



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

MEMO

DATE: September 24, 2021

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 (on request)

I was so pleased to be given this standing committee and to have the opportunity to share spiritual development with League sisters.

What sets the League apart from other women's groups, from other Catholic groups? It is the combination of faith, service and social justice. Following this three-fold theme, councils are encouraged to have one-third of each meeting devoted to spiritual development. Leaders in the parish council need to be women of prayer, bring their planning to God and trust that God will work through them.

Having come through the COVID-19 pandemic, you and your parish council members may have been separated from each other. Even if you could meet electronically, you have not been able to 'touch' each other. To help guide you as your councils come back to each other, to meet in person, ask yourself these questions:

- What spiritual programs give your council comfort; that you feel is your identity?
- What spiritual programs can you add in or change to bring new life to your prayer time?

To invigorate councils, members need a combination of both; the comfortable and the innovative, the traditional and the new. Form a small committee in your council to help you (from members with years of experience and new members), ask for their ideas and brainstorm. All ideas are welcome! There are many resources available, including on the national website, which has many League-focused prayers. Your committee of diverse members may also have other resources.

The implementation committee's spiritual formation working group is releasing a prayer workshop later this fall. I have participated in an earlier version of this workshop. It has valuable information and ideas, and I am sure parish councils will benefit from this workshop. I thank these women for their work on our behalf.

Another consideration to help members grow in their spiritual life and give other opportunities to gather as a parish might be hosting a book study. May I suggest *33 Days to Morning Glory: A Do-It-Yourself Retreat In Preparation for Marian Consecration?* The book, written by Fr. Michael E. Gaitley, MIC, is a study inspired and guided by four giants of Marian spirituality—St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta and Blessed John Paul II. Another book along the same line that would be a good study before the close of the Year of St. Joseph is *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father*, written by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC. Readers' guides for both are available. I have participated in both studies and benefitted from the consecration. Consider making a reading schedule if 33 days does not work for you.

You may wish to consider other resources devoted to St. Joseph before the end of the Year of St. Joseph, which can be found at ccb.ca/evangelization-catechesis-catholic-education/celebrating-the-year-of-saint-joseph/.

Prayer to St. Joseph

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace,
mercy and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

(Libreria Editrice Vaticana)