

The Catholic Women's League of Canada



Handbook for Spiritual Advisors

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CWL BACKGROUND

Historical

The Catholic Women's League of Canada was:

- placed under the patronage of
 - Most Rev. Pietro di Maria, Apostolic Delegate to Canada and Newfoundland, 1922–28
 - Raymond-Marie Cardinal Rouleau and Most Rev. Andrea Cassulo, Apostolic Delegate to Canada and Newfoundland, 1929–31
 - Most Rev. Andrea Cassulo, 1932
 - J.M. Rodrigue Cardinal Villeneuve and Most Rev. Andrew Cassulo, 1933–36
 - J.M. Rodrigue Cardinal Villeneuve, 1937–46
 - James C. Cardinal McGuigan, 1947–74
 - mandated by the Canadian Catholic Conference of the Hierarchy, January 1, 1948
- granted the special patronage of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976 and 1989
- recognized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as a lay association of women, 1992
- commended on numerous occasions by Sovereign Pontiffs, Pope Pius XI, Pope Pius XII, Pope John XXIII, Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II
- recognized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as a national private association of the faithful, 2005

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The Catholic Women's League of Canada

- comprises 11 provincial councils – one for each of the 10 provinces which includes the territories, and the 11th council being that of the military ordinariate which was granted provincial status in 1965
- has received the commendation and keen appreciation of federal, provincial and municipal authorities, for the voluntary services ably performed by its nationwide membership
- was granted federal incorporation December 12, 1923. An organization must be federally incorporated to hold property, inherit a legacy, make legally binding contracts, hire employees, be in a position to sue or be sued as a society or the like. Officers and members are thereby protected from personal liability under obligations that may be incurred by the organization. (Resource: *Robert's Rules of Order*)

* * * * *

The seal and crest of the League is the cross, exemplifying faith, and is set above 10 maple leaves, representing the provinces of Canada, with the words THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA – FOR GOD AND CANADA enclosed in an unbroken circle, symbolic of constant service. The colours of the crest are blue, for the Virgin Mary, and the papal colours, white and gold.

(National Manual of Policy and Procedure)

History of the Picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel

Located in the small Italian village of Gennazzano, some 30 miles from Rome, is the shrine with the painting of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

The old sanctuary was given by Prince Colonna to the Augustinians in the 15th century, and the monks set about rebuilding their church. A wealthy woman, named Petruccia, came to their support in the restoration of the old church “Our Lady of Good Counsel.” The monks ran into difficulty, and the villagers mocked their efforts. Before her death, however, Petruccia saw the opening of the church on April 26, 1467, at which time the picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel was unveiled.



People stood in wonder before its beauty! Mostly peasants, they were convinced it had come from paradise. They were reluctant to accept the story that the beautiful fresco had come from the walls of a church in Scutari, Albania. A recent discovery seems to confirm the Scutari origin. Restoration work was done on the famous painting by Professor de Compos between 1957 and 1961. At that time, letters which seemed to be a signature were noticed on the edge of the child’s robe. They were deciphered as reading: “A. Vivanini made this.” De Compos concluded that the fresco was the work of the illustrious Antonio Vivanini, a master of the Veronese school of art in the first half of the 15th century. This picture depicts the formative period of the master’s work and was probably painted between 1437 and 1440.

The original picture of the mother and child is painted on light plaster, measuring 18 x 15 inches. The style is oriental and Byzantine, and shows evidence of moving away from the stylized rigidity of the east. The original was brilliant and brightly coloured; the faces simple, pure, compassionate and devotional. The infant is so close to His mother that His simple and loving gesture draws us all to Mary, Our Lady of Good Counsel.

The discovery of the signature confirms the authenticity of the artist. In the five centuries since 1467, it has seen miracles, pilgrimages of popes and saints, and visits of the faithful from all over the world.

Before Vatican II, the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel was celebrated on April 26th. When this and many other special feasts were deleted from the Liturgical Calendar, Saturdays were set aside for Votive Masses in honour of the Blessed Mother.

(Leading the League)

Mission Statement

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
is a national organization
rooted in gospel values
calling its members to holiness
through service to the people of God.

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is the largest national organization of Catholic women in Canada. Its mission is the religious renewal of the "people of God" as envisioned by the documents of Vatican II.

"rooted in gospel values" – as Christians we use the word "tradition" – something handed on to us and which we, in turn, hand on to others. Values are part of League tradition, not only rooted in the gospel but also rooted in values which have been shaped through the church that is the "people of God."

