



Communicator

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
BC & Yukon Provincial Council Newsletter

Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call
Witnessing to the Truth



Advent Issue Number 37

"Prepare the Way of the Lord"

This publication is published twice a year and we welcome submissions from parish, diocesan, provincial council members and spiritual advisors. Articles may be submitted to comm@bcyukoncwl.com and will be published on the provincial website www.bcyukoncwl.com or to your personal email upon request to info@bcyukoncwl.com

This publication is not intended to replace communiques or reports but is to share our council events, success stories and milestones with our members throughout British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.

The deadline for the Easter issue "Alleluia He is Risen" of the Communicator is March 15, 2019. Start gathering your news submissions now!

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Message from the President

My dear members of the Catholic Women's League of BC & Yukon, it gives me great pleasure to write to you today via the Communicator. As I look back to our provincial convention in June in Whitehorse and the following elections, I will recall some of the events that have taken place thus far.

First, I want to thank Pat Deppiesse for a well-run election and I thank the members that let their names stand to serve the League. The Holy Spirit was truly at work and we have a wonderful slate of officers in our provincial executive. After five years as, Provincial Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Edwin Kulling handed over the reigns to Fr. David John from the Diocese of Nelson. Our website has been refurbished and I hope that many members will explore it. www.bcyukoncw.com

In August, many of us experienced another great national convention in Winnipeg. It was very exciting for me to sit at the national executive table with clever and dedicated Sisters in the League.

Time flew by and we gathered for our fall meeting in Kelowna at Seton House of Prayer. It was a time of bonding, praying and deliberating. We experienced beautiful weather and held prayers outside, including Father David's spiritual presentation, joined by his friendly black Lab called Ranga. Bob Breene, CEO of the Catholic Health Association of BC explained plans for educational programs for pastoral care outreach visitors in parishes and Life Member Nancy Simms enlightened us on the updates of the *Strategic Plans* for the future of the CWL.



Sylvia Jurys initiated the gifting of the "Mandatory Age Verification -Pornography Hurts postcards" from BC & Yukon Council to national, now available under Resources in the 100 Series on the national website.

Other events that have taken place are the CWL presentation to the seminarians in Mission by Catherine L'Heureux, Spiritual Development Chair; the Life Canada Mini Conference and Gala Dinner in North Vancouver which was attended by Blanca Stead, Christian Family Life Chair; Angelina Stiglich, Vancouver diocesan president and I presented greetings to St. Patrick's Council in Maple Ridge at their 80th Anniversary's High Tea, and in September I attended St. Patrick's Council in Campbell River for their 70th Anniversary.



Edna Lorenzen, President of St. Patrick's CWL Campbell River and Gisela Montague

We mourn the passing of Life Member Marjorie Miller, Vancouver Diocese, Carmen Foucher, Past President of Prince George Diocese, Marie Lucie Schaff, Life Member from Kamloops Diocese; the husband of Life Member Pat Dorigo from Vernon and the husband of Pat Battensby, Life Member from Vancouver Diocese. May their souls rest in peace.

We welcomed Carol Penno as the new Provincial Life Member Liaison who took over from Barbara Jarvis from the Vancouver Diocese.

As we prepare for the season of Advent, I thank God for all the blessings we have received and are receiving every day. May we always search for the truth and be his witnesses, embracing our new provincial theme: "Witnessing to the Truth".

I wish you and your families a blessed Advent Season and a joyful Christmas,

Gisela, BC & Yukon President



Getting to know our new Provincial Spiritual Advisor through his adventures to two conventions and a message from Pope Francis

Fr. David & Ranga's Trip to the CWL Provincial Convention in Whitehorse

Dear Sisters in the League, I thought I would share with you what Ranga and I have been doing over the summer.

Our trip up to Whitehorse was not without incident. We were two days late in leaving so we did a dash up through Alberta and got to the Alaskan Highway early on our second day of driving. It hadn't rained in this area for three weeks, so the ground was firm, and it was easy to turn off the Alaskan Highway and into the bush to find a nice place to camp. Sadly, one night the heavens opened, and it rained and rained and rained. We went to sleep on firm dry ground; in the morning we found ourselves in the middle of a bog! It was at this point that the drive-shaft decided to give up the ghost, or at least, one of the drive-shafts. Eventually good old BCAA came and dragged us out and we limped on up to Whitehorse just in time for the CWL Provincial Convention.

The Convention was impressive. If you think the CWL are just a group of ladies who bake cakes and cater for funerals, then you are missing a big chunk of what they do. At the convention there were people who were passionate about the society they live in and desperately want to shape that society in the same way that Pope Francis wants to create a better world. So, they bake cakes, cater for funerals, do numerous other good works of charity and also raise their heads and look at some of the bigger issues that surround us – this year euthanasia was a particular focus at the convention. The presentations and debates were serious, thoughtful and informed, and the guest speakers were often quite challenging.

On the lighter side, call me a coward, but I was relieved that the night the ladies 'let their hair down' the local bishop called all the priests to his home, so he could talk with us; a hundred CWL ladies partying can strike fear into even the most hardy of priests, and it was quite a party!

The CWL executive – *which included myself* – would meet at 8:30 a.m. each morning, we were then on the go all day, and only once did I get to my room before midnight, so by the end of the convention I was ready for some wilderness! When it was all over, we had to wait another three days for a replacement drive-shaft to arrive in Whitehorse. This left us about three more days before we needed to head out on the long trail home. Accordingly, we only had time for a quick look around the Yukon, but we did briefly get up into the North West Territories. In fact, if I had pushed myself, we could have spent an extra day or two exploring, but all the roads were mud and the weather forecast was calling for more severe rainstorms and having got stuck once I wasn't going to risk it again. We were lashed with rain for most of the way back down the Alaskan Highway but by then we were on a nice, hard, paved road. These were good days: I loved having light for twenty-four hours a day, I was amazed at how few bugs there were, and on our walks Ranga and I did meet a number of bears and a buffalo or two, but generally our return trip was, thankfully, uneventful. 6,400km later and we are home. I wish I had had more time and could have got further north, but in the North West Territories to go on to the next town would often mean a nine or ten-hour drive, and then one would have the same drive to come back! I also wish I had had more time to stop and be still, that is, other than the two days I stopped and was still... up to my axels in mud! I can't wait until August and the CWL National Convention in Winnipeg; I will be fascinated to see how the CWL operates at the national level.

So Much We Don't Want to Know but Need to Know!

From Fr. David – Provincial Spiritual Advisor

My trip to Winnipeg for the CWL *National* Convention was interesting and I think it was fruitful. As I said after the Whitehorse CWL *Provincial* Convention, I am continually impressed by how the leadership in the CWL have a clear focus and a rigour in what they do. If for you the title 'CWL' summons up images of cream teas and jam making, then you are missing out on a gigantic part of what the organisation does.

