



**THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA
SAULT STE. MARIE DIOCESAN COUNCIL
Spiritual Development Chairperson**

Directive # 2

February 14, 2021

To: Parish Council Spiritual Development Chairpersons

Cc: SSM Diocesan Executive, Parish Council Presidents, Provincial Spiritual Development Chair

Warm winter greetings in this month of love,

A polar vortex has been delivering on its promise of frigid, wintry weather and we are anxiously anticipating a regionalized approach to lifting the restrictions on our daily living routines.

Variants have arrived, vaccines are here and we hold on to the hope of being reunited with our families and friends.

Our celebration of weekly Mass has evolved to include live streaming and Sacramental Communion. We have learned to live one day at a time, and to embrace each and every encounter with each other as a gift – with grace.



As I reviewed the spiritual development annual reports, I was inspired and my heart was reassured that members have found ways to continue to connect and pray and serve during these times of physical isolation to spread love.

Pope Francis, in his recent announcement, has now formally recognized and affirmed the role of women serving in ministries with a change in Canon law in reference to “lay person”. You continue to serve in your parishes and councils with faith, compassion, courage and leadership.

As we prepare to enter the season of Lent this year, I am mindful that it was at this time last year the pandemic began to unfold; it’s full impact yet to be revealed. For many, this past year has in itself become a time of renewal; in our families, our homes and spiritual journey.

We have learned to let go, prioritize, embrace new ways, show love differently and let God.



During Lent we are invited to pray, give, fast and prepare so that our hearts are ready to welcome the risen Jesus.

It is a season of love! Pope Francis in his message for Lent 2021 has called on the faithful to “renew our faith, draw from the living waters of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God.” Visit www.vaticannews.va for his full message.

Ash Wednesday on February 17, 2021 marks the beginning of Lent and we are offered a new way to celebrate in our own home this year, where we may be unable to participate in limited capacity or unavailable parish celebrations due to ongoing pandemic considerations.

Visit the Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie website www.dioceseofsaultstemarie.org or your parish website for more information. In your prayerful preparations this year, you may wish to learn more about the role of women in the church, or seek out new ways to incorporate daily prayer. The daily readings may be an easy way to begin if you are unable to participate in daily Mass.

Father, help me to see this holy season as a time of spiritual renewal, rather than a time of deprivation. Motivate me to reach a new level of experiencing your grace. AMEN.



You're Invited! *We are gathering together ... invite a friend!*

A friendly reminder to plan to attend a virtual **Afternoon of Spiritual Reflection** being held on **Sunday February 21, 2021 at 1:15 pm** organized by Kathleen Niro, Sudbury Regional Chairperson, CWL Member-Our Lady of Hope Council, and facilitated by Sudbury Regional Spiritual Advisor Ruth-Anne Ingram; CWL Member-St. Patrick Council and Associate of The Sisters of St. Joseph of Sault Ste. Marie. For more information and to obtain the meeting link please visit www.ssmcwl.ca . Hope to see you at our first gathering as a diocese since the start of the pandemic.



Giving during Lent may look different this year as the need is great right here in our own communities. So many of our members are lending their helping hands and support at local community food banks and missions and in parishes to provide outreach and support to our neighbours during these times of physical and social isolation – a witness to our living faith.

Fasting can take many forms – doing without a favourite treat or indulgence, or taking up a new or different approach to living out our faith may result in the greatest grace. Let's not be afraid to add a new habit, prune the bad habits and seek an encounter to grow!



Perhaps our journey of the heart this year will be likened to outcome of the gentle potter – who adds water and life, adjusting the recipe, applying effort and gentle nudging, while encouraging growth and change to reveal a likeness - the work of his hands.

We are all a work in progress....and LOVE is a key ingredient!
We are called to serve.

“The encounter with Jesus Christ happens in daily life, and in one’s personal search in prayer, in the wise reading of the signs of the times (Mt 24:32, Lk 21:29) and in the midst of our brothers and sisters (Mt. 25:31-46, Lk 10:25-37)”

Taken from: A Year with Pope Francis – Daily reflections from his writings as the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina and during his first year as pope.

With love and prayers,

Patricia Clizia

SSM Diocesan 1st Vice President
Spiritual Development Chairperson