



“Around our Diocese”

(President’s Update) January/February 2026

Dear Spiritual Advisors and Sisters in the League,
January is the month where we decide if we are going to make any new year’s resolutions, a time to review our past year and make changes for the new year to come. This January saw many of our parish councils hold elections. Congratulations and thank you to all who let their name stand for a position for their council election. This January, across Canada, our members started using the new theme of our National President, Betty Colaneri, “Ignite your Passion, Empower His Mission”, along with using her new logo. The theme prayer, which is found on the last page of this newsletter was written by our national president: “Prayer for Passion on the Mission”.

February 22nd is National Day for Human Trafficking Awareness. February is also the month we celebrate Valentine’s Day and Family Day. Our Season of Lent began with Ash Wednesday, February 18. Let us commit to treating one another with respect, to choose words that help, not hinder and to live out, through our actions, the focus of our national theme for the next two years, “Blessed are the Poor.”

Be Eucharistic.

Upcoming Events:

March 1: Second Sunday of Lent

March 8: Third Sunday of Lent

March 15: Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 22: Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 29: Sixth Sunday of Lent (Palm Sunday)

April 2: Holy Thursday

April 3: Good Friday

April 4: Holy Saturday (Easter Vigil)

April 5: Easter Sunday

March 4: Humber Valley Region Spring General Meeting

March 10: Durham Region Spring General Meeting

March 11: CWL Wednesday, Effective Meetings

March 19: Toronto Region Spring General Meeting

March 23: North York Region Spring General Meeting

March 25: Northern Region Spring General Meeting

April 27 & 28: TDC 105th Annual Convention

Pope Leo’s Monthly Intentions

March: For disarmament and peace

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

April: For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

<https://ewtnvatican.com/articles/pope-leo-xiv-prayer-intentions-2026>



Council:

St. Joseph, Highland Creek

St. Joseph, Highland Creek, has been blessed with a new CWL Executive. This executive brings knowledge, energy and new ideas to our CWL Council.

At our February General Meeting, the night was filled with educating our CWL members and infusing a fun, dynamic social.

Our Executive invited us to wear a PINK SHIRT to this meeting as a national and global anti-bullying symbol. PINK also symbolizes kindness, inclusion and safety.

The BLUE HEARTS our members are wearing highlight HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS.

Our joyful social time included warm heartfelt conversations with our sisters, writing Valentine's messages to another member and playing themed Valentine games.



Submitted by Nancy Jane Martineau, Member, St. Joseph Highland Creek Parish Council.
Scarborough Region

Council:

Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Service Activity - January 2026 Meeting



“Whistle While You Work!!”

At our January, 2026 Meeting, our activity was based on “Blessed are the Poor” which is the focus for the CWL Theme, “Ignite Your Passion, Empower His Mission.” We selected an activity from the standing committee of Service to make and donate sandwiches to the Good Shepherd Centre, Toronto.

We started our activity with a Faith Reflection and pondered the following questions:

? How would you feel if you had to rely on a stranger for your lunch every day?

? What is your favourite lunch?

? How does it feel when you are hungry and you have to wait to eat?

We decided to keep these questions in mind as we started our sandwich making.

Charlene Visconti explained the correct method to make the sandwiches (peanut butter on both slices of bread, jam on one slice, close up, cut in half, put in baggie, put baggie in the bread wrapper with the date and the type of sandwich on a label). Members and Father James Cyfko, our Spiritual Advisor, pulled on their gloves and got right to work. Pairs formed naturally around the tables. One group even settled into a smooth little assembly line! The room filled with easy laughter, light chatter, and plenty of friendly suggestions about how to keep things moving. It was relaxed, cheerful, genuinely enjoyable ... the kind of simple teamwork that makes the whole task feel joyful. It was a rollicking good time!!

We donated 15 loaves of PB&J sandwiches and 100 juice boxes to Good Shepherd Ministries.

Submitted by Margaret McKibben, Secretary, Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish Council, Scarborough Region

Council:

St. Francis Xavier, Mississauga

St. Francis Xavier Council is proud to honour three members who received the Maple Leaf Service Pin in November (25th) and December (8th) 2025

The Maple Leaf Service Pin is awarded to CWL members who have demonstrated exemplary or meritorious service, either through a single outstanding contribution or over several years, with a suggested minimum of seven to ten years of service.

