- **Preparation:** *The room should be dimly lit. A large candle, the Pascal candle if possible, should be placed centrally. If the group is seated at tables, each table should have a Christ candle centrally placed in a holder. Provide the words and music for the hymn “The Light of Christ”. Obtain a copy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s book, *God’s Dream*. (Candlewick Press, 2008). If possible set up a projector and laptop to conclude the service with a Power Point presentation of “Go Light Your World”. [Several versions are available online from YouTube.] Five readers enter together, each carrying a taper candle. The first will light the central candle.*
- **Introduction**
- **Reader 2:** The Dalai Lama delivered this message to the United Nations at its summit at the beginning of the new millennium: “Inner peace is the true foundation of world peace.”
(lights her candle)
- **Reader 3:** Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta reminded the world that: “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” *(lights her candle)*
- **Reader 4:** Anne Frank, a young teenage girl who was killed in a concentration camp during World War II, wrote in one of her essays: “How lovely to think that no one need wait a moment, we can start now, start slowly changing the world.” *(lights her candle)*
- **Reader 5:** On the night before He died, Jesus said: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” *(lights her candle)*



(Readers should spread through the room to prepare to light table candles.)

- **Reader 1:** We need to light up our world with hope – the hope that allows us to believe that peace is possible in the midst of a violent world; the hope that brings light to dispel the darkness of our lives; the hope that brings love wherever there is indifference and injustice.
We need to bring hope to our peers, our families, our community, and our world – the same hope that Jesus brings us!

- **Reader 2:** To light a candle as an act of hope is to say to yourself and others that, despite anything that might be happening in the world, you are still nursing a vision of peace and unity based upon something beyond the present state of things and this hope is based upon deeper realities than the world admits.

- **Reader 3:** To light our Christ candles, then, is a powerful statement of hope. We light candles because we believe that God, who is more real than anything else, has promised to establish a kingdom of love, peace, and justice on this earth and is gracious, forgiving, and powerful enough to do it.

(Readers light the Christ candles at each table as “The Light of Christ” is sung.)

- **Hymn:** “The Light of Christ”



- **Prayer**

- **All:** Loving God, You make our world radiant with the splendour of Jesus Christ our light. Open our hearts to welcome Him, the true light of the world. May the light of faith shine in our words and in our actions. This we ask through Jesus Christ, Your Son and our Saviour. Amen.

- **Reader 2:** During apartheid, Bishop Desmond Tutu kept hope alive in the hearts of South Africans with his vision that justice, freedom, and peace would come. “God says to you, ‘I have a dream. Please help me realize it.’ It is a dream of a world whose ugliness and squalor and poverty, its war and hostility, its greed and harsh competitiveness, its alienation and disharmony are changed into their glorious counterparts.” Sometime afterwards Bishop Tutu co-authored a children’s book entitled “*God’s Dream*”.

- **Reader 3:** *(Read God’s Dream by Desmond Tutu.) (Alternately a reading from the New Testament can be chosen.)*

- **Intercessory Prayer**

- **Response:** Come, Lord Jesus; empower us to be beacons of hope!

- **Reader 4:** Jesus, you became incarnate to bring light and hope to our hearts. Help us to make God smile as we strive to be beacons of hope; we pray. **R**

That we become beacons of hope by proclaiming the unconditional love of God for all people; we pray. **R**



That we become beacons of hope, by being people of compassion and forgiveness, a people of prayer and respect; we pray. **R**

That we become beacons of hope by reaching out to those who hunger for food, for justice, for a kind word, for acceptance, and for a sense of belonging; we pray. **R**

That we become beacons of hope by “acting justly, loving tenderly, and walking humbly with our God”; we pray. **R**

That we become beacons of hope by reaching out to those who suffer the loss of a loved one, so that the peace and consolation of our heavenly Father may penetrate the darkness of their pain and loss; we pray. **R**

Lord Jesus Christ, You who embraced us in our humanity, empower us to be beacons of hope, bringing light to the darkness of our world. This we ask in your name. **Amen.**

- **Reflection**

- **Reader 5:** Life Member Barb Dowding wrote, “To be *Women of Peace and Hope*, we must first be women who love and are loved. Remembering who we are in God’s eyes and His plan will enable us to reach out, affect change and help each other believe in ourselves. One of the many aspects of feminine leadership comes in the form of confidence, not necessarily self confidence, but rather the confidence that comes from trusting in God. The quote attributed to Nelson Mandela, “As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated



from our own fears, our presence automatically liberates others,” reminds me to use Jesus as the ultimate model of leadership. Called to love and be loved in this world, I must lead with my heart, trust my informed intuition (feminine genius?) and make manifest the glory of God. As *Women of Peace and Hope*, we cross all barriers when we extend a hand, a hand of comfort and welcome, of friendship, understanding and compassion. Resolutions: Shining our lights as *Women of Peace and Hope*, how blessed are we?”

- **Closing Song and Power Point:**
“Go Light your World”

Contributed by Fran Lucas, Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council President
2009-2011



Come to the Table of Peace and Hope

- **Preparation:** *Prepare a focal point by covering a table, with a white tablecloth and placing on it a white candle lit, an open bible and a single rose laid on the bible. Have soft music playing. Call the group to silence; encourage them to listen to the texts that will be read and ask participants to read the prayer.*

- **Leader:** What can one do while wars and conflict continue in the world?
While jobs are lost, and many are homeless?
Woe is the one who has no hope.

What can one do while children are starving?
While women and children are victims of human trafficking?
Woe is the one who remains silent.

What can one do while materialism, secularism, and racism continue?
While the aged are lonely for love?
Woe is the one who does not try.

(Allow a moment of silence.)

- **Prayer**

- **All:** God of peace and hope, we pray for courageous and committed people around the world who every day take steps along the path to peace. May we too be faithful travelers as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus who came to be our peace and hope.



- **Leader:** Unconditional love is the central condition of peace; faith develops hope. Jesus, Prince of Peace, take us, broken as we are, and make us instruments of your peace.

(Allow a moment of silence.)

- **All:** Heavenly Father, source of all hope, creator of peace, help us to stretch across political, religious and cultural boundaries, so by continuing together in the search for justice, peace and truth, we may bring hope to all.

- **Leader:** Be mindful that creating a peaceful heart and working toward inner peace takes practice.
Do we have hope to match God's hope for us?

(Allow a moment of silence.)

- **All:** May the God of hope give us faith in believing; may the God of love give us joy in our living. May the God of peace give us peace in all ways and at all times.

- **Leader:** Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.
How do we make space for peace in our hearts?

(Allow a moment of silence.)

- **All:** Holy Spirit, we ask for peace in our hearts, our families, our CWL council, our communities, peace within countries. Bring an end to violence, oppression. Remove all resentment and bitterness. Teach us your ways of peace and hope.



● **Discussion Questions: (optional)**

1. What are the unique gifts women bring to the table of peace and hope?
2. What part does hope play in my life?
3. Do I hope mainly for things or for people?
4. How do we pass peace on to our children, our grandchildren, our League sisters?
5. How can you see women working together for peace?

(Invite participants to approach the Table of Peace and Hope, pick up the rose, and indicate an action you could undertake to bring more peace and hope into your world.

Present the rose to another participant who would like to share. When everyone wishing to share is finished, lay the rose on the bible. Conclude the prayer service by extending to each other a sign of peace.)

Contributed by Velma Harasen, National President-elect 2008-2010 and Danielle McNeil-Hessian, National President 2008-2010



A Reflection on Peace

- **Preparation:** *Needed: a bible and a recording device to play soft music during the reflection. Also have the words and music available for the closing hymn “Lord Make Us Servants of Your Peace”. Also needed are one leader and six readers.*

- **Sign of the Cross**

- **Prayer**

- **Leader:** Dear Heavenly Father: Please bless us today while we gather together as *Women of Peace and Hope*, sharing in one voice our prayers: Please grant us the Grace that will enable us to accomplish our goals through this reflection.

We thank You for giving us the opportunity of knowing Your love, understanding, and mercy and we ask that You continue to guide us along our faith journey, working together within our mission statement to serve others.

We ask this through the intercession of our Patroness Our Lady of Good Counsel. Amen!

- **Reading:** Romans 5.1- 8
- **Reflection:** *(Have someone read very softly and reflective while relaxing music plays in the background)*

Author Gien Karssen imagined a single lonely dove flying over a world completely submerged by flood waters. She had been released from the ark by Noah to search for dry land. No matter where she flew, she found no rest.



Noah, whose name means “he who will bring rest” watched and waited for her return. When she flew back he extended his hand to bring her safely back into the ark. (Gen.8.8-9)

Karszen reminds us that when we feel hopeless and abandoned, like the dove, “We flutter around in a world that increasingly offers less to hold on to in every way. We see little hope of humanity. Spiritually and emotionally we find no rest.”

We are not alone. God is watching over us. “Through Him we can find rest in spite of the catastrophes that harass the world. He offers us a place to stand, and hope, even in an apparent lost world. He offers a new beginning to those of us who return to Him.”

- **Meditation**

- **Leader:** As we meditate on the words in the Gospel reading and the Reflection I want us now to think about what was said and how we can associate it to our own lives. Let us silently ask ourselves:

In what ways does the peace and hope that we share in our lives complement one another?

Have we been able to make a positive impact on someone else because of that?

What have we gained from that experience?

How can we build on our experiences for the future?



- **Prayers of Intercession**
- **Response:** We pray to the Lord
- **Reader 1:** For our families and friends, and people everywhere, that they will experience good health; happiness; and contentment. **R**
- **Reader 2:** For our sisters in the League, that they will continue to share their gifts and talents with others. **R**
- **Reader 3:** For people oppressed, who do not, or cannot, have a voice of their own, that they will have justice. **R**
- **Reader 4:** For all who feel forsaken; depressed; and lost, that they may be filled with peace and hope. **R**
- **Reader 5:** For the sick and the dying and for those who have lost loved ones, that they may be comforted. **R**
- **Reader 6:** For those who volunteer, especially those who work with the needy; the sick, and the dying, that they may be blessed. **R**
- **The Lord's Prayer**
- **Sign of Peace**
- **Hymn:** "Lord Make Us Servants of Your Peace"

Contributed by Peggy Roche, National Secretary-Treasurer 2008-2010



Eight Candles – Lighting Prayers for Peace

- **Preparation:** *Supplies needed: a small bowl of popped pop corn at each table, a bible and words and music for “Women of Peace” (adapted from “People of Peace”). A leader and eight readers. If equipment is available, a You Tube video of “Go Light Your World” can be broadcast at the end of the service.*
- **Hymn:** “Women of Peace”
- **Introduction**
- **Leader:** Change begins with the individual. Today we will pray for what we can do as a group.

Reflect on the popcorn on the table in front of you. Dissension spreads like popcorn. It needs hot oil to activate the kernels. A few kernels pop here and there and then quickly explodes until it fills its niche. If left on the heat it burns itself out, but not before the room is filled with pungent smoke. If no heat is activated, the kernels sit there with no place to go.

When groups or mobs of people explode into fury, there is usually some sort of oil flowing along in the undercurrent and then some heat causes it to explode. Prayer is one way to diffuse fires. May we be the catalyst that calms the fires in the world. (*moment of reflection*).

The leader will light the candle of each Reader. The Reader will read her section, then will go and pass her light to those on the floor to be taken back to their councils. (Those near the front, wait until you each have a light passed on to you from each of the readers so that the light from all seven of the requests mentioned in the prayers be forwarded into the world).



