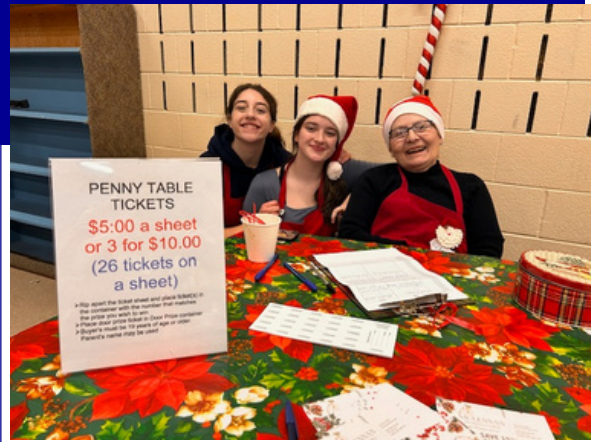


Newsletter

Winter 2025



Editorial

We hope you will find material in this third issue of our revived CWL Newsletter of interest to you. As ever, we have a rundown of our activities in the fall of 2024, and a little preview of what we are planning for our spring - you will need to mark some events down in your calendars as dates not to be missed. We have two more members sharing their lives with you in the Getting to Know You section, some special birthdays being marked this new year, and some names of members recognized for long devoted membership and service.

This has been declared a special jubilee year of hope by Pope Francis so you will find some information here to help you celebrate this year. Some of us find Lent a difficult time for sustained effort and joy, so we have some tips on how to have a truly blessed Lent yourself and with your grandchildren.

When listening to the news, in contrast to Hope, we are often almost overwhelmed by anxiety and subsequent depression, so we are offering some light advice on dropping your worrywart ways.

We pray that the magazine will bring some joy in the fellowship which you have with the rest of your CWL sisters, and that the coming months will bring you increased faith, **hope**, and love.

Upcoming Events

*The following dates have been booked, but are subject to change.

February 11 | Budget Meeting followed by Valentine fun & refreshments

March 1 | Lenten Retreat

March 7 | World Day of Prayer

May 13 | Afternoon Tea

Here I am Lord, send me.

This is the challenge for us from the central office of the Canadian CWL for this year. How will you answer?

Here is the League prayer on this theme for this year, composed by Bishop Lobsinger:

Heavenly Father,

Through the ages, You have called many to serve you:
Abraham, Sarah and Samuel; Martha, Mary and Elizabeth,
As well as countless men and women throughout the ages.
All were different, and each brought unique gifts to Your service.

Now today, we too hear Your call to come and follow, to bring
our gifts to Your service.

Help us, O Lord, to make our reply,
"Here I am Lord, Send me"

With full and generous hearts,
In order that we may be Your instruments in the building of
Your kingdom.

We ask that You hear and answer our prayers through Christ
our Lord.
Amen.

Faith, Hope, and Love

Faith allows us to believe and give ourselves totally to God.
Hope gives us the assurance that God's will will be done.
Love frees us to give ourselves completely to others.

Faith, Hope and Love are gifts poured out on us by the Holy Spirit.

Volunteer To Express Your Faith

To Volunteer:

You will need a Vulnerable Sector police clearance -

<https://www.londonpolice.ca/en/services/Vulnerable-Sector-Check.aspx> for the appropriate form.

Make sure you have your SIN number handy and Driver's license for identification.

The website gives you a limited time to fill in the information and online is the only way you can do the process.

Volunteer Opportunities:

To find volunteer opportunities in the London area, check out the following:

<https://www.london.ca/living-london/community-services/senior-supports/age-friendly-london-volunteer-opportunities>.

They list "meaningful" opportunities for older adult volunteers, with groups ranging from the Alzheimer's Society through the alphabet to the WILL Employment Connections.

For specific current volunteer positions at all levels, look at

<https://www.pillarnonprofit.ca/volunteer>.

In Memory

In thanksgiving for lives of love and service, we recognize the following members or their relatives who have died to us, but who live eternally with God:

January 2024

Mary Sofalvi, sister-in-law of Judi Sofalvi, CWL Member

Mary Broome, CWL Member

February 2024

Marjorie Burns, CWL Member

March 2024

Antonia Schalk, CWL Member

Elizabeth Perpich, CWL Member

May 2024

Carol Ann Crossman, mother of Wanda Hatch, CWL Member

Jack Kost, brother of Paula Abey, CWL Member

June 2024

Elizabeth Melchers, CWL Member

July 2024

Maureen Reynett, sister-in-law of Betty LaRoche, CWL Member

November 2024

Corrine Crozier, CWL Member

Beverly Ann Keens, CWL Member

Ed St. Antoine, husband of Carol Ann St. Antoine

Betty Henry, CWL Member

December 2024

Mike Quayle, husband of Lou Quayle, CWL Member

Margaret De Ryke Tavarini, CWL Member and sister of Jean Lutchin, CWL Member

Praise and Thank You to the 1000-years ladies!