How much do you know about 'human trafficking' in Canada? The CWL was one of the first organisations that took up the course of human trafficking in Canada and assisted those working with the victims of the trafficking. To be very brief, there are very many children in Canada who go through some sort of crisis in their teenage years. And then there are people who, to make money, will exploit these youngsters; they will befriend them, give them gifts – even drugs – in order to get their trust and confidence, and then they will sell them into prostitution. This is happening in every large city in Canada and the kids – mostly girls but some boys as well – can come from any part of this country. At the national level the CWL have worked hard to bring this issue before politicians for action. Related to this is then many other aspects of child exploitation which are unpleasant even to think about. Child pornography is one. Hopefully this is unimaginable to most people, but it exists, and is even produced in this country. While all pornography leads to a sister or brother of Jesus Christ being reduced to an inanimate form for sexual fantasy, child pornography is particularly abhorrent since it is rarely just voyeurism; child pornography more than any other pornography is not a victimless crime. It was horrid hearing about this, and so it is understandable why much of the media and many politicians shy away from being vocal on this issue, but it is a reality in our country and the CWL are doing a noble job of supporting agencies that try to combat this industry.

At the same time the BC & Yukon section of the CWL was pushing the national leadership to find initiatives to help individuals and institutions fight against physician assisted suicide becoming the norm in end of life care. Again, this is another subject that many of us don't really want to think about, but as a Church we need to address this, and the CWL seems like the right body to do it.

There were other subjects addressed in Winnipeg, including First Nations issues and issues relating to the environment, as well as spirituality and leadership.

While I was in Winnipeg, I also had a chance to spend time with the twenty or so other spiritual advisors who were there. Five of these were bishops, and they gave a very clear signal of how the hierarchy of the Church stands shoulder to shoulder with the CWL leadership in their initiatives.

Don't get me wrong, while the convention made us face many dark areas, the love, faith and enthusiasm of all the participants really lifted us up and made an environment where we could look at such difficult issues in solidarity and hope for a better future. (And there was also the Irish pub next door to the hotel that was a good refuge!)

Pope Francis' Message

Having faced such difficult subjects in Winnipeg, I have to say that it felt like a body blow to come back and hear what had happened within the Catholic Church in Pennsylvania.

Probably like many others, I really cannot get my brain around how this could have been allowed to happen. While some rightly quote St. Paul saying, *"If one member suffers, all suffer together with them"* (1 Cor 12:26), for many of us it will be other words from scripture that come to mind, *"It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble."* (Luke 17:2). But while this comes out of understandable anger, I think what we as a Church need more than anything is humility.

All the dioceses in B.C. and Yukon have 'Safe Environment' policies which are very strict sets of guidelines put in place to ensure the safety of everyone, especially the most vulnerable, and all Church members should be familiar with these. Part of these policies is a procedure to flag up inappropriate behaviour, and this process does not necessitate people going through clergy.

In his letter the Pope talked about getting rid of the culture that let these most "repellent crimes" happen. But they did happen, so we not only have to move forward in a way that is guaranteed as safe for all, but we have to share the grief of those who have been hurt, and as a Church, repent of what we have let happen within our walls.

Pope Francis reminds us that we fight evil with **prayer and fasting**. This is difficult to write as in worldly terms it sounds weak, but we are a people who gather around the symbol of the Cross – the ultimate sign of God letting himself be weak out of love of us, so we should not be frightened of worldly weakness. Again, we go to St. Paul, he tells us that the Lord said to him, *"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me... for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.* (2 Cor 12:9-10). It is only by God's power that we will build the Kingdom of God and drive out such corruption of humanity; and we align ourselves with God's creative power through prayer and through surrendering even our human desires in a belief that everything we need comes from God alone.

Fasting is something that has largely fallen out of our culture, and even abstinence is in decline. I would like to underline the power of the traditional Friday observance of abstinence. When we fast, we are remembering Christ's words, *"One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."* (Matt 4:4); similarly, abstinence is a reminder to us and a sign to others that we are not just creatures of pleasure, rather we are a community that tries to live by the rhythm of faith, and part of this rhythm is to humbly come before God remembering Christ's death on the Cross. I know this is easier for some than others, but let's let ourselves be challenged.

We do not do this just for self-sanctification, we do it in an attempt to build a humble Church that truly grieves for all those youngsters hurt in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Plus, we do it to be a 'counter cultural' sign that says we are a Church that does not accept the whole philosophy of convenience and gratification at the expense of human dignity and, in some parts of our society, even human life.

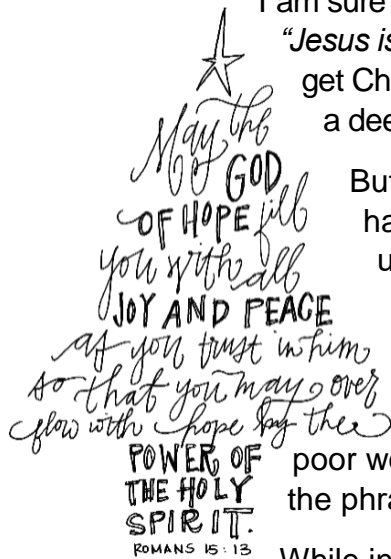
With many thanks to my colleagues who were with me at the National in Winnipeg.

Fr. David

True Meaning of Christmas

Reflection for Advent

By Fr. David



I am sure we have all seen the bumper sticker or fridge magnet that says, "Jesus is the reason for the season". And there is a strong push by many to get Christmas away from the pure consumerism that it can be and back to a deeper spiritual meaning.

But this is not anything new; for at least two hundred years people have been trying to bring society back to a more religious understanding of Christmas. Just think of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" written in 1843. It tells the story of a miserly person who is taught the true meaning of Christmas via the appearance of three ghostly visitors. This story was written primarily to highlight the dreadful conditions of the children of poor working-class families, but its effects were, among others, to put the phrase "Merry Christmas" in to common use.

While in the first half of the nineteenth century the focus was using Christmas to bring about a more compassionate and caring society, this same message was soon used to try to counter the strong influence of consumerism at Christmas. In 1889, author Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote, *"to give up one's very self — to think only of others — how to bring the greatest happiness to others — that is the true meaning of Christmas."*

So our search of the true meaning of Christmas is nothing new, yet I wonder how far we have succeeded in this search. My guess would be that for very many people Christmas is seen as a grand birthday celebration for an important person, Mary's son, Jesus. And so it is. But while we celebrate birthdays of kids with great joy, as we get older we get the sense that birthdays really are not that important, and again the consumer society is perhaps the major force shaping how we celebrate birthdays!

