



**January 2022 Edition**

Featuring the St. Catharines Diocese and OPC Resolution

**“Care for our Common Home”**



*Colleen's Communications*

"Greetings and Happy New Year 2022.

I came across the following blessing by Joyce Rupp and felt that it was appropriate as we begin again this new year. Enjoy it!

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*I hope for you in this new year of 2022*

*That the single, most significant dimension of life is your relationship with the Source of Goodness who never ceases to sing love songs to your soul*

*That you find meaning, purpose, and vitality in what you do daily*

*That you treasure your loved ones and let them know how dear they are to you*

*That you make choices and decisions that reflect your truest self*

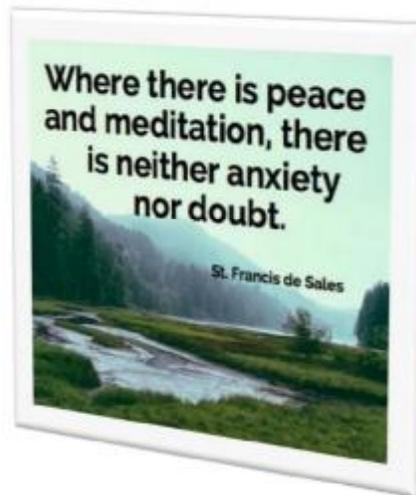
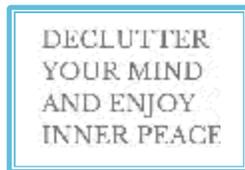
*That you look in the mirror at least once a day and smile in happy amazement*

*That you remember relationships are what count above all else – more than work or money, or all the material things we spend so much time tending*

*That you live in an uncluttered manner, enjoying the freedom to be content*  
*That you keep your sense of humor when things don't go the way you want*  
*That you find adventure in each new day and marvel at the wonders of creation*  
*which constantly present themselves to you*  
*That you never give up on yourself when others turn away or do not understand*  
*That you are attentive to the health of your body, mind, and spirit*  
*That you take risks and accept the growth-full challenges that come to you*  
*That you draw on your inner strength and resiliency when you are in need*  
*That you carry peace within yourself, allowing it to slip into the hearts of others*  
*so our planet becomes a place where violence, division, and war are no more*

May the peace that our faith provides us provide you with comfort and grace.

Yours in faith,  
*Colleen Perry*



## St. Catharines Diocesan Council



The Diocese of St. Catharines is comprised of 32 parishes spread out through the agricultural Niagara Region. The inception of St. Mary Catholic Women's League in Welland was our first Catholic Women's League Council in the region and started not long after the National League was established. Through the years, the faith, determination, and conviction in these women's beliefs has carried on through the decades and is an example to all. I feel very honoured to be the President of such a devoted and faith filled diocese.

At the end of last year, The Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria celebrated their CWL 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a Mass said by Bishop Gerard Bergie and parish priest, Fr. Donald Lizotti.



**St. Mary celebrates 100 Years**

St. Mary in Welland celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021. To recognize this extraordinary achievement, Community Life Chair applied to the City of Welland to have this celebration recognized in a floral tribute for all Welland to see. Not only a great idea, but so much recognition for our beloved league!



From left, member Sandy Sardelli, President Florence Paul, and Community Life Chair Muriel Dyson

**2021 Council Anniversaries:**

St. Mary, Welland, January 11th, 1921:	...	...	100th Anniversary
Our Lady of the Holy Rosary - March 15th, 1926:	...	...	95th Anniversary
Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria			
- October 27th, 1936:	...	...	85 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
St. Therese of Lisieux - January 24th, 1951:	...	...	70th Anniversary
St. Elizabeth - April 11, 1951:	...	...	70th Anniversary
St. Patrick, Port Colborne - April 24, 1951:	...	...	70th Anniversary
St. Kevin - October 1, 1951:	...	...	70 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
St. George - December 13th, 1956:	...	...	65th Anniversary
St. Thomas More - December 14th, 1956:	...	...	65 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
St. Martin of Tours - March 19, 1961:	...	...	60th Anniversary
Our Lady of the Holy Scapular - December 5th, 1961:	...	...	60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary



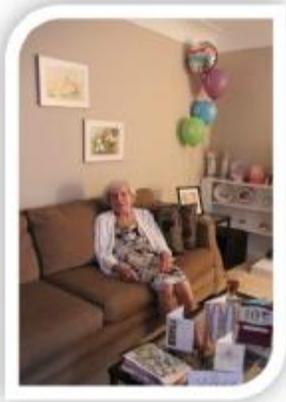
Lorrie MacKenzie, St Kevin CWL President and Mary Fromberger.

**Maple Leaf ServicePin Recipients:**

- Mary Fromberger, St. Kevin Council, Welland
- Bonnie Koabel, St. George Council, Crystal Beach
- Naty Canaria, St. Julia Council, St. Catharines
- Olga Rosinski, St. Ann Council, Fenwick
- Colleen Drake, St. Helen Council, Haldimand



In February the Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria Council started a prayer shawl ministry.