- **Responsorial Prayer**

- **All:** **Come, Lord, and grant us peace and hope.**

- **Reader 1:** Let us light a candle that we may be tolerant, and pray for a unity that respects diversity and enhances the well-being of all the inhabitants of Canada and of the world. Let us pray for a society where it will be easier to live virtuously, where joy will be the lot of many, where all children will be surrounded with love, where prejudice will have no place and where God will be more evident to all. **R**

- **Reader 2:** Let us light a candle for justice and that we may be just, and pray for the eradication of poverty and want everywhere in Canada and the world, but especially among children and the First Nations. Let us pray for our young people, especially those preparing for World Youth Day, that they may find solid mentors, leading them to creative and satisfying lives. **R**

- **Reader 3:** Let us light a candle that we may bring peace, and pray for all victims and peace makers, for marginalised people, for the weak and defenceless, including immigrants and refugees, that they be welcomed to take their rightful place within society. Let us pray for tolerance and peace, justice and forgiveness, that we may find lasting solutions to terrorism and crime. **R**



- **Reader 4:** Let us light a candle to love and forgive, and pray for those whose lives give birth to evil and who pervert the truth and turn to violence. Let us pray for those how, as a result, now doubt the power of love and goodness, those lost in grief and all who have been robbed of hope or security. Let us pray for greater understanding between Christians, Muslims and Jews, that solidarity among all people of good will may promote harmony and tolerance and unite all people in the ways of justice and peace. **R**

- **Reader 5:** Let us light a candle to have faith, and pray for a clearer sense of the dignity and value of each human person and the sanctity of marriage. Let us pray for all scientists, technicians and health professionals, that respect for life be foremost in their endeavours to bring the best of science to the care they exercise, and that their work will be profitable for all segments of society and for the good of the whole planet. **R**

- **Reader 6:** Let us light a candle for goodness and virtue, and pray for our government leaders that they may have the courage and wisdom always to decide what is best for the common good. Let us pray for ourselves and for all religious leaders that we may always speak what is true and good and live accordingly. **R**

- **Reader 7:** Let us light a candle in thanksgiving, and pray for all who are engaged in volunteer work, that it may lead them to deep spiritual peace. Let us pray for our parishes and families, for the sick and dying and for all Christians, that we may be true women of peace and hope. **R**



- **Leader:** Let us light a candle for hope, and pray for God's blessing upon each one and all, that we may have a life-filled, peaceful League year. Let us pray for those who have died this past year, especially the victims of terrorism and natural disasters and for those how gave their lives in acts of heroism and martyrdom; that they may behold God face-to-face.

May this peace service that began in 1986 when a group of Americans visited a Russian Orthodox Church. An elderly women placed three rubles into the ministers's hand and asked him to light a candle for peace. This candle burns in the First Presbyterian Church in York, Pennsylvania, USA. R

- **Hymn:** **Go Light Your World by Kathy Troccoli** (On You Tube)
<http://www.truveo.com/Chris-Rice-Go-Light-Your-World/id/4134606874>

- **Closing**

- **Leader:** Candles may be extinguished now. Let us pass forward the sign of peace so that hope may flourish.

Contributed by Terri Scott, National Chairperson of Spiritual Development 2008-2010 and Pauline Krupa, Ontario Provincial Council 2nd Vice-President 2008-2010



The Four Candles

- **Preparation:** *Choose one or several readers to present the poem. Four members can animate the poem by lighting and extinguishing four tapers or pillar candles.*

The Four Candles burned slowly.
Their ambiance was so soft
you could hear them speak...

The First Candle said, "I Am Peace,
but these days,
nobody wants to keep me lit."
Then Peace's flame slowly
diminishes and goes out completely.

The Second Candle said, "I Am Faith,
but these days, I am no longer indispensable."
Then Faith's flame slowly diminishes
and goes out completely.

Sadly The Third Candle Speaks,
"I am Love and I haven't the
strength to stay lit any longer.
People put me aside
and don't understand my importance.
They even forget to love
those who are nearest to them.
"Waiting no longer,
Love goes out completely.

Suddenly...A child enters the
room and sees the three
candles no longer burning.



The child begins to cry,
“Why are you not burning?
You are supposed to stay lit until the end!”

Then The Fourth Candle speaks
gently to the little child,
“Don’t be afraid, for I am
Hope, and while I still burn,
we can re-light the other candles.”

With shining eyes the child
took the Candle Of Hope and
lit the other three candles.

Never let the Flame Of Hope go
out of your life.
With Hope, no matter how bad things look
and are...Peace, Faith and
Love can shine brightly in our lives.

Aino Makato

- Prayer: “Dear God, you are my light and salvation. You are my hope. Please come into my heart and forgive all my wrongs and give me Your wonderful gift of eternal Life. Help me be an instrument of Your love and cause Your light to shine on others and through me. Amen.”

Contributed by Danielle McNeil-Hessian, National President 2008-2010
and Velma Harasen, National President-elect 2008-2010



The Beatitudes for Our Times

Based on the Gospel of St. Matthew 5:3-10

- **Hymn:** “Blest Are They”
- **All:** **Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**
- **Leader:** When I get jealous that my neighbour has beautiful new furniture and a new car, then I remember to fall on my knees and thank God for my health, my children, my wonderful spouse.
- **All:** **Lord, grant me contentment with what I have that I may enjoy it to the fullest and not experience envy and greed that will destroy my genuine loving self.**
- **All:** **Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.**
- **Leader:** When my future becomes muddled with anxiety and sunny days turn to fog and there is no reason for feeling blue, then I remember to fall on bended knee and ask for help.
- **All:** **Lord, grant me respite from this anxiety that I may have hope, to pray for others besides myself.**
- **All:** **Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.**
- **Leader:** When I start to gossip and put down a person, then I remember that I am looking at the face of Jesus, and so I fall on bended knee and ask for forgiveness for not having the patience to really see that person as they are, the face of Christ.



- **All:** Lord, grant me tolerance and goodwill so that I may hear your little voice inside my heart that will tell me what this person needs from me to make us both better people in your sight.
- **All:** Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- **Leader:** When my day is going well and I am singing with joy and there's food in my cupboard and gas in my car, then I remember to fall on bended knee and thank the Lord and ask for help for others who aren't as fortunate as I am.
- **All:** Lord, grant me compassion to remember that half the people in the world are hungry and don't have food or a bed and remind me to pray for them or better yet send help in some way.
- **All:** Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
- **Leader:** When I get angry and judgemental of the squeegee people and the down-and-outs on the sidewalk and I condemn them for not having a job, then I remember to fall on my bended knees and thank the Lord that I have the ability to see those in need.
- **All:** Lord, grant me the grace of a generous heart and mercy to see you in all your children regardless of their appearance.
- **All:** Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.



- **Leader:** When I get impatient and frustrated with the noise and exuberance of children and the demands of the mentally challenged in my life, then I remember Your words and I fall on bended knees and thank the Lord for the love that they share.

- **All:** **Lord, grant me the ability to see your creations in all its varied forms with love with which you made them.**

- **All:** **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.**

- **Leader:** When I complain that I am too busy and my phone is always ringing off the hook and I never have time to watch television or to go to a movie, then I remember that I was blessed with hands and a brain to do God's work on earth and so I fall on my bended knees and thank the Lord that I have the opportunity to help out in the world.

- **All:** **Lord, grant me enough time for all that You ask of me and remind me to use it wisely and not waste even a second of it.**

- **All:** **Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

- **Leader:** When my aging becomes too hard to bear and my aching bones call out for relief, then I remember to fall on bended knee and ask for help.

- **All:** Lord, grant me relief for these aching bones that I may have freedom from pain to pray for others besides myself who also ache and cry with pain.



- **All:** Good and gracious God, you have given us the word of your Son and the example of His mother to guide us on our journey home to you. Have mercy on our endeavours and may they be pleasing to You. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Contributed by Terri Scott, Chairperson of Spiritual Development 2008-2010 and Mary-Margaret Patterson, Winnipeg Diocesan Council President-elect 2007-2009





Special Intentions

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Prayer for New Executive Term

- **Preparation:** *Provide a bible and choose a leader and seven readers as well as the council executive in advance of the service.*

- **Reading:** **Leader:** Romans 12:3-6
As we begin a new year, we recognize that we all bring different gifts to our work in the League. Let us commit ourselves to recognizing and sharing these gifts in a spirit of co-operation and empowerment so that we may build up the kingdom of God in a loving caring manner.

- **Prayer**

- **Reader 1.** May all who come to our meetings be treated with respect and kindness.
- **Reader 2.** May all who come to our meetings find love and acceptance.
- **Reader 3.** May all who come to our meetings find encouragement and affirmation.
- **Reader 4.** May all who come to our meetings find caring and compassion.
- **Reader 5.** May all who come to our meetings find gentleness and patience.
- **Reader 6.** May all who come to our meetings find forgiveness and reconciliation.
- **Reader 7.** May all who come to our meetings find courage and strength.

- **Leader:** Bless the efforts of this executive team as we work together for God and Canada.

- **President:** May my leadership and dedication to the League allow all members to celebrate their faith and truly become “*Women of Peace and Hope*”.



- **Corresponding Secretary:**
May my correspondence be informative, accurate, and elevate the image of the League.
- **Recording Secretary:**
May my records be efficient and record well the proceedings we undertake.
- **Treasurer:** May my efforts to monitor the finances of our council always reflect good stewardship.
- **Historian:** May my efforts to record the history of our council reflect the love and dedication of those who went before us in service.
- **Chairperson of Spiritual Development:**
May my efforts help members to enhance and deepen their own spirituality while they grow in knowledge and appreciation of their gift of faith.
- **Chairperson of Organization:**
May my enthusiasm and programming skills draw new members to the League and help current members to develop their leadership abilities.
- **Chairperson of Christian Family Life:**
May my efforts support and strengthen the family unit, diverse as it may be in our society today.
- **Chairperson of Community Life:**
May my efforts help members to reflect a Christian perspective in the many diverse activities in their communities.



- **Chairperson of Communications:**
May my work in communications allow everyone to learn how significant and valuable the work of The Catholic Women's League of Canada truly is.
- **Chairperson of Education and Health:**
May my efforts support the cause of Catholic Education and provide opportunities for all to learn and grow and become truly who they were meant to be.
- **Chairperson of Resolutions:**
May my work in resolutions draw attention to the inadequacies and disparities that exist in our society and further the efforts of members to make the changes necessary for a more just society.
- **Chairperson of Legislation:**
May my efforts convince members of the value of following through on the projects we undertake to improve our world.
- **Newsletter Editor:**
May my efforts as Newsletter editor reflect the diversity and significance of the issues that The Catholic Women's League of Canada addresses.
- **All:** May we rejoice in the work of the League and celebrate the many opportunities we have to become Women of Peace and Hope.
- **Leader:** Romans 15.13
- **All:** **Amen.**

Contributed by Margaret Ann Jacobs, Ontario Provincial Council President
2007-2009



Prayer for Members and Families of the Canadian Forces

- Opening

- **Leader:** Lord Jesus Christ, you acknowledge the faith of the centurion and healed his son, look lovingly upon the members of the Canadian Forces and their families and guide us in the ways of Your peace.

