



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: April 11, 2022

FROM: Cathy Bouchard, national second vice-president and chairperson of spiritual development

TO: Parish chairpersons of spiritual development

CC: Parish presidents, diocesan presidents, provincial presidents, life members (upon request)

The Gift of Spiritual Advisors

Catholic Women's League councils are gifted differently with spiritual advisors. Councils blessed with an active and supportive spiritual advisor result in a growing and vibrant council. However, when a council does not have the same support, it must change its approach. Just as members realize that personal connection with someone brings them into the League, it is also true with spiritual advisors. Presidents who create a personal relationship with their spiritual advisor find they are more supportive and play a more important role in the parish council.

The League has the approval of the bishops of Canada. By appointing a priest to a parish, the bishop also appoints him as parish spiritual advisor. If the parish has a League parish council, he becomes the spiritual advisor for the council by his appointment. When the council has new leadership, the leadership should meet with the advisor to share its vision and ask for support.

Some suggestions for a renewed approach to your spiritual advisor:

- The parish council president should meet regularly (in person) with the spiritual advisor and invite him to assist in the growth of the League within the parish.
- Share the updated League focus—faith, service and social justice and the Mission Statement, “The Catholic Women's League of Canada calls its members to grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service.”
- Introduce the spiritual advisor to the pamphlet, *A Guide for Spiritual Advisors* (#167).
- Share the *Welcome Program* (#621) and *Welcome Brochure* (#308).
- When meeting with the advisor, talk about his role.

- Communicate that the League is more than just a women's group, a prayer group or a group that raises money for the parish.
- Let the advisor know what is expected of them (attend meetings, share in discussions, give a talk, preside at CWL ceremonies and attend conventions when possible).
- It is important to put the spiritual advisor on the agenda of each meeting. For example, ask the advisor to give a talk on a suggested topic and encourage him during the refreshment break to share in this time of fellowship.
- If he cannot attend, ask the advisor to share a written message to be read at the meeting. It has even been suggested to have a year-long program that the advisor can lead.
- "Some priests won't take part in League activities or programs unless they are formally and officially invited and given a role to play or something to do. Include them, get them involved." Members value the opportunity to take part in the Eucharist in conjunction with their meeting but need more than mass for their spiritual development.
- Let the spiritual advisor know there is a connection between the support of a spiritual advisor and the positive growth of the League.

Presidents, chairpersons and councils can reach out and surround their spiritual advisor with faith-filled love. Members must stand with spiritual advisors and encourage them to be the best they can be for the council's benefit and their own. If the strategic plan is to become a reality, dynamic women of the League must bring their spiritual advisors along with them, encourage them and help the League grow.

Resources

- *A Guide for Spiritual Advisors*: cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/167-A-Guide-for-Spiritual-Advisors-2015.pdf
- *Welcome Program*: cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/621-Affirmation-Welcome_Program.pdf
- *Welcome Program Video*: cwl.ca/welcome-program-video/
- *Welcome Brochure*: -