Last issue we began to recognize the members who in, 2024, were celebrating notable years of service to the CWL. The total number of years of membership, hard work, laughter and spiritual growth was over 1000!

Here is the last of the list – thank you, ladies, so much. May you be very blessed this new year!

30 years	Claudia Hunter, Joan Kruse, Carol Ann St. Antoine, Cathy Tarvit, Theresa Wood
25 years	Rita MacIntyre, Connie Myles, Heather Tarvit
20 years	Barbara Ayearst, Marjorie Braatz, Carla Lin, Sue Ellen Savel
15 years	Victoria Ellul, Jacqui Hart, Cynthia Hellsten, Betty Henry, Sharon Molnar, Lucyna Mahood, Betty Sandrin, Sheila Smyth, Joanne Sorrenti
10 Years	Martha Chisholm, Karen Cormier, Corrine Crozier, Tina Cyr, Michelle Gilpin, Jane Kelders-Keast, Erika Marks, Paula Massiah, Natalie Nesterenko-Albani, Lianne Notarandrea, Toinette Parisio, Kathleen Plant, Lou Quayle, Mary Lou Saker
5 years	Mary McNabb-Lutz, Mary Snyder



Helpful Links

Springbank Catholic Family
of Parishes:

www.springbankcatholic.ca

St. George CWL:

www.springbankcatholic.ca

/

st-george-cwl

CWL of Canada:

www.cwl.ca

Ontario Provincial CWL:

www.cwl.on.ca

London Diocesan CWL:

www.cwllondon.ca

Diocese of London

www.dol.ca

Reminder:

Please advise us of any
changes to your membership
info such as your phone,
address, or email. To update
information, visit:

[www.springbankcatholic.ca/
renewed-sg-cwl-member](http://www.springbankcatholic.ca/renewed-sg-cwl-member)



Cause for Celebration

We would like to congratulate the following members on
special birthdays celebrated this year:

Jocelyne Anderson in July

Claudia Hunter, also in July

Lou Quayle in November

Also to be much congratulated are the following couples who
will be celebrating 40 years of love and growth:

Kathryn and Gord De Val - 40th wedding anniversary in
August

Donna and Kevin Jordan - 40th anniversary in December,
2024

Sue Ellen and John Savel - 60th wedding anniversary in
January

Please let us know if you have a special birthday or
anniversary coming up and we will include it in the next
edition of the newsletter.



Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

In May of 2024, Pope Francis declared 2025 as an ordinary jubilee year with emphasis on our identity as pilgrims of hope to the world for its redemption, and to each other in our work as bringers of the Kingdom in Jesus' name. Often people do go on actual pilgrimages to mark their observance of the year.

The declaration was called "Spes Non Confundit," a quotation from St. Paul meaning "Hope does not disappoint." If you want to read the document, it is available in a variety of languages on the Vatican website: it is also available in our library in a binder for circulation.

You may wonder what exactly the virtue of hope is and how it relates to the year's theme. You may find an article, called "Hope: The forgotten virtue of our time," from the Jesuit magazine "America" from November 07, 2016 helpful. A copy of this article is available on line at the "America" website, and a copy is also the SG library with the Pope's document.

2025 will be a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation. It will be a particular invitation to discover a vision that can restore access to the fruits of the earth to everyone. We are also invited to rediscover a spirituality of God's creation, in which we are pilgrims, not masters.

Here is a prayer that Francis has written for this special year. Please pray it each day so that we may be helped by God's grace for the task that lies ahead;

Father in heaven,
may the *faith* you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of *charity* enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed *hope*
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both
humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, *Pilgrims of Hope*,
a yearning for the treasure of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.
Amen.



What's been going on?

September - we had our Welcome Back Brunch with over 80 ladies enjoying a super brunch cooked for us by the Knights of Columbus. Honoured guests included Fathers Mockler and Renaud, and Allison Powell. Allison was honoured with a farewell gift from both the Knights of Columbus and the CWL, flowers, and a membership in the CWL in recognition of her six-year service as parish secretary, with particular service in producing special materials for us like the newsletter and retreat brochures.

October - as requested by the membership in last Christmas' survey, we had a fall retreat focused on the Nativity story and its connection to the problem of homelessness in our community. Special guest, Jenica Minkarious, from the Ark Aid Mission, led us through role playing to stimulate homelessness. Lots of frustration and laughter. One member was even stuffing what little money she had in her bra to protect it from robbery by other poor folks!