In days of trouble, defend us from all evil and in days of peace let us not forget You. May we set out to do the tasks assigned to us cheerfully and honourably and, by Your grace, accomplish them together in a spirit of service. **Amen**

Bless, O Lord, with the gift of Your Holy Spirit, those in the Canadian Forces, that they may go about their duty with the fire of inspiration in their lives and your love in their hearts, to give You true and cheerful service, who together with the Son, live and reign in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. **Amen**

You have served humanity according to the Father's will, in love and unto death, who with the Father lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen**

O God, our keeper and our helper, we ask You to watch over our servicemen and women in their several professions and trades. May Your fatherly care shield them, the love of Your Son preserve them from all danger, and the guidance of Your Holy Spirit keep them in the way that leads to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**



Lord God, we ask for your protection of our military families. Those presently involved in protecting us against terrorism are husbands, wives, sons and daughters. We ask you to be with them as they engage in necessary actions to guarantee the safety and freedom of all those who are victimized in this world. **Amen**

Give the loved ones of our military members who are separated from their families the strength to endure the lengthy separations and the courage to carry on supporting one another. This we ask in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

● **Litany of the Saints for Military Personnel ***

Saint Michael **Pray for Us.**

Saint George **Pray for Us.**

Saint Lawrence **Pray for Us.**

Saint Martha **Pray for Us.**

Saint Amand **Pray for Us.**

Saint Apollonia **Pray for Us.**

Saint Luke **Pray for Us.**

Saint Agatha, Saint Camillus & Elizabeth of Hungary **Pray for Us.**

Saint Peter of Alcantara **Pray for Us.**

Saint Brendan & Saint Nicholas of Tolentino **Pray for Us.**

Saint Peter the Apostle **Pray for Us.**

Saint Barbara **Pray for Us.**

Saint Adrian **Pray for Us.**

Saint Ignatius of Loyola & Saint Sebastian **Pray for Us.**

Saint Joseph of Copertino **Pray for Us.**

Saint Theresa **Pray for Us.**

Saint Martin of Tours **Pray for Us.**

Saint Matthew **Pray for Us.**

Saint Stephen **Pray for Us.**



Saint Pantaleon **Pray for Us.**

Saint Francis of Sales **Pray for Us.**

Saint Benedict **Pray for Us.**

Saint Ivo, Yves of Kermartin **Pray for Us.**

Saint Hilary & Sir Thomas Moore **Pray for Us.**

Saint Cecilia **Pray for Us.**

Saint Gabriel **Pray for Us.**

Cassian of Imola **Pray for Us.**

Saint John Francis Regis & Louise de Marillac **Pray for Us.**

Mary, the Blessed Virgin **Pray for Us.**

Our Lady of Good Counsel **Pray for Us.**

● **Hymn:** “Prayer of St. Francis”

*Patron Saints for Military Personnel

Saint Michael: (soldiers, paratroopers, rescue specialists, flying personnel, police officers and all elements of the military)

Saint George: (soldiers, all elements of the military)

Saint Lawrence: (cooks, firefighters)

Saint Martha: (housewives, cooks)

Saint Amand: (stewards, bartenders)

Saint Apollonia: (dental personnel)

Saint Luke: (medical personnel)

Saint Agatha, Saint Camillus, & Elizabeth of Hungary (nurses) Saint Peter of Alcantara: (guards, military police)

Saint Brendan & Saint Nicholas of Tolentino: (seagoing personnel)

Saint Peter the Apostle: (sailors)

Saint Barbara: (fireman, combat engineers, architects, artillerymen)

Saint Adrian: (soldiers, prison guards)

Saint Ignatius of Loyola & Saint Sebastian: (soldiers)

Saint Joseph of Copertino: (aircrew, flying, astronauts)

Saint Theresa: (all who fly, including aircrew personnel)



Saint Martin of Tours: (chaplains)
Saint Matthew: (finance, bookkeepers, accountants)
Saint Stephen: (building workers)
Saint Pantaleon: (doctors)
Saint Francis of Sales: (writers)
Saint Benedict: (engineers)
Saint Ivo, Yves of Kermartin: (judges)
Saint Hilary & Sir Thomas Moore: (lawyers)
Saint Cecilia: (musicians)
Saint Gabriel: (telecommunications, postal workers)
Cassian of Imola: (scribes, secretaries)
Saint John Francis Regis & Louise de Marillac: (social workers)
Mary, the Blessed Virgin: (all elements of the military)
Our Lady of Good Counsel: (all League members)

Contributed by Julie LeLievre, Military Ordinariate Provincial Council
President 2008-2010 and Ellen Peterkin, Quebec Provincial Council
President 2007-2009



Welcome: Prayer Service

- **Preparation:** *Supplies needed; a bible. One or two readers are needed to lead reflections and read scriptures. Note: Reciting the Hispanic Creed or the Prayer and asking members to reflect silently on it and then, if they wish, to share in small groups could be a simple way to open a meeting with prayer. Or, councils could use the Hispanic Creed over several meetings: one verse at a time, praying, reflecting, and sharing. The first prayer, reminiscent of “The Magnificat.” is adapted from the musical “Prayer Phrases” by Harris J. Loewen. “The Hispanic Creed” is taken from Justo Gonzales’ book Mil Voces Para Celebrar. (Abington, 1996)*

- **Opening**

Hymn: “All Are Welcome” or “Gather Us In”

- **Prayer**

- **All:** Gracious God, hear our confession,

Our faith is uncertain, our forgiveness slow, our conviction weak, our compassion wavering.

We have exalted the proud and powerful, put down the weak, saturated the rich with good things, neglected the poor, sent the hungry away empty-handed. We have helped ourselves.

Show us your mercy. Help us show mercy, through your Son, our Saviour. Amen.

(Harris Loewen)

- **Reading:** John 13.34-5; John 15.12-17; John 17.20-23; Luke 10.25-37, or Matthew 25.34-46.



- Petitions

- Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

- Leader: For the hungry, R
For the homeless, R
For the lonely, R
For the displaced and refugees, R
For the persecuted, R
For the oppressed, R
For all God's people, R

- Hispanic Creed

- All: We believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of the heavens and the earth
Creator of all peoples and cultures,
Creator of all tongues and races.
We believe in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord,
God made flesh in a person for all humanity, God made
flesh in an age for all ages,
God made flesh in one culture for all cultures,
God made flesh in love and grace for all creation.

We believe in the Holy Spirit
through whom God incarnate in Jesus Christ
makes his presence known in our peoples and our
cultures,
through whom God, Creator of all that exists,
gives us power to become new creatures;
whose infinite gifts make us one people:
the Body of Christ



We believe in the church universal
because it is a sign of God's reign,
whose faithfulness is shown in many hues
where all colors paint a single landscape,
where all tongues sing the same praise.

We believe in the reign of God –
the day of the Great Fiesta
when all the colors of creation will form a harmonious
rainbow
when all peoples will join in joyful banquet,
when all tongues of the universe will sing the same
song.

And because we believe, we commit ourselves:
to believe for those who do not believe,
to love for those who do not love,
to dream for those who do not dream,
until the day when hope becomes a reality.

(Justo Gonzalez)

● Rite of Peace:

Let us close by offering one another the sign of peace.

Contributed by Mary Nordick, Chairperson of Community Life 2008-2010



Prayer for Caregivers

- **Preparation:** *Have available a bible and the words and music for the chosen hymns. The reflection is taken from Life Member Shirley Bernier's report on the 17th International Congress on Palliative Care.*
- **Hymn:** "People of Peace" or "Women of Peace"
- **Opening prayer**
- **All:** O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to live in peace by acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with You, our God. (Micah 6.8) We pray that You enlighten the eyes of our minds, so that we may see what hope Your call holds for us. (Eph 1.18) May we be firm in the hope we profess (Heb 10.23) and always ready to give the reason for the hope we have. (1 Pet 3.15)
- **Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 131
- **Response:** In You Lord, I have found my peace.
- **Left:** O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high; I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. **R**
- **Right:** But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me. **R**
- **Left:** O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time on and for evermore. **R**



- **Right:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
R
- **Left:** As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen
- **Antiphonal Psalm**
- **Antiphon:** **May Your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in You.**
- **Left:** The Lord looks on those who revere Him, on those who hope in His love. (Psalm 33)
- **Right:** Our soul is waiting for the Lord. The Lord is our help and our shield. (Psalm 33)
- **Left:** For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. (Ps 84.10)
- **Right:** O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in You. (Ps 84.12)
- **Left:** The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. (Ps 9.9)
- **Right:** Those who know Your name put their trust in You. (Ps 9.10)
- **Left:** Make me know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. (Ps 25.4)
- **Right:** Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation. (Ps 25.5)



- **Left:** Blessed be the Lord, for He has heard the sound of my pleadings. (Ps 28.6)
- **Right:** The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts. (Ps 28.7)
- **Left:** Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who hope in His steadfast love. (Ps 33.18)
- **Right:** Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in You. (Ps 33.22)
- **Left:** For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from Him. (Ps 62.5)
- **Right:** He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. (Ps 62.6)
- **Left:** On the day I called, You answered me, You increased my strength of soul. (Ps 138.3)
- **Right:** The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; His steadfast love endures for ever. (Ps 138.8)
- **Left:** Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
- **Right:** As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
- **Antiphon:** **May Your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in You.**
- **Reading:** Romans 15.13



- **Reflection:** What is hope? Where does it anchor when immediate realities point to continued illness and death? How do caregivers help fan hope's flame as patients address their changing conditions?

Sister Karen Dufault showed that hope is a powerful and dynamic life force, a healing yet not curing asset, is operative during all stages of illness, influences coping and quality of life, and is influenced by others. Hope through the eyes of persons with a life-threatening illness is confident with an uncertain anticipation of future good. Hope is personally significant and desirable, and realistically possible. Hope has implications for interpersonal relatedness and is active within the context of actual or potential loss.

- **Prayers of Intercession**

- **Leader:** God establishes His people in hope. Let us cry out to Him with joy:

- **Response:** **You are the hope of Your people, Lord.**

- **Leader:** Palliative care is an approach that provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms, we ask that You give caregivers the insight to address the needs of each patient, for this we pray, **R**

Palliative care offers a support system to help families cope during the patients' illness and in their own bereavement; we pray that caregivers give this loving and compassionate support, **R**



Lord, we cannot put days into their lives, but help us to put life into their days, we pray, **R**

Since palliative care is a public health issue, we pray that the information on end-of-life issues and pain relief be distributed to all people, **R**

For all caregivers, that they may balance care-giving and concern to maintain their own health, we pray, **R**

- **All:** Lord, we pray that palliative care be integrated into the global curriculum of professionals in the health care system – including research, surveillance, public information and awareness, education in the best practices and quality care. This we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen
- **Hymn:** “All My Hope on God Is Founded”

Contributed by Yvonne Colleaux, Saskatchewan Provincial Council President 2007-2009



Prayers and Reflections for a Resolutions Meeting

- **Preparation:** *Needed: a bible and a leader.*

Friday Morning

- **All:** Let us put our hope in Christ, for He will save us!

You will know that I am the Lord, and those who hope in me shall never be disappointed (Is. 49.23)

- **Reading:** Leader: Romans 5.1-5

- **All:** And you shall be secure, because there is hope; you shall look round you and lie down in safety (Jb.11.18)

- **Let us pray together:** Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father

- **Intercessions:**

- **Response:** Christ our hope, hear us.

For our League sisters who are ill, especially...**R**

For our families and loved ones who need our prayers. **R**



For peace and harmony in our deliberations these days. **R**

For our personal intention **R**.

- **Leader:** Blessed are You, bounteous God, maker of heaven and earth, You have chosen us to be your people and to give You glory in everything we do.
- **All:** **Be with us during our meeting, which will bring us together as one. Help us to meet one another in joy and to work together for your glory and the benefit of our beloved Catholic Women's League of Canada**

Friday Noon

- **The Angelus**
- **Leader:** The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary:
And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.
- **All:** **Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word. **Hail Mary...**

And the Word was made Flesh: And dwelt among us. **Hail Mary...**

Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.



- All: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Friday After Lunch

- All: We humbly pray You, O God our Father,
To bless The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Bless our beloved country,
Our homes and families.
Send Your Holy Spirit upon us,
To give light to our minds
And strength to our wills
That we may know and fulfill
Your great law of charity.

Teach us to share with others
At home and abroad,
The good things You have given us.
This we ask through Our Lord Jesus Christ
And the intercession of our patroness,
Our Lady of Good Counsel. AMEN

Friday at close of day

- All: Almighty God, thank You for the gift of this day for guiding our minds and hearts in our work and deliberations.