"calling its members to holiness" through service to the people of God – rooted in gospel values is a call to a way of life, a call to holiness which is rooted in baptism and proposed anew in the other sacraments, principally the Eucharist. This call requires each of us to follow and imitate Jesus Christ, in embracing the beatitudes, in listening and meditating on the Word of God, in conscious and active participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the church, in personal prayer, in family life and in the community, in the hunger and thirst for justice, in the practice of the commandment of love in all circumstances of life and service to the brethren, especially the least, the poor and the suffering. (*Christifideles Laici*, John Paul II, No. 16)

Objects of The Catholic Women's League of Canada

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.

Policy of The Catholic Women's League of Canada

The policy of the League shall be:

1. to have membership and operation based on the parish unit, with diocesan, provincial and national representational levels.
2. to operate on a system of standing committees and to make the fullest possible use of these committees in the involvement of all members.
3. to develop leadership qualities and provide training to enable members to take active roles in the affairs of their faith, community and society.
4. to maintain affiliation with the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.
5. to cooperate at all levels with other organizations where and in whatever manner the council concerned agrees is necessary or desirable to accomplish the objects of the League.
6. to maintain liaison with pastoral councils in accordance with the *Code of Canon Law*.
7. politically non-partisan.

(Constitution & Bylaws)

Standing Committees of The Catholic Women's League of Canada

- (1) Spiritual Development
 - (a) spiritual growth of members
 - (b) study of Catholic teachings
 - (c) role of women in the church
 - (d) evangelization and mission assistance
 - (e) lay ministries
 - (f) ecumenism and interfaith endeavours
- (2) Organization
 - (a) recruit members and maintain membership
 - (b) leadership development
 - (c) League resource material
 - (d) annual reports
 - (e) life membership
- (3) Christian Family Life
 - (a) marriage and family
 - (b) sanctity of life
 - (c) ministry to: youth, disabled, seniors, widowed, separated, divorced
 - (d) vocations
- (4) Community Life
 - (a) dignity and rights of persons
 - (b) social and economic justice
 - (c) refugees, immigration and citizenship
 - (d) Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP)
 - (e) developing countries
- (5) Education and Health
 - (a) Catholic education
 - (i) Catholic schools and catechesis
 - (ii) Rites of Christian Initiation
 - (b) literacy and continuing education
 - (c) scholarships and bursaries
 - (d) wellness and sickness/disease
 - (e) environment
 - (f) genetics
- (6) Communications
 - (a) *The Canadian League* magazine
 - (b) media: for evangelization; to promote the League; evaluation and promotion of good content; newsletters and bulletins
 - (c) media relations
 - (d) pornography
- (7) Resolutions
 - (a) research and preparation of resolutions and briefs
 - (b) study and implementation of resolutions passed by other levels
 - (c) at provincial and national levels, presentation of resolutions to government
- (8) Legislation
 - (a) monitor and study legislation at all levels of government
 - (b) preparation of briefs and position papers on proposed legislation
- (9) Parish Activities (parish level only)
 - (a) liaison and cooperation with pastoral councils
 - (b) parish assistance
- (10) Laws (national level only)
 - (a) facilitate the study and implementation of the *Constitution & Bylaws*
 - (b) interpret the *Constitution & Bylaws* in consultation with the national president
 - (c) chair the national amendments committee
 - (d) advise on parliamentary procedure
- (11) International Relations (national level only)
 - (a) liaison with World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO)
 - (b) other international programs

(Constitution & Bylaws)

ROLE OF SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Role

1. The spiritual advisor, in cooperation with the chairperson of spiritual development, shall provide advice and guidance for the spiritual program.
2. The spiritual advisor shall receive due notice of all executive and council meetings and conventions and shall attend and participate in all such meetings and conventions when possible, in an advisory capacity.
3. At national level, the spiritual advisor shall receive due notice of the national administrative committee meetings and shall attend and participate when possible.

Appointment

1. The spiritual advisor of the parish council shall be the pastor of the parish. Where this is not possible, the pastor, in consultation with the council executive, shall appoint a spiritual advisor.
2. At other levels, the spiritual advisor shall be named by the appropriate level of the hierarchy.
3. A spiritual advisor may not serve simultaneously on any two levels above parish level.

Term of Service

On levels other than parish, a spiritual advisor's term of office shall not exceed five years. The council concerned shall give six months advance notice of the expiry of a spiritual advisor's term to the authority responsible for naming a successor.

(Constitution & Bylaws)

Voting Privileges

A spiritual advisor acts in an advisory capacity and does not have voting privileges.

Women Spiritual Advisors

Women may be appointed as spiritual advisors. Where a member is appointed as spiritual advisor, she may continue to pay her membership fees in order to maintain her years of service. However, during her tenure as spiritual advisor, she will not have voting privileges.

At Eucharistic celebrations, lay spiritual advisors participate as lay persons, not as clerics. Liturgical roles should not be confused with League roles.

