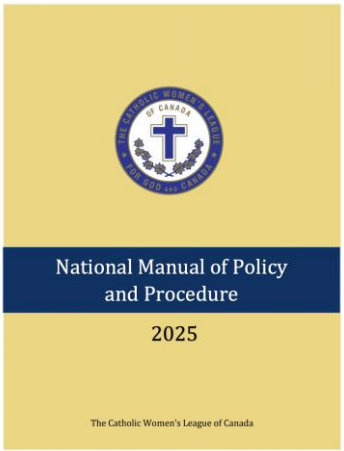
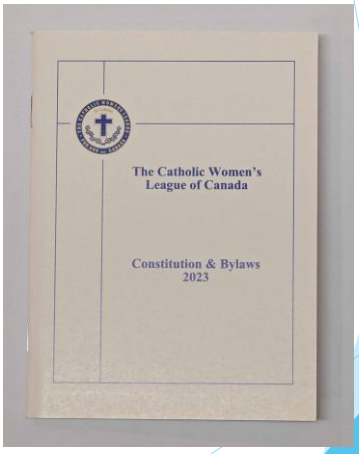
Parish Council Elections





This presentation is revised from notes and presentation posted on the TDC website, from 2025, created by Sue Lubowitz, then Past President of TDC. Information is taken from the National Manual of Policy and Procedure, Section 7: Eligibility, Nominations and Elections, pages 83-105, which is taken from the Constitution & Bylaws (Part XVI, pages 34-39.

Preparations Before Elections

Elections: when do we start?



When is the best time to start the election process? For elections the answer is you never stop planning! All CWL events provide opportunities for members to show their leadership capabilities…if we allow them. If we aren't encouraging members to step up, then we are actually discouraging them. How many times have you heard the following: "We tried that before and it didn't work", or "that's not how we do it here" instead of "we haven't tried that for a long time but if you would like to give it a try, we'd be happy to help you with that". Not everyone leads in the same way. Encouragement and mentoring is very important!

Ideally, elections should follow your Annual Meeting of Members in January. This way, the outgoing executive gives their report, finalizing their year and term and the new executive starts immediately, planning for February Executive and General Meetings.

Who is Eligible?

At All Levels:

(i) A member shall hold only one office at a time at the level concerned.*

(ii) If an officer, at any level, has been removed in accordance with Part XI, Section 5, her existing eligibility is forfeited. (C&B, Part XVI, Section 1(e))

Annual membership fees must be paid in full to be eligible for office and to vote during elections (C&B, Part VII, Section 1)

*Note: Presidents may not hold any other position on an executive as they are already a voting member of the executive.

At Parish Level:

General Membership: A Catholic woman 16 years of age or over may become a member with voting privileges and with eligibility for office by election or appointment. (C&B, Part VII, Section 1(a))

Associate Membership: A non-Catholic woman 16 years of age or over may become a member with voting privileges, but without eligibility for office by election or appointment. (C&B, Part VII, 35 Section 1(d))

Paid in Full: please be sure that membership dues are submitted ***to national*** in a timely manner. Member in charge of membership, you need to ensure the treasurer sends members' dues to national asap – do not hold on to payments until you get them all.

A member cannot hold 2 positions – for example, you cannot be secretary and Chairperson of Service, another example is Past President cannot be 'Acting President' – an executive may agree to let the past president organize and run the meetings, but her position is still Past President.

Term of Office

1. The term of office for elected officers shall be two years.
   (C&B, Part XVI, Section 2 (a))

2. An elected or appointed officer shall serve but not exceed one full term in the same office, except the chairpersons and treasurers who may be elected to a second term. A chairperson shall be assigned a different standing committee to chair in her second term.
   (C&B, Part XVI, Section 2 (b))

3. If the time served by an appointed officer is more than one year, it shall be considered a full term. (C&B, Part XVI, Section 2 (c))

1. This includes presidents. At the end of her term the president moves on to the past president's position and the past-president can now retire or move up to another level is she desires.
2. 2. Treasurers may be elected to serve a second 2 year term
3. . A standing committee chairperson may be elected to serve a second term as standing committee chair, but not in the same committee.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The nominations and elections committee is responsible for all procedures involved with nominations and elections.