I see the significance of Christmas on a much higher level.

If we look at the whole of the Old Testament, it is a story about God and humankind and their relationship. We were created to be intimate with God, to walk through paradise with Him in the cool of the evening (Genesis 3:8); but a separation – **a sin** – broke the relationship and distanced us from God, so much so that not only could we not walk with God but we had to run and hide when God appeared, and suddenly paradise was closed to us.

The story of the Old Testament then tells us how God repeatedly called humankind back to Himself. To do this God assembled a community to Himself through the leadership of Abraham. This was the community that God would guide and teach until the point it was ready to receive His Son.

Eucharistic Prayer IV summarises this well:

When through disobedience
we had lost your friendship,
you did not abandon us to the domain of death.
For you came in mercy to the aid of all,
so that those who seek might find you.

Time and again you offered us covenants
and through the prophets
taught us to look forward to salvation.

And you so loved the world, Father most holy,
that in the fullness of time you sent your
Only Begotten son to be our saviour.

Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary,
he shared our human nature in all things but sin.

So with the birth of Jesus the separation is ended. It is interesting that the angels announcing this Good News say:

“Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ***This will be a sign for you:*** you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2:10-12)

Yes, a birthday of our brother and dearest friend, Jesus, but the baby lying in the manger is also a “sign” that says our time of separation is ended.

Our task is to try to embrace this mystery of ‘Emmanuel’, God-with-us, to understand the incredible gift that God is giving to us, to rejoice in this gift and to share this joy with others. We must make sure we are ready to receive this gift; that means getting rid of any barriers there might be that could stop us receiving God’s love in its fullness. In plain words: try to ensure that we are ‘at rights’ with all those we interrelate with, and make sure we are ‘at rights’ with God. This is not always easy, but remember, if it is God’s will for us to be reconciled and at peace with one another, then God will enable us to do it. The grace of the Sacrament of Reconciliation can be very helpful here!

Can you imagine living in a community where everyone’s first concern is to be loving, kind, compassionate and forgiving? That is the ‘paradise’ we came from and the world that Christ asks us to rebuild, and at Christ’s birth we see the nature of God’s grace that is truly present to help us in this task. The preface to the first Eucharistic Prayer of Reconciliation tells us about God’s bond of love that he is offering to us:

For you [God] do not cease to spur us on to possess a more abundant life and,
being rich in mercy,
you constantly offer pardon and call on sinners
to trust in your forgiveness alone.

Never did you turn away from us, and, though time and again we have broken your covenant,
you have bound the human family to yourself through Jesus your Son with a new bond of love so tight that it can never be undone.

Even now you set before your people a time of grace and reconciliation, and, as they turn back to you in spirit, you grant them hope in Christ Jesus and a desire to be of service to all, while they entrust themselves more fully to the Holy Spirit.

At Advent we are invited to grasp this *time of grace and reconciliation* and turn back to God by entrusting our lives *more fully to the Holy Spirit*.

Reflection

I found this wonderfully thought-provoking quote from Lewis Carroll. So I invite you to contemplate what this short reading means to you, and then to pray for your Advent journey towards Christ at Christmas.

"There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilisations — these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit...

Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses. If they are your Christian neighbour, they are holy in almost the same way, for in them also Christ vere latitat [in truth is hidden] — the glorifier and the glorified, Glory Himself, is truly hidden in them." Lewis Carroll

A heart centred on love will make that presence visible

With a promise of prayers this Christmas,

Fr. David.



2018 Provincial Convention Report

There was never a dull moment at the 71st BC & Yukon Catholic Women's League Provincial convention held in Whitehorse, Yukon June 21-23, 2018. The convention began with the Eucharistic celebration, Thursday evening at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Concelebrating all the masses with Bishop Hector Vila (Yukon) and Father Slawomir Schwagryk, rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, were Father Edwin Kulling (outgoing BC & Yukon Spiritual Advisor), Father David John (incoming BC & Yukon Spiritual Advisor), diocesan and parish spiritual advisors along with several visiting seminarians.

Carol Vanderbyl, Sacred Heart/Yukon president and her convention committee, although small in numbers, exuded hospitality, friendliness, grace and diplomacy throughout the convention.

The Resolutions Dialogue was extremely well attended. Animated dialogue was evident as six resolutions were perused, discussed and edited. For many, this was their first resolutions dialogue and they remarked that it was a very positive learning curve. All six resolutions were presented on the convention floor and were passed. Five of them will be forwarded to the National CWL council for consideration at the 2018 National convention in Winnipeg. BC & Yukon Resolution 2018.03 Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity 123 (SOGI 123) will be dealt with provincially.

The convention business sessions opened on Friday, June 22, 2018. Evelyn Rigby, BC & Yukon Provincial President, welcomed everyone and stated that speakers would be addressing issues from both ends of the age spectrum and everything in between to fit the convention theme of "Leading with Courage". Maria Campos-Mendez in "Immigrants with Faith" spoke of no longer feeling like a foreigner when she stepped into a church. For God there are no strangers. She invited us to find the inspiration and be the inspiration; to lead with courage. Mary Wagner's video "Defense of Life" showed a profound testimony of her passion to protect life at the beginning stages. She quoted Gandhi, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." Alex Schadenberg, from the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, in his presentation "Caring, Not Killing" explained how his organization has evolved. The documentary "The Euthanasia Deception" was the first film produced. Participants watched a part of "Fatal Flaws" a new 80-minute documentary which will be available soon.

Jenny Shaw spoke of an "Amazing Sisterhood" where she with her sister, toured, hiked and camped in the Yukon a few years ago. Their journey, experiences and adventures were a lure for others to venture forth and also explore in sisterhood.

Father Edwin Kulling spoke on "Peace of Heart". In the busy and hurried times we live in, we often find ourselves restless. We need to put God first, have prayer as a priority and we will attain peace of heart and mind. Father David John spoke on "The Strengths and Weaknesses I Bring to the CWL". Father David believes that God uses our weaknesses as gifts for others. He asked us "When did God last speak to you directly?" and "When did you last see a miracle?" God chooses to work miracles in plain sight – always and anywhere – but we don't often see them.

Margaret Ann Jacobs, CWL National President, spoke on two occasions. She began with a League Update, outlining some initiatives from National office: On the Spot; Palliative Care; focus on Mental Health; update on the donations for the National Voluntary Fund, Cody Institute; and CNEWA; to name a few. Her second presentation was on leadership. We need to pray to the Holy Spirit for constant guidance. She spoke of being a servant leader, of learning to listen, really be a good

listener. Servant leaders are visionary leaders, and more are needed. A challenge was given to delve into and recognize our leadership potential and then put it into action.