Guidelines

- Take an interest in the spiritual life of the members and the council by consulting with the president and chairperson of spiritual development.
- Work closely with the chairperson of spiritual development to give assistance with prayers/reflections at meetings.
- Celebrate the Eucharist or a Liturgy of the Word and help plan programs for meetings and special occasions.
- Be familiar with spiritual resources offered by the League.
- Give a message of encouragement and support at the meetings.
- Be familiar with the League's Mission Statement: "The Catholic Women's League of Canada is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God."
- Promote membership drives and other projects by speaking positively to the parish about the League.
- Note that catering or kitchen chores, though a traditional League service in many parishes, is not the sole work or main concern of League members.
- Assist the League to avoid conflict in dates with other parish events.
- Recognize the value of a CWL representative as liaison on the pastoral council.
- Be familiar with League protocol for a deceased member: Eucharistic offering, guard of honour, CWL stole, prayer service at the funeral home, luncheon, etc.
- Serve on the nomination and elections committee.
- Attend regional meetings and conventions at the next level whenever possible and participate with members.

Finances

The spiritual advisor needs to respect the financial autonomy of the League and to remember that fundraising is not the main concern of the League.

Part XVII of the *Constitution & Bylaws* notes that the spiritual advisor is to be consulted on financial matters. The final decision is made by members.

- a) At parish level, all financial projects shall be approved by the members at a council meeting in consultation with the spiritual advisor.
- b) National, provincial and diocesan councils shall not impose financial obligations on parish councils without their consent.

Members Who are Separated/Divorced/Remarried

Catholic women who are separated or divorced should be welcomed as sisters in Christ. League members can support them with their faith and love. They are eligible to hold elected office at any level of the League.

Catholic women, who entered a second marriage having received a declaration of nullity from a diocesan marriage tribunal, are eligible to hold office at any level of the League.

Catholic women, who have entered a second marriage without church recognition, perhaps requiring an annulment, require special attention:

- (a) Spiritual advisors should make known to the individual the possible available solutions, as well as their present status within the League. This should, of course, be done privately and confidentially in a way which demonstrates the church's and the League's pastoral concern for the dignity and spiritual needs of every Catholic person. Every care should be taken to protect the reputation of the member and the League from criticism.
- (b) Where a solution has been arrived at in some way in the "internal forum," the conscience of the individual should be respected. Any appearance of scandal should be avoided.
- (c) In cases where a solution has not been sought or cannot be received through the use of the internal or external forums, the member can honour the status as an associate member.

The basis of all judgments must be utmost compassion for, and acceptance of, the individual concerned while, at the same time, being true and loyal to the traditions and teachings of the church.

CEREMONIES

Reception of New Members

Invitations: Invite the husbands and children of prospective members to be present and extend an invitation to parish councils of neighbouring parishes and the diocesan spiritual advisor.

Preparations: Table covered with a white cloth; the paschal candle (outside of Lent); a picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel; flowers; candles or tapers for each new member; and the bible

Reception Committee: parish council spiritual advisor; president; chairpersons of organization and spiritual development

The ceremony for Reception of New Members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada may take place at a Eucharistic celebration right after the homily. (Start at Invitation to New Members [page 10])



If it takes place outside of a Eucharistic celebration, follow the format below:

(The paschal candle (outside of Lent) is lit before the ceremony begins.)

Opening Hymn

Introduction

Spiritual Advisor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Spiritual Advisor: The grace of Jesus Christ and the love of God and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Opening Prayer

Spiritual Advisor: Let us pray:

Blessed are You, loving God,

Bless us in our work and our prayer, "For God and Canada," and grant that our lives may give You glory through our words, our witness, and our worship.

We give You praise, gracious God, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, in the communion of Your Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Scripture Reading

Reflection on the Word of God (or silence)

Invitation to New Members

Chairperson of Organization: I invite the following new members to come forward.

The new members are called by name. They stand in a line in front of the altar facing the congregation. The president stands below facing the prospective members.

Instruction

President: We welcome all new and current League members and visitors. We pray that your membership in the League will be most challenging and fulfilling.

As Christians, we have been given a great mandate. As expressed in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the laity “must assist one another to live holier lives even in our daily occupations. In this way, the world is permeated by the Spirit of Christ and more effectively achieves its purpose in justice, charity and peace.

The laity have the principal role in the universal fulfilment of this purpose.” *(The Church, No. 36)*

As members of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, we are guided and inspired by our Mission Statement. “The Catholic Women’s League of Canada is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God.”

Chairperson of Organization:

Today, as never before, the church needs an enlightened and dedicated laity. Through the League, you will acquire greater knowledge about our faith. You will become involved in a supportive community. The Catholic Women’s League of Canada is an organization which will help you grow in your relationship with Christ and the church.

Through the League’s standing committees you will be able to carry on the work of Christ at home, in the community and in the world.

Intercessions

President: Christ cared for us so much that He laid down His life for us, conquered death and thus sanctified our life’s work. May Christ teach us how to love!

