

Spotlight On....

Michele Ferri is a founding member of our St. George CWL and a league member for over 25 years. She is currently serving on the executive as the chair of Education & Health. Below she shares her journey in the Catholic Women's League.

My journey in the CWL started over 20 years ago when Father Gary Goyeau approached myself, Lynne Tomchuk and Cathy Emery to reactivate the St. George Catholic Women's League. The chapter had been active in the sixties but had been disbanded for many years. We held a meeting in 1996 and over 50 women attended. We recruited an executive and we were off and running. We now have almost 200 members.

My CWL journey really started by seeing my mother active in the CWL. I knew that she baked and helped at Bazaars, but I really didn't know what the league did. I still to this day feel that most people do not know what we do. I think there is a perception that we make sandwiches and cookies for funerals and run bazaars and teas. Yes, we do these things, but we are so much more.

Each sandwich is made with compassion for the bereaved family. A funeral lunch provides an opportunity for the family to be supported by friends and relatives. The Bazaar welcomes the community at large into our church. It is an opportunity to open doors for people to come back to church. I have met the most amazing women in our Parish who quietly and humbly help serve others. They represent Christ to me. I have met Carol McGeough who at 80 took on the role of Community Chair collecting items and helping women set up apartments for the Women's Community House. Even when her health was failing, she never complained and was always thinking of others. She inspires me to be a better Christian woman. These are hard working women, faithful and committed to helping others. The CWL is so important to me because it gives me the opportunity to serve others.

Through the CWL Conventions, I have met women from all walks of life and from across our country. When the wildfires were ravaging in Fort McMurry, we reached out to our CWL sisters and supported them through prayers and financial assistance. We have supported missions in Africa and Peru and our own CWL members have been to these missions and shared their experiences with us. We offer support to women in our community by reaching out to those in long term care with visits and cards. One of my proudest moments was when we asked Martha and Corrine, residents from L'Arche, to join us and were told that both their mothers had been members and how proud they would have been. The women from the apartment complex down the street are asked to join us for a special lunch each year. Our goal is to be inclusive and welcoming into God's house. We provide financial assistance to St. Joseph Hospice, Women's Community House, Precious Blood Sisters, the Christmas Hamper program just to name a few. We participate in the Cancer Daffodil Campaign and 40 days for Life. All these activities bring me into contact with amazing women, faithful and committed to serving God and others.

Our Mission Statement sums up best what the CWL is to me, "The Catholic Women's League of Canada is a national organization rooted in Gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God." We are truly blessed with all our members of Saint George Catholic Women's League.