As a follow-up to this retreat, we have set up a group to investigate possibilities for further action by us on the challenge of homelessness in London.

During this month, we had a great collection of winter clothing for the homeless served by the Ark Aid Street Mission. Your gifts were much appreciated by those who face a winter sleeping on the street or in one of the encampments. You are the face of Christ's love to them. Ongoingly, Patricia Silver will take any items you wish to donate to the Ark on a weekly basis. Just mark them clearly for the Ark and leave them in the narthex for her to pick up.

November - The Candy Cane Bazaar again was a great success - the weather was good and we had lots of guests. The Silent Auction was again a very popular activity and, even after all expenses were taken into account, we made thousands of dollars to support the many charitable organizations in our community. Many thanks to the ladies who worked so hard from creation of the first roll-out of pastry for pies to the last handout of Penny table items. your work is valued by all of those who will benefit from your efforts.

December - the Christmas dinner is always a highlight of the year's calendar. Thank you for all who attended and shared fellowship and laughter. Thanks to May Day catering for the meal - what a treat not having to fight with turkey insides while wrestling the bird into the oven, or worrying about vegetables being cooked and ready at the same time as the gravy is bubbling, and the defeated turkey is carved!

Another calendar year finished - thanks be to God for all the blessings we have been given this year!





What's Coming Up This Spring

After a January spent hibernating and sleeping off the effects of too much turkey and whatever wonderful creation you had for Christmas dessert, we meet Tuesday, February 11th at 1:00 PM for a busy meeting to consider the CWL budget for 2025, to hear Fr. Rob talk on what we can do to foster vocations and mentor young people in their life decisions, followed by some Valentine fun and refreshments.

Saturday, March 1st, MARK YOUR CALENDAR - we will be having our Lenten retreat in the hall starting at 8:30 AM for registration and ending with a light lunch by noon. It is going to be a really fun, busy session of things to do with one's children or grandchildren during Lent to help cement their faith and their relationships with us. You will go home with lots of ideas and samples.

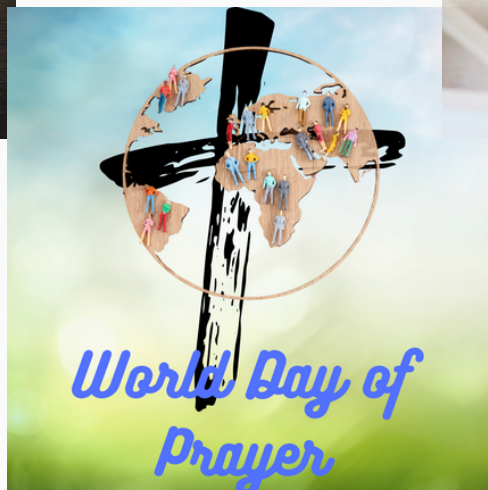
Remember we will be responsible for one of the Stations of the Cross celebrations during Lent - date as yet unknown. Watch for further details.

Friday, March 7th, MARK YOUR CALENDAR - our church will be hosting this year's World Day of Prayer with several other local churches, starting at 1:00 PM in the sanctuary with refreshments (provided by the SJD CWL) to follow in the hall. We need a good turnout for this, so please consider spending an afternoon with this interdenominational event.

May, Tuesday the 13th at 1:00 - 3:00 PM, Afternoon Tea with Mary. Hope to see you there for an opportunity to relax and enjoy each other's company.

That brings us to the last meeting before the summer break on June 10, with a delicious dinner after mass and a recognition of long service by members, plus bonus entertainment.

Your Executive hopes that we will see you at the above activities to enrich your life and growth in fellowship with your sisters in the CWL.





Late-winter Spiritual Blaahs

If you are like me, late January and February are REALLY difficult times. I could happily run away from home, but my Visa card won't let me, to say nothing of all the things that I am committed to and expected to turn up to, fairly bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. I suffer from post-Christmas blues and, at this time of extreme mental deflation and lethargy, Lent is here again! I often think that I would do better with Lent if it happened another time of the year, but unfortunately the world does not turn as I command.

So, what is the solution?

Ultimately, I suspect it is like taking a New Year's dip in cold water - hold your nose and just jump! Move your legs and arms as fast as possible and hope to survive hypothermia till you get back to the shore! The Lenten equivalent of an icy water swim is all the good stuff you decided to do about improving your prayers, attendance at daily mass, a donation to your favourite charity, abstinence from uncharitable thought and speech, and cutting down on carbohydrates, particularly sweet chocolate temptations. Like New Year's resolutions, this all may be getting a little difficult by week three.