All: **Those who belong to Christ will be known by what they do.**

President: While on earth, Christ reached out in compassion and healing to all those in need. May we be inspired by the Holy Spirit to reach out to the needy in our own communities and in our world.

All: **Those who belong to Christ will be known by what they do.**

President: The mission of Christ continues on earth through each of us. Christ teaches, comforts and shows mercy through all of us who profess His name. May Christ strengthen us to be faithful disciples.

All: **Those who belong to Christ will be known by what they do.**

Symbol

With the assistance of the chairperson of spiritual development, the president lights small candles from the paschal candle (outside of Lent) and gives one to each new member saying the words, “Receive the Light of Christ.”

President: You have been given lighted candles as a reminder of the candle you received at your baptism. Let your light shine before all, so that your good works may give glory to God.

Please join in the League promise.

All: **For the glory of God and the good of God's people, I promise as a Catholic woman to honour, invoke and imitate our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. I promise to be a loyal member of The Catholic Women's League of Canada and to promote its interest and growth in every way. I promise to cooperate with officers in all programs under their direction and to conform to the best of my ability to the bylaws of the organization in all League activities.**

The candles are extinguished and collected by the chairperson of spiritual development.

The spiritual advisor then blesses the League pins.

The president pins the League insignia pin on each new member.

President: Wear this emblem with pride, honour and loyalty.

(The new members return to their places when all have received their pins.)

** At a Eucharistic celebration, the concluding prayer, blessing and sign of peace are omitted and the celebration continues with the general intercessions and the preparation of the gifts.*

Concluding Prayer

Spiritual Advisor: In support of one another, and in communion with all the saints in heaven, let us now pray with one heart and one voice. Our Father...

Blessing

Spiritual Advisor: May God bless us and keep us. **Amen**
May Jesus Christ graciously smile upon us. **Amen**
May the Holy Spirit, the giver of life, grant us peace. **Amen**

Sign of Peace

Spiritual Advisor: Let us conclude our celebration by offering one another a sign of peace.

Installation or Reaffirmation of CWL Officers

The installation or reaffirmation of officers takes place during the Eucharistic celebration for members or at a Liturgy of the Word. In some parishes, this may take place at a Sunday Eucharist. The prayers and readings are from the calendar of the day.

The role of the retiring past president in this service may be the spiritual advisor or a previous president of the council. In the case of a new council, the diocesan/provincial president may assume this role.

NOTE:

- word changes for the reaffirmation ceremony are in brackets
- underlining denotes the words to change for the reaffirmation

Preparations:

- *Handbook for Spiritual Advisors*
- list of names of officers
- paschal candle (outside of Lent)
- tapers or candles for each officer, or a bowl of blessed water
- gavel
- petitions for the prayer of the faithful
- copy of the League Promise
- wine, if both species are being used

The ceremony for Installation or Reaffirmation of CWL Officers may take place at a Eucharistic celebration right after the homily or before the final blessing (start at Instruction [page 13]).

If it takes place outside of a Eucharistic celebration, follow the format below:
(*The paschal candle (outside of Lent) is lit before the ceremony begins.*)

Opening Hymn

Introduction

Spiritual Advisor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Spiritual Advisor: The grace of Jesus Christ and the love of God and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Opening Prayer

Spiritual Advisor: Let us pray:

Blessed are You, loving God,
You have made a covenant with Your people:
You called us to be Your holy people,
to sing Your praises at all times.

Bless us in our work and our prayer,
“For God and Canada,”
and bless the officers we have chosen
to lead us in the Catholic Women’s League.

We give You praise
through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer,
in the communion of Your Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Scripture Reading

Reflection on the Word of God (or silence)

Instruction

Retiring Past President or

Spiritual Advisor: Dear people of God, through baptism we are called to work together as members of the Body of Christ. Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit, to bestow upon us gifts of many kinds to complete God's work on earth and bring us the fullness of grace.

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is an organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God.

As a League member, each woman uses her gifts and talents to share the Good News of her Christian calling to love and serve God and neighbour in her parish, diocese, province and country. These women are your duly elected officers of the N... executive.

In your presence and with your prayers, we now install (reaffirm) them in their respective offices for the coming year.

Commitment

Past President: N..., as past president it is my privilege to present you (once again) with this gavel as a sign of your office as president.

Will you (continue to) be faithful to your call, and help all League members through your faith, love and prayers?

President: I will, with God's help.

The past president presents the president's pin to the president. The president then presents the past president pin to the past president.

Retiring

Past President As retiring past president, it is my privilege to install (reaffirm) you as the new executive officers.

You have been chosen by the members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada because they recognize in you the gifts of service to the League at the N... level. We thank you for your willingness to accept your office.

Will you (continue to) be faithful to your call and help all League members through your faith, love and prayers?

