



Catholic Women's League Australia Inc

Member Organisation of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO)
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National newsletter

Behold the miracle of creation



**All Correspondence to Catholic Women's League Australia (Inc)
PO Box 458, Australind, WA 6233**

President: Valma Ivory
Ph: 08 9758 8658 M: 0428 760784
Email: wdandvmivory@westnet.com.au

Secretary: Maria Parkinson
Ph: 08 9751 1936 M: 0428 771140
Email: maria.parkinson@westnet.com.au

Treasurer: Fran Mulcahy
M: 0429 011564
Email: franmulcahy23@outlook.com



The president's report

Valma Ivory

Six months have flown by since we officially took the reins of National Executive and, looking back in time, I am grateful for all the support and assistance our National Executive have received from the Member Organisations and Convenors.

Public Relations Officer Mrs Rosie Robertson has made our life easier with her work on developing our new website, updating information on each Member Organisation, adding current news such as Social Issues and Bioethics to the site and monitoring the usage of the site. Her formatting of the Newsletter into a neat publication and adding it as a flip book on the website is done efficiently. We look for input from all members as you use the website so that we can develop it to a point where you can easily find the information you need and add News alerts for important events in each MO region. Rosie will report on her work at the Mid-Term Council meeting.

I am about to fly across 'the ditch' to join our sisters, New Zealand Catholic Women's League members, at their National Conference in Wellington. Members from Queensland and New South Wales are also attending the conference so I will be able to spend some time with them as well.

All necessary administration for WUCWO General Assembly has been completed. Catherine McGrath has been a great help to ensure all paperwork was correct and sent in time. I'm so grateful for her time for a quick call and counsel. Madeleine Banister, our National International Secretary is our voting delegate. As National President I am second delegate and Peg McEntee is third delegate. I am delighted to learn that there will be a small delegation also attending from the east coast.

I have accepted invitations to attend State Conferences in Hobart, Wollongong and Ayr. I am eager to hear the good work that continues across the nation and meet as many members as possible. Reading reports from State Presidents has given me a peek into some of the activities but joining the membership in this forum will reinforce my great regard of the collective power of the good works of CWLA.



Praise my God and sing to him; praise the Lord with drums and cymbals; play a new song for him. Praise him and call on him for help.
Judith 16:2

A note from our chaplain

Fr Jess Sargado Navarra

A JOURNEY TO THE HOLY LAND

"Tourists pass through the land. But pilgrims allow the land to pass them."

In May, twenty eight pilgrims from some Parishes of the Bunbury and Perth Dioceses journeyed into the most sacred space "The Holy Land" where God entered into a relationship with a human race.

Some of the pilgrims are members of Catholic Women's League in their respective parishes. We walked through and visited the Holy sites with much humility, curiosity and openness and at the same time we listened to the voice of the Land, its people and its stories.

We came back with lots of fond and cherished memories that will last forever.

My words of encouragement to my fellow pilgrims towards the end of the journey was to find ways of integrating the enriching experiences into their daily lives.

"I was glad when they said to me, 'let us go to the house of the Lord!' Our feet are standing within the gates, O Jerusalem." Ps 122



Tasmania

Deirdre Reid

Our Tassie ladies are busy at present trying to persuade more ladies to join the League. Our lovely new chaplain, Father Jaison, suggested that we give a short talk at Masses, to let people know what we are about.

It is hard to believe, but we have discovered there are some who have never heard of CWL. This initiative is now happening with flyers being handed out after the talk.

We are enjoying extra social times and recently there was a lunch at Wrest Point for all Southern ladies. It was an enjoyable time when many 'older' past members caught up - all friends together in a lovely setting.

Our executive recently travelled to the north of the state to a meeting at George Town; then the next day meeting up with Launceston ladies and some from the North West for a meeting and lunch. A couple of ladies detoured on the way, to attend the funeral of one of our former State Presidents - Mary Binks OAM. She was the first lady Mayor of Devonport and was farewelled with a beautiful Requiem Mass. Mary was one of our treasures.

George Town members told us of a special day they had on Mother's Day, when they hired their school bus and toured their Parish, stopping in each section to set up their little altar for Our Lady, to say prayers and decades of the Rosary. Apparently some people passing by on a walk joined in - what a wonderful day they had. They mean to make it an annual event.

Sadly Tasmania has lost two more branches, but a couple of their ladies have become Diocesan Members and are still involved.