Bishop Hector Vila graced the convention with his presence at each mass, parts of the business sessions and at the banquet.

Friday evening, a buffet and the lively dance routines of the Snowshoe Shufflers were enjoyed by all. Jigging instructions were given by Rev. Martin Carroll and his wife Ruth and the Yukon Ramblers entertained with music. Outgoing provincial Spiritual Advisor, Father Edwin Kulling and outgoing provincial president Evelyn Rigby, with much humour and affection, were duly roasted by their provincial executive.

The liturgy booklet, created by Agnes Geiger, Provincial Spiritual Development Chairperson gave us spiritual nourishment. The Prayer for Mental Health, The Earth Day Prayer service and the Prayer for Reverence of Life aptly fit the theme of the convention and elaborated on the messages given by all speakers.

Saturday afternoon, the provincial election was held. At the closing mass a full slate of officers was installed, including the new provincial spiritual advisor, Father David John and new provincial president, Gisela Montague.

The convention concluded with a banquet where several awards were presented. Linda McClinton, outgoing Education and Health Chairperson, presented the Molly Boucher award to Emma Kalin from Armstrong, BC. Accepting for Emma was Kamloops Diocesan President, Dorothy Hruby. The BC & Yukon Life Members' Fine Arts and Culture Award was presented by Barbara Jarvis, BC & Yukon Life Member Liaison, and won by Theresa Milbers from Vancouver. Accepting the award for Theresa was Angelina Stiglich, Vancouver Diocesan President.

The banquet speaker Geraldine VanBibber, MLA for Porter Creek in Whitehorse, told her life story which was a tribute to courage. Geraldine has received the Order of Canada and always follows her motto of "Laughter Heals All".

The 101 delegates and guests enjoyed a very successful, informative, spiritual and fun-filled convention. Invitations were extended to attend the National convention in Winnipeg, August 12 – 15, 2018, and the provincial convention in Nanaimo, June 12 – 15, 2019.



Fr. Edwin receiving the spiritual bouquet from Agnes Geiger, Spiritual Development Chair (2016-2018) at the convention

Pope Francis - Ten Secrets of Happiness

We all want to be happy, and in our world today there are many people telling us how to achieve that goal. Yet, many of these paths to happiness are based on false promises or superficial suggestions that offer fleeting moments of pleasure and quickly fade away. The good news is that Pope Francis, who carries an aura of joy in everything he says and does, has now identified ten secrets to happiness that are time-tested and true.

1 Live and let live.

Too many of us jeopardize our happiness by trying to control the lives of others. We become fixated on what other people are doing and lose sight of what God is asking us to do. Jesus said it a little more bluntly when he asked the question: *“Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?”* (Mt 7:3).

How would your life be happier if you stopped trying to change or control the lives of others?

2 Be giving of yourself to others.

Being open and generous with others — especially those in need — brings us into an intimate encounter with Christ, who is the source of all joy. Jesus assures us that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for him (see Mt 25:40). Whenever we share material goods, offer emotional support, extend a helping hand, or provide spiritual sustenance, we not only ease someone’s burden, we also discover that the experience enriches our lives, too. Pope Francis warns that “if you withdraw into yourself, you run the risk of becoming egocentric. And stagnant water becomes putrid.”

How have you experienced happiness through reaching out to others?

3 Proceed calmly.

Happiness is jeopardized when our lives become hectic and out of control. The pope uses the image of a quiet pool of water and urges us “to move with kindness and humility, a calmness in life.” In trying to cultivate calmness in life, it is important for us to understand that life is not governed so much by what happens to us as it is by how we react to disruptive influences. One way to maintain calmness — no matter what is happening — is to establish a deep spiritual life. When we are centered on God, what happens on the surface of our lives may ruffle us a little, but it will not disturb our deep inner peace.

In what ways can you cultivate peacefulness in your life?

4 Develop a healthy sense of leisure.

We live in a secular world that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Many of us deal with stressful job demands and other commitments. Parents juggle work demands in addition to the

busy schedules of children involved in school, sports, and other activities. Pope Francis notes the real fear that the pleasures of art, literature, playing with children, and spending time with family members are being lost in the busyness of daily life. Leisure activities give our bodies and minds a chance to refresh and renew themselves and give us a chance to reconnect with one another. It is important to set aside time to turn off the television, communicate with one another, read together, engage in playful activities, and eat dinner together as a family, as well as explore the arts, culture, and nature.

How do you balance work and leisure in your life?

5 *Make Sunday a holy day.*

Pope Francis suggests that a sure-fire way to find happiness is to reclaim Sunday as a holy day. He also suggests that Sunday should be a family day. You can start to make Sunday holy by going to Mass every week. Making the rest of the day holy will depend on your lifestyle. If you work indoors, outdoor adventures will allow you to enjoy God's creation. If you're active all week, you might build some quiet time into Sunday. Observing Sunday as a holy day offers us the opportunity to reflect on the spiritual side of our existence, appreciate the blessings of family, and discover true happiness.

What kinds of things would you have to change in your life in order to reclaim Sunday as a holy day?

6 *Create jobs for young people.*

We find purpose in our lives through meaningful work; we are encouraged to take that one step further and ensure that young people have what Pope Francis calls "dignified jobs." We can start the process early in our own families by assigning to our children household chores that teach them the importance of making a contribution to the family. We can involve preteens and adolescents in volunteer service projects where they can use their God-given gifts and talents. "We need to be creative with young people," the pope urges, "in order to prevent them from slipping into drugs and despair. When we find ways to raise them up, we will discover in them and in ourselves a deeper sense of happiness."

How can you help young people find dignity and happiness through meaningful work or service?

7 *Respect and take care of nature.*

We are the stewards of God's creation, and we have a responsibility to preserve and protect it — not just for ourselves, but for future generations — including clean air and water, wetlands and forests, and farm lands and natural resources. Pope Francis asks the question: "Isn't humanity committing suicide with this indiscriminate and tyrannical use of nature?" We can start in our own homes, schools, and workplaces by recycling, reusing, and cutting back on pollutants and waste. Our personal campaign to respect and care for nature brings happiness, because we know that we are taking time and important steps to respect and preserve our environment.

What is something that you can do to become a better steward of God's creation?

8 Stop being negative.

Constant complaining, biting criticism, backstabbing, and gossip are like poisons that kill happiness. “Needing to talk badly about others indicates low self-esteem,” Pope Francis explains. “That means, I feel so low that instead of picking myself up, I have to cut others down.” It’s not easy to change from being negative to being positive. The first step is awareness that being negative or positive is a personal choice. The second step is making a concerted effort to stop ourselves from negative thoughts and words as soon as possible. “Letting go of negative things quickly is healthy,” the pope adds, and it leads to a more positive and a happier outlook on life.