Nominations and Elections

- At the regular October or November meeting prior to an election year, a nominations and elections committee, consisting of three experienced members of the council concerned, shall be appointed by the parish president in consultation with the spiritual advisor. (C&B, Part XVI, Section 3)

- The chairperson of the committee shall not be a candidate for office. She shall be prepared to conduct the elections at the parish meeting when elections will be held.

Because the chair of the nomination committee is not eligible to be a candidate for office, this role usually falls to the past-president. If there is not a past-president, for whatever reason, another member can step in to the role.
The committee is appointed by the president. Note of it should be made in the minutes of this November meeting.

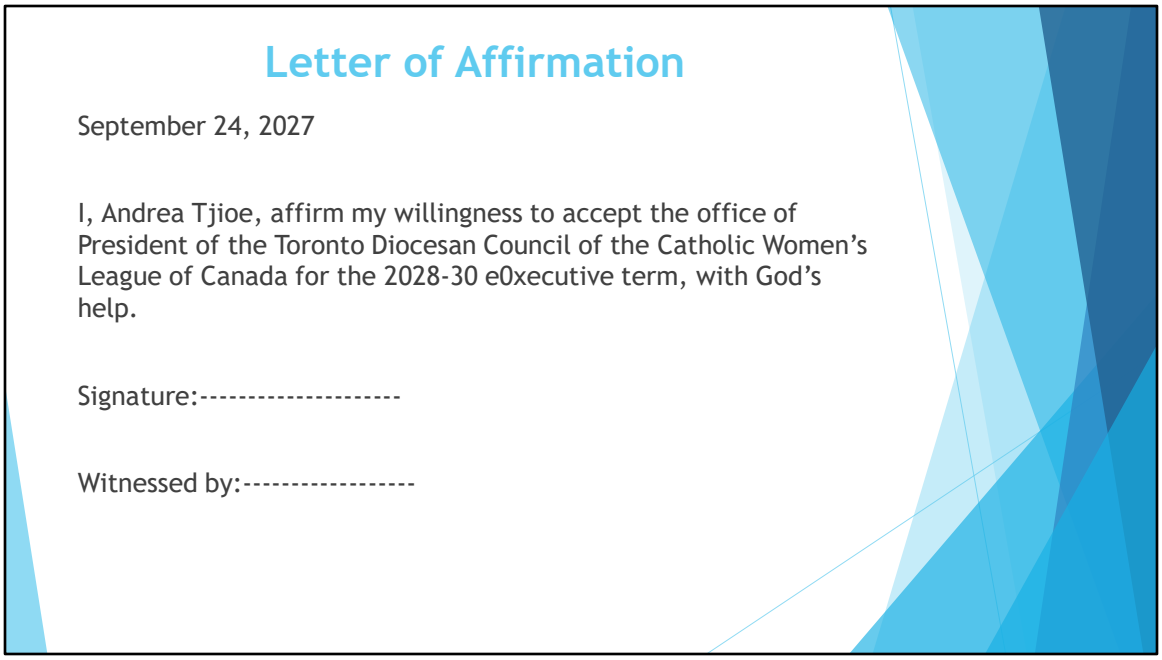


Parish Nominations

1. Where there is a vice-president, she must be contacted by the chairperson of the nominations and elections committee to affirm her willingness to assume the office of president. It is advisable that she sign a note declaring her intention to serve
2. If the office of vice-president is vacant, nominations should be sought for the office of president.
3. At the December meeting, the chairperson of the nominations and elections committee shall post the list of all general members of the parish council, the names of the present executive officers and their eligibility for nomination.
4. At the December meeting, the chairperson shall have nomination forms available for distribution to all members. In addition, the committee, in consultation with the executive, shall determine whether a nomination form should be: 2 (1) mailed to all other members, (2) emailed and mailed as necessary or (3) distributed at the church.
5. Any member may submit a nomination form. A member may be nominated for more than one office. All nomination forms must be signed by the chairperson of the committee.
6. Nomination forms shall be received by the committee within three weeks of the date of the December meeting.
7. All members nominated shall be contacted by the nominations and elections