May was a busy month, with annual meetings and WUCWO prayer and gathering days. These were well attended and enjoyable.

This year is our Conference Year and plans are well under way for the last three days in August.

We are looking forward to having our National President Valma Ivory in attendance. We are very fortunate to have 'The Dynamic Duo' - Doctor Deirdre Little and our National Research Officer, Sonia Di Mezza, coming to be our keynote speakers.

We pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit will be with us over that time to bring new life and enthusiasm to CWL Tasmania.



South Australia

Cecilia Quigley

At the moment, four members of our State Executive have been planning for a State CWL Conference in September. After the National Conference in Adelaide in 2017, I felt it was important to action one of our motions – the unpacking of Pope Francis' Encyclical, *Laudato Si*. We have arranged for three excellent speakers, Julian Kluge, a religious education consultant from the Catholic Education Office in Adelaide; Alice Dunlop, our agitator, who has set up her own ecological sustainability business and is a co-founder of "Little Earthies"; and Sophie Thomson, a passionate gardener who works in the media and on Gardening Australia.

The date for the Conference is Friday 21 September. Our State Chaplain, Fr John Herd, will close the day with Mass. I feel very excited as we now come closer to the day – it is a day for any concerned members of our communities with relation to caring for our environment. One of our country branches, Whyalla, was going to close, but thanks to Fr Monahan, who spoke at Masses one weekend about the vital role CWL members have played in the past in supporting women and their families, a new committee was formed, and the branch is now ready to go again. I had hoped to go up to Whyalla for their Vicariate meeting but was unable to do so. I am preparing to visit sometime this year.

The CEO of the Hutt Street Centre was our guest speaker at our six monthly State Council meeting. At the end of his talk we asked what we could do to support the organisation. He has asked us to walk with our CWL banner when the Centre has "Walk a mile in my boots day" which is on Friday 10 August at 7:30am. So we are going to do that! I'm not sure how many members we will have as our members are getting older and the weather is not so good in Adelaide at this time, but we'll have a go! We are to meet inside Victoria Park parklands at 7:00am, off Wakefield Road.

The Archdiocesan CWL branch held a very successful Film Morning in June, raising money for pet shelters at one of our new Safe houses run by Vinnies in the northern district. They raised \$3,500! A magnificent effort! Congratulations to all those involved in this activity.

I have attended two Regional meetings, one at Keith in the upper South East and one at Stirling in the Adelaide Hills. The reports from each branch at these meetings have confirmed the amazing support given to their communities. I'm not sure how many parishes would prosper were it not for our CWL members.



Our new office space is slowly becoming a nice place, but still much work to do in buying new furniture and sorting through many old records that will be archived. Four of our members are journeying to Perth for the Midterm Conference on August 10 – two from Adelaide and two from the Port Pirie Diocese. We are very much looking forward to catching up and listening to reports from the other states.

Blessings to you all!

Western Australia

Bev Macri

We are thankful for the wonderful rains Western Australia has received recently. I'm sure all of the farmers in our Wheat Belt have welcomed it, along with our own personal gardens that seem to have taken on a happy face! Winter is always a time that makes me appreciate seasons, each one has its good and bad aspects, a bit like our own lives and we must learn to accept both.

At our recent State Council meeting we were blessed to have our Chaplain Fr Laurence back with us after his recent illness which left him out of action for about six months. He is able to return home soon for a holiday in Ireland with family. We wish him safe travels. At our meeting Fr Laurence spoke about the forthcoming meeting on families to be held in Dublin in August which will be attended by Pope Francis. He also reminded all members to participate as fully as possible in preparations for the forthcoming Plenary Council in Australia.

The Bunbury branch celebrated its 50th Anniversary on the 28 April with a Mass and a wonderful luncheon. Members travelled from various parts of the state to attend and all enjoyed the celebrations as well as the display of historic items and memorabilia which the members from Bunbury had prepared. It was also a great opportunity to catch up with members who due to travel distances we don't often see at our gatherings.

The winner of our Annual Scholarship for a female student to attend Notre Dame University was Amy Colgan from Esperance. Amy is studying for a Bachelor of Nursing degree and was thrilled to receive this award.

Our delegates and Alternate Delegates will be attending the coming CWLA Midterm Conference that will be held in Perth on the 11-12 August.

