



# The Catholic Women's League of Canada B.C. & Yukon Provincial Council

*National Theme: Ignite your Passion, Empower His Mission*

*Convention Theme: Tea by the Sea*

79th Provincial Convention June 17-21, 2026, Sidney, BC

*Mary Winspear Centre & St. Elizabeth's Church, Sidney, BC*

## CONVENTION GUEST SPEAKERS



**Belinda Boyd** is a passionate Vincentian and has served for 20+ years. She is currently the President of the Region of BC & Yukon for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and past president in her local conference of St. Joseph the Worker in Richmond, BC. She is blessed to be able to support communities across the province through the many good works of conferences and councils in the meeting the great needs of our neighbours with love, respect, justice, hope and joy. Belinda is a professional consultant in the field of public engagement and quality improvement. In her work Belinda works with entities to strategize, plan and implement engagement processes ensuring the voice of those most impacted by changes or decisions are heard.



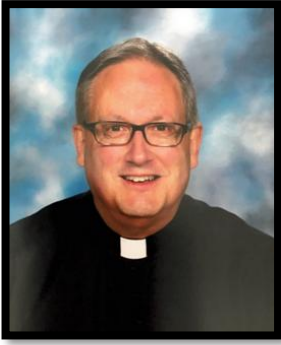
**Giancarlo Brotto** is a globally recognized thought leader and strategist, driven by a mission to help communities thrive in an AI-driven world while staying grounded in Catholic values. With over 20 years of experience at the intersection of education, technology, and leadership, Giancarlo has advised governments, global organizations, and faith-based communities on adopting AI responsibly. Inspired by Vatican initiatives like the Rome Call for AI Ethics, he ensures his work reflects the Church's call for ethical technology that uplifts humanity. Through PAVE Edu, Giancarlo equips families, leaders, and organizations with strategies to integrate AI in ways that honor community, stewardship, and care for creation. His vision is clear: with faith as our guide, we can use technology to build a more compassionate and just world.



**Betty Colaneri** joined the Catholic Women's League in 1986 and has served on every level of the League. We are now honoured to have her serve as our national president. Betty is also the marketing manager, event planner and creative consultant for their family business. Colaneri Wines, in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Over the years, Betty has given many presentations and said that her 39 years in the League have been a spiritually enriching and rewarding experience filled with many blessings. She feels that the best part of being in the League is having sisters all across Canada walking with her on her spiritual journey to pray with in times of joy or to help carry the cross in times of sorrow. She will bring her passion for the League to our provincial convention.



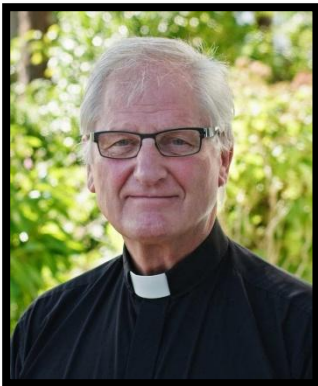
**Barbara Dowding** is a dedicated leader with over thirty years of service to the Archdiocese of Vancouver, holding key roles such as Special Assistant to the Archbishop, Chancellor, and Director of Stewardship. She has also contributed significantly as a volunteer, including serving as Regional Vice President for North America with the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations and as National President of the Catholic Women's League of Canada. Recognized with the Papal Benemerenti Medal, Barbara continues to advocate for feminine leadership in the Church and remains actively involved in her community and family life. A passionate supporter and active participant in the recent Synod of Bishops, Barbara continues to serve as a mentor, advisor and connector for all things synodal in harmony with our bishop and the Universal Church.



**Fr. John Garden** has been the Spiritual Advisor for the BC & Yukon Provincial Council for the past three years. He is the youngest of ten children of the late Elroy and Elda Garden. His formative years were lived in Prince George, B.C., and White Rock, B.C. Prior to entering seminary and theological formation, he obtained a Bachelor of Education degree from U.B.C. (Vancouver, BC) and subsequently taught at Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Prince George and the Vancouver Archdiocese. He then entered seminary and theological formation at St. Joseph's Seminary and Newman Theological College (Edmonton, AB) where he obtained a Master of Divinity degree. Fr. John was ordained to the ministerial priesthood on June 15, 2004, by Most Rev. Gerald Wiesner, OMI. After ordination, he completed graduate diplomas in ethics and canon law from St. Paul University (Ottawa, ON), and a Master of Education (Counselling Specialization) degree from U.N.B.C. (Prince George, BC). He presently serves in the Diocese of Prince George as Chancellor, counselling therapist, and pastor of a parish with a parochial elementary school.



**Kerri Isham** is a dedicated, passionate and community-oriented advocate who has been nominated twice for the Nanaimo Women of Influence. She created a grass-roots organization called Nanaimo Women Helping Women in October 2021. They help women flee intimate partner violence as well as women who are transitioning from unhoused to housed. During her presentation, she would love to share what her group of 1000+ women have accomplished in the past 4.5 years. She will talk about the organizations they support, what they offer to clients, group collaborations, who they are currently in partnerships with, as well as current fundraising



**Father Larry Lynn** is Pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Coquitlam. He was married and has brought up his three children in the French language and now is blessed with five grandchildren who all live in Montreal, Québec. Father Larry is a very late vocation, being ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Miller December 3, 2015, at sixty-six years of age. He considers himself blessed beyond measure to have received his calling and for having had the sense to submit to it. Having enjoyed a long career as an award-winning cinematographer, Father Larry also directed several documentary films, including "Kids in Jail" for the National Film Board and "In the Spirit of Reconciliation" about the Residential Schools in the Northwest Territories. Father Larry is also the Pro-life Chaplain for the Archdiocese of Vancouver, and being extremely grateful for his own life, he promotes the dignity of the human person and the awesomeness of God's creation wherever he finds himself.



**Michelle Robertson:** has worked with Development & Peace-Caritas Canada for over thirty years. With a background in Youth Ministry, Michelle's early involvement with DPCC focused on engaging young people in the work of social justice. In recent years she has been serving as a parish representative as well as on diocesan councils in both the Nelson and Victoria diocese. Michelle has been blessed with the opportunity to visit DPCC partners and projects in Ethiopia, the Philippines and Kenya and has seen first-hand the positive impact these projects have on the lives of the people. Michelle is excited to share with you her passion for DPCC and serving our sisters and brothers in the Global South.