Officers: I will, with God's help.

For the glory of God and the good of God's people, I promise as a Catholic woman to honour, invoke and imitate our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. I promise to be a loyal member of The Catholic Women's League of Canada and to promote its interest and growth in every way.

I promise to cooperate with officers in all programs under their direction and to conform to the best of my ability to the bylaws of the organization in all League activities.

Retiring Past
President:

May God keep you faithful to these promises and bring them to fulfilment.

Spiritual Advisor: Members of the League, at this time I affirm (reaffirm) my commitment to assist the executive and members of the League in their work "For God and Canada."

Symbol

President: *Water:* May the grace given to each of us in our baptism be shared with all God's people through Jesus Christ.

All: **Amen**

OR: *Candle:* Bring Christ's light to the world.

All: **Amen**

Blessing of the Officers

Spiritual Advisor: Blessed are You, O God, Ruler of the universe, and healer of a broken world:

Look with kindness on these women.

They have been chosen to serve as officers of the N... executive of The Catholic Women's League of Canada.

In Your love and mercy,

Bless † all their works.

May Your glory be manifested in all they do for You and for Your church.

All praise and glory to You, God through Jesus Christ, in the love of Your Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Acclamation

Retiring Past
President:

Dear sisters and brothers (assembled at this gathering of The Catholic Women's League of Canada),

These women have been chosen (reaffirmed their commitment) to serve the church through the N... executive of The Catholic Women's League of Canada. I ask you to welcome their gift (recommitment) of themselves, their faith and trust in God, and their love for the church, the League and Canada.

The officers extinguish their candles and return to their seats.

Concluding Prayer

Spiritual Advisor: In support of one another, and in communion with all the saints in heaven, let us now pray with one heart and one voice. Our Father...

Blessing

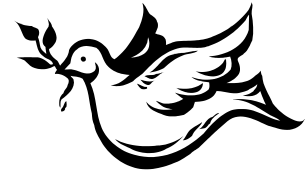
Spiritual Advisor: May our Creator God bless us and keep us. **Amen**

May Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, graciously smile upon us. **Amen**

May the Holy Spirit, giver of life, grant us peace. **Amen**

Sign of Peace

Spiritual Advisor: Let us conclude our celebration by offering one another a sign of peace.



Protocol for Funerals of Deceased Members

Preface:

“The ritual gestures, processions, and postures should express and foster an attitude of reverence and reflectiveness in those taking part in the funeral rites” (*Order of Christian Funerals*).

Supplies:

- League scarf
- League pin
- *Candles (one each for the members of the honour guard)
- *Candles may be new tapers or battery-operated candles, as determined before hand by the parish priest in consultation with the council president
- Matches (if required)

Protocol:

When a member of a parish council dies, all members share in the loss. Members should console mourners and support them with appropriate acts of kindness, such as assisting the mourners with routine daily tasks and offering assistance of any kind to the family so they may focus on planning of the funeral with the priest and lay ministers. This will give the family time to be together in mutual support and comfort.

If invited or requested, members of the parish council may assist the priest and family with the organization of the funeral and during the preparation, and the priest and family may request a prayer vigil (*Ceremonies Booklet*). Assistance may also be offered with the choice of readings and hymns or as readers so as to alleviate undue stress on the family during this time of grieving.

During these preparations and in consultation with the parish priest, family and funeral director, the council president (or her designate) may request that members be permitted to form an honour guard at the funeral. If there is to be an honour guard, the president (or her designate) will provide the priest and funeral director with an approximate number of members who will participate so as to ensure sufficient reserved seating and to receive directions on alignment of the members for the reception of deceased (i.e. casket or urn), entrance procession and the prayers of final commendation prior to the dismissal. At this time, request from the priest and funeral director any further instructions for the day of the funeral.

Members will:

- a) Arrive at the church at least 45 minutes prior to the funeral and await directions from the funeral director for lining up and filling the church.
- b) Listen carefully to the directions from the funeral director when moving into the aisle of church to receive the deceased (i.e. casket or urn) and the family.
- c) Wear the League scarf and pin.
- d) Each hold a lighted candle in a uniform manner before the funeral liturgy begins and maintain a dignified upright posture.

If reserved spaces have been made available, members file into the designated pews after the entrance procession and family have moved to the front of the church. Following the concluding funeral rite, and prayers of commendation, members will again assume their honour guard positions for the recessional hymn and procession out of the church. Candles may be lit uniformly at the outset, as determined before the concluding rite of the funeral liturgy begins.

Other Considerations:

1. To emphasize the importance of the person's baptism, the church in Canada encourages the use of a funeral pall at the liturgy. It is placed on the coffin during the reception of the body but not for an urn with the cremated remains of the deceased. This pall is a reminder of the white baptismal garment, the sign of the Christian dignity of the person. This makes the statement that she is a sister of Christ, a member of the church.