CWLWA Social Issues Convenor Lynne Buzzard has been closely following information about the "End of Life choices" that is presently being finalized by the Joint select committee, to go before WA Parliament. We understand that WA Parliamentarians will have a conscience vote so we will be busy finding out who our local WA members are and will encourage CWL members to make personal contact. Another local issue concerns WA coming into line with the National Disability Insurance Scheme, between August and December 2018.

Delegates on State Council continue to do a wonderful job keeping in touch with the various CWLWA branches and associate members; noting what they are doing and reporting back to state council. I thank them all for this very important task in keeping us all connected. CWLWA recently held their AGM/Teleconference. I thank the wonderful members who have nominated for various positions on State Council for 2019. Without your commitment to our organization we would not exist.

Thankfully our membership has remained the same for 2018 and branches continue to hold meetings that involve guest speakers who are interesting and a lot can be learnt from them. We keep our CWL members and families in our prayers especially those who may be struggling with ill health.

Queensland

Veronica Box

It seems that our membership this year will reach the 700 mark, which is about a 7% decline from last year. While this is disappointing, there is room for hope, as some branches have reported new members.

The on-going revival of Catholic Women's League in the city of Townsville has been very good news. The President of the new Townsville branch, Rosalie Totorica will accompany me to the Mid Term Council Meeting to gain experience in the working of our organisation. A new member, Rosalie is very enthusiastic and eager to learn.

Visiting the different dioceses for their AGMs and Yearly Conferences, I am very humbled by the dedication of our members, and impressed by their creativity.

In April, Brisbane Archdiocese held their Annual Thanksgiving Mass in our beloved Cathedral of St Stephen, with Archbishop Mark Coleridge as celebrant. This was followed by the AGM in the Cathedral Coffee Lounge, and a delightful lunch, which was attended by representatives of other denominations and organisations. President Sandy O'Donohue will continue as President as there have been no nominations for the position. The Coffee Lounge has existed in the basement of the building, now known as Penola House, since 1992, with a paid supervisor and a volunteer staff. This is a little haven of serenity in the busy CBD, as well as providing funds for the rental of the meeting rooms. I think this is probably unique in Catholic Women's League.

I was privileged to attend the Rockhampton Diocesan 60th AGM and Conference in June, in the tropical city of Mackay. Mass was concelebrated by Bishop Michael McCarthy, Monsignor John Grace, the Rector of the Holy Spirit Seminary and several priests. Surely this shows how highly these women are regarded for all the multitude of ministries they perform in their communities. Delegates from every branch attended the AGM/Conference and gave their branch reports. Old friendships were renewed during the delicious luncheon which was a very joyful event.

In the North they are working very diligently to make the State Conference in September a success, while still serving their parishes in many ways. They are looking forward to welcoming National President Valma and NIS Madeleine Banister.

Members are looking forward to participating in the preparation for the Plenary Council. These are not easy days for the Church and Catholic Women's League, but the Holy Spirit will guide us to where we are meant to be.

Love and blessings.



Victoria and Wagga Wagga

Jane Munro

Earlier this year the Governing Board decided to run a survey as part of an advanced planning scheme. Members were asked what the League does best; what they like to take part in best; what they find hard to take part in; how we can better promote the teachings of Christ on the dignity, integrity and freedom of each person; communication; networking and suggestions for the future.

The responses were heartfelt and practical. The next phase is dreaming of a future organisation incorporating these ideas – one that has less governance but reaches out more, in a variety of ways. We are grateful to Ann Robinson for collating the responses.

The Working Party on Social Media reports that our new website is just about ready. Check it out at cwlvicww@bigpond.org.au

All this year, The Horizon has featured pictures of youth on the front cover, as part of the Year of Youth. The current front page is of children from Sacred Heart School in Fitzroy. Sacred Heart School is among the ones that receive support from our Missions and Welfare Committee. This support includes the purchase of Myki cards for the public transport system or the provision of school uniforms.

Mary Glowrey House, very ably run by our Manager, John Good, receives quiet, but heart-warming messages of gratitude from people who have stayed there whilst their loved ones are in nearby major hospitals. It is available for short term stays for people visiting Melbourne too.

The Mary Glowrey Prayer Group continues to grow in numbers. They offer prayers of intercession requested by Members and others.

The first question asked by the Plenary Council was broad and general, so we are looking at what God is asking of the Church in the light of our Aims, Objects and Purposes. This will form part of our General Conference in late August. Anima Women's Network, with whom we have a Memorandum of Understanding, ran Mini-Retreats during Advent last year and Lent this year. Monica Russell has a new plan for October this year. Check their website for details at www.animanetwork.org.