committee to determine if they are willing to stand for the office(s) for which they are nominated. In making such contact, no reference should be made to the number of nominations received or the names or persons submitting the nominations. If accepting the nomination, the candidate will need to submit a Letter of Personal Attestation (form #553)

8. The committee shall seek nominees for any office where no nomination or acceptance of nomination has been received by the deadline date inscribed on the nomination form.



The VP must be contacted to confirm with her that she is willing to serve. It can also be done in person, or by email. An example of the letter:

Dear Andrea,

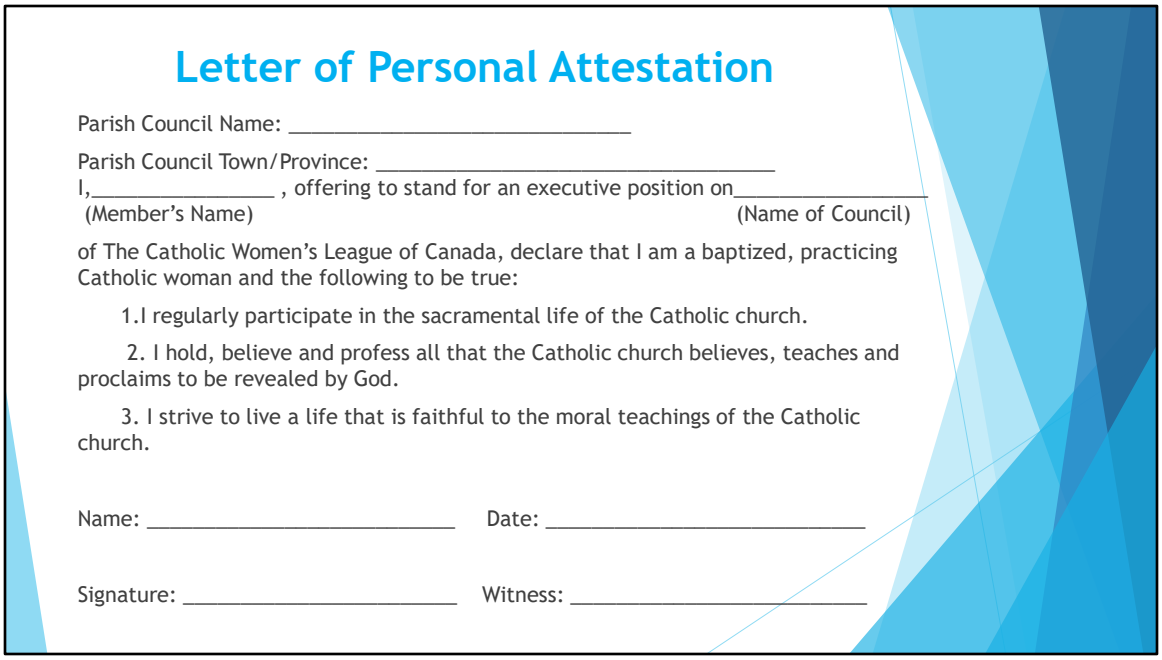
In April 2026 you were elected to the position of Vice-President of the Toronto Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada. Since that time, you have performed your duties as specified in Part XII, Section 2 of the CWL Constitution & Bylaws (2023).