Saturday Morning

- All: We give You praise and glory, Lord our God, for ever and ever
I Cry to You Leader:
O God, early in the morning I cry to you.
Help me to pray
And to concentrate my thoughts on you:
I cannot do this alone.
In me there is darkness,
But with you there is light:
I am lonely, but with You there is help;
I am restless, but with You there is peace.
In me there is bitterness, but with You there is patience;
I do not understand Your ways,
But You know the way for me.
Restore me to liberty,
And enable me to live now
That I may answer before You and before me.
Lord, whatever this day may bring,
Your name be praised.

*(Dietrich Bonhoeffer – taken from
the Book of Blessings)*

- Intercessions
- Response: Christ our peace, hear us.

For all those who are abused, trafficked and exploited **R**

For women and children living in poverty and war-torn
regions of our world **R**

For inspiration and confidence in our work today **R**

For our personal intentions. **R**



- All: Praise to You, Lord God, of all creation: You have made the world for us to live in. Grant us light to understand the needs of our community, and the strength to make wise decisions for the benefit of all. Teach us to be generous in our outlook, courageous in the face of difficulty, and wise in our decisions. You know our hearts and our plans, and guide all that we do. Bless us as we continue to do our work and help us to carry out our duties for Your honour and glory and for the salvation of Your people.

Saturday noon

- The Angelus (see also Friday noon)

Saturday after lunch

- All: O Lord our God, You are the source of peace. Inspire the women of the League to live in peace by acting justly, loving tenderly and walking humbly with You, our God.

We pray that You enlighten the eyes of our mind, so that we may see what hope Your call holds for us.

May we be firm in the hope we profess and always be ready to give the reason for the hope we have. Amen



Saturday at close of day and end of meetings

- **All:** Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope that we may know You as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread.

Bless us for our work and see us safely home. We are grateful for Your many graces and blessings and together we pray the prayer You taught us;

Our Father

- **Leader:** Lord, direct our actions by Your inspiration and carry them out by Your assistance. May our every prayer and work always begin with You and through You come to successful completion as we prepare our resolutions for the national convention. Let us be “doers” of the Word, not “hearers” only:

We must meditate and pray over the need for justice in the distribution of the world’s resources to assure at least a minimum of life’s necessities for all, we must experience metanoia, a change of heart, and we must be willing to act, taking the risks that are associated with education for justice.

We have in our hands the making of history. Each of us an influence which must be brought to bear to help express the Word of God in the laws and policies of Canada and the world. We must hear the Word, relate to it to the great issues of our times, and finally have the courage to be Doers of the Word: first as individuals, then as groups and organizations. (Molly Boucher)



- **Our call:** We will have to make a determined effort to come well versed on current social and moral issues if we are to discern what fruit is proposed for us by God, if we are to realize our Christian vocation in the many roles that every woman plays during the course of her lifetime. Helping women towards this Christian formation and supporting them through a community of women who share the common goal of taking Christ into everyday life is (what I see to be) the prime purpose of the Catholic Women's League.

Without this distinct purpose of deepening the spirituality of our members we are but a shadow service group. (Molly Boucher)

Contributed by Barbara Dowding, National Chairperson of Resolutions 2008-2010



We Remember; We Celebrate God's Faithful Ones (A Memorial Service)

- **Preparation:** *In a dimly lit room, place chairs around a central sacred space containing a white pillar candle (Christ candle) and a bible. Vigil candles (tapers) for all participants may be arranged here for distribution prior to the para-liturgy. A leader and three readers are required. Pictures surrounding the candle help visualization: war sites, war memorials, deceased life members, loved ones, priests, etc.*
- **Leader:** *(lights the Christ candle with the words), "We light this candle as a reminder that your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5.16)*
- **Hymn:** "We Remember"
refrain, first verse, refrain
- **Prayer**
- **Leader:** Loving Father, giver of life, light of the world, you have gifted us with many wonderful people, loved ones, family and friends who have gone before us in the sign of faith. Their lives have influenced us and formed us as your children. We remember; we celebrate their gift of faith.
- **Reading**
- **Reader 1:** Ecclesiastes 3.1-13



- **Responsorial Psalm**
- **Reader 2:** Psalm 100
- **Response:** “Sing to the Lord, all the world!”

Sing to the Lord, all the world!
Worship the Lord with joy;
Come before Him with happy songs! **R**

Acknowledge that the Lord is God.
He made us, and we belong to him;
we are his people, we are his flock. **R**

Enter the temple gates with thanksgiving,
go into its courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and praise him. **R**

The Lord is good;
his love is eternal
and his faithfulness lasts forever. **R**

- **Reading**
- **Reader 3:** Matthew 5.1-15
- **Reflection:**
- **Leader:** Let us pause and reflect on the lives of our loved ones who have gone before us, followers of Jesus, filled with qualities of goodness, people who have inspired us by their witness to be faithful to the Christ-like goodness within us. (*Pause for reflection.*)
- **Leader:** Let us remember our spiritual advisors and priests who have gone to their rest.



- A Prayer for Our Deceased Priests

- All: Eternal and Loving God, You have made the cross a sign of strength for us and marked us with the sacrament of resurrection. We ask you to remember our priests whom you have called from this life and who have gone before us in faith. In baptism they died with Christ: may they also share his resurrection. We pray for all those who represented You on this earth, and who were greatly aware of the grace that You poured out through their ministry which they carried out with deep faith, a bright and firm hope and burning love for You. May they who faithfully shepherded Your flock when they were on earth, now be examples of Your love for those whom You chose to be Your ministers and the stewards of Your mysteries. God of mercy, we entrust all our departed priests to You, and ask that You grant our prayer through Jesus, our Eternal High Priest, who lives with You and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

- Lighting of Candles

- Leader: You are now invited to light your vigil candle from the Christ candle remembering a loved one who has inspired you by their witness. Celebrate this person by saying, **“I light this candle in remembrance of (name of loved one). I am grateful for (share the gift or witness they inspired).**

(Then go around the circle again.)



I light this candle in remembrance of the 90th Anniversary and of those who died in the First World War. (1914-1918)

I light this candle in remembrance of those who died in the Second World War. (1939-45)

I light this candle in remembrance of those who died in Viet Nam, (1964-1973)

I light this candle in remembrance of those who died in the Cambodian Civil War. (1970-1975)

I light this candle in remembrance of those who died in the Bosnian Civil War. (1992-1995)

I light this candle in remembrance of those who died in the Gulf War. (1990-1991).

I light this candle in remembrance of those who died in the Afghan Civil War. (1978 - now).

I light this candle in remembrance of all the wars too numerous to mention.

● Reflection

● Leader

or a reader: *"In Flanders Fields"*

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.



We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McCrae

(Participants may return to their seats and/or continue their reflection in silence.)

- **Leader:** Let us pause in silence to be grateful for all we have learned from these loved ones and for the ways they have helped us to witness to God in our daily lives and to reflect the goodness of God. Let us renew our intention to let God's light shine before people, so that they will see the good things God does through us and give praise to our heavenly Father.
- **Hymn:** "We Remember"
Refrain and final verses to the end.

Contributed by Margaret Ann Jacobs, Ontario Provincial Council President 2007-2009 and Terri Scott, National Chairperson of Spiritual Development 2008-2010



Reconciliation Prayer

- **Preparation:** *Provide a large bowl with pieces of coloured tissue paper in a small amount of water and a rose bowl with unlit candle inside. Provide a hymn book or song sheet with the hymn “Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”.*

- **Opening Prayer**

- **All:** God our Father, we are gathered here tonight to reconcile ourselves to You and each other. We are here to strengthen our faith, and share our love for one other to bring peace and hope to our lives. May the Holy Spirit guide us in our discernment.

- **Penitential Rite**

- **Leader:** For the times we have not been a light of love and goodness to others

- **All:** **Lord have mercy**

- **Leader:** For the times we have not seen the light of love and goodness in others

- **All:** **Lord have mercy**

- **Leader:** For the times we have shut out God’s light.

- **All:** **Lord have mercy**

- **Reading:** Romans 5.1-5

- **Silent Reflection**

- **Leader** *(Allow a moment between each item for silent personal reflection):*



Think about the times that you have spent gossiping about your neighbour...

Think about the times that you were jealous of your friend's success...

Think about the times that you argued with family members over trivial things...

Think about the times that you were too busy to spend time in prayer...

Take a moment to reflect on other things in your life that are contrary to God's teachings...

- **Leader:** *Invite individuals to come forward and to stick a few pieces of paper on the outside of the rose bowl to symbolize the repair of their brokenness. When everyone has placed their pieces of tissue on the outside of the bowl, the candle is lit as reminder that they have a commitment to be a light to others.*

- **Prayer**

- **All:** **God, who dwells within, God who is with us in good times and in bad, we turn our hearts again to you. Grant us the courage to be our true selves. You know how easily we can lose our way. Keep us on the path that leads to you. Open our hearts so that we may follow your path within our lives, and be a light, a reflection of that love to others.**

- **Hymn:** "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace"

Contributed by Julie LeLievre, Military Ordinariate Provincial Council President 2008-2010 and Diane Lemay, Quebec Provincial Council President 2009-2011



Reflections from Mary

● **Hymn**

(Sung to the tune of Amazing Grace)

My soul proclaims the Lord my God,
My spirit sings His praise,
He looks on me, He lifts me up,
And gladness fills my days.

All nations now will share my joy,
His gifts he has out-poured,
His little ones he has made great,
I magnify the Lord.

His Mercy is for evermore
His name I praise again
His strong right arm puts down the proud
And raises lowly ones.

He fills the hungry with good things,
The rich He sends away.
The promise made to Abraham
Is filled by God each day.

● **Prayer**

● **Leader:**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed are Thou among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.



- **Reading**

- **Leader:** During the unimaginable joy of the Annunciation, Mary is given the name of someone she knows, Elizabeth her cousin. She hastens to see her. This is not the haste of fear or worry, but rather the haste of joy and adventure. These two blessed women see each other and, once again, what seems impossible occurs—their joy escalates! In one another's faces they see the limitless grace and mercy of God. They proclaim to one another the greatness of God who has come to dwell among them. Elizabeth says, "Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Mary says, "My soul magnifies the Lord!" Mary and Elizabeth, with the hidden presence of Jesus and John, become the first Christian community. A community in which God's presence is evident in the very visage of each member.

- **Reflection** (*Personal or Shared*):

1. Elizabeth says, "Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Mary came to Elizabeth in joy, faith, hope and love. She carried the message of hope and true meaning of Christian joy.

- **Reflect:** Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

2. Mary and Elizabeth, with the hidden presence of Jesus and John, become the first Christian community. A community in which God's presence is evident in the very visage of each member.



- **Reflect:** How do I, a member of the Catholic Women's League, make God's presence evident in our community of League members?

3. Mary is given the name of someone she knows, Elizabeth her cousin. She hastens to see her. This is not the haste of fear or worry, but rather the haste of joy and adventure.

- **Reflect:** How do I hasten in joy and adventure to bring the Good News?

