

FAITH, SERVICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

In 2021, The Catholic Women's League of Canada underwent a strategic renewal. The League reviewed the existing standing committees and reduced them to three to align with core values of faith, service and social justice.

The League's purpose is "uniting Catholic women to grow in faith, and to promote social justice through service to the church, Canada and the world." Through the core values of faith, service and social justice, members are called to live the Mission Statement to "grow in faith, and to witness to the love of God through ministry and service."

The envisioned future of the League is that through the work of these three standing committees, "The Catholic Women's League of Canada will become an inclusive and engaged community of Catholic women inspired by faith." The members will be vital participants in the church, valued partners for social justice, respected advocates at all government levels and connected to the world.

Faith (Hearts in Prayer)

"Uniting Catholic Women to Grow in Faith"



Spiritual development is the essence of the Catholic Women's League. The League was established in 1920 as a lay organization of Catholic women who worked and advocated for social justice but who also valued their spiritual development. The League was officially recognized by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as a lay association of women in 1948.

Councils at all levels are encouraged to provide opportunities for members to experience spiritual growth through:

- ❖ Prayer: communal and individual (meaningful liturgies, spiritual programs, retreats, days of reflection, prayer with scripture)
- ❖ Recognizing the sanctity of life: "Respect for life and the dignity of the human person extends also to all God's creation, which is called to join with us in praising God" (St. Pope John Paul II, World Day of Peace Message, 1990). Members are called to be people of life (from conception to natural death) and for all life at all times.
- ❖ Study of Catholic teachings (papal documents, courses, programs, guest speakers, workshops, videos, subscriptions to Catholic newspapers, periodicals and other publications)
- ❖ Awareness of the role of women in the church (theology of all creation, call to evangelization, involvement in lay liturgical ministries, support of the missionary work of the church)
- ❖ Encouraging vocations (supporting parish priests, formation programs for young women and men, youth ministries)
- ❖ Ecumenism and interfaith endeavours (Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, World Day of Prayer)
- ❖ Study and implement the action plans of adopted resolutions that pertain to faith and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (pro-life legislation, reproductive technology, euthanasia); circulating information that enhances church teachings.

Service (Hands That Share) “Service to the Church, Canada and the World”

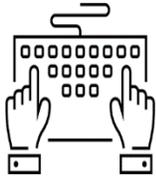


“Just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mt. 20:25). The Catholic Women’s League of Canada and its members provide service to those in need, their parish, their local community, the country and the world. The League Prayer includes the words, “... teach us to share with others at home and abroad...” The League is known and valued for this service. Individuals and councils address the corporal works of mercy.

Through service, members are encouraged to:

- ❖ Provide/coordinate volunteer activities/projects of the council in service of members, the parish or the community
- ❖ Develop services to help in the areas of homelessness, human trafficking, poverty, bullying, racism, etc.
- ❖ Support food banks and soup kitchens, serve funeral receptions
- ❖ Invite guest speakers to educate members about charitable needs in the local community, the country and abroad
- ❖ Educate members about issues relating to restrictions to providing service such as summer jobs applications, criteria restrictions for peaceful witnessing
- ❖ Study and implement the action plans of adopted resolutions that pertain to service

Social Justice (Minds That Dare) “Actively Involved in Society”



“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” Luke 4:18,19

In its envisioned future, The Catholic Women’s League of Canada sets out to be a respected advocate at all government levels. Social justice, as one of the three fundamental core values, is critical in supporting this endeavour and is vital to accomplishing several Objects of the League. Exemplifying the Christian ideals by upholding and defending Christian education and values, protecting the sanctity of human life, recognizing human dignity of all people and contributing to the understanding and growth of religious freedom are all foundational in achieving social justice. This is the core value that facilitates the League affecting change in areas like policies and legislation within various levels of government.

Through social justice endeavours, members will:

- ❖ Participate in activities that uphold the life and dignity of the human person
- ❖ Be mindful of the poor and vulnerable, show concern for their needs and advocate for their complete inclusion in society
- ❖ Become involved in advocating for the dignity of work and the rights of workers
- ❖ Recognize and uphold the principle that with rights come responsibilities
- ❖ Understand that we are one human family and are called to global solidarity as God’s people
- ❖ Promote peace in parishes, communities and elsewhere
- ❖ Demonstrate care for God’s creation
- ❖ Know the local, provincial and federal government representatives in their areas
- ❖ Keep informed on issues concerning the League
- ❖ Study and implement the action plans of adopted resolutions that pertain to social justice and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (freedom of religion, end-of-life legislation, support for the vulnerable, etc.)
- ❖ Educate members and keep them informed of all relevant social justice issues

Guidelines by Standing Committee Responsibilities per C&B

Responsibility	Current Chairperson	Future Chairperson/Officer
Spiritual growth of members	Spiritual development	Faith
Study of Catholic teachings	Spiritual development	Faith
Role of women in the church	Spiritual development	Faith
Evangelization and mission assistance	Spiritual development	Service
Lay ministries	Spiritual development	Faith
Ecumenism and inter-faith endeavours	Spiritual development	Faith
Recruit members and maintain membership	Organization	Vice-president
Leadership development	Organization	Vice-president
League resource material	Organization	Vice-president
Annual reports	Organization	Vice-president
Life membership	Organization	Vice-president
Marriage and family	Christian family life	Service
Sanctity of life	Christian family life	Faith
Ministry to various	Christian family life	Service
Vocations	Christian family life	Faith
Dignity and rights of persons	Community life	Social justice
Social and economic justice	Community life	Social justice
Refugees, immigration and citizenship	Community life	Service
Development and Peace	Community life	Service
Developing countries	Community life	Service
Catholic education	Education and health	Service
Literacy and continuing education	Education and health	Service
Scholarships and bursaries	Education and health	Service
Wellness and sickness/disease	Education and health	Service
Environment	Education and health	Social justice
Genetics	Education and health	Social justice
<i>The Canadian League</i> magazine	Communications	Secretary
Media for various	Communications	Secretary
Media relations	Communications	Secretary
Pornography	Communications	Service
Research and preparation of resolutions and briefs	Resolutions	Social justice
Study and implementation of resolutions	Resolutions	Social justice
Presentation of resolutions to government	Resolutions	Social justice
Monitor and study legislation	Legislation	Social justice
Preparation of briefs on proposed legislation	Legislation	Social justice
Liaison with pastoral councils	Parish activities	Service
Parish assistance	Parish activities	Service

When in Doubt, Use Graphic Definitions of the Three Standing Committees



Faith
(hearts in prayer)



Service
(hands that share)



Social Justice
(minds that dare)