

St. Patrick's CWL Council
Napanee, Ontario
Celebrating the Past and Embracing the Future
February 2018

At the beginning of a new year it is always good to reflect on the past. Although each year is filled with special events and celebrations, 2018 will be remembered in a special way by CWL members and by all St. Patrick's parishioners. On October 14, 2018, after a lengthy planning phase spear-headed by our pastor, Rev. Marek Chochrek and the building committee, followed by the construction phase, the official opening and blessing of St. Patrick's Parish Centre by the Most Rev. Brendan O'Brien, became a reality. This new facility has special significance for our CWL council. A bright new kitchen adjoining the hall, provides a beautiful open, accessible space for funeral luncheons and parish functions especially the annual Fall Bazaar!

During the construction phase the CWL carried on with their many commitments and events. Homelessness was a focus this past year in the League. Many churches and organizations in Napanee support the good work of the Morningstar Relief Mission as they feed and clothe many who have no place to call home. CWL members volunteer weekly in different capacities. In February 2018, Margie Peters, then CWL President and myself met with both Kevin Alkenbrack, from Morningstar Relief Mission and NDSS Vice-Principal, Shannon Tyner to gain better insight into this issue. The result of these meetings was the Backpack Project for Homeless Youth. Members and parishioners responded with donations of toiletries and personal items that would fit into backpacks. Several backpacks were then delivered to our local high school and to the Morningstar Mission.

The sanctity of life from conception through to death is integral to our faith. Canadians need access to fully funded palliative care. The 12

hours for Palliative Care took place on May 9, 2018. Special prayers were made available and the rosary was recited each hour during Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Many participated in this important day of prayer as we strive for palliative care to become part of our universal health care.

In addition, receptions were provided for both First Holy Communion in the spring and Confirmation. The Grand Opening in October was followed by the Annual Fall Bazaar, the first in our new bright hall. It was well attended and very busy. These women never stop!!

Again in December the most vulnerable members of our community were once more a focus through the Diocesan Warmth and Comfort Initiative. Several bags of peanut butter, crackers, gloves and mitts were collected and delivered to Morningstar Mission. On February 23rd, *The Coldest Night of the Year* walk takes place. St. Pat's parish has a team, and all are CWL members. Many throughout Canada will walk to raise awareness and funds for those in need.

"Amen I say to you, whatever you do for one of these least of my brother of mine, you do for me." Matthew 25:40

I am so very proud of the hard work and dedication of the many CWL members who work tirelessly in support of our parish, our diocese and our country, a legacy of faith passed down from generations of caring women sharing their gifts generation after generation. This year marks the 95th Anniversary of St. Patrick's Catholic Women's League. Plans are being made now to celebrate this important milestone in June. "*Care for Our Common Home*", the CWL theme for this year, provides new challenges, as we as a council, and in our homes, strive to reduce our carbon footprint and remember that we are all stewards of God's creation.

The CWL as an organization understands and has accepted change as an opportunity for growth. Change always comes with challenges. Through the hard work of National League members, with input from all levels, a strategic plan has been created and now, the implementation phase begins. We pray these strong women will be guided in their work and the CWL will emerge renewed and invigorated, as we embrace the future together.

Marilyn Murray
President, St. Patrick's CWL