- **Closing Prayer:**

Let us make haste in peace and hope, empowered to proclaim the goodness of the Lord. Let us share God's community of joy with all those we meet. May the source of faith, hope and love draw us together, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen

- **Hymn:** "Hail Mary, Gentle Woman"

Contributed by Agnes Kenney, Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Council President 2009-2011 and Janice Peddle, Nova Scotia Provincial Council President 2008-2010



Prayer Service and Blessing after a Miscarriage

- **Preparation:** *Provide a bible and Holy water.*
- **Introduction**
- **Priest:** In times of death and grief the Christian turns to the Lord for consolation and strength. This is especially true when a child dies before birth. This blessing is provided to assist the parents in their grief and console them with the blessings of God.
- **Introductory Rites**
- **Priest:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- **All:** **Amen**
- **Priest:** May the Father of mercies, the God of all consolation, be with you all.
- **Response:** **And also with you**
- **Priest:** Let us praise the Father of mercies, the God of all consolation.
- **Response:** **Blessed be God forever**
- **Priest:** For those who trust in God, in the pain of sorrow there is consolation; in the face of despair there is hope; in the midst of death there is life. N. and N., as we mourn the death of your child we place ourselves in the hands of God and ask for strength healing and for love.
- **All:** **Amen**



- **Reading from the Word of God**

A reading from one of the following:

Colossians 1.9-12

Isaiah 49.8-13

Hebrews 5.7-10

Luke 22.39-46

Romans 8.26-31

Romans 8.18-27

Lamentations: 3.17-26

- **Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 25)**

- **Response: To you O Lord, I lift up my soul.**

Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your path. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my saviour, and for you I wait all the day. **R**

Remember that your compassion, O Lord, and your kindness are from old. The sins of my youth and my frailties remember not; In your kindness remember me because of your goodness, O Lord. **R**

Look towards me, have pity on me, for I am alone and afflicted. Relieve the troubles of my heart, and bring me out of my distress. **R**

Preserve my life, and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, because I wait for you, O Lord. **R**



- **Intercessions**

- **Response: O Lord hear my prayer**

Let us pray to God who throughout the ages has heard the cries of parents. **R**

For N. and N. who know the pain of grief, that they may be comforted. **R**

For this family, that they may find new hope in the midst of suffering. **R**

For these parents, that they may learn from the example of Mary, who grieved by the cross of her Son. **R**

For all who have suffered the loss of a child, that Christ may be their support. **R**

- **The Lord's Prayer** (*spoken or sung*)

- **Prayer of Blessing**

- **Priest:** God of all creation we bless and thank You for Your tender care. Receive this life You created in love and comfort Your faithful people, in their time of loss with the assurance of Your unfailing mercy. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

- **All:** **Amen**
(*The priest may now, in silence, sprinkle the parents with holy water.*)

- **Concluding Rite**

- **Priest:** May God be with you in your sorrow and give you peace.

- **All:** **Amen**

- **Priest:** May God raise you up from your grief.

- **All:** **Amen**



- **Priest:** May God grant encouragement and strength to accept His will.
- **All:** **Amen**
- **Concluding Blessing**
- **Priest:** And may Almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- **All:** **Amen**

Contributed by Pearl Bridgwater, National Chairperson of Christian Family Life 2008-2010



Advent Reflection

- **Opening Hymn** “Let Heaven Rejoice” refrain and verses 1-2
- **Opening Prayer** Lord God of all, gentle Father and friend, be with us today as we gather to share prayer and Your Word. Send Your Holy Spirit to flood our hearts with the graces of mercy, kindness, peace and hope. Open our ears and mind to hear and understand Your teachings. Awaken our souls so that we may be ready to receive the blessings of this Advent season. Help us to see You in ourselves and each other. We ask this, Lord, as we ask all things, through the intercession of Jesus, Your Son and our Saviour.
- **Reading:** Philippians 4.4-7
One minute of silence
- **Psalm:** Psalm 25 (spoken or sung to CBW II #16)
- **Right side:** Teach me Your ways, O Lord; make them known to me.
- **Left side:** Teach me to live according to Your truth, for you are my God, who saves me. I always trust in you.
- **Right side:** Remember, O Lord, your kindness and constant love, which you have shown from long ago.
- **Left side:** The Lord is righteous and good, he teaches sinners the right path.



- **Right side:** He leads the humble in the right way and teaches his will to the poor.
- **Left side:** With faithfulness and love he leads all who keep his covenant and obey his commands
- **Right side:** Those who have reverence for the Lord will learn from him the path they should follow.
- **Left side:** The Lord is the friend of those who obey him and he affirms his covenant with them.

One minute of silence

- **Intercessions** (*individual or shared reading*)
- **Response:** **In your kindness, Lord remember us.**

Lord teach us to turn to you with hope and trust, as we go about our daily way. **R**

Lord be with us as we pray, together and separately in this Advent season, seeking to know your truth **R**

Lord help us to be, more and more Women of Peace and Hope **R**

Lord let us see that it is in You, that we have our being. **R**

Lord let us be as Mary was, trusting You completely. **R**

We bring our individual prayers before the Lord. **R**



- **All:** We entrust our prayers to You, God our loving and giving creator. Give us the simple, trusting heart of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who lovingly accepted Your request to have and nurture Your only son. Bless us with hope and peace, that we may revere You and others in our service to You, our parish, and our country. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Mary's son and our Lord. Amen.
- **Closing Hymn:** "Let Heaven Rejoice" refrain and verses 3-4.

Contributed by: Bobbie Brennan, Member Mary Queen of the World Parish Council, Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador; Agnes Kenney, Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Council President 2009-2011 and Janice Peddle, Nova Scotia Provincial Council President 2008-2010



Christmas Novena

Holy Church wishes that the celebration of the mystery of our Lord's Incarnation should bring us the grace that we may live a new life, more free from sin and attachment to ourselves and creatures. She would have us understand above all that Christ, in exchange for His humanity which He takes from us, wishes to make us partakers of His divinity by sanctifying grace, that He may possess us completely. The grace of His new divine birth in us is the true meaning and spirit of Christmas. Just as our Blessed Mother had an intimate share in giving Jesus to us, she also has an intimate share in obtaining the grace of Christmas for us.

(Adapted from Lovisik, Lawrence. Mary My Hope.)

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory Be**

● **December 17th – Antiphon**

O Wisdom, O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care. Come and show your people the way to salvation.

(Canticle of Mary follows each antiphon)

● **December 18th – Antiphon**

O sacred Lord of ancient Israel, who showed Yourself to Moses in the burning bush, who gave him the holy law on Sinai Mountain: come; stretch out Your mighty hand to set us free.



- December 19th – Antiphon
O Flower of Jess's stem, You have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in Your presence; the nations bow down in worship before You. Come, let nothing keep You from coming to our aid.
- December 20th – Antiphon
O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel controlling at Your will the gate of heaven; come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead Your captive people into freedom.
- December 21st – Antiphon
O Radiant Dawn, splendour or eternal light, sun of justice; come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
- December 22nd – Antiphon
O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man, come and save the creature You fashioned from the dust.
- December 23rd – Antiphon
O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Saviour of all people, come and set us free, Lord our God.
- December 24th – Antiphon
Mary said: My soul is deeply troubled; what can this greeting mean? Am I to give birth to my King and yet remain a virgin forever?



● December 25th – Antiphon

Christ the Lord is born today; today, the Saviour has appeared. Earth echoes songs of angel choirs, archangels; joyful praise. Today the earth his friends exult: Glory to God in the highest, alleluia.

(Adapted from the Liturgy of the Hours)

● CANTICLE OF MARY

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour for he has looked with favour on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory Be

Contributed by Marianna Caldwell, B.C.& Yukon Provincial Council
President 2008-2010



Refugee Sponsorship Celebration

(with a potluck meal)

- **Introduction**

- **Leader:** This evening we gather to mark the end of our journey of sponsorship of the _____ family under the terms of the agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. We remember and celebrate our journey as sponsors and sponsored and continue our journey as friends. As is fitting we will begin with prayer: an opening prayer, a chance to offer prayers of gratitude for the sponsorship experience, a closing prayer and a grace before meals. Let us take a moment to quiet ourselves, to step back from the busyness of this day.

- **Prayer**

- **All:**
No Longer Strangers:
We worship one God
In whose image all people are made
Who calls us no longer to be
Strangers, but friends
To whose service we are summoned
By whose presence we are renewed.
(Australian Council of Churches)

- **Leader:** Now let us offer our prayers of thanksgiving, reflecting on what this sponsorship experience has been for each of us. I suggest that anyone who wishes to participate begin with the words, “I am grateful for”, then name the prayer or experience, and all will respond with “Thanks be to God.”



● **Prayer:**

● **All:** God of the restless and the settled
Calm the fears and anxieties of the restless,
Disturb the calm of the settled
to walk the way of peace with the restless.

God of the exiled and the rooted
Give security and a sense of rootedness to the exile
Disturb the security of the rooted to walk the way of
belonging with the exile.

God of the stranger and the host
Provide welcome and succour to the stranger
Disturb the comfort of the host
to welcome the stranger
So that together they continue life's journey
with the Peace, security, and rootedness
Of people who share a common humanity.

(Eildon Dyer/Christian Aid)

● **Grace**

● **Leader:** Now we ask God to bless us as we share this meal: Loving God, we give thanks for the generosity of Your creation, which provides this food, for the service of those who prepared it, and for all of us who come to share this meal in friendship and celebration. Amen.

Contributed by Mary Nordick, National Chairperson of Community Life
2008-2010



Prayer for Our Senior Citizens

- **Leader:** Gracious and loving God, consider our senior citizens and the beauty of their lined-faces, their faded eyes and silvery hair; the hardships of severe climate and a rock hard virgin land that had to be endured and suffered over. We ask that you take special care of our elderly. Let us pray...

- **Responsorial Prayer**

- **Response:** **We pray to the Lord.**

- **Left side:** We consider the pioneers, Lord, their backbreaking labour building this beautiful country of Canada for us. We pray that one day they may again straighten their backs with pride. Let us pray. **R**

- **Right side:** We consider their values and morals, Lord, for they were brought up to make this nation life-giving. We pray their grand-children will remember the life they received and remember to teach their children the beauty of life. Let us pray. **R**

- **Left side:** We consider their children who died before them; polio, stillborns, tuberculosis, wars, accidents, and for their strength to mourn and not give up their faith or courage. We pray that their reunion with them and with You be understanding and fulfilling. Let us pray. **R**



- **Right side:** We consider their aches and pains brought on by the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden and the ailments brought on by our own sins. We thank their generation for bringing us pain killers, penicillin and vaccines. We pray that what they started may end with the greatest medicine to end all illnesses. Let us pray. **R**

- **Left side:** We consider our own grandparents and the suffering they endured leaving their loved ones behind in other countries; husbands from wives, parents from children, grandparents from grandchildren to start afresh in a this new country. May we meet them one day in Your glorious heaven and thank them in person. Let us pray. **R**

- **Leader:** Jesus, Your foster father on earth, Joseph, was in his senior years. Please have the same compassion on the elderly here on earth as You gave Your foster father. Your love is never failing. Hear the call of the vulnerable. Keep them from peril and provide for their necessities we ask you in Your name.

- **All:** **Amen.**

Beatitudes of the Elderly

- **Left side:** Blessed are they who understand my faltering step and shaking hand,

- **Right side:** Blessed, who know my ears today must strain to catch the things they say,

- **Left side:** Blessed are they who seem to know my eyes are dim and my mind is slow,



- **Right side:** Blessed are they who looked away, I spilled my tea on the cloth that day,
- **Left side:** Blessed are they who, with cheery smile, stopped to chat for a little while,
- **Right side:** Blessed are they who know the way to bring back memories of yesterday,
- **Left side:** Blessed are they who never say, “You’ve told that story twice today!”
- **Right side:** Blessed are they who make it known that I’m loved, respected and not alone,
- **Left side:** And blessed are they who will ease the days of my journey home, in loving ways.

“Beatitudes for the Elderly”

Elizabeth Clarke, Mostly Maryline II. p.17. 1995

Contributed by Terri Scott, National Chairperson of Spiritual Development
2008-2010



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Workshops

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Hope: A Workshop for Those in Need

- **Preparation:** *Prepare a focus table or a sacred space with items of peace and hope such as candle, bible, dove, pictures of people known for peace. Find someone to make a presentation that will introduce and expand on the discussion questions listed below.*

On each table, place a white sheet of paper bearing the illustration of a dove in front of each participant, a selection of pens or pencils and six multi-coloured paper cut-outs of butterflies for small group sharing. Provide a bible and copies of Breaking Bread or a hymn book that contains the words to “Let There Be Peace on Earth”. Time allotted: two hours.