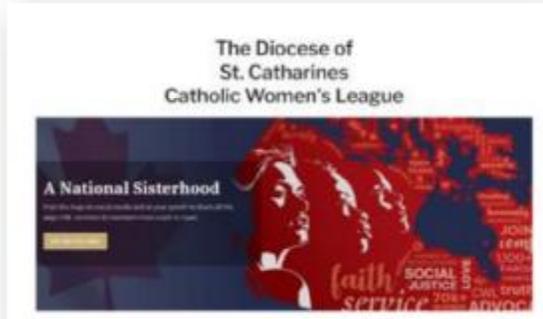


Ann Kneal, a resident of Grimsby and a member of St. Helen Council in Beamsville turned 105 on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Kneal received cards from across Canada from her sisters in the league, including then President, Anne Gorman and then President Elect, Fran Lucas!

In April, St. Helen Council in Beamsville planted their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tree. After lockdown was lifted, on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, the tree was Blessed.



In May – Although still on lockdown, many parishes across the Diocese celebrated the Crowning of Mary. Flowers were left near Mary’s statues in vases done during a designated period to follow social distancing laws.



In June, the diocese launched a new website. Please visit at <https://stcatharinescwl.ca/>

June 1 – Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Community celebrated Bishop O’Mara’s 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his ordination. The League delivered a Living Mass Card , a "Cheers" congratulations card and a photo album filled with photos and memories of times shared with the League, Priests and Parishioners. The photos of him in his vestments were taken at CWL Diocesan Convention.



Bishop John O'Mara, Bishop of the Diocese of St. Catharines from February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1994, to November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2001

June 21st was National Indigenous People's Day – Star of the Sea Council, held a Mass on June 23rd for Healing and Reconciliation, followed by an additional prayer service in Mary's Garden in which members filled out messages of hope and apologies on the orange hearts, which were strung on the bench in the Mary Garden where they remain.



In July, Star of the Sea Parish celebrated its 150th Anniversary, a much scaled down event. The council was instrumental in helping and planning a Mass for members to attend and celebrate this historical event.

Lifelong Star of the Sea parishioner, Dorothy McIntyre donated her George Upper painting of Star of the Sea to Father Richard Kowalchuk



**St. Kevin Council 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass** – Lorrie MacKenzie, CWL President at St. Kevin led the council and parish in a special evening Mass on Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup> to celebrate this momentous occasion. All Diocesan members were invited to attend.

A charter was applied for on October 4, 1951, forming the beginning of St. Kevin's League. During this time, they honoured the three Life Members in the council: Marg LaRose, Lois Anderson, and Billie Lottridge. Over the 70 years they have awarded 547 Service Pins.

The Maple Leaf Service Pin, which was introduced in 1971, awarded for exemplary service to the Catholic Women's League has been awarded 22 times. The most recent to receive this year was Mary Fromberger. At the beginning of the 1980's the Council had over 500 members. This parish is a Blessing to the Diocese.



**Landscape of Nations:** A Cultural & Historic Journey at Queenston Heights Park, a self-guided prayer walk was held for the Diocese on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Authored by Linda Dirks and led by Wilma Vanderzwaag, about 40 people attended the walk. It was both educational and prayerful and this is a time in history for us to be aware and learn. Deedee Alexandre ended the walk by leading with the Rosary.



Individual parishes did the walk as well. St. Thomas Aquinas chose to do it as a parish!

More pictures and information can be found at <https://stcatharinescw.ca/> under Who We Are: Diocesan Photos and Event Opportunities



On October 16<sup>th</sup>, St. Helen Council in Beamsville, participated in the Holy Rosary Crusade. Parishes across the Diocese celebrated this crusade at different times and places, but with the same powerful prayer to Our Lady.

Members praying the Rosary



In December, Colleen Drake was awarded the Maple Leaf Service Pin from St. Helen's Council.

Our Lady of the Scapular Council, celebrated years of service with pin awards and leadership certificates. Pictured is President Carol Lundy with Lucie Carey receiving her 65-year pin! Lucie is an inspiration to us all!!!



Carol Lundy

At the beginning of October, across the Niagara Region, peaceful protests were supporting Right to Life. It was a very rainy and damp day, but CWL members still went out.

October – Socks, socks, and more socks! Once again, members were working to keep the homeless warm. The Diocese collected 2500 pairs of socks and blankets, hats, scarves, and mittens that were donated to "Out of the Cold".



November – Parishes across the Diocese celebrated Mass for their deceased members and relatives related to current members. It was a very moving Mass celebrated with fellow sisters.

The Veterans were honoured with a wreath of remembrance placed at the Cenotaph on Main Street, in St. Catharines, ON. The members feel this is an important element of respect and appreciation for our current freedom.





November 14<sup>th</sup> – Deedee Alexandre received blessing from the Diocesan Spiritual Adviser, Father Richard Kowalchuk before attending Mass in Hamilton, where she and 4 other women joined the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel and of the Holy Mother Saint Teresa of Jesus. This is a third order of Catholic lay persons and secular clergy associated with the Discalced Carmelites.

Secular Discalced Carmelites profess promises to strive to live evangelical perfection in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, and of the beatitudes.

St. Alexander members celebrated in Deedee's joining. Back Row: Debbie Pine, Deedee Alexandre, and Sue