To review eligible members, a committee was formed at the request of M. Olivia DeSouza, President. The committee consisted of Ann D'Souza, Life Member, and Past Presidents Sonia Villanueva and Emilia Parado.



Charmaine Alweyn

Diana Gamboa (Right)

Lynette Mendes (Left)

In addition to the outstanding contributions these Ladies have made to their council, all three have also served and/or are still serving on various positions at the regional and diocesan levels. Their leadership, commitment, and willingness to contribute at the parish level and beyond, reflect the true spirit of the CWL motto, Service for God and Canada. Through their time, talents, and education, they have strengthened St. Francis Xavier Council

Submitted by Charmaine Alweyn, Member, St. Francis Xavier Council, Peel Region

Council:

St. Francis de Sales, Ajax

The CWL at St. Francis de Sales Parish in Ajax, Ontario are glad to share some of our recent successful activities



On February 1, 2026, we hosted the Mary Matthews Public Speaking Competition for the first time. We had almost 2 years of preparation while learning the process. Credit to CWL- Holy Family in Whitby and Kim Beatty for their guidance. Thanks to our Service Chair 2024-2025 who is now our current President, Janet Gazarek, for her conscientious effort and to our current Service Chair, Barb Gillen, for carrying out the project. "Thank you" to the team and volunteers.



Our Membership Drive was held on February 7/8, 2026. We had Poster Boards for our new Theme "Ignite Your Passion, Empower His Mission" and a continuous slide show presentation showcasing our activities these past two years.

Council:

St. Francis de Sales, Ajax, (cont'd)

The Installation of our new Executive 2026 a solemn affair presided by our retiring Past President, Rosemary Plantinga. The Holy Mass was celebrated by our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Derek Ali. It was followed by fellowship and general meeting.



Our CWL organized a display of various Nativity Sets from around the world at the Audley Public Library in Ajax, in conjunction with the celebration of Christian Heritage Month, December 2025. It was greatly appreciated and we are invited again to do the same in December 2026.



Submitted by Submitted by Malou Galapin, Past President and Janet Gazarek, President, St. Francis de Sales Council, Durham Region

Council:

St. Anthony of Padua, Mississauga



St. Anthony of Padua had their **CWL Christmas Dinner** at Swiss Chalet this year. It was well attended. We had a special guest, Ana Mendoza Peel Region Chair. We also had our Pin Ceremony: 5 years to Jemma Luckman, 10 years to Sonia Aritzibal 15 years to Grace Gyles and Doreen Garthson and 35 years to Pam Munjal. We had lots of door prizes and everyone had a lot of fun!



Submitted by Pam Munjal, President, St. Anthony of Padua Parish Council, Peel Region

Council:

Precious Blood, Scarborough

Installation of New Executive



Precious Blood Parish Council held their Installation of New Executive 2026-2028 term on January 18th, with all positions filled.

Left to Right: Janet Kasiban (Vice President), Marie Claire Ng (Past President), Nenita MacKenzie (Secretary), Maureen Weiss (President), Fr. John-Mark Missio (Spiritual Advisor), Iselyn Murray (Treasurer), Lindsay Pawson (Faith Chair), Janet Alderson (Service Chair), Philomena Menezes, Julia Ahee (Social Justice Chair).

Submitted by Nenita MacKenzie, Secretary, Precious Blood Council, Scarborough Region

Human Trafficking Awareness

These next 4 pages are in recognition of Human Trafficking Awareness. The first page, a council shares their Red Sand Prayer Service.

Toronto Diocese Applied for Three Venues in the GTA to Light up Blue for Human Trafficking Awareness – the last three pages are pictures from these three venues.



Blue for the Broken  Light for the Lost  Hope for All

Council: Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Scarborough

“Where there is a Will, there is a Way”

On a cold February day, the women of the Annunciation Council gathered for The Red Sand Prayer Service. Although this prayer service is traditionally held outdoors, the extreme weather led us to bring it inside. With creativity and determination, we built an improvised sidewalk using soil and pea gravel. We carved jagged cracks to symbolize the vulnerable people who too often fall through the gaps in society. With our sidewalk prepared, we were ready to begin this symbolic prayer service.

