



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: April 11, 2022
FROM: Rolande Chernichan, national chairperson of resolutions
TO: Parish chairpersons of resolutions
CC: Parish presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents and life members (upon request)

I write you following a beautiful sunrise, in thanksgiving for another day gifted to me by creator God, and in the promise of spring as we experience more hours of sunlight each day. I encounter you through this memo and join you as we walk the journey, made more meaningful by the invitation of Pope Francis to take part in the Synod on Synodality, with the theme *For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission*.

At the time of receiving this memo, resolutions are in various stages of development. By now, the parish council should have approved the resolution topic, and the committee researching and developing the resolution would be hard at work. As chairperson, one of your responsibilities is researching and preparing resolutions. Thus there is an expectation that you are part of the committee tasked with developing a resolution. Follow the specific policies and procedures that guide the resolutions process. Encourage the committee to use the *Resolutions Supplement to the Executive Handbook* that details every step. Additionally, the *Resolutions Guide* provides information in a condensed form for easier referencing. Both resources are available in print or on the national website at cwl.ca.

Of note is that since 2019, the League no longer uses whereas clauses in resolutions. Your council's resolution must contain one or more well-drafted resolved clauses stating the desired objective of the resolution. The resolution must also use the correct bridging clause to enable it to be forwarded to its intended destination within the League (to provincial council for the provincial government; to national council for the federal government). Equally important is the content of the accompanying brief. It should inform and convince the reader of the resolution's intent through in-text citations and parenthetical references obtained from reliable original sources of research. The list of works cited and other sources of research and a proposed action plan must be supplied.

The parish council should inquire about the deadline date for its resolution to be submitted to the diocesan level. Knowing the date allows the committee to set deadlines to complete the various resolution components. The established practice of the League is to notify your diocesan counterpart about the resolution's topic.

Your council's resolution must first be adopted by motion at a regular parish council meeting before forwarding it to the diocesan level. Refer to the *Resolutions Supplement to the Executive Handbook* for procedures to be followed for formal presentation and adoption of a resolution at the parish level. It is advisable to prepare a two-minute pre-worded statement supporting the resolution for when the motion opens for debate.

The adoption process follows *Robert's Rules of Order*. When being formally presented, chairpersons may be called upon to read the resolution. At all times, members address the chairperson for an opportunity to be heard. As part of a debate, members are to state either 'in favour' or 'opposed' and give their reason while staying relevant to the topic, respectful and courteous. The resolution may be amended if the changes do not affect its original intent or may be deferred. A majority vote decides its fate. If adopted, the chairperson of resolutions is responsible for ensuring that the president and secretary sign the resolution to verify a majority vote of the council was in favour. If it is not adopted, members are encouraged to accept the decision gracefully.

If the resolution is adopted, the chairperson is also responsible for "sending sufficient copies of all required documents to the diocesan resolutions chairperson before the deadline date," as well as "ensuring that a parish council member is prepared to speak briefly in favour of the resolution at the diocesan convention." The parish council member should be provided with the resolution's file beforehand to become familiar with the topic. That member is encouraged to prepare a two- or three-minute pre-worded statement that could be read out in support of the resolution when it is formally presented for adoption at the diocesan convention.

It is to be remembered that a resolution may undergo changes at each level of the League it passes. Once a council's resolution has been adopted and forwarded to the next level, it is no longer the originating council's resolution. The diocesan resolutions committee may edit the resolution, but at no point can the intent of the originating council's resolution be changed by the next level.

In gifting a resolution to the League through the adoption process, the submitting council must relinquish ownership of the resolution. It is natural to be invested in the progress of the resolution as it advances through the levels to its intended destination.

I hope all those who serve on resolutions committees will not become discouraged by setbacks and disappointments, whether their council's resolution is returned for more information or voted down during its League journey. Instead, may the experience make members stronger and more determined to try again to develop resolutions. The League needs its members and their gifts for this specialized ministry of advocacy. Developing a resolution is answering the call for a synodal church that involves "communion, participation and mission." It is part of being *Catholic and Living It!*