The Catholic Women's League of Victoria and Wagga Wagga also has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mary Glowrey Heritage Limited, which opened a Museum featuring the work of Dr Sr Mary Glowrey in a room above Cathedral Hall, at the Australian Catholic University. Cathedral Hall was where over 2000 women met to launch the Catholic Women's Social Guild (as CWL was called) on 1 October 1916, with Dr Mary Glowrey as the first President. The Museum was part of the upstairs rooms used, as offices, by the Catholic Women's Social Guild for many years.

Cathedral Hall was also the site of light refreshments after the Farewell Mass for Archbishop Hart, on 21st July. We are very grateful to Archbishop Hart for his assistance to the League over the last several years. Many members attended the Farewell Mass.

Judging by the huge crowd present many Melburnians and Victorians appreciated his 17 years of guiding the Church, as Archbishop, especially through some very difficult times.

New South Wales

Anne Pereira

We in New South Wales are very busy at the moment preparing for our State Conference. This year it will be held in Wollongong 5-6 September. I am sure everyone is familiar with the work that goes on behind the scenes to put a conference together. We have a very supportive committee involved in preparations who are responsible for most of the local activities and I thank them for all they are doing. We pray that all goes well.

Some of you may remember Helen Wyborn and her involvement with Bioethics. She did much research for numerous causes at all levels in our organisation. Helen passed away this week, and we ask you to remember her in your prayers. Many of our members are experiencing ill health currently and we continue to pray for them. Several members have had deaths in their families and again we pray that they are comforted in their grief.

I am off to New Zealand for their Conference Tuesday 24 July and staying on for extra days. On my return I head off to Perth for the Mid-term and then it is only three weeks to the conference! I appreciate the support and assistance of my executive and am confident that they will take care of things in my absence.

We continue to pray for our drought-stricken farmers. Many have planted crops and are now waiting for rain. Some areas are holding fund raisers for food, clothing, basic toiletries, and feed.

Recently at the Jean Arnot Memorial Luncheon, CWLNSW had nine ladies in their ninetieth year recognised for their service to the community.

We acknowledge the contribution these wonderful ladies have made to our organisation and the community in general. Many of them are still working in various volunteer roles in their home town.

May you enjoy this winter season and appreciate all the gifts we have been given.

Mary Help of Christians, pray for us, and we will forward information.



Social issues

Anne-Marie Ferry

Pope Francis tells us that “blessed” in the Beatitudes actually means “holy” and that we are all called upon to be holy.

“I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me” (Matthew vv 35-36)

Let us try to keep that in mind as we try to respond in a practical way to what Jesus needs done for him in our community – not only discerning the Christian response but seeing Jesus in each needy group below.

LOW PAID WORKERS

As of 1 June 2018, low paid workers received an increase of \$24.30 per week in the minimum wage. This was half of the increase sought, but the question is whether the economic system is fair to the neediest.

Reports of “wage-theft” continue to make the news, so the problem of vulnerable workers being paid less than they should be seems to be widespread.

ASYLUM SEEKERS

Nearly 1700 former Manus Island detainees have received their compensation following Australia’s largest human rights class action settlement. A PNG court ruled their detention on Manus Island was illegal. The Australian government did not admit liability. (The Centre has been closed.)

Meanwhile protests by religious and welfare organisations continue about the cuts to the Status Resolution Support Services for asylum seekers in Australia. Their lives are being made more difficult as a result of the changes affecting those arriving after 1 April, according to spokespeople.

The Australian government has also moved to limit those 100 or so asylum seekers here for medical treatment to 6-month bridging visas.

ELDER ABUSE DAY

Older Australians were the focus on 15 June. While older people can be subjected to all the same sorts of domestic violence as the broader community, they are particularly vulnerable to financial abuse – the pressure to hand over their funds or control of their affairs. A national bank register will be set up to monitor withdrawal patterns of suspected victims.

ANTI-SLAVERY BILL

NSW passed anti-slavery legislation in June after campaigns about the plight of women and girls forced into the sex trade in South East Asia, the use of slave labour in the supply chains for many products we unwittingly buy, organ trafficking and a broad range of other exploitative practices. Supporters of the legislation see it is only a start, saying it needs to be widened and be adopted nationally.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE BILL

In recognition of the fact that advocacy for disadvantaged groups is part of the legitimate function of charitable organisations, charities have been exempted from the Federal government’s foreign influence bill (passed in June.)