- **Hymn** “Let There Be Peace on Earth”
- **Leader:** The leader can have opening remarks such as thank them for coming and other words of welcome, then ask the person chosen to read the first reading to begin the workshop.
- **Reading:** Romans 5.1-5
- **Responsorial Prayer**
- **Response:** **Jesus, we place our trust in Your plan for us.**
- **Left:** When a clap of thunder awakens us in the middle of the night, we hope for a gentle rain to water our flower beds. **R**
- **Right:** When the refrigerator is full, we hope for a good meal. **R**
- **Left:** When there is money in the bank, we hope for a beautiful vacation. **R**



- **Right:** When our bed is comfortable, we hope for a good sleep. **R**
- **Left:** When we have a good education, we hope for a good career or vocation. **R**
- **Right:** When the tires are worn, we hope for a safe trip. **R**
- **Left:** When we are rushing down the highway, we hope we don't hit the deer leaping across. **R**
- **Right:** When we are cross the tracks, we hope we aren't hit by the train coming around the bend. **R**
- **Left:** When we tuck our children into bed, we hope we are around another day to share our love. **R**
- **Right:** When we have sinned by not following the Ten Commandments, we hope we will be forgiven. **R**
- **Introduction of Guest Speaker**
- **Guest Speaker** (15 – 30 minutes)
- **Small Group Discussion** (15-20 minutes)
(Divide into six groups to reflect and elaborate on the guest speaker's presentation. Ask the members of each group to write each response on a paper butterfly, as provided.)
 1. Suffering: How do we offer hope to someone on their death bed so that they are at peace?
 2. Family: How do we offer hope to a family that has been broken by divorce to that they feel peace?
 3. Faith Development: How do we offer hope to someone searching for God so that he/she may feel peace within themselves?



4. Personal Growth: How do we build a relationship with someone who lives on the street and offer them hope?
5. Friendship: How do we build a relationship with a stranger in church that they may feel welcome and at peace in their new surroundings?
6. Work: How do we evangelize at work to bring our co-workers peace and comfort in knowing salvation is meant for them as well?

The Leader calls a representative from each group to bring forward the completed butterflies, discuss the answer and then pin the butterflies to a board or hang them on a tree. Monitor the available time to allow response from all groups.

- **Personal Reflection**

The Leader asks the participants to reflect in silence and create a personal mission statement, a commitment to be a Woman of Peace and Hope with a plan to honour the commitment. Group sharing can be optional. (15 minutes)

- **Conclusion**

- **Leader:** We offer hope and peace to others by being consoling, by offering empathy by standing by them, by not abandoning them. By not condemning, we are showing them there is hope and peace in the relationship. Let us offer each other a sign of our peace!

Contributed by: Terri Scott, National Chairperson of Spiritual Development 2008-2010 and Shari Guinta, Ontario Provincial Council President 2009-2011



Meditation on a Seed

- **Preparation:** *Needed are a leader and three readers. Supplies needed include: a mural backdrop attached to a wall, drawn with grass along the bottom, a variety of seeds (about 4 or 5 per person), an envelope for each person, inside which, is folded a picture of flower, fruit, vegetable or bush and labelled at the centre bearing one of these words: respect, humility, self-control, patience, tolerance, inner strength, generosity, goodness, kindness, joy, justice, prayer, harmony, happiness, serenity. Provide tape near the mural.*

- **Hymn:** “Seed, Scattered and Sown” refrain & verse 1, refrain

- **Greeting:** *Words of welcome from the leader*

- **Opening Prayer**

- **Reader 1:** Master Sower, You are the author of all life.

- **Right side:** We come to You as your children.

- **Left side:** Enlighten our minds that we may learn to appreciate and respect our differences.

- **Right Side:** Strengthen our hearts that we may find the courage to do Your will.

- **Left Side:** Guide us as we go forward in faith and hope endeavouring to build Your kingdom of peace.

- **All:** **This we ask through our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen**

- **Reading:** **Reader 2:** Matthew 13.31-32



- **All:** **Thanks be to God.**
- **Hymn:** “Seed Scattered and Sown” refrain, verse 2, refrain
- **Reflection**
- **Leader:** Look upon the seeds in your hand.
Think to yourself; am I like any of them? Which one? God has planted me here, now, with these people. “Bloom where you’re planted,” said the children’s song...what kind of plant have I become? What good can I serve?

After a short time of reflection, turn to your closest neighbour and discuss (2 minutes).
- **Leader:** Let us imagine that all these seeds in our hands are scattered and sown in a field. (This is something like God scattering us upon the world.) A couple of months later, we come upon the field. What might we see?
- **Reading:** 1 Corinthians 12.4-11
- **Reader 1:** Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit;
- **Reader 2:** And there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;
- **Reader 3:** And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.
- **Reader 1:** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
- **Reader 2:** To one is given through the Spirit, the utterance of wisdom,
- **Reader 3:** And to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,
- **Reader 1:** To another faith by the same Spirit,



- **Reader 2:** To another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,
- **Reader 3:** To another the working of miracles,
- **Reader 1:** To another prophecy,
- **Reader 2:** To another the discernment of spirits,
- **Reader 3:** To another various kinds of tongues,
- **Reader 1:** To another interpretation of tongues.
- **Reader 2:** All these are activated by one and the same Spirit,
- **Reader 3:** Who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.
- **All Readers:** The word of the Lord!
- **All:** **Thanks be to God.**
- **Reflection**
- **Leader:** Now it is three months later, we stumble upon our field of seeds, grown under the sun, nurtured by the rain and the good soil. What might we see? *Brainstorm (1 minute)*
- **Ritual Action**
- **Leader:** Open your envelope, what do you see? If these had been seeds of peace, what helps this “gift” to grow in your heart? What nurtures virtue in you? Where does your faith life find nurturing?

The Leader encourages each participant to announce her plant of peace for the gathering and places it on the mural (using the tape) to form a garden of hope.



- **Small Group**

Discussion: *In groups of three, pick three plants in the Garden of Hope and talk about how can we nurture these seeds of peace in our family/council/parish/community? (6 minutes).*

- **Large group**

Discussion: *The Leader facilitates sharing from the small groups. (15 minutes).*

- **Prayer**

- **Reader 3:** Let us gather all these thoughts and offer them to God.

- **All:** **Our Father**

- **Prayer**

- **Reader 1:** Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

- **Right side:** Where there is hatred, let me sow love,

- **Left side:** Where there is injury, pardon;

- **Right side:** Where there is despair, let me bring hope.

- **Left Side:** Where there is doubt, faith

- **Right Side:** Where there is sadness, joy.

- **Left Side:** Where there is darkness, light.

- **Right Side:** For it is in giving that we receive

- **Left Side:** it is in pardoning that we are pardoned

- **All:** **and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.**



- **Blessing**
- **Reader 2:** May God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit bless us as we go forth in faith and joy to sow the seeds of peace and hope in the world.
- **All:** **Amen.**
- **Hymn:** “Seed Scattered and Sown” refrain, verse 3, refrain

Contributed by Cecile Miller, National 2nd Vice-President 2008-2010 & Betty Anne Brown, 1st Vice-President 2008-2010



Women of Peace & Hope Workshop

- **Preparation:** *Create a focal point with items that symbolize peace and hope, e.g. books, mementoes, pictures all placed around a large pillar candle. A leader and nine readers will be needed. Provide a bible and words and music to the hymns. Program time is approximately one hour.*
- **Hymn:** “Let There Be Peace on Earth” *A recording can be played softly as women enter, then restarted to accompany singing.*
- **Leader:** *Women of Peace and Hope! Our theme stops us in our tracks. “Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me”: what a mantra for this group of women! Peace is not some abstract state that is way out there. It is real and it is up to us to promote it in the simplest of daily activities.*

We have so many definitions for the word peace. Let us reflect for a moment on this one: Peace represents security for humankind without the need to resort to violence.

Now think of situations that you are involved in that require peace, consolation, hope, light and joy. *(two minutes)*

- **Examen of Conscience**
- **Leader:** Am I a peacemaker? Reflect for a minute or two after each statement:
- **Reader 1:** Within my family do my actions create or destroy peace? Do I focus too much on exterior activities which cause stress and destroy peace in my family?
- **Reader 2:** What kind of neighbour am I? In one of her writings, Mother Teresa asked “Do I even know my next door neighbour?” Do I build or tear down fences?



- **Reader 3:** In my council, do I respect the views of my sisters? Do I support junior members who are learning? Do I sometimes gossip about the actions of others?
- **Reader 4:** When I am asked to lead, do I act humbly with the goal of uniting the group or am I so overly concerned with results that I lose focus on the journey and sometimes hurt others on the way?
- **Reader 5:** In my community do I extend a hand of friendship to newcomers, especially those from another country or of a different culture? Do I reach out to those with special needs?
- **Reader 6:** In my province do I offer words of encouragement to politicians who work diligently for our interests or am I ready to criticize the least mistake?
- **Reader 7:** In my parish, am I a beacon of peace and hope for all those that I encounter, especially for our youth, the sick and the elderly?
- **Reader 8:** In the world at large, do I support the cause of peace and development? Do I pray daily for our world leaders?
- **Reader 9:** Mother Teresa said “There is more hunger in the world for love and appreciation in this world than there is for food”. Do I strive to show love and appreciation to all in my life?

● **Litany for Women of Peace and Hope**

- **Leader:** In a world becoming divided, may we as *Women of Peace and Hope*. Listen to the call to love and say “I am here, Lord”
- **Response:** May we as *Women of Peace and Hope*, let love work through us.
- **Leader:** In this climate of economic extremes and stresses, may our prayers of hope to clothe and shelter the disadvantaged be answered. **R**



- **Leader:** In our world where food is wasted, may we learn to prepare only what is needed, or share our bounty with the sick and lonely. **R**

- **Leader:** In our world where spirituality is adrift and materialism and Godlessness rules, may our actions open the hearts of the hardened. **R**

- **Leader:** Mother Teresa reminds us, “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”

- **Reading**

- **Reader 1:** The Beatitudes (Matthew 5.1-16)

- **Reflection**

- **Leader:** Blessed are the peacemakers they shall be children of God. As with everything in our life, we cannot do it alone. We become peacemakers only with the divine help of God. Once again in scripture we see reference to “Children of God”. To be a child of God means to submit to the will of God. For inspiration we reflect for a few moments on the lives of some women who were truly “Children of God.”