NOTE: No other symbols, such as the "insignia of associations", have any place in the funeral liturgy (i.e. CWL funeral pall is NOT permitted).

2. In the case of a member who was in the military, the Canadian flag could be located near the entrance of the church where it is visible to all. If the family wishes to drape the flag over the coffin, it may be done only when the deceased is transported to and from the church where the funeral liturgy is to be celebrated. The flag can then be removed and folded with appropriate ceremony and respect just before the funeral pall is to be placed on the coffin during the welcoming rite for the deceased. Following the conclusion of the liturgy, the pall is removed, and the flag may once again be placed on the coffin for transport out of the church (Catholic Funerals and Eulogies, the Pall and the Flag, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, March 5, 2010).

Prayer Service for a Deceased Member

Hymn

Introduction

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Leader: The grace of Jesus Christ and the love of God and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Welcome

Leader: We, the members of the Catholic Women's League of *N...* parish are gathered here today to commend our deceased sister *N...* to God. We recall in silence her loving service to others and pray that God will welcome her into eternal glory.

Prayer

Leader: Loving God, You promised fullness of joy to those who seek Your face. Trusting in Your Word, we pray to You for our sister *N...* who sought to further Your reign on earth by her service in the Catholic Women's League "For God and Canada." Though we are saddened that she is no longer with us, we entrust her to You with confidence. May she now live in peace, joy and happiness.

We ask this in the name of Jesus who is God. **Amen**

Scriptures

Reflection on the Word of God (or silence)

General Intercessions

Leader: Gracious and loving God, in Your mercy You have chosen us in Christ to be part of Your family. In Christ's name, we pray for our deceased sister, for the church and the world.

Assistant: We pray for our sister *N...* who was baptised into Your everlasting life. Receive her now into Your eternal embrace.

All: **Hear our prayer!**

Assistant: Give strength to her family and friends who mourn. Help us to bear the burden of sorrow in a spirit of faith and hope.

All: **Hear our prayer!**

Assistant: We pray for all our deceased members who have died in faith, may they be raised up on the last day.

All: **Hear our prayer!**

Leader: Creator God, hear our prayers. Welcome our sisters into paradise and strengthen our hope that we will share in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Prayers in Common *(started by the leader)*

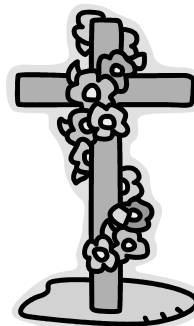
Conclusion

Leader: May our sister, *N...*, who adopted Our Lady of Good Counsel as her patroness through League activities, rest in peace, through the mercy of God.

All: **Amen**

Leader: May God bless us all, through Jesus, our Redeemer, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**



Memorial Service for Deceased Members

[See the CCCB's *The Order of Christian Funerals* 1990 for additional prayers, readings, etc.]

This service is designed to honour the memory of members who have passed away during the year. It may be conducted in the church or in a meeting room. Members of the family of the deceased may be invited to attend and place a rose for their relative. In the absence of a member of the family, a League member would place the flower.

Care should be taken to provide an atmosphere of devotion and dignity – a chair is placed at the front, draped in white; a table is placed beside it with candles, statue of Our Lady, the bible, flowers, etc.

The leader is the spiritual advisor, the president or her designate.

Hymn

Invitation to Prayer

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Leader: The grace of Jesus Christ and the love of God and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Instruction

Leader: We gather tonight as members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada to honour the memory of... [number] members of *N...* council, who have gone from this life to their eternal rest in Christ.

We welcome the family members who are with us to join in the memorial for our departed sisters: ... [read names].

In the world of today, as perhaps never before, the church needs an enlightened and faithful laity. Dedicated members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada live their faith by serving others and thus discover Christ through relationships with others.

The members we honour today openly made a solemn commitment to be witnesses of Christ, carrying out the mission of Christ at home, in the parish and in the whole community.

We recall now their service to others, and we pray that the God of all has joyously welcomed them into the fullness of life, where they rest in peace and love.

Opening Prayer

Leader: Gracious God, to whom mercy and forgiveness belong, hear our prayers on behalf of Your faithful servants whom You have called into the light of Your presence. May they be welcomed joyously into heaven. We ask this through Christ, our Redeemer.

All: **Amen**

Scripture Reading

Reflection on the Word of God

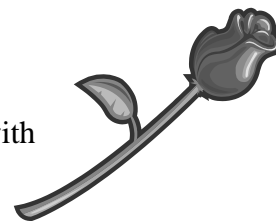
Individual Memorial Rose

Leader: God is the glory and joy of each of our departed members whose memory we celebrate today. A rose, a symbol of life in Christ, will now be presented as a living memorial for each one.