Believe me, when I say that a good book can help carry you through all forty days.

Here are some suggestions from our library that might work for you:

Hays, Edward - "The Ascent of the Mountain of God: Daily Reflections for the Journey of Lent"

Metz, Johannes - "Poverty of Spirit" - this book is like a cold shower - really reinvigorating to one's spiritual life!

Morneau, Robert - "Ashes to Easter: Lenten Meditations" - a personal favourite of mine which I use every Lent.

Nouwen, Henri - "From Fear to Love: Lenten Reflections on the Parable of the Prodigal Son" - a small book of great comfort.

Nouwen, Henri - "Out of Solitude: Three Meditations on the Christian Life" - this writer always has something to say to one's heart.

Rohr, Richard - "Wondrous Encounters: Scripture for Lent" - as always with his writer, a challenging book on becoming God's image in the world.

Wojtyla, Karol - "Through the Year with Pope John Paul II: Readings for every day of the year".

Wright, Vinita - "Set the World on Fire: A 4-week personal retreat with the female doctors of the Church" - can't get away for a retreat? Try this exploration at home of four weeks of prayer and reflection in the company of Therese of Lisieux, Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena and Hildegard of Bingen on small steps of loving God, trusting in His operation in the world, acting and responding creatively to God's inspiration.

There are many more books in our library which can freshen and sustain your spiritual life during Lent and beyond. Drop in anytime the church is open and browse as long as you want. There are no due dates to worry about - you keep the books as long as you need in order to incorporate their message and insight into your life.



It will soon be time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving

Ever thought of a Lent beyond giving up chocolate, saying an extra Rosary or putting an extra \$20 in the Sunday collection?

We need to expand what we mean by fasting, praying and almsgiving.

Here are some ways you could try that are a different manifestation of fasting, of communicating with God, and of sharing the earth more generously with all God's children, ways that might make a difference in our world, the great gift of God to us:

* Go plastic free. Even if you can't become totally plastic-free, try to cut down on plastic you bring into your home - we need to cut down on our use of things made from fossil fuels, with the ultimate goal of slowing climate change.

* Switch off the digital. Try a technologically-free time each day in order to increase face-time with people in your house, to increase quiet, uninterrupted time without constant external demands and stimulation, to increase your peacefulness before sleep, for more time to talk with God.


* Eat more consciously. Whether it is less food eaten, less food wasted and discarded, more food bought that is locally grown, more food eaten that uses less water to produce, or makes fewer demands on the soil with less demand for chemical fertilizers, think about how little changes in our daily eating can add up to a planet that is less stressed, one where everybody can enjoy some of God's bounty.

* Consume less. Don't buy yet another T-shirt you don't really need. Think of the working conditions of those who made it which make its low-price tag possible. Borrow, lend and share stuff with neighbours and friends, so we can cut down on using yet more of the earth's resources. Donate things you no longer need.

Look at your electronics use - do you really need the latest smart phone or a new laptop? They need rare earths in their manufacture that come from countries in many cases ill-inclined to the values we hold as Catholics and Canadians.

* Spend more time in nature. It will increase your appreciation for the variety and beauty of God's creation and bring you closer to God in gratitude. Whether you just go for a walk in the park, spend some time pottering in your garden, or do forest bathing like the Japanese, you will be calmer, more integrated with creation, and refreshed for dealing with life's challenges.