What steps can you take to eliminate negativity in your life?

9 Respect others’ beliefs.

We all have family members, friends, and acquaintances who do not share our Catholic beliefs. Yet, nagging and pressuring will not bring happiness for anyone. “We can inspire others through witness so that one grows together in communicating,” Pope Francis explains. When we live as authentic witnesses to Christ, other people are attracted by the inner peace and joy that emanate from us. They want that peace and joy for themselves. Whether or not they ever come to share our beliefs, when we treat them with respect, we create a bond of happiness between us.

How do you respect others’ beliefs and at the same time witness to your own?

10 Work for peace.

We are called to stand up for peace: “The call for peace must be shouted. Peace sometimes gives the impression of being quiet, but it is never quiet; peace is always proactive,” Pope Francis says. We may not be able to bring about peace on a global scale, but we can pray for world peace. We can also work for peace in our homes, neighborhoods, schools, and places of employment. When we take a stand against violence in any form, we become peacemakers. Jesus calls peacemakers “blessed” and gives them the distinction of being “children of God” (Mt 5:9).

In what ways do you work and pray for peace?

When we read between the lines of the pope’s ten secrets of happiness, we find the essence of the Gospel message. Indeed, living as authentic disciples of Jesus Christ will bring the kind of deep inner happiness and peace that nothing can ever take away.

Sharing Our Faith

Have you ever seen a majestic waterfall, a gorgeous autumn scene, a group of gleeful children playing at a playground, a beautifully decorated table laden with tasty food or a velvety red rose? What is the first thing you want to do? Share it of course! This is how our faith experience should be. We need to share our rich faith experiences.

I once attended a Mass where all the key players were young people. Their energy, enthusiasm and musical talent is etched on my mind, body and soul forever. I've been to churches where stained glass windows, floral arrangements and the overall beauty of the church astounded and uplifted me.

I recently attended a palliative care conference in Vancouver. The Mass proceeding the conference was so beautiful. The sermon given by Archbishop Miller was very thought provoking. Death "is not a nod to nothingness" he said.

Saying my rosary & Chaplet early each morning is a very rich experience for me. I say it before anyone is up because we only find God in silence.

I recently attended the baptism of my great nephew. We all gathered with family and friends to welcome little John into God's family.

Another rich spiritual experience is going to Sunday Mass. I like seeing all the parishioners, listening to the readings, the priest's sermons, the singing, the flower arrangements. What did God specifically say to me today? Receiving the body and blood of our Lord helps me on my journey to heaven.

In the spring, my little granddaughter received her First Communion. It was so beautiful and so thrilling for all of us. After she received the Body and Blood, she threw her arms around me saying "Oh Gramma I love you so much". Magdalene's communion filled her little heart with so much love that it spilled out onto her family.

I often say God bless you if someone has served me. The other day I said it to a grocery check out girl. As I was leaving, she raced up to me and said, "You don't know how much I needed to hear that, thank you!"

We all have rich spiritual experiences that we need to share. Without God there is no hope and today so many people don't know Him. Share Him with all you meet.

Catherine L'Heureux
BC/Yukon Spiritual Development Chair

Liturgy of Anger and Tears

By Kathy Fadum

In recent weeks our Church has been inundated with allegations of abuse, reported in all forms of media and on the Internet. These have felt like very dark days indeed for people of faith.

In response, the Church has acknowledged and expressed understanding of what has happened. In his letter dated August 20, 2018, Pope Francis wrote, "The heart-wrenching pain of these victims, which cries out to heaven, was long ignored, kept quiet or silenced. But their outcry was more powerful than all the measures meant to silence it or sought even to resolve it by decisions that increased its gravity by falling into complicity. The Lord heard that cry and once again showed us on which side he stands. Mary's song is not mistaken and continues quietly to echo throughout history."

In his Pastoral Letter, Bishop Gary's said, "The pain and suffering of one victim is too much, as it affects the whole Body of Christ and calls us to act ever more transparently and humbly before our God and one another." He invited us to join him in prayer, penance, and fasting in solidarity on Saturday, Sept 15, the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, to implore the grace of God for the healing of victims of sexual abuse and for all those who have suffered abuse by the leadership in the Church.

Following that invitation, our Diocesan President, Christa Grillmair, asked for ideas as to how we as Catholic women could respond. The *Liturgy of Anger and Tears* was born as our response. We are a people of hope, even when we experience darkness in our midst. If we allow ourselves to remain bound by ties of guilt and shame, how will the world know and believe that we are People of The Good News of Jesus Christ?

On October 16, 2018, the *Liturgy of Anger and Tears* was shared with more than 50 CWL members from Councils across the Diocese. Participants received a natural, in the rough, beach stone to represent pain, hurt, shame, judgment, isolation, and loss of trust. Prayers, hymns, and scripture readings focused on all of these emotions and their impact on the entire Church community, including our bishops, clergy, those in leadership position in our parishes, victims and their families, and all the people of faith.

The next part of the *Liturgy* was a Litany of Repentance that laid out the horrors of the abuse, and using the *Kyrie Elision*, we asked for forgiveness.

With stones in hand, each participant connected the rawness of the stones to their feelings in solidarity with the abused. The effects on the People of God were tangible.

Healing was initiated with the invitation for each person to bring their stone forward to place around the standing cross, when they were ready to do so. While participants placed their rocks, we listened to the hymn *There's a Longing in our Hearts*. This was followed with a shared gesture of peace and the lighting of the Paschal Candle.

Our day ended with Mass of Thanksgiving, following which the cleansed rocks were returned to the ocean where they belong.

The process was very emotional as the participants journeyed together through anger and tears to reach a place of hope, with a commitment to continue to take baby steps for healing, and to remain silent no more.

For more information about the *Liturgy of Anger and Tears*, visit www.cwldov.org.

Kathy Fadum is President of St. Peter's CWL Council in Nanaimo

In Loving Memory of our CWL Sister

A Tribute by Sharon Geiger to Marie Lucie Schaff R.I.P



Lucie has been a member of the Catholic Women's League since 1966 (52years) and she has been a Life member since 2003 (15 years). The reason she joined the CWL was to meet people from the parish as she was new to the area.

She held many convenorships on the CWL parish council, attending many executive and regular meetings over the years. She was CWL parish president from 1985-1987 and then moved on to the diocesan level where she moved to president quite quickly and served there for 3 years (1990-1993). Lucie then spent 4 years at the Provincial level as Christian family life and Education and Health chairpersons.