The service opened with a talk on Human Trafficking. We asked ourselves an important question: What can our CWL do to help stop the spread of exploitation? Four commitments emerged: 1) Educate ourselves on how trafficking operates, how victims are recruited, and who is most at risk. 2) Pray for justice, always. 3) Report suspicious activity to law enforcement. 4) Talk about it at our CWL meeting to raise our awareness about the insidious nature of human trafficking and its impact.

Our Chairperson of Faith led the service with reverence. Four members read the petitions and prayers, each pouring red sand into the cracks of our sidewalk. As the sand filled the empty spaces, we were reminded of our call to stand with those who are unseen, unheard, and at risk.

It was a solemn and moving Red Sand Prayer Service reinforcing our commitment to Social Justice and bringing an end to Human Trafficking.

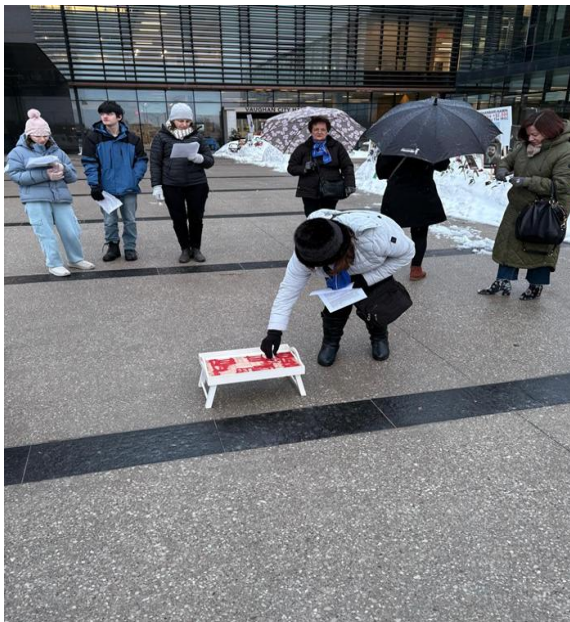


Submitted by Margaret McKibben, Secretary, Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Parish Council, Scarborough Region

City Hall, Vaughan



At Vaughan City Hall, there were 21 members who attended. They also held a Prayer Service and the Red Sand Prayer Service.



Submitted by Debbie Fisher, Past President, St. Padre Pio, Vaughan, Humber Valley Region

Mississauga Clock Tower

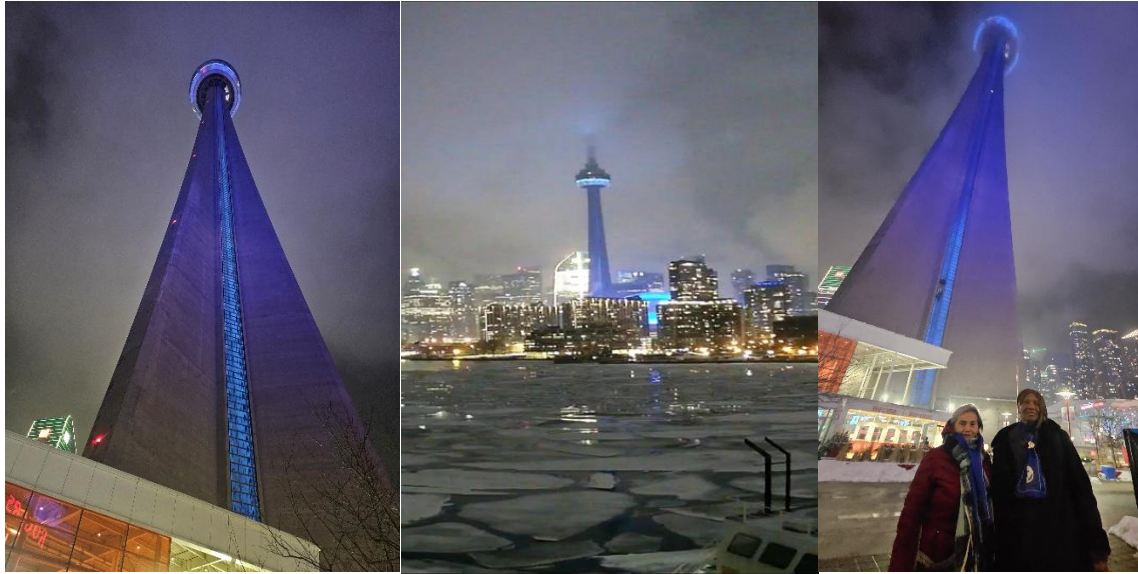


At the Clock Tower, Mississauga, 20 members gathered for a Prayer Service and the Red Sand Prayer Service