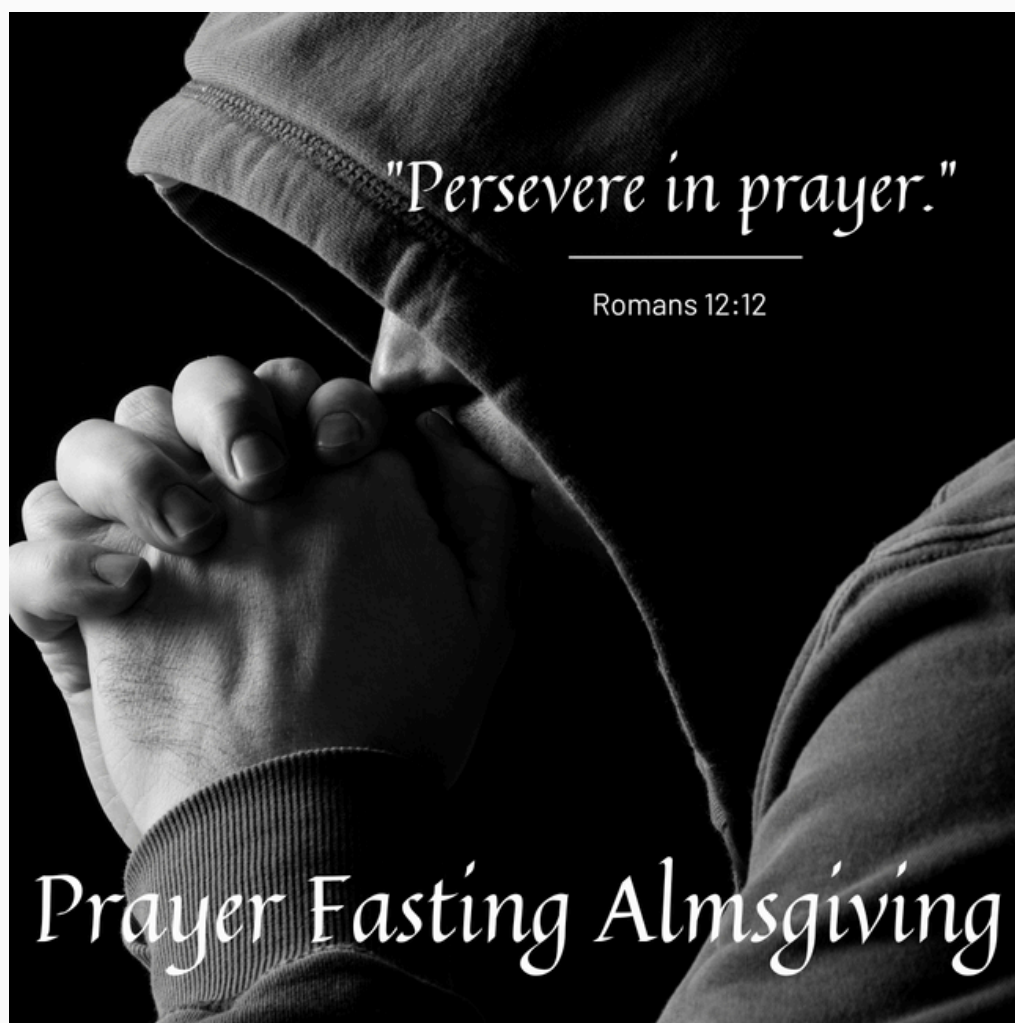
* Change how you get places. Get out of your car - walk more or bike more; share car trips to the store, the library, the church, the sports arena, the hair salon, with friends and neighbours. You will see your surroundings differently, be healthier physically and spiritually, and be closer to your neighbours and community.

* Think energy. The production of energy increases our carbon footprint and has a negative impact on the world around us. So, there are many ways to reduce your personal demand on the system. Lower your energy demand by lowering your heat requirements in the winter, your cooling requirements in the summer. Use energy at off-peak times. Use the outdoors to dry clothes. Use a fan to cool your room by air movement. Take a short shower rather than a deep bath. Dress for the weather and be prepared for changes with layering.

* Make the money count. Talk with your financial advisor or bank manager about where they invest your money. If your money is supporting industries that are negatively impacting our world, like arms manufacturing, tobacco products, oil and gas production, strip mining, then maybe its is time to divest yourself of your investments in these areas.

Can you do all the above this Lent?

Probably not, BUT make a start, however small, and you will be honouring God, your neighbour and the world we share. Your actions of fasting from bad activity that hurts others and our world, your closer alignment to love for God and neighbour, your sharing and equalizing of resources with others will make this Lent a truly blessed time for all.





A Crown of Thorns for Lent

Here is a fun activity to share with your children or grandchildren - it is a wonderful way of encouraging grandchildren observe Lent by doing good!

You will need a small grapevine wreath (available from Michael's or other craft or flower shop)

A box of toothpicks for thorns an empty jar

A square of purple paper or fabric a paper king's or queen's crown

A square of gold paper or fabric

At the beginning of Lent, have your grandchildren arrange the wreath and the jar on the purple paper or fabric on a shelf or table easily accessible to them.

Push toothpicks into the wreath at odd angles (number depends on the number of children doing the Lenten activity).

Make a paper label for the jar saying "Acts of Love"

Every time a child does an act of love or prayer in Lent, the child gets to remove a toothpick and place it in the jar.

Hopefully by the end of Lent, all the toothpicks are in the jar! The wreath is replaced for Eastertime by a paper crown on gold paper or fabric to celebrate the Resurrection. Mine has no "jewels" decorating it, but children should be encouraged to glue on "jewels" or other decorations like sequins to celebrate their Lenten efforts.





Need a break to rest, refresh, or reorientate?

Spring is a great time to reset your spiritual life, to dust off your faith or its practical expression. So, we are suggesting a visit to one of the following retreat centres where you might find just the right stimulus to spiritual spring-like growth.