Chairperson of Spiritual Development

(optional) *N...*, we thank God for the gift of ... that You shared with us.

All: **Amen**



Hymn

Closing Prayer

Spiritual Advisor: Compassionate God, Mary, the mother of Jesus, gave of herself completely. Blessed is she who gave humanity to Jesus, and blessed are our sisters who spent their lives serving others in God's name.

We join Mary in proclaiming Your greatness and in thanking You for giving us life through death and resurrection of Jesus. We proclaim Jesus and the gift of Your life-giving Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Leader: Eternal rest grant unto them.

All: **And let perpetual light shine upon them.**

Leader: May they rest in peace.

All: **Amen**

Final Blessing [Form 'A']

Spiritual Advisor: May the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and in the grace of Jesus Christ.

All: **Amen**

Spiritual Advisor: May almighty God bless you, the Creator God, Jesus our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Final Blessing [Form 'B']

Spiritual Advisor: May the love of God and the peace of Jesus Christ, bless and console us, and wipe every tear from our eyes: in the name of our Creator God, Jesus our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit.

All: **Amen**

Sign of Peace

Leader: Let us conclude our celebrations by offering one another a sign of peace.

Blessing for the Book of Life

The *Book of Life* should be blessed when it is used for the first time. The blessing praises God for the people whose memory is honoured in this book.

An appropriate time to bless the *Book of Life* during the Eucharistic celebration is after the homily. Holy water may be used to bless it.

The *Book of Life* may be placed in a designated place near the Paschal candle before the Eucharistic celebration. The proclamation of the names of the deceased members may be read at the prayer of the faithful.

Prayer of Blessing *(after the homily)*

Leader: Ever loving and gracious God, we thank You for the gift You gave Your church in the people whose names are inscribed in this *Book of Life*. You called them to be salt of the earth and a light to the world.

In their families and in this parish, they let their lights shine before all so that their good works gave glory to You, and were an example and encouragement for all of us.

As we hold close to our hearts the memory of those who are inscribed in this book, we ask You to bless † this *Book of Life* and to bless those members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada whom we honour in this book.

We ask this blessing through Jesus Christ and through the intercession of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel.

All: **Amen**



Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel – April 26

Opening Hymn

Opening Prayer

Leader: Loving God, You know that our thoughts on earth are full of fear and uncertainty; through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, from whom Your Son took flesh and blood, send us the Spirit of Counsel to teach us how to know Your will and to guide us in all we do.

Grant this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Gospel Acclamation

Leader: Alleluia. Jesus manifested His glory and His disciples believed in Him. Alleluia. *[use only if sung]*

Our Lady gave herself wholeheartedly to God's loving plan. The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

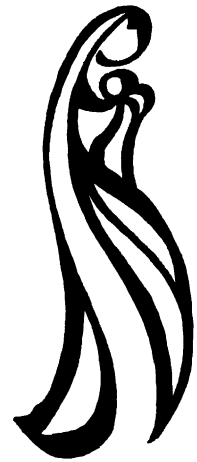
All: **It is right and just.**

Prayer after Communion:

Leader: Ever present God, we have shared in Your mysteries on this memorial of Our Lady, Mother of Good Counsel. Grant that we may learn what is pleasing to You, and receive salvation from Jesus Christ, whom you gave to us as our Wonderful Counsellor through the cooperation of the Blessed Mother.

All: **Amen**

Closing Hymn



Installation of Spiritual Advisor

[diocesan/provincial/national]

The installation is done by the bishop, the retiring spiritual advisor, or the League president. It could be done at the end of a League Eucharistic celebration, before the final blessing, when the spiritual advisor assumes his or her role at the first meeting they attend.

It would be appropriate to give a spiritual advisor's pin at this time as a symbol of the role.

Leader: N..., you have been invited to serve the [parish of/diocese of/province of/national church in Canada] as spiritual advisor for the [parish/diocesan/provincial/national] council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada.

May you be inspired by the Holy Spirit in offering support, encouragement and guidance to the officers and members of the League.

The Catholic Women's League of Canada is an important work in the mission of Christ's church in Canada. May your collaboration in League activities bring growth and blessing to the members and their communities.

Creator God, sustain all CWL spiritual advisors with Your divine grace and grant them peace and joy in serving You. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ through the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

All: **Amen**

Rite of Election of Officers

The president remains in the chair to preside over the convention which is still in session. At the request of the chairperson, the chairperson of elections provides a brief overview of the elections procedure, introduces the candidates for office and invites them to come forward.

Instruction

Chairperson: Members of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada:
The moment has arrived at this convention to elect the officers who will serve this organization for the next two years.
The election process will take place in the context of a prayer service.
In the community of disciples, Jesus reminds us that authority is a call to serve: “The greatest among you must become the slave of all, and servant of all.”
Several members have represented themselves to serve on the [name appropriate level] executive of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada. Those who will be elected to office will be called upon to unite themselves in a special way to Christ, the servant of all.