As outlined in the National Policy and Procedures Manual (page 88), your affirmation and willingness to assume the office of president for the next two-year term (2028-2030) must be received before I can complete the eligibility list for all positions. Please confirm in writing on the attached form, (as you see on the screen) your willingness to accept the position of President of the Toronto Diocesan Council for the 2028-2030 term. God bless you Andrea and may Our Lady of Good Counsel accompany you as you continue your service to God and Canada.

Sincerely,

Kate O'Quinn, Chair, Nominations and Elections Committee

A signed letter of affirmation by the VP is required before starting the eligibility list.



Any member offering her name to stand for an executive position (by election or appointment) at any level of the League will submit this Personal Attestation declaring her standing in the Catholic church and her practice of her faith. Once completed, it is to be submitted by the member to the applicable nominations and elections committee.

Suggested Procedure:

1. The Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee gives every member allowing her name to stand for election the form. The member submits the completed form to the nomination and elections committee.
2. 2. The committee reviews the form and documents having received the completed form by way of a checklist to indicate receipt.
3. 3. The completed form is then returned to the member for safekeeping.

Positions Open For Nomination

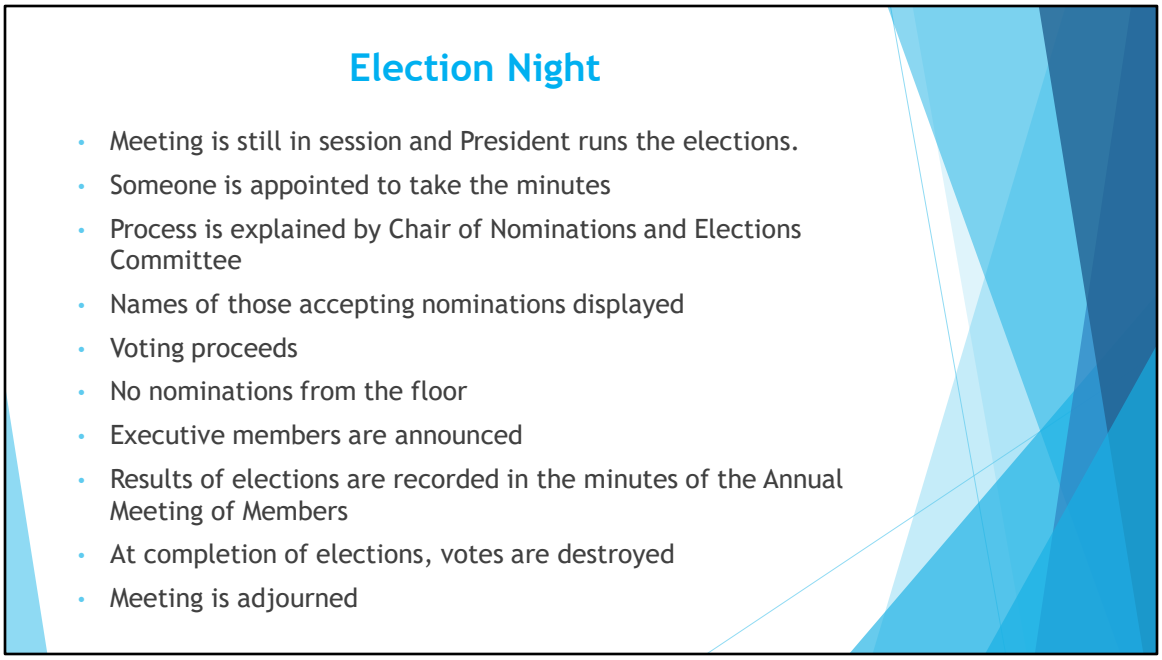
- President (if there is no elected Vice-President)
- Vice president
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Standing Committee Chairs (3)

Standing Committee Chairs are not elected to a particular committee but appointed to one by the president after the election

Experience Required

- For most positions no experience is required, just enthusiasm and a willingness to serve.
- If standing for Treasurer position, candidate should have some experience with keeping financial records.
- If standing for Secretary position, candidate should have access to a computer and printer.
- Training is available if needed. Contact diocesan president, Connie Cristinziano
- Information on positions available in the C&B and in the Handbooks and Toolkits, all found on National website:

  www.cwl.ca



The night of the election:

▪ At the end of the business meeting the president will ask any current officers to leave the head table.