During these years at the Diocesan level Lucie travelled to many places attending Diocesan, Provincial and National Conventions.

Between 2005 and 2007 she was the Life Member liaison for the Kamloops Diocese and helped on a consultative basis at both the Kamloops diocesan and parish level.

Lucie loved to go to the conventions because there she would meet all her old friends from afar as well as meeting new ones.

Sharon Geiger
Provincial President Elect and Organization

Education and Health with a new twist!

Here is a game those of you, a matching game of Education and Health resolutions and its action plans. Match the Resolution to the action plan. It may require a little research on www.cwl.ca To Act On/(Resolutions) By Position, as certain words or phrases have been removed from the action plans.

Resolutions

- A. Setting a Standard for Products Marketed as Flushable**
- B. Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide**
- C. Increased Early Intervention and Access to Children and Youth Mental Health Services**
- D. Ban Plastic Microbeads in Personal Care Products**
- E. Electronic Cigarettes**
- F. National Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Registry**

Action Plans

Avoid purchasing products containing _____ by checking their list of (PE), (PP), (PET) or (PMMA)].

Answer: Resolution (A, B, C, D, E, or F) _____

Hold a speaker presentation on healthy living and _____ choices.

Answer: Resolution _____

Write to the prime minister, minister of health and local members of parliament, urging them to act on ... the potential risks of _____.

Answer: Resolution _____

Request an awareness campaign of the consequences of inappropriate disposal of _____ through municipal and provincial governments.

Answer: Resolution _____

This would be a fair and equitable system ensuring people would receive timely, safe, high quality care in relation to _____, regardless of one's province or territory of residence, or financial situation.

Answer: Resolution _____

Write letters to the prime minister, minister of health and local members of parliament, urging the federal government to invest in pan-Canadian efforts to provide early intervention and access to _____ suicide prevention initiatives and programs.

Answer: Resolution _____

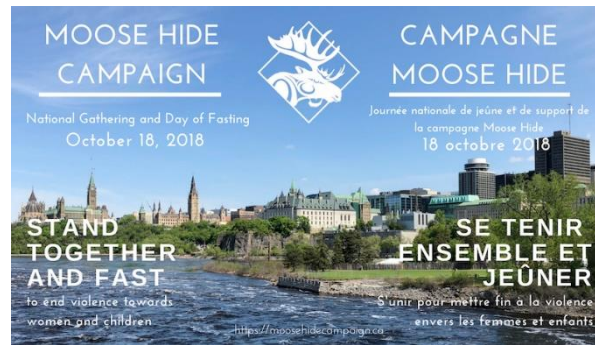
I hope that this will be a bit of fun at your December Meeting.

And I encourage you to have fun with something in our committee that you are passionate about. God knows where it will lead.

Kathy Weswick

Chairperson of Education & Health

Email me for the answers at: eandh@bcyukoncwl.com



Taking a Stand Against Violence towards women and children!



L to R Gord. Johns, NDP MP Government of Canada, Christa Grillmair Victoria Diocesan President and Ascension Council President Gail Olyniuk

The Moose Hide Campaign is a grassroots movement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and boys who are standing up against violence towards women and children. Wearing this moose hide signifies your commitment to honour, respect, and protect the women and children in your life and to work together to end violence against women and children.

On October 11th at the General Meeting Ascension Parish hosted NDP MP Gord. Johns to enlighten our members on the Moose Hide Campaign, with about 40 women in attendance. He explained he “has been a member since 2014 when MLA Scott Fraser introduced me by giving me a small square moose hide symbol.” He passed it forward by handing out a card and Moose hide to each member of Parliament to remind them how critical the violence against indigenous and non-indigenous women is. He further explained indigenous women and girls are three times more likely to be assaulted and killed. In 2004 54% of women came into this statistic. Child poverty and poor child care leads to these alarming statistics. Victoria Diocesan President spoke about the CWL resolutions that we have sponsored in relationship to this subject.

Today 153,000 children in Canada live in poverty; 21% non-indigenous and 30% indigenous. The Moose Hide Campaign was co-founded by Raven and Paul Lacerte who live in Victoria. This Campaign has spread across Canada.

There was a gathering on Parliament Hill October 18, 2018 and Gord. Johns and other members of Parliament took part.

For a video and complete information contact: info@moosehidecampaign.ca

Sandi Digras
Chairperson of Communications
Victoria Diocesan Council

Milestones

Bellelle Guerin Award

Presented to Catherine Stroman

The esteemed Bellelle Guerin award was presented by the Nelson Diocesan Council to Catherine Stroman at the 82nd Diocesan Convention in recognition of her 4 terms on the Nelson Diocesan Council and her 62 years as a devoted CWL Member. Catherine was coached by her Mom to join the league and she has held most of the positions on her home council executive committees in Alberta and British Columbia and is truly respected at all levels. Congratulations Catherine for this well-deserved recognition from the Catholic Women's League of Canada.



Pictured l to r, Evelyn Rigby Provincial President, Catherine Stroman, Sylvia Jurys, Diocesan President, Wilma Lucia Suarez-Pinzon, President, Our Lady of Lourdes, West Kelowna

Diocese of Nelson Member turns 108!



Margaret Froment had a twinkle in her eye as she enjoyed birthday cake and a glass of wine at Lakeview Lodge, West Kelowna with staff, family and friends to celebrate her 108th birthday.

While her hearing is deteriorating, Margaret can see, her mind is sharp, and her attitude is positive. She has been a faithful follower of the *Daily Courier*, she moved to the westside in 1976 and still reads the newspaper 6 days a week, first thing in the morning.

She enjoys Baileys Irish Cream with her coffee and apart from her heart patch she doesn't use any medications. She liked to be active and was still using the treadmill at 102. She now uses a wheelchair. She has been a resident at Lakeview Lodge since 2013. Born in 1910 on a farm in Eden, South Dakota she was the first of 6 children. The family moved to Saskatchewan

in 1915 when Mary was 5. She didn't speak much English, just German. She likes to tell the story of when the teacher asked her to sweep the floor in the old country schoolhouse during the first year of school in 1916. It scared her so badly that she dropped the broom and ran home.

In 1943 she and her husband Ernest McLarty along with their 5 children moved to a granary in Dawson Creek with no running water or electricity. In 1976 they moved to Westbank. McLarty died in 1991. Margaret loved to stay busy gardening and volunteering. She travelled the world with trips to Europe, Israel, Barbados and an African Safari and cruising the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. She has 14 grandchildren, 30 Greatgrandchildren and 7 Great-Great Grandchildren. She celebrated her birthday with family in the morning, Chinese food for lunch with cake in the afternoon. Her son came from Spain, her daughter from Nevada to celebrate with her.