Prayer

Spiritual Advisor: Jesus, our Redeemer, You promised that You would be present with those who gather in Your name.
Show us the ones You have chosen to lead The Catholic Women’s League of Canada at the [name appropriate] level.
Help us to receive Your choice with trust and faith.
All praise and glory to You, God, through Jesus Christ, in the love of Your Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Elections Process

At the time of election, the chairperson calls for silence and invites all members to pray during this silence, in their hearts, for one another and for the League.

Following the voting procedure for each office, the chairperson of elections hands the chairperson the voting results and the chairperson declares the new officer elected.



Concluding Rite

Chairperson: Let us listen to the instruction of Jesus for us, as recorded in the Gospel of John: (John 13:12–17)

Following the election, the chairperson calls those who have been elected to come forward and be introduced, each accompanied by her (name appropriate level) spiritual advisor or bishop, if in attendance. They are invited to face the assembly.

Immediate

Past President: When Jesus had washed their feet and put on His clothes again, He went back to the table. “Do you understand,” He said, “what I have done to you?”

You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.

I tell you most solemnly, no servant is greater than the master, no messenger is greater than the One who has been sent.”

The spiritual advisor invites the members of the assembly to extend their right hands towards the newly-elected officers, in silence and prays. (The hand of the spiritual advisor may be placed on the shoulder of the president).

Spiritual Advisor: Creator God, we extend our hands toward these, Your servants, seeking Your gifts of unity and peace.
Through Your Spirit, You prompted each one to offer herself for the service of the League at the [name appropriate] level.

May those chosen to lead, and those who offered themselves so generously, be filled with gratitude and praise for the gift of Your Spirit, the gift of Your church, the gift of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada and the gift of each one present here.
We ask this through Christ, our Redeemer.

All: **Amen**

Sign of Peace

Spiritual Advisor: Let us conclude by offering one another a sign of peace.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the elected officers go to the head table to be recognized.

MISCELLANEOUS

Order of Procession – National Convention Example

CWL Procession Protocol

Order of Flag Procession (15 flags – flag stands and poles required)

Led by the Canadian flag, the provincial presidents process to the front of the church and take their places in a row across the front of the altar, from left to right, with the Canadian flag on the far left and the CWL flag on the far right.

- Canadian flag - carried by the Military Ordinariate Provincial President
- Flag of host province
- Ontario
- Quebec
- Nova Scotia
- New Brunswick
- Manitoba
- British Columbia
- Prince Edward Island
- Saskatchewan
- Alberta Mackenzie
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Northwest Territories – to be designated by Alberta Mackenzie Provincial President
- Yukon Territory – to be designated by B.C. & Yukon Provincial President
- Nunavut Territory – to be designated by Manitoba Provincial President
- CWL flag – carried by the national president



Once the procession is complete, flag bearers will lift/raise their flags in unison for the singing of “O Canada.” At the conclusion of the anthem, flag bearers will lower their flags together, place them in the stands, and then take their assigned pews. (No flag will be higher than the Canadian flag). The Canadian flag is placed in the stand on the far left with the CWL flag on the right.

The assigned pews are as follows (may vary depending on the size of the pews):

- Dignitaries/guests: pew 1 – left
- Honorary life members: pews 2 and 3 – left
- Extra pews as needed for life members: pews 4,5,6 – left
- National president: pew 1 – right
- National president-elect: pew 1 – right
- National past president: pew 1 – right
- National secretary-treasurer: pew 1 – right
- National vice-presidents (2): pew 2 - right
- National chairpersons of standing committees: pews 2 and 3 – right
- Provincial presidents: pews 4 and 5 – right

After the president enters her pew, there is a short pause of silence to indicate that the CWL procession is complete. The Eucharistic celebration is ready to begin.

The commentator introduces the gathering hymn, familiar to all members, and invites the congregation to participate.

Eucharistic Celebration

Liturgical Procession

- Cross bearer and acolytes
- Altar servers
- *Book of the Gospels* – (not always processed in, it is a local custom)
- Clergy (sit in assigned pews)
- Presider

The convention committee chairperson invites everyone to be seated following the procession. The host diocesan president calls forth the dignitaries who will bring greetings.

Host Spiritual Advisor
Provincial President (if she is not the host)
National Spiritual Advisor
Mayor of City

Provincial Government Representative
Federal Government Representative
State Deputy Knights of Columbus
Response from the National President

Order of Recessional

- Cross bearer and acolytes
- Altar servers
- All clergy
- Presider

After the closing Eucharistic celebration, the flags are returned to the secretariat office for return shipping to national office.

(Guide to Hosting a National Convention)