Most offer individual retreats, both guided and independent, of varying periods of time from a one-day visit to several days, and group retreats - several friends together, or a larger organization group. Most offer accommodation and meals, sometimes priced separately, sometimes included in the cost of the retreat. Some offer limited facilities for you to do some cooking on your own. Sleeping options range from single occupancy rooms to dormitory-style arrangements. Check the appropriate website for details on offerings, schedules, and special events.

Here are a few options close to us geographically that you might want to check out. We have included one emphasizing ecological concerns and another offered by the Presbyterian Church to give you more of a flavour of what is out there.

a. Holy Family Retreat House, Harrow in Essex County.

This is probably the most familiar retreat centre for most of us, sponsored by our diocese. A regular room with meals, single occupancy, costs \$175 for the first night and \$140 for subsequent nights. If you wish to do a self-directed retreat, they have downloadable guides on a variety of themes that you can use. Contact at <https://hfrh.ca>.

b. Crieff Hills Retreat Centre, Puslinch, just south off the 401 after Kitchener/Waterloo

This is run by the Presbyterian Church in a very rural setting with lovely walks. You can bring your own food or order from their kitchen. Accommodation is roomy - the 1-bedroom suite, for example, can actually sleep up to four people. There is a labyrinth for meditation and spiritual direction is offered as an extra item. Contact at <https://crieffhills.com>

c. Gethsemane Ministries, Wellandport, west of Welland, halfway between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie

This is a very active lay-run retreat place with a distinct evangelical flavour, offering various kinds of retreats, ranging from Saturday day retreats to longer ones. The emphasis is on developing lay evangelization. Contact info@gethsemaneministries.com





d. Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre, Pickering, just east of Toronto and Scarborough on the 401.

Specializing in Ignatian spirituality, they offer 1-5 day individual retreats, directed and undirected. For those who don't wish to drive that far, they offer some virtual retreats with free video material. Contact them at director@manresa.ca

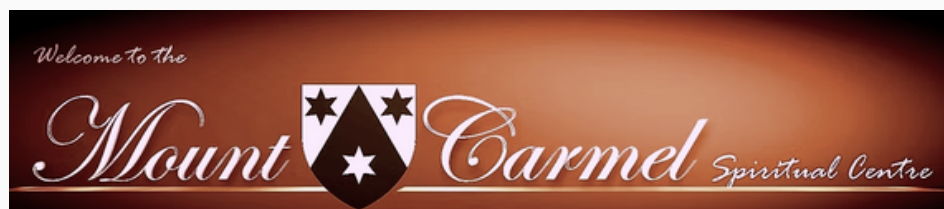
e. Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, Niagara Falls.

This is the national shrine of St. Therese of Lisieux, probably one of the most popular saints today. A full range of retreat options is available and they also have a labyrinth. Contact reservations@carmelniagara.com

f. Villa St. Joseph Ecology and Spirituality Centre, Cobourg, about half way along Lake Ontario just off the 401.

Perhaps the furthest drive away from us, this is run by the Sisters of St. Joseph. A range of retreats is offered but not in July and August. They range from personal day retreats to weekend and longer ones. The emphasis in activities is on our connection with creation, natural and human, and on just stewardship. Contact them at <https://villastjoseph.ca>

These are several of the options available to you in our general area. More can be found by looking for Ontario Christian retreat centres on the Internet. So, browse them and see which might fit best with your needs. True, there is travel effort and expense and expenses associated with the length and kind of retreat you chose, but it will be spiritually worth your while. Perhaps costs could be defrayed by a Christmas or birthday gift of money from family if you request it!





Easter Prayer

I live in faith of the Resurrection, but such is the nature of my faith that so much of me remains entombed. Break open the Tomb.

Where I've buried my compassion, break open the tomb.

Where I've buried my sense of mercy, break open the tomb.

Where I've buried my humility, break open the tomb.

Where I've buried my humanity, break open the tomb.

Where I've buried my love for my Heavenly Father, break open the tomb.

Where I've buried my sense of joy, break open the tomb.

Where I've buried my willingness to forgive, break open the tomb.

Lord, in you I've found a Savior no grave can withstand.

Help me to roll away this stone and find the miracle of new life that I may live more fully in your saving grace.

Amen.





Are You A Worrywart?

According to my dictionary, “worrywart” is a term especially used in North America for a person who worries unnecessarily or to excess. And what does it mean to worry? In the *Chambers Dictionary*, it takes 2 1/2 inches of print to cover the various meanings of “worry” and its variant forms! Besides what we would all agree is meant by “worry”, some of my favourite meanings given in the dictionary are the Scottish two: “to devour ravenously” and probably as a result “to choke.”