As for her secret for living so long, Margaret said "Don't worry".

*Printed with permission
Barb Aguiar
Kelowna Daily Courier*

Postscript to the story, Margaret has been a member of the CWL for 31 years at Our Lady of Lourdes Council (and probably more in Saskatchewan and Dawson Creek). Congratulations Margaret!

Sylvia Jurys and her sister CWL members of Our Lady of Lourdes Council, West Kelowna.

Christ the King Council, Comox Valley 70th Anniversary Celebration

Christ the King Council of the Comox Valley, Victoria Diocese, marked the 70th anniversary of its Charter which was issued on April 8, 1948.

This significant anniversary was celebrated on April 22, 2018 with a festive brunch catered by the parish Knights of Columbus for its members.

As a special project, Mary Slein, Barbara LeBlanc, Cindy Wilson, Rita Gouthro and Julie Wind collected photos of members and made up a framed collage which they presented to the members who were present.

In 1988 the original name was changed due to the amalgamation of four local parishes into one new parish, Christ the King, Comox Valley.

Although the name was changed, the spirit and aims of League remain constant through the dedication of the members who invoke the help of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel when facing new challenges and tasks.

*Margaret Beardon, Chairperson of Communications
Christ the King Council.
Comox Valley*

St. Patrick's Parish CWL Council Maple Ridge BC 85th Anniversary

To celebrate this joyful milestone, we hosted an Anniversary Tea on October 13, 2018. The tables were beautifully decorated, and the food was delicious. It was wonderful to see our members so beautifully dressed up for this occasion. Our Parish Priest, Father Mathew To, emphasized how grateful he is to the CWL ladies for all the assistance that we have given and continue to give to our Parish Community. We were honoured to have Gisela Montague, President – BC Yukon Provincial Executive and Angelina Stiglich, President – Diocesan CWL Vancouver attend our Anniversary Tea.



From left to right - Angelina Stiglich (President - Vancouver Diocesan Council), Suzanne Eng (Treasurer & Resolution Chair - St Pat's Maple Ridge Council and Treasurer – BC & Yukon Provincial Council), Joanne Prawdzik, (President) and Gisela Montague (President – BC & Yukon Provincial Council) at our 85th Anniversary Tea Celebration



Lorraine Spindor being presented with her 55th Anniversary Pin by our President Joanne Prawdzik.

Noella D'Mello, Chairperson of Communications

Leona Schaeffer Celebrates her 90th birthday with her Sisters in the League



At St. Joseph's Council, Armstrong we ask a member once a month to share with us their CWL "life/faith" story as a CWL member. They are asked to submit a written copy which we are

compiled in our archives. This project, now 3-years long is very positive, interesting and enjoyable. It also enables us to become acquainted and better understand each other.

Here is Leona's Story.

Leona is a prairie girl. Her mother died when she was 14 years old and she and her 3 sisters took care of their Dad. Leona married Gordon Drozdowich when she was only 16 years old. They had 4 daughters and 1 son. They lived in Vegreville, Alberta and then moved to Falkland where they lived for many years. Gordon died after they moved to Armstrong in 1992.

Leona joined the CWL and enjoyed the friendship of many. She married Norman Schaeffer -- who was such a good cook & famous locally for his cabbage rolls. She never held executive positions but was very involved in parish functions and CWL activities and loved by all. She was again widowed about 6 years ago.

Now to her birthday party that was attended by 80 of her friends. The special birthday cake was a "flower garden cake". (Wouldn't it be nice to have that many friends who love you enough to come to your 90th birthday party?)

Leona really is a wonderful, lovely lady. Happy Birthday Leona, and best wishes for many more.

Ria Wanner

Our Lady of Sorrows Council in Vancouver Celebrates its 65th Anniversary



It is with great joy and gratitude for many blessings received over the years that Our Lady of Sorrows CWL Council in Vancouver has celebrated its 65th Anniversary in November 2018.

Over the years, it has been the privilege of the members to play an active role in parish life, supporting both financially and with volunteer work a multitude of functions. At the same time, the members have been able to raise funds for several charitable endeavours and to donate scholarships to students in the parish school.

Over the years, the members have strengthened their spiritual lives by participating in workshops and retreats and especially supporting the Right to Life campaign has helped them to gain a greater appreciation of the faith and joy of being members of the Catholic Community.

To mark the 65th Anniversary, the members assembled at a local restaurant, where they were delighted to be joined by Pastor Father Richard Zanotti, an enthusiastic supporter of the Catholic Women's League in all its activities.

We as members, now ask all our sister members in the Catholic Women's League of BC and Yukon, to pray for our continued success in supporting the Church and its members.

Praise be Jesus Christ!

Marie Wong
Secretary & Organization Chair

Quest to find Barbara Gobbi!

Can you send a get-well card to Barbara Gobbi?"

This was an email request from my Vancouver Diocesan President, Angelina Stiglich. According to Angelina's email, Barbara was in Prince George. I thought she lived in Sechelt! I had to put the brakes on speeding thoughts, and wondering why, what, when, where, and how Barb was?

Quickly, I fired off an email to Gemma Gillis, president of the Prince George Diocese. I had met Gemma at the CWL Provincial Convention in Whitehorse in June and no, as far as Gemma knew, Barb was not in Prince George.

I know Barb personally as we attended a couple CWL conventions together, she stayed at my home and enjoyed a glass of wine with me. Furthermore, she was a great mentor for me when I first joined the Catholic Women's League. We shared our love for Legislation.



Barb and Pamela Gregorchuk in Sechelt

I looked up in my list of the CWL presidents of the Vancouver Diocese and Voila! I found Pamela Gregorchuk who is the CWL president at Holy Family Sechelt. Pam was most gracious and gave me an update on Barb. Yes, Barb had moved to Prince George.

I decided to be a sleuth and with the help of the internet I found Laurie Hooker, past president of the CWL of Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince George, I learned so many great achievements and life changing events about Laurie. We delightfully chatted, and she offered to be in touch with Greg, Barb's husband. Laurie had met him at the parish office and she saw him in church the week previously. Laurie offered to deliver my card to Greg and Barb if I wanted to send one. Yes, I would. How gracious is our Lord!

Meanwhile, Gemma was also sleuthing! Yes, Barb was in Prince George. After two weeks Greg Gobbi emailed me an update on Barb. My heart melted with thanksgiving to know Barb continues to go for walks, has an appetite, and is around her caring family. She remains in my prayers.

The request to send a card of well wishes took me on this incredible journey in meeting Sisters of the League in order to find another sister. How connected we are, we women of the Catholic faith!

Love, prayers and sincere thanks to the blessings bestowed upon us.