AFFORDABLE / SOCIAL HOUSING

While Vinnies and other organisations are still busy dealing with increasing numbers of homeless people, the Federal Government has established a new infrastructure fund to boost the supply of affordable and social housing. Hopefully this funding will go some way to addressing the need and be rolled out promptly.

INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

There are reports of a ten-fold over-representation of indigenous young people in the criminal justice system. According to the Jesuit Social Services, this statistic shows the system is failing vulnerable young people. Other options need to be found for them.

The welfare system also seems to be failing vulnerable children, with the spotlight on a number of children in foster care suffering abuse instead of being protected.

On the positive side, the Federal Government has approved a large amount of funding for the provision of new housing in remote aboriginal communities over the next ten years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday was celebrated on the first Sunday in July, acknowledging the gifts ATSI people bring to the church community.

8-14 July was NAIDOC week, and this year's theme was "Because of Her, We can." There were celebrations of the role of indigenous women across Australia and in all levels of our national life.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Australia does not have a Bill of Rights enshrining the right to free speech. Two recent issues have highlighted the need for tolerance and respect. One concerns recent NSW legislation forbidding anti-abortion protests near abortion centres, and a case being brought against a Victorian woman for breaching similar laws in Victoria. While she is opposed to abortion, her argument is about being able to protest and the most effective way to do this is in the vicinity of the issue (think anti-logging protests or union picket lines.)

Queensland is set to debate abortion again in October and wants to have 150m safe zones introduced there too.

The Minister for Home Affairs Mr Dan Tehan has spoken out in the context of people's freedom to express their religious beliefs but we are still waiting to hear the Government's response to the Ruddock review of religious freedom (in the wake of the same sex marriage legislation.)

In both these issues we believe that everyone should be able to put their point of view, not be silenced or disenfranchised when certain practices are legal in our society. Jesuit lawyer and panel member Fr Frank Brennan is suggesting the same sex marriage or anti-discrimination legislation may need to be "tweaked." We are hoping for something more than tweaking....



Please can you let Anne-Marie Ferry know about any issues which require our attention. Anne-Marie's email is amjferry@gmail.com

Report from WUCWO board member

Catherine V McGrath

I thank you most sincerely for the faith you have placed in me and for the nomination by CWLA for my third term on the WUCWO Board. I am also very pleased that you have considered nominating, once again, Australia for General Assembly 2022 and look forward to working together with CWLA if we are successful in this bid.

Everything in relation to WUCWO from my perspective as Board Member has been progressing very well as we prepare for General Assembly 2018 being held in Dakar, Senegal in October this year. It will be a completely different General Assembly, so we believe; as such an important event in the life of WUCWO has never before been presented by an African Country. I am not sure of the numbers at this point but they were a little slow to come in at the time of the first deadline but they have since increased. I am sure the numbers will be comparable with General Assemblies of the past.

The Asia Pacific Mass for 17 October has been prepared and forwarded to the WUCWO Secretariat for printing in the official booklet. I thank Valma and her Executive for completing, before time, all the documentation required by each member organization prior to the General Assembly. This is no small undertaking. WUCWO Day was celebrated successfully throughout all areas with the liturgy prepared by the Asia Pacific Region. Hopefully, all monies collected in conjunction with the day have been forwarded to WUCWO. WUCWO is now officially domiciled in Italy.

WUCWO offered a scholarship to a young person between 18-35 years of age who was interested in the social media aspect in particular, of WUCWO.

I will continue with the rest of my work for WUCWO in the Region and in close communication with CWLA.



May Our Lady Queen of Peace be with us in all our endeavours.

A prayer for families

Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, USCCB

In August the Pope's prayer intention is for **the Treasure of Families**—that any far-reaching decisions of economists and politicians may protect the family as one of the treasures of humanity.

*We bless your name, O Lord,
for sending your own incarnate Son,
to become part of a family,
so that, as he lived its life,
he would experience its worries and its
joys.*

*We ask you, Lord,
to protect and watch over this family,
so that in the strength of your grace
its members may enjoy prosperity,
possess the priceless gift of your peace,
and, as the Church alive in the home,
bear witness in this world to your glory.*

We ask this thought Christ our Lord.

Amen.