- **Response:** **Jesus is the way to peace and hope.**

- **Reader 2:** We have the example of the woman at the well who had led a sinful life and who felt lowly and of no status. She was ashamed and embarrassed to be seen going for water. Yet she meets Jesus who does not scorn her but asks her for water. He reached out to her, did not ridicule her, but gently taught her the way to Him. **R**



- **Reader 3:** Mary, Queen of peace our Mother showed us so many examples of strength, yet she always answered the call of God. As such as young woman, she answered “Thy will be done” when the angel appeared to her. As much as she loved her only son, she stood at the foot of the cross and let the will of the Father be completed. Mary showed us both how to be strong yet gentle. **R**

- **Reader 4:** Our Canadian saint, Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys, was an independent goal-oriented woman who left her native France behind and came to Quebec when it was only being settled. She showed us strength and compassion, as even on the long voyage, with a predominately male group, it is reported that she ministered to their health needs. Once in Quebec she modelled cooperation not confrontation as she started the religious order and opened a school. As she became well known in the community, she refused privilege and wanted to be treated like the ordinary person. In our modern day as we are often focussed on equality of genders, St. Marguerite can be a wonderful role model. **R**

- **Reader 5:** A woman of our times, Mother Teresa emphasized that it is not the big things that we need to pursue but to be ever vigilant daily in our immediate surroundings. We are often so stressed in our busy lives that it is so easy to forget the journey. Mother Teresa tells us “There is always the danger that we may just do the work for the sake of the work. This is where the respect and the love and the devotion come in that we must do it to God – to Christ and that is why we try to do it as beautifully as possible”. **R**



- **Leader:** And so we learn that to be peacemakers, we are called to reach out, to mend broken hearts, to offer encouragement, to give a hug, to make someone's day with a smile. We are to serve where we are planted. We are to be peacemakers. We are called to pass the olive branch. Now, would one woman pick up a branch and pass it on; then pick up another branch and pass it on, etc. Reflect for a moment and make a promise on how you will make peace where ever you may roam. As you go forward, may you continue to pass the olive branch to those in your world. Let us remember the words of Mother Teresa "Peace begins with a smile". Let us offer our sisters a sign of peace with a warm smile.
- **Hymn:** "Women of Peace"

Contributed by Joan Kerr Member 17 Wing/ St. Marguerite Bougeoyoys Parish Council, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Terri Scott, Chairperson of Spiritual Development 2008-2010



St. Paul the Apostle Workshop Praying for the Oppressed

- **Preparation:** *Needed: a facilitator; leader and six readers. Assemble a sacred space on a small table with memorials such as and Icon of St. Paul, prayer cards with prayers to St. Paul, pictures of people who have been oppressed e.g. trafficked women, abused people, child soldiers... Materials needed: a bible, candles or tea lights, matches, a flip chart and paper to write on, felt markers, copies of Gather or words and music to the hymns being sung. Invite participants to sit at tables in groups of 6-8, and determine who will take notes for the table.*
- **Facilitator:** *(offers greetings and an explanation of the workshop.)*
- **Hymn:** “We Have a Dream” verse 1
- **Leader:** We have come together to pray for those who are oppressed. Just as in Paul’s day the Christians were oppressed by the Jews and by the Romans, today Christians are still the most heavily oppressed group in the world. *(lights one candle or tea light)*
- **Reader 1:** Galatians 5.1
- **Leader:** St. Paul the Apostle, as we celebrate the 2,000th anniversary of your birth, we recall how you persecuted the early church out of zeal for your faith in God to protect your Jewish people from contamination. Then you used the same zeal to found a new church:
- **Left side:** St. Paul, zealot, grant that we may be fired with the same zeal that struck you down so many years ago, that we may be a champion for the church and dispel our fears as we evangelize those souls who do not know God...



- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Right side:** St. Paul, leader, you who held a high position in the temple and were humbled and blinded by the hand of God, teach us how to drop any pretensions so that we may become Christ-like in all that we do...
- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Left side:** St. Paul, teacher, teach us how to be patient with ourselves as we learn to follow in your footsteps...
- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Right side:** St. Paul, former Pharisee and enemy of Jesus, startle us into seeing the living Christ as you did so many years ago...
- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Hymn:** “We Have a Dream” verse 2
(Leader lights second candle or tea light.)
- **Discussion:** Jesus and St. Paul were both considered zealots. What does it mean to be a zealot today? *(10-15 minutes’ sharing at the tables)*
(Facilitator asks a spokesperson from each table to share one or two thoughts from the sharing session. Time dependant on program time allotment.)
- **Reader 2:** 1st Corinthians 6.12
- **Left side:** St. Paul, brave saint, show us how to be brave in the face of questioning and opposing opinions...
- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.



- **Right side:** St. Paul, listener of the Word, in this year that is dedicated especially to you, show us how to be truly present to your teachings in the Gospels...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Left side:** St. Paul, prisoner, help us to free ourselves from our own constraints and embarrassments to speak the truth as you did...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Right side:** St. Paul, faithful servant, let us be aware of our own mission in life that God has tasked us with and to be faithful to Him who created us...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Hymn:** “We Have a Dream” v. 3.
(Leader lights third candle or tea light.)
- **Discussion:** What does it mean to be brave in today’s world? *(10-15 minutes’ sharing)*
(Facilitator leads large group sharing for time available.)
- **Psalm** Psalm 91, “Be with Me”
- **Reader 3:** Romans 3: 22-25
- **Left side:** St. Paul, Apostle of the Gentiles, you made it possible for non Jews to know Christ, may you be praised for accepting the call of conversion...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**



- **Right side:** St. Paul, you who desired your communities to be holy, that we may be catalysts in bringing our communities to holiness...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Left side:** St. Paul, who was filled with a righteous anger against Christians, remind us of how righteousness can also destroy and put up walls instead of soften hearts...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Right side:** St. Paul, member of a distinct branch of Judaism, gradually bring together the many branches of the church so that we may be whole...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Hymn:** “We Have a Dream” verse 4.
(Leader lights the fourth tea light.)
- **Discussion:** What does it mean to be holy today? *(10-15 minutes’ sharing)*
(Facilitator leads large group sharing for time available.)
- **Reader 4:** 2nd Corinthians 2.14-17
- **Left side:** St. Paul, who faced encounter with a new era, help us to encounter our own culture with the strength of standing up to those who believe in abortion and euthanasia...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Right side:** St. Paul, who was awakened with new life, aid us in living holy lives for a life everlasting...



- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Left side:** St. Paul, who suffered suffering and martyrdom for Jesus, help us to keep our eyes on Jesus to set a good example for non-Christians...
- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Right side:** St. Paul, who saw Christians as betrayers of his true faith, but who accepted conversion, remind us to pray and evangelize for many more conversions to come back to the church...
- **All:** St. Paul, pray for us.
- **Hymn:** “We Have a Dream” verse 5
(Leader lights fifth candle or tea light.)
- **Discussion:** Have you ever felt used by God? *(10-15 minutes’ sharing)*
(Facilitator leads large group sharing for time available.)
- **Reader 5:** Acts 18.9-12
- **Left side:** St. Paul, eloquent writer, inspire writers of the media and children’s programs to promote wholesome family entertainment...



- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Right side:** St. Paul, fierce warrior, keep our Armed Forces under your protection...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Left side:** St. Paul, man and lover of women, keep safe the women in our society, from being abused by husbands, from being trafficked on the street...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Right side:** St. Paul, friend of Jesus and the disciples, be with us in all our struggles as we find the courage to help the oppressed...
- **All:** **St. Paul, pray for us.**
- **Hymn:** “*We Have a Dream*” verse 6

Leader lights sixth candle or tea light.
- **Discussion:** What is God asking us to do today? (*10-15 minutes’ sharing*)

(Facilitator leads large group sharing for time available.)
- **Leader:** May St. Paul, who epitomizes how we should live in holiness and devotion to Jesus our Saviour, fill us with missionary zeal and obtain for us the faith and grace to accept our struggles, sufferings and misfortunes as we joyfully follow his example in building a world of peace and hope.



- **All:** Prayer to the Apostle Paul

Glorious St. Paul,
Most Zealous Apostle,
Martyr for the Love of Christ,
give us a deep faith,
a steadfast hope,
a burning love for our Lord
so that we can proclaim with you
'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.'

Help us to become apostles
serving the Church with a pure heart
witnesses to her truth and beauty
amidst the darkness of our days.

With you we praise God our Father
'To Him be the glory, in the Church and in Christ
Now and for ever'.

- **Hymn:** "We Have a Dream" verse 1 (*or complete hymn*).

Prepared by Terri Scott, National Chairperson of Spiritual Development
2008-2010 and Margaret Ann Jacobs, Ontario Provincial Council
President 2007-2009



Objects of the League Workshop

- **The objects of the League shall be to unite Catholic Women of Canada:**

1. to achieve individual and collective spiritual development.
2. to promote the teachings of the Catholic church.
3. to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life.
4. to protect the sanctity of human life.
5. to enhance the role of women in church and society.
6. to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere.
7. to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world.
8. to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony.

- **Preparation:**

- **Set Up Option A:**

to reflect on the Objects of the League from a spiritual perspective with a view to expanding personal understanding toward action in a visual manner.

- **Room Set-Up:**

- *One large rectangular table with a candle, a bible, words and music for a hymn to sing the first two verses at the beginning of the workshop and the rest at the conclusion.*
- *Eight pieces of paper or poster board with the number and text of one of the Objects neatly printed across the top.*
- *Have all the participants sit at only 8 tables, no matter the size of the group. It may be necessary to group tables together to have 8 sections- one to study each objective.*



● **Supplies:**

- *Decide on size of paper or poster board. If the project can be displayed on the meeting room walls, then use 8.5 by 11 paper. These can be stapled later to make a booklet. Alternately, large poster board can be displayed at meetings for reflection and contemplation.*
- *If making the booklet, have a cover page with all the objectives listed on it.*
- *Glue sticks will be needed at each table.*
- *Ask each member to bring a pair of scissors or have 2-3 pairs per table.*
- *Ask each member to bring a couple of newspapers and news magazines, such as *The Times*, *Maclean's*, *Women's World*, but no gossip magazines, alternatively, if you have a large council, and good archives with a lot of action shots that someone can photocopy, then have stacks of pictures on each table.*
- *Announce that a prize will be presented to anyone who can memorize the eight Objects by the end of the workshop.*

● **Instructions:**

- *Have each table pick a secretary who can write down points from the discussion and to explain their collage to the other participants.*
- *Tell participants to discuss the questions listed below for each objective. They are to discuss in a prayerful manner what the objective means to them.*
- *Then have them go through the magazines, newspapers (headlines and/or pictures) or council pictures to pick out a collage of pictures that best explains the objective. Glue together the collage, big or small, depending on the size of paper being used.*
- *Tell participants that the objective of the workshop is to make each Object a visual, so that it is easier to remember.*



- Tell participants that these collages can be passed around at their meeting or displayed on their meeting room walls, if allowed.

(Also, need one or two ladies who can read each of the points below for each group to contemplate. Each section below can be photocopied for each section to reread as they study their objective.)

- **Set Up Option B:**

Omit the collage preparations as above for smaller groups and/or less preparation time and use this workshop as a spiritual reflection.

- **Supplies:**

- Flip chart or white board/pens.
- Handouts with Objects listed and questions for discussion.

- **The Workshop/Reflection**

- **Welcome**

- **Hymn:** “City of God”, “In Christ there is no East or West”, “We are Called”, etc. Begin with first two verses; close with last two.

- **Reading:** Romans 5.1-6

- **Leader:** *Direct the groups to share in reading aloud the notes about the Object they are studying, then prayerfully address the discussion questions. Remind them that “Objects of the League shall be to unite Catholic women of Canada”*



1. to achieve individual and collective spiritual development

As Catholic women it is important that we believe we are loved and beloved. We must ensure that our members know they are loved by our most merciful Father. In our knowing that we are the beloved daughters of God, hope rises from our soul.

Our collective spiritual growth needs to be fed first, one on one, one to one. In forgiving our sisters for both the real hurts, and those hurts which are perceived, we begin on the path to peace. As the saying goes, “It begins with me.” Am I lovable, do I love in return? What is love anyway?

Are we willing to take that huge step forward, to put ourselves second and see what happens? Peace comes from gratitude. As Catholic women are we grateful for all the gifts we have received? Do we care for them in ourselves and in others? Are we willing to want what we have, or are we continually striving to have more, more goods, more power, more prestige?

The League prayer says, “Teach us to share at home and abroad, the good things You have given us...” It is the gift of faith, the grace to love and be loved and the assurance that God will never be outdone in generosity that keeps us focused. Gratitude means acknowledging that all I have and all I am is a gift from God, freely given. It is to be celebrated with joy.

Henry Nouwen, in the *Return of Prodigal Son* states:

“Gratitude is a discipline that involves a conscious choice... I can choose to be grateful when I am criticized, even when my heart still responds in bitterness. I can choose to speak about



goodness and beauty even when my inner eye looks for someone to accuse or something to call ugly. I can choose to listen to the voices that forgive and to look at the faces that smile, even while I still hear the words of revenge and see grimaces of hatred.”

To let gratitude flourish, we sometimes need the courage to trust.

● **Discuss:**

- a) Name three ways that gratitude, courage and trust can lead to individual spiritual development.
- b) Name three ways that a lifestyle of thanksgiving can enhance collective spiritual development.