Your Sister in Christ,
Sherray Duran a.k.a. Sherlock Holmes!
Vancouver Diocesan Council
Chairperson of Spiritual Development

No holding back the fun at St Ann's Council Abbotsford this summer!



We started the summer with twenty-two member, dressed to the nines to represent the Catholic Women's League in the Canada Day Parade.

Four of our members submitted their personal immigration stories to the National Convention in Winnipeg, while four other members were able to attend the event and squeezed into the canoe to pretend forging down the rapids!

Our president, Bev, prepared for our very successful Fall Fashion Show & Tea and made sure we had enough glamorous members to be models for Suzanne's Fashions on the big day. Tickets and posters made in short order to be ready for the sold-out event in October.

Throughout July and August, we continued making a once a month lunch or breakfast with the women at Christine Lamb Residence. This is a forty-one-unit safe place for vulnerable women with children and we prepared and served a funeral lunch for one of our parishioners.

Our annual parish picnic was a lot of fun. CWL members helped organize and facilitate the event which included several of the parish committees. We helped serve the delicious pot luck dishes. We made popcorn for the movie night that followed the picnic.

We served throughout mass and hosted coffee & desserts afterwards on two weekends for CWL Sunday, even though it was vacation season for many people. CWL Sunday is the first Sunday of every month at our parish.

Our sisters continue to support the Warm Zone; a place for street engaged women to come during the daytime for shelter, first aid, computer use, food, etcetera and Cyrus Centre (a place for homeless youth) with toiletries, clothing and food.

Our regular support activities throughout the year. We visit our sick/homebound CWL sisters to give them words of encouragement, prayers and hand made quilts.

Our members who receive our emails, were invited to pray for the intentions requested by our sisters as various needs arose in their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

Each week we continued to put a CWL article in the church bulletin to keep our members engaged and informed.

Many of our sisters were busy making welcome gifts for the 2019 Diocesan Convention that we have the honor of hosting in April. They were so dedicated that by September we already had enough.

Valerie Loeppky
St. Ann's Abbotsford

A few words of advice to stay healthy when travelling this Christmas

Although this is not a news item, I thought I would drop this article in at the end of my first *“Communicator”*. Sometimes we forget the importance of taking care of ourselves in public places. While the focus of these tips is when we are at airports, we can use the same advice when shopping, at restaurants, in public washrooms and yes, even around our homes.

1. Any sort of doorknob or handle

Whether you pushed a revolving door to get into the airport or grabbed a handle on the airport shuttle, you should wash your hands ASAP. (Honestly, this goes for touching doorknobs and handles in any public spaces) The general rule is that if you’re touching it, a lot of other people are too, which can expose you to germs that could potentially get you sick.

Of course, when you’re making a beeline for your flight, it’s not always convenient (or even possible) to pause at the bathroom every time you touch something “germy”. Carry a small vial of alcohol-based hand sanitizer for times when you can’t access soap and water for handwashing. Hand sanitizer doesn’t kill as many germs as washing your hands, but it is better than nothing. For maximum effectiveness, choose a hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.

2. Escalator handrails

Escalator handrails as one of the most germ-ridden places in airports since so many people hold onto them for safety purposes. That’s technically a good thing. Toppling down the escalator with all your luggage isn’t ideal. But after disembarking from the escalator, track down a bathroom or whip out your hand sanitizer to get rid of some of those germs.

3. Security bins

If we had to write a zombie movie, the contagion would start with the security bins. Basically, everyone in the airport has to touch these! Yes, that includes the person who is coughing next to you as you wait to board the plane and the sick child is sneezing. Unless you are into the idea of all those germs hitching a ride onto the plane with you, wash your hands once you’re through security and as often as you feel at risk.

4. Armrests in the waiting areas

Most experts mentioned these as “super germy” places given that a ton of other people also touch them. If you have time, pop into the bathroom and scrub your hands prior to boarding. You can also try going over the armrests with disinfectant wipes before touching them.

5. Literally any surface in the bathroom—on the plane or in the airport

No matter how well and often airport and airplane bathrooms get cleaned, so many people use them in so many...intimate...ways that the experts want you to do your due handwashing diligence. If you’re feeling too lazy to wash your hands for 20 full seconds, think of **toilet plume**. Toilet plume happens when you flush a toilet and it sprays aerosolized droplets of its contents throughout the air and on to your body, including your hands. After washing your hands, you may still need to touch a possibly contaminated knob to turn off the faucet or door handle to leave the restroom. Try using a piece of paper towel to shield your hand in these moments or use your hand sanitizer once you are out.

6. Tray tables

Airplane seat tray tables are germ-laden surfaces, and it is pretty hard to avoid touching them if you plan on eating, drinking, or working as you travel. In that case, it is suggested that you bring disinfectant wipes to cleanse the surface first. When you are done using the tray table, wash your hands or use your hand sanitizer. Whatever you do, don't eat your snack directly off the tray table.

7. Touchscreens

Inflight entertainment is great; getting sick from the touchscreen isn't. Those who have swiped their fingers all over the screen before you can leave behind bacteria and viruses. Keep that bottle of hand sanitizer nearby while browsing movies or watching your flight map, wash your hands once you are finished using the screen. (As a bonus, getting up often to stretch your legs can help prevent blood clots, which are more likely during long periods of travel.)

8. Anything an obviously sick person has touched

This is just a given, but we'll still say it here: If you touch something that a person who's coughing, sneezing, or otherwise seems ill just touched, you should wash your hands as soon as possible.

Also, go get vaccinated against the flu if you haven't already.

Washing your hands is great. But the most direct contamination source of illnesses like the flu is the sick person, not objects that you may touched. If you are near a person who is sick at the airport and you can move easily, try to stand at least six feet away, which is how far respiratory droplets spreading the flu can travel. If you happen to be sitting near someone ill on the plane, you can try turning your head away from them when they cough or sneeze, and avoid touching your mouth, nose, and eyes so you don't transport any of their germs into your body. But the best thing you can really do for yourself is getting your flu vaccine. It is **not 100 percent effective**, but it makes you less likely to get the flu or get very sick if you do wind up contracting it. It also prevents you from passing the flu along to people who are most vulnerable to flu complications, like babies, the elderly, and those who are immunocompromised. If you have already had your flu vaccine, pat yourself on the back. Otherwise, getting vaccinated as soon as possible—it takes your body two weeks to develop flu-fighting antibodies—should be at the top of your to-do list.

Sign off ...

Thank you SO much for your editorial contributions to our provincial newsletter; you all are totally awesome!

In closing, on behalf of the provincial council, I would like to wish you many blessings for Christmas and a bright, happy and healthy 2019.

Sylvia Jurys
Chairperson of Communications