▪ The president will remain in the chair during the election process and will appoint someone who is not running for office to take the minutes of the election process. The meeting is still in session and won't be adjourned until after the election is complete. It is suggested to use the rite of election found on pages 19-20 of the Ceremony booklet. A simple prayer may be substituted if the spiritual advisor is not present.

▪ The president will call on the chair of elections to give a report on the nomination process and explain how the election process will proceed.

*The Order of Voting is as follows: (President, if there is no elected vice-president to take the office), Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chairpersons of Standing Committees (three)

▪ The committee shows, on a flip chart or overhead, the names of all those who have accepted to let their name stand for election and the positions for which they are standing. This list is kept confidential until it is displayed for the assembly to see. She then introduces them to the assembly.

▪ It is advisable to have the spiritual advisor present for the counting of the votes.

▪ For positions where only one candidate has accepted nomination, the president will ask for a motion that the candidate be declared elected.
▪ For officer positions where more than one candidate has accepted nomination, the members vote by secret ballot. Ballots will be handed out by the committee and counted by the committee and Spiritual Advisor. The Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee passes the results to the president to announce. The successful candidate is the one who receives the majority of votes..
▪ For election of standing committee chairs, the chair will announce three positions are required. If only that number of candidates is listed, the president will ask for a motion to declare all these candidates elected.
▪ If there are more candidates than positions, there will be a secret ballot, and members will be asked to list only sufficient names to meet the positions open. The successful candidates will be chosen from those who have received the highest number of votes, to fill the required number of positions. Names are announced alphabetically
▪ If all positions are not filled**, nominations from the floor on election night are not acceptable.** Members may offer to fill vacant positions and the new president may appoint that member or another member to take on vacant positions, after discussing this with her new executive.
▪ The outgoing president will introduce the new executive.
▪ The meeting is adjourned.
* Results of the elections (name and office) must be recorded in the minutes of the annual meeting of members. When results of the election have been duly recorded, the nomination forms and the ballots shall be destroyed (C&B, Part XVI, Section 5 (f)) by the nominations and elections committee and spiritual advisor.
* The nominations and elections committee is dissolved.

Vacancies

Any office left vacant following the election shall be filled from those eligible for nomination to office in that council (C&B, Part XVI, Section 5 (e)

In the event of a vacancy in the office of vice-president **during her term,** the secretary shall perform the duties of the vice-president until the next election. She shall not be appointed to the office of vice-president nor assume the office of president.
In the event of a vacancy in the office of vice-president **after an election is held,** an "acting" vice-president may be appointed by the president in consultation with the executive and the spiritual advisor. The "acting" vice-president shall perform the duties of the vice-president until the next election. She shall not automatically move to the office of president at the time of the next election. She may be nominated and elected to the position of president as long as she meets the eligibility criteria and has not held the office of president on that council before.
In the event of a vacancy in any other office than president or vice-president, a member shall be appointed by the president in consultation with the executive and the spiritual advisor and shall serve until the next election.
**If the office of president is vacant following elections, an "acting president" should be adopted by motion of the executive of the council.. (C&B, Part XI, Section 4 (c))

After Elections

1.The newly elected officers assume the duties and responsibilities of their respective office immediately following the annual meeting of members.

2. The formal installation of officers should take place as soon as possible after the annual meeting of members during a Eucharistic celebration using the Installation of Officers Ceremony found in the (603) Ceremonies Handbook.

3. Within two weeks of the election, the council secretary must send a list of the newly elected executive, including all their contact information, to their diocesan and provincial councils.