But all choking (sorry, joking) aside, there is probably some truth in the words concerning the ill effects of too much worry - it can obsess your mind and emotions and eat you up so that you choke on the happy side of life, unable to enjoy the moment.

So, if you find yourself worrying about everything from the dreaded appearance of wrinkles and age spots, to the abandonment of the Faith by your grandchildren, to the rising cost of living, to the decay of Western civilization, and the probable end of the world around the corner, then you need to read on!

We all feel better when we can DO something about a situation. But, first steps first. As Jesus points out, as reported in Luke, chapter 14, you need to know your enemy and the resources you can muster to oppose him, or the cost of building a tower if you are architecturally inclined.

Which of the worrying situations mentioned above can you fix one way or another? What do you need to know to fix the situation? What resources or tools would you need? Who might be a help? So, you can probably find lotions and creams to deal with the wrinkles and the age spots; the loss of faith by your family will take a bit more thinking and work; the end of the world is probably a concern totally above your pay level. Jot down your thoughts on paper. Then...

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Let go of the worries that you can do nothing about. If the world will continue to turn on its axis regardless of your concern, then consciously put the problem of its continued rotation aside for today, then tomorrow again put it aside, and again the next day and the next, until it is erased as a concern in your mind.

Consciously letting go of the need to fix and control will take a great burden from you. If your jottings lead you to consider that you could effect some change in a situation to avert further problems, what is the next move?

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Talk to God about it. Before DOING stuff, we need to check that, though it may all seem right and beneficial for all concerned to follow a certain course of action, it may not be part of God’s plan for you, the problem and the world in general.

In your own words, tell God about the situation that worries you and what you think would solve the matter and WAIT for an answer. One way or another, the Holy Spirit will guide you. You just have to listen, to be open to answers that might not coincide with your solution.



They say that a problem shared is a problem halved - but, in sharing with God, He takes on the whole burden and we are invited to co-operate in a very small way. The responsibility is not ours.

As it all is in His hands, you do not need to carry the burden of worry. So, you can let it go. Your daily prayer mantra should be Mary's "Let it be done to me according to Your will."

Sometimes this is hard to do.

ACTIONS RECOMMENDED: Consciously think of the many small blessings you are given each day - bird song, wild flowers by the edge of the road, the smell of coffee, someone holding a door open for you, the smile of a passing stranger, peaceful streets for walking, the chewy crust of a fresh roll, the amazing function of hands to express love, forgiveness and creativity. When the day is over, write a minimum of five things that lifted your heart this day, and you will soon find that your mind has little room for worry, so full is it of the blessedness of your life and creation.

Remember to thank God - gratitude relieves much worry because you are reorienting your mind to concentrate on the positive.

Try breathing exercises, perhaps with music. Many cultures and religions have found concentration on deep slow breathing a way of calming the parasympathetic nervous system.

Try walking, particularly in natural surroundings - most of us get to an age when we are not going to be breaking any speed records running marathons. But walking daily can be an excellent exercise for the whole body and a way of relieving tension.

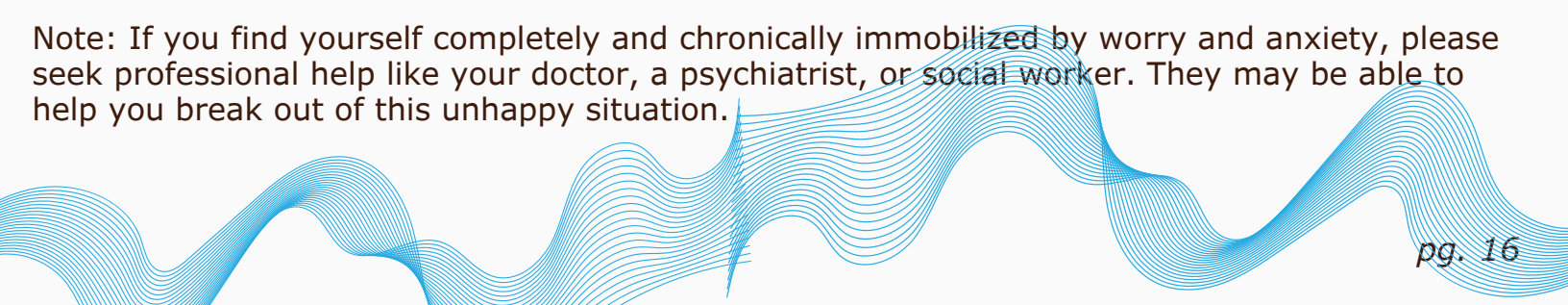
Volunteer - if you can do something for someone else less fortunate than yourself. That is the way in which we can change the world - one small action of love at a time. There is so much need and so few folks to fill the needs, so there is no lack of opportunities that you could fill.