2. to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church

How well do we ourselves know and truly understand our Church’s teaching and the *magisterium* we always hear about? Are we familiar with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*? When was the last time you picked it up or referred to it? There are so many issues coming at us that we need a working knowledge and understanding of what our Church Fathers say.

By having a clear understanding and basic ability to explain our faith when called upon, we begin the process for peace. Many people have been misled or misunderstood. There are some who think they cannot attend mass because they’ve been divorced or are separated. Even within the League there is confusion over annulments. Think of other areas where we need to be clear about church teaching about sacraments, death and dying, stem cell research. A good working knowledge of the Church’s teachings will go a long way.



Is bible study a regular part of our prayer life? What do you know about the Great Adventure Bible series, or Theology of the Body? There is rich and profound material from Pope John Paul II that puts everything in perspective - who we are; why we were created. What other courses can promote the teachings of the church?

League members are blessed with many opportunities at all levels to learn more about the saints, our faith and sacred scripture.

● **Discuss:**

- a) Have you recently attended a seminar, course or Bible study and what did you learn from it?
- b) Discuss ways of promoting the teachings of the Church in your own life – how do we share the Good News of the Gospel?

3. to exemplify the Christian ideal in home and family life.

For many of us, living a life of good example is an everyday occurrence; in fact, it is something we almost expect or take for granted. At least we hope so. Whatever our walk of life or role, we need to be a living testimony to what we believe. To exemplify means “to epitomize, embody or show” Take some time to think about the Christian ideal. It can be as simple as being the face of Christ for, and to, others. It means standing up for the family, for our children and grandchildren in areas of faith and morals. If we are only going through the motions, what can we do to make positive changes? Do we watch the kind of television we want our young people to grow up on? Do we say one thing but do another? What does the ideal Christian look like?



The Catechism of the Catholic Church states,

“The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and portray his charity. They express the vocation of the faithful associated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection; they shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life; they are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations; they proclaim the blessings and rewards already secured, however dimly, for Christ’s disciples; they have begun in the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints.” CCC 1717

We are all called to be saints, to be holy. Mother Teresa notes,:

“Holiness is not the luxury of the few; it is a simply duty, for you and for me. We have been created for that.”

The Christian family life standing committee provides ample opportunities to be involved in the areas of home and family by promoting marriage, sanctity of life, ministry to all ages and stages of life and vocations.

● **Discuss:**

- a) How can we improve the way we demonstrate our faith and morals at home?
- b) How can we extend a hand of friendship and hope to members of our families and the community at large?



4. to protect the sanctity of human life.

St. Augustine of Hippo, called the Doctor of Grace, said,

“By loving your neighbour and caring for your neighbour, you make progress on your journey. Where is your journey, if not to the Lord God, to Him whom we must love with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind? We have not yet reached the Lord, but we have our neighbour with us. So then, support him with whom you are traveling so that you may come to Him with who you long to dwell.”

How better to support the most vulnerable than to make a stand for the sanctity of life in all its stages, throughout its natural journey?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* links our faith to the belief in the miracle of life:

“Nothing is more apt to confirm our faith and hope than holding it fixed in our minds that nothing is impossible with God. Once our reason has grasped the idea of God’s almighty power, it will easily and without any hesitation admit everything that [the Creed] will afterwards propose for us to believe - even if they be great and marvellous things, far above the ordinary laws of nature.” (CCC274).

We are called to respect life, to honour it and to preserve it. We are called to overcome all forms of discrimination so the face of Christ is seen and respected in all human beings. It is up to each one of us to help others experience again a sense of the sacred dignity of each human person.



● **Discuss:**

- a) What can we do, one person at a time, to ensure that God's precious gift of human life has a chance?
- b) How do our actions or reactions define us?

5. to enhance the role of women in church and society

To be *Women of Peace and Hope* we must first be women who love and are loved. Remembering who we are in God's eyes and His plan will enable us to reach out, to affect change and to help us believe in ourselves. One of the many aspects of feminine leadership comes in the form of confidence, not necessarily self confidence, but rather the confidence that comes from trusting in God. This quote attributed to Nelson Mandela reminds us to use Jesus as the ultimate model of leadership:

“As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fears, our presence automatically liberates other.”

We need to lead with our hearts, trust our informed intuition (feminine genius?) and make manifest the glory of God. As *Women of Peace and Hope*, we cross all barriers when we extend a hand -- a hand of welcome, of friendship, of understanding.



John Paul II in *Christifideles Laici* (Christ's Faithful People) wrote,

“If anyone has this task of advancing the dignity of women in the Church and society, it is women themselves, who must recognize their responsibility as leading characters. There is still much effort to be done, in many parts of the world and in various surroundings, to destroy that unjust and deleterious mentality which considers the human being as a thing, as an object to buy and sell, as an instrument for selfish interests or for pleasure only.”

We are encouraged to move from words to deeds. Women must mentor one another; teach life skills (remember the old African saying, if one educates a woman, one educates a village). We are called to be the promoters of peace, builders of peace and makers of peace.

● **Discuss:**

- a) As *women of peace and hope* how can we carry break down the mentality that demeans the worth of women and girls?
- b) How do you see the role of women being enhanced in the Church, in society?

6. to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere.

John Paul II who always had a deep passion for the rights of the human person reminded us when he wrote *Mulieris Dignitatum* (*On the Dignity and Vocation of Women*) that we didn't create ourselves, but rather God did and saw 'it was good', that the human person has absolute value and is loved for him/herself. God loved both equally as he made each in His own image. One is fulfilled not from oneself but in the gift of self to others.



We are blessed to live where there is so much to be thankful for. It is hard to imagine living in the midst of abuse, violence, war, degradation and submission. And yet atrocities against the human person are evident in our own cities and towns. Put yourself in another country where war is a daily occurrence, where children are kidnapped, trafficked or sold, where prostitution and crime seem to be the only means of survival.

Again, in “Christ’s Faithful People” John Paul II states:

the lay faithful must bear witness to those human and gospel values that are intimately connected with political activity itself, such as liberty and justice, solidarity, faithful and unselfish dedication for the good of all, a simple life-style, and a preferential love for the poor and the least.”

Through our resolutions process, the League addresses injustices and advocates for change. Key issues are addressed at top levels of government; to be the hands, face, feet, and heart of Christ - this is the key. As a human race we need to stand in solidarity, to try and comprehend what is truly, humanly speaking, incomprehensible.

Some recent examples include: Exit Strategies for Prostituted Persons (2009.01), Protection and Support Services for Foreign Victims of Human Trafficking (2009.02), Preventing Human Trafficking at 2010 Olympics (2008.01), Religious Freedom (2006.01) and Children Living in Poverty (2004.02).

We have ample opportunities through the community life standing committee as we address the dignity and rights of persons, social and economic justice, refugees, immigration and citizenship, Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP), and developing countries. We have the tools we need!



● **Discuss:**

- a) Discuss those injustices to the human person we see at home and abroad
- b) What can we do better to promote the value and dignity of the human person?

7. to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world

Women have a unique vocation to safeguard humanity and bring about peace. We must enable each person to acquire new freedoms proper to Christianity, to appreciate the value of relationships and to rediscover different experiences of culture. Whatever our role in life, we have each been instilled with the desire to support, affirm and teach our women where they live and work of the important issues, to instill the belief and conviction of what we have and hold as Catholic women and to convince our sisters that they (we) hold the key to hope and have the necessary gifts to build peace. Science won't save society, love will, for love convinces more than reason; it convinces deep in our soul.

Edith Stein (St Benedicta of the Cross) wrote in her discourse on the feminine soul:

“To cherish guard, protect, nourish and advance growth is her natural, maternal yearning.”

Edith Stein impacted the Church's view of women; she was active in important circles of education and philosophy until deprived of her position. She is known to have had significant influence on John Paul II even in his earliest days as a young priest – the feminine influence indeed!



Saints are concrete models for so many women who long to live their own baptismal identity as lay people with greater depth and awareness while seeking their mission in life. Looking to a greater presence of women in families, education, politics and economics, the cultural sphere and the Church, we see a future filled with hope, the hope that springs from Christian education and values consistent with our Church teaching.

● **Discuss:**

- a) What do you see as your role, personally?
- b) Give some examples of how we can defend and promote Christian education and values in the world.

8. To contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony.

Peace – such an overused word in a troubled world. Christian hope unfolds from the beginning of Jesus’ preaching in the proclamation of the *beatitudes*. The beatitudes raise our hope toward heaven as the new Promised Land; they trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. Evangelization through word and example, supporting organizations who do the work in the field, helping women reach their potential in countries where they are not valued – these are but a few ways to contribute on a global scale. As League members we are part of the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO), whose aim is to promote the presence, participation and co-responsibility of Catholic women in society and the Church, in order to enable them to fulfill their mission of evangelization and to work for human development. Its recent theme is self explanatory: Building a Culture of Peace – with special attention to education and the elimination of poverty.



Further, it is our own Catechism that points us to hope:

But through the merits of Jesus Christ and of his Passion, God keeps us in the “hope that does not disappoint.” Hope is the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul . . . that enters . . . where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf.” Hope is also a weapon that protects us in the struggle of salvation: “Let us . . . put on the breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” It affords us joy even under trial: “Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation.” Hope is expressed and nourished in prayer, especially in the Our Father, the summary of everything that hope leads us to desire (CCC 1820)

Participating in prayer services, such as the World Day of Prayer and other evangelical gatherings that accentuate what we have in common is a good beginning towards unity and is paramount in our growth towards peace and understanding. We are called to be one. Mother Teresa reminds us: *Kind words are short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.*

● **Discuss:**

- a) Talk about your experiences of other faiths or religions and how you’ve been affected.
- b) Discuss how you think you affect others in relation to Christian unity.

Take time to have groups briefly report on their responses and if time, open the discussion to include general interventions.



Thank everyone for participation, enthusiasm and ideas. Remind everyone to use the activities Kit (have one handy!) which gives suggestions by standing committee which can be used or applied to the Objects discussed today.

Pray a simple prayer of thanksgiving then close with the last two verses of the opening hymn and close the bible.

Contributed by Barbara Dowding National Chairperson of Resolutions 2008-2010 and Terri Scott, National Chairperson of Spiritual Development 2008-2010





Appendices





Appendix 1: Hymns and Songs

● All Are Welcome	B-396 G-741
● All My Hope on God Is Founded	C-479
● Be with Me, Psalm 91	BB-432 C-357 G-50
● Blessed Are They	B-551 C-522 G-636
● City of God	C-345 G-663 GP-43
● Come and Journey With A Saviour	C-476 G686
● Gather Us In	B-311 CBW BB-311
● Go Light Your World	
● Hail Mary, Gentle Woman	B-692 G-779 GP80
● In Christ There is No East or West	C-529 G-726
● Let Heaven Rejoice	B-547 GP-115
● Let There Be Peace on Earth	G-723
● Lord Make Us Servants of Your Peace	C-630
● Make Me a Channel of Your Peace	C-698 G-721
● O God Beyond All Praising	C-561
● Peace	B-478
● Peace is Flowing Like a River	B-479 G-725 GP162
● People of Peace	GP 164
● Prayer of St. Francis	B-475
● See Scattered and Sown	B-349 C-604 G-830
● The Light of Christ	B-558 C-394
● We Are Called	G-710
● We Have a Dream	G-876
● We Remember	B-455 G-578
● Women of Peace	GP-564

B = *Breaking Bread* 2004. Portland, Oregon, Oregon Catholic Press, © 2003.

C = *Catholic Book of Worship III*. Ottawa, Ontario, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1994.

G = *Gather* Chicago, Illinois, GIA, 2004.

GP = *Glory and Praise* Phoenix, Arizona, North American Liturgy Resources, 1990.

Appendix 2: Graphic Templates

















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