

# The Blue and Gold

## Summer 2023



Newsletter of the  
Pembroke Diocesan Council of  
The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
2023 Summer Conventions Supplement

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**Editor's Notes:** Welcome to this 2023 Summer Conventions Supplement of *The Blue and Gold* offering you highlights of the two summer conventions. Conventions are far more than business sessions. They are a whole gamut of experiences from the journey there, to each new encounter and experience along the way. Enjoy your read and perhaps next year, you might consider attending the provincial convention in Sudbury July 07-10, 2024 or the national convention in Saskatoon August 11 – 14, 2024.

## Ontario Provincial Convention 2023, Cornwall

Eight delegates from Pembroke Diocese registered for the Ontario Provincial Council 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention held in Cornwall July 8-12, 2023. In total, 206 delegates and guests were in attendance.

It was an ending of sorts for host Diocesan Council Alexandria -Cornwall. On June 10, 2023 Alexandria-Cornwall Diocesan Council officially amalgamated with the Ottawa Diocesan Council to form the new Ottawa-Cornwall Diocesan Council. The Alexandria-Cornwall team did an amazing job in its last official capacity as a Diocesan Council. The hospitality and warm greetings we all received made the convention one to remember.



Pembroke Diocesan delegates on banquet night. Seated in front: Pat Weller, Louise Rockburn, Joan Lemay. Standing: President Annette Chaplin, Bev Drouin, Fr. Michael Coyne, Donna Provost, Irene Perrault, and Lauralee Sopczak.

Annette, Donna, and Pat arrived on the Saturday to take in the evening “Mini Tattoo Dinner and Show”. The show included a local group of Highland Dancers and bag piper, all

highlighting the strong Scottish heritage within Alexandria-Cornwall Diocese. Those in attendance were encouraged to wear their favourite tartan, kilt, or plaid.

Sunday morning and early afternoon events for Annette involved a provincial council executive meeting. For Donna and Pat, it meant a bus tour of The Lost Villages of the St. Lawrence. The tour travelled along the St. Lawrence River where a number of villages had once stood until the St. Lawrence Seaway was built and flooded the land. Many of the buildings and structures that could be moved were relocated, some were burned, some were left to be flooded, and some structures were preserved at the newly established Upper Canada Village. Most of the flooded settlements were located on the Canadian side of the river. The tour guide, Jim Brownell, current President of The Lost Villages Historical Society, had an amazing bank of information on each of the villages, what houses had been moved, where they were relocated, and ongoing work to remember the lost communities. Jim frequently mentioned Fran LaFlamme, the first president of The Lost Villages Historical Society and her dedicated work in preserving this history. Donna and Pat have her name deeply embedded in their memories from the innumerable times her name was mentioned.

The convention's opening mass was celebrated at St. Andrew Church, located in the little hamlet of St. Andrew's West about 10 minutes north of Cornwall. Opening ceremonies followed the mass where we were greeted by local dignitaries including the local MPP Nolan Quinn and Cornwall Mayor Justin Towndale, both of whom were raised in St. Andrew Parish and whose mothers and other family relations have been long standing CWL members.

Provincial President Linda Squarzolo's symbol, the bee, decorated the halls and rooms of the convention site, the Cornwall Civic Complex. The hotel accommodation was in a separate location from the convention site. However, it was an easy drive from the various hotels and the host committee had buses running back and forth between the hotels and convention site to facilitate trouble free transportation for delegates who had arrived by train or plane or who did not wish to drive their own vehicle.



A beautiful "bee" themed quilted wall hanging gracing one of the podiums.

Fr. Eugene O'Reilly, C.Ss.R. was guest speaker for the Monday session. His humour and quick wit masked his more serious message about not letting the past darken our lives or fear of the future prevent us from connecting and living fully within the present. He shared a prayer with delegates:

## Prayer to Live in the Present

I spend so much time reliving yesterday or  
anticipating tomorrow  
that I lose sight of the only time that is really  
mine...THE PRESENT.

Remind me that THE PAST... with its successes  
and failures...is over.

I can make amends where I have hurt others or  
let them down,  
but I cannot undo what has been done.