Sleep - sleep can be difficult for worrywarts. Set yourself a daily routine timewise so your body and mind expect to sleep at a certain time. If necessary, take something to help you get to sleep and stay asleep - right now there is great enthusiasm for an Indian herb, Ashwagandha, which some folks find relieves stress in order to get to sleep despite the sound and stress of battle. Try it.

People - join a group or person to share your worry and your life with. It could be a group like AA or Alanon, a small faith group like the Mosaic groups in our parish, a spiritual director, a priest, or your best friend. Worries aired to someone else always seem less of a burden.

Remember you are a beloved daughter of God and all things shall be well.

Note: If you find yourself completely and chronically immobilized by worry and anxiety, please seek professional help like your doctor, a psychiatrist, or social worker. They may be able to help you break out of this unhappy situation.





Getting to Know You

This issue we are featuring Gail Clarke and Mary Ann Crummer. Hope that you enjoy reading about them in their own words.



Gail Clarke

I was born in Windsor and had one older sister who passed away in 2022. My father was head of obstetrics in two hospitals in Windsor. As a result, my mother's volunteer hours and ours were done at the hospitals and at the blood donor clinics.

During my high school years, I was actively involved in Junior Achievement. This involvement continued into my thirties, volunteering at conferences in the States.

My teaching career spanned 35 years - it began and ended in London. However, I did teach also in Toronto and was a Primary School Consultant in Kitchener during those years.

In 1974, when my family moved back to London, I volunteered with Birthright, serving as Director and Chairperson of the Board. It was after this that I became involved in the CWL, serving as President twice at St. John the Divine, and also at St. George. I have served as a Eucharistic Minister in both parishes, also on the Parish Council at both, and on the Building and Finance Committee at St. John the Divine.

I can't leave out the best thing in my life: my husband and best friend, Tom. We had many great times in Port Elgin with family, particularly with the grandchildren. I have wonderful memories of our travel south and many cruises. He was a great support to me in all my CWL activities.

Over the years, I have had many good friends and good memories in both parishes. I will say that I see my church as a welcoming, strong community that I am proud to be a small part of.



Mary Ann Crummer

My name is Mary Ann Crummer and I am the correspondence coordinator for the St. George Catholic Women's League.

I was born in Caracas, Venezuela. As a side note, I am fluent in Spanish and enjoy speaking my native tongue.

As a child, my family moved to the beautiful island of Barbados in the Caribbean. My education started at the Ursuline Convent from Montessori and finally graduated upon completing Grade 12. The nuns gave us a strong academic and spiritual foundation, and my Christian faith will always be my guide.

I met my husband in Barbados and, after high school, we were married and moved to London, Ontario. We have been married for 55 years this past August.

My first job here in London was at Supertest Petroleum (no, I didn't pump gas) working in the data processing centre, and four years later our daughter Lisa came into our lives. We have also been blessed with three wonderful granddaughters who unfortunately live in Ottawa and we get to see them only a couple of times a year.

After 10 years as a stay-at-home mom, I entered the workforce again. I started working at Robert Q's Travel as their receptionist. This was a truly amazing job that I loved for 25 years. I was able to visit many wonderful and interesting destinations. My husband and I loved to cruise and have been on many fantastic cruises mainly to the Caribbean (to visit family and friends). We have also done a Hawaiian cruise.

During my retirement, I have been rewarded with my membership in the St. George CWL. I have become a Eucharistic Minister and volunteered to attend at a retirement manor where I listened to the stories of the residents.

Please feel free to approach me anytime if you wish to know more about our CWL, its activities and privileges of membership. I am always happy to help with the expansion of our league.

We are hugely blessed in the presence of these two women in our CWL - they are very much part of the glue that holds us together.

We hope you have enjoyed learning more about who is who in the CWL. Let us know if you would like us to spotlight others in future issues.



Some creation wisdom to lighten your heart

A friend sent me this in an email – I don't know who created it but I hope it will speak to you.

Everything I need to know I learned from Noah's Ark

One: Don't miss the boat.

Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat!

Three: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

Four: Stay fit in every way. When you are 80 years old, someone, like God, may ask you to do something really big.

Five: Don't listen to critics and nay-sayers: just get on with the job that needs to be done.

Six: Build your future on high ground.

Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.

Nine: When you are stressed, float for a while.

Ten: Remember the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

Eleven: No matter the storm, there is always a rainbow waiting.

So, there you have it, some humour, some hope, a call to action, and some sound spiritual advice!



A Picture Says A Thousand Words....



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