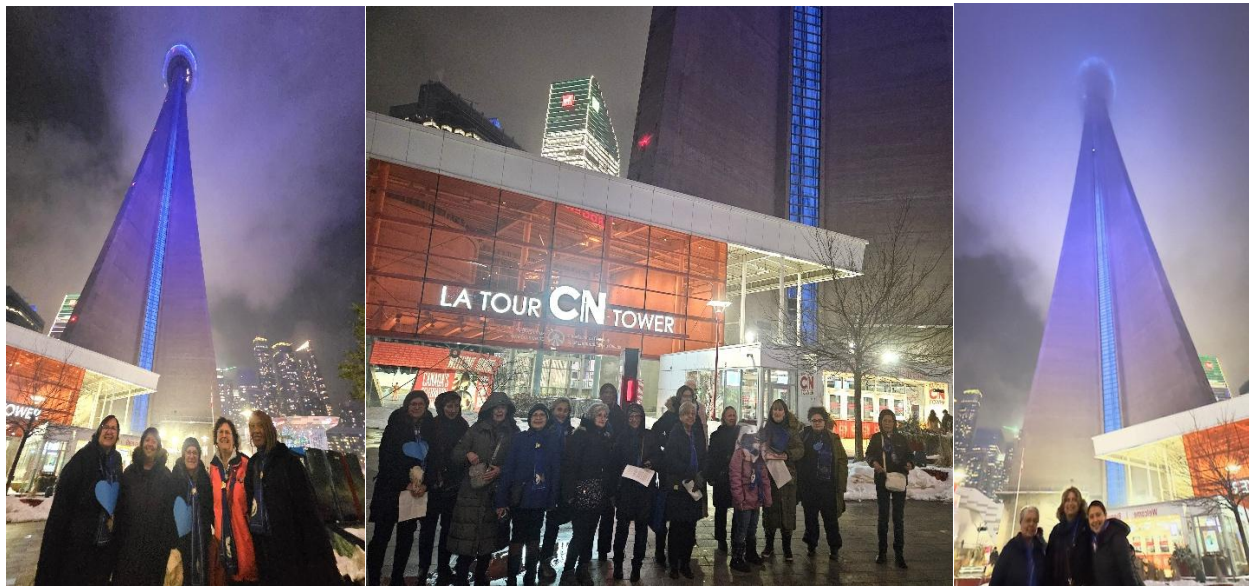


Submitted by Christina Boyle, Chairperson of Social Justice, Toronto Diocesan Council

CN Tower, Toronto



At the CN Tower, there were 25 members who gathered together in prayer, at the foot of the CN Tower, to pray for victims of Human Trafficking.



Photos by Debbie Fisher, Kathleen Koyama, Colleen Martin and Kate O'Quinn



Prayer for Passion on the Mission

Jesus, Our Lord, we come to You with open hearts
seeking passion for Your mission.

Your deepest desire was to draw all peoples
into the embrace of the Heavenly Father's Kingdom.

Send Your Holy Spirit to ignite our hearts with
the fire of Your passionate love, to empower us
with enthusiasm for Your mission.

May we be instruments of Your love
to our sisters in the League,
our families, parishes, and communities.

As we journey together, may the flame in our hearts
illuminate others to know Your eternal love.

May we hold Your people in our hearts
as we place all our trust in You.

Sweet Jesus, each day as we lift up our hearts to You,
we offer You our prayers, works, joys, and sufferings.

We humbly ask that our offerings increase
our faith, hope, and charity.

O Most Sacred and Passionate Heart of Jesus,
may our hearts and Yours beat together as one.

We make this prayer to You, Jesus,
in the power of the Father and in the union of the Holy Spirit,
now and forever. Amen

Betty Colaneri