THE FUTURE is yet to be had, eagerness or  
apprehension will not hasten it,  
or postpone it.

You give me TODAY, one minute at a time.  
That's all I have...all that I ever will.

Give me the faith that knows each moment  
contains exactly what is best for me.

Give me the hope that trusts you enough to  
forget past sins and future trials.

Give me the love that makes each minute of  
life an anticipation of eternity with you.

Amen.

This year all dioceses dined together at the Civic Complex for the Monday night diocesan dinners. After dinner, each diocese performed a skit of its own creation. After these performances, we were entertained by the band "Fridge Full of Empties". Their lead singer is the son of Mary Ellen Villeneuve, a Life Member from Alexandria-Cornwall.

On Tuesday afternoon, we were tasked with choosing four short workshops from over twenty. They ranged from writing personal letters to using Power Point. Every workshop was directly related to something that we, as CWL members, could benefit from knowing about. Workshops were facilitated by either provincial

officers or diocesan presidents. Annette presented a workshop on Travelling Mary.

From Sunday to Wednesday, mass was celebrated by Bishop Dowd and assisted by all Diocesan and Parish Spiritual Advisors in attendance including Fr. Michael Coyne. Bishop Dowd has a gift of being able to give meaning and context to the Gospels and readings in his homilies. At the opening mass, in reflecting on the Gospel of Mathew, he spoke of the yoke and its burden. When the yoke is balanced, the burden is light. When CWL members all work together as one body, our challenges are easier to bear.

National President Fran Lucas updated delegates with news of her activities over the past year including the successful in-person meeting with representatives of the federal government in Ottawa in February of this year. (See *The Canadian League* Spring 2023 issue for more details on the visit and resolutions discussed.) She also mentioned her recent trip to Italy for the WUCWO general assembly and the great support Pope Francis offered for women's participation in the synodal church. The following are some statistics Fran shared with us for the current year's membership:

63572 members

333 Life Members

15 Honourary Life Members

33 Dioceses

1097 parish councils.

The Ontario Provincial Council gifted its second installment of \$5000 to the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund established by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB). Bishop Dowd accepted the cheque on behalf of the CCCB.

Four new Life Members from Ontario were introduced and received a blessing from Bishop

Dowd. They are Ann D'Sousa (Toronto), Betsy Currier (Sault Ste Marie), Rebecca McCarrell (London) and Joan Schurter (Hamilton).

**Resolution ON.23.01 To Establish a Sustained Universal Intermittent Catheter Coverage** gifted by the Toronto Diocesan Council and **Resolution ON.23.02 To Add Compassionate Community Care to the National Voluntary Fund** gifted by London Diocesan Council were both brought to the floor of the convention, voted on, and passed. **Resolution ON.23.01** will stay in Ontario. The provincial delegation will bring this to Queen's Park during their next visit. **Resolution ON.23.02** moved forward for consideration at the National Convention in St. John, New Brunswick.

The instructed vote involving a change in the Constitution and Bylaws (2013) to allow virtual meetings to be held when circumstances preclude meeting in person passed with all voting delegates voting yes. Since this is a national issue, the provincial president will take this result to the national convention where a similar vote will be taken by voting delegates there.

The host council chose Shalom House for its collection. It is located in Alexandria and is the only retreat centre in the diocese of Ottawa-Cornwall. It also serves as a parish hall and diocesan center. The collection amounted to \$1287.

The Social Justice Award for 2023 was presented to Joanne Belanger from St. James the Minor Parish in Kingston Diocese.

One Bishop Bernard F. Pappin Memorial Fund bursary was awarded to a seminarian this year.

## **National Annual Meeting of Members 2023 St. John, New Brunswick**

Diocesan President Annette Chaplin and Diocesan Administrative Assistant and Life Member Bev Drouin had the opportunity of attending the National Annual Meeting of Members in St. John. This year, in person attendance was limited to voting and accredited members and invited guests. However, all CWL members were invited to register to view online streaming of the business sessions on August 14 and 15. Donna Provost and Pat Weller joined in via live streaming for these on the Monday and Tuesday. In total, 119 Voting and Accredited members were in attendance in person and 178 members joined virtually.

All of the items within the agenda of the meeting were framed by a spiritual dimension including the New Life Members Commissioning, the Deceased Members and Spiritual Advisors Memorial Service, the Ceremony to Archive Resolutions and Position Papers, and the Rite of Election of National Officers. There were also opening and closing prayers for the business sessions and a celebration of the Eucharist each day.

**Resolution 2023.01 Combating Textile Waste in Canada** was passed. Its aim is to urge the federal government to establish new programs and expand established subsidies to reduce textile waste in Canada. From figures supporting the Resolution's brief, the fashion industry adds 10% green house gas emissions worldwide and synthetic textiles produce 35% of all micro plastics in the ocean. (Full text of resolution available on [cwl.ca](http://cwl.ca)).

Ontario's **Resolution ON.23.02** was not brought to the floor for consideration. One of the criteria for supporting an organization with the National



Voluntary Fund requires at least three years of financial records to be available for review. Since Compassionate Care Canada does not yet have three years of operation, it was ineligible. This does not mean it is not a viable or worthy organization to support. It works closely with Euthanasia Protection Coalition and is an important organization in the fight against euthanasia.

The Instructed Vote received a unanimous Yes from voting delegates so virtual meetings when circumstances preclude meeting in person will now be written into the Constitution and Bylaws. It is expected that National Office will be printing the revised Constitution and Bylaws in booklet form in the upcoming months now that all of the current amendments have been addressed.

Since this was the end of the current two year term, elections were held for a new national executive. The results are as follows:

President: Shari Guinta

Vice-President: Betty Colaneri

Secretary-Treasurer: Dorothy Johansen

Standing Committee Chairs:

Faith : Roland Chernichan

Service: Joline Belliveau

Social Justice : Glenda Carson

Past President: Fran Lucas

National Spiritual Advisor: Most Rev. Wayne Lobsinger Auxiliary Bishop of Hamilton (5 year appointment)

National President Shari Guinta will formally announce her new national theme in January 2024 at which time the logo and prayer will be shared with members across the country. Until then, *Catholic and Living It!* will continue to inspire members with its call to live out our lives fully as members of the Catholic Church.



Ontario delegates at National AMM.



Bev (3<sup>rd</sup> from left sitting) at Life Members Lunch.



New National Executive – Officers, Spiritual Advisor and Provincial Presidents.



Annette having fun with some new friends.

## Upcoming Events

Sat. Sept. 23, 2023 **Diocesan Spiritual Day of Reflection** at Our Lady of Fatima Parish Hall and Church, Renfrew. Morning session will focus on "Indigenous Spirituality" with Experiential Drumming by women from Bonnechere Inodewizin Abinodjinish Kikinamagan (BIAK) and a powerpoint presentation by Dr. Emilie Pigeon, Assistant Professor of History at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College "Comparing Ojibway and Catholic Spiritualities". The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Service for Deceased Members will follow after lunch. Registration and refreshments begin at 9:30. Bring your own lunch. Morning refreshments and soup at lunch time will be provided by Our Lady of Fatima CWL. Day concludes at 2:30. Event is free and open to all women in the diocese. Bring a friend. Register by calling Margaret Maloney at 613-4332-6276 or email Margaret at maloneym1961@gmail.com.

Sat. Oct. 28, 2023 **Fall Diocesan Meeting** at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish Hall, Petawawa. Topics of interest will include a presentation on current activities in Development and Peace, information on **Resolution 2023.01 Combating Textile Waste in Canada**, and a workshop on leadership highlighting the election procedure with the new streamlined structure of Faith, Service, and Social Justice. A presentation of the Budget for the upcoming year by the Diocesan Treasurer, Julie Mallory, and reports from executive and Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Michael Coyne will also be on the agenda.

Reminder to all parish councils to submit articles and photos of interest for upcoming issues of *The Blue and Gold*. Items of interest will also be needed for the February 2024 *ON-Line* newsletter in which Pembroke Diocese will be highlighted. Please send to Pat Weller, Diocesan Communications Chair at [paweller@nrtco.net](mailto:paweller@nrtco.net).

**CATHOLIC**  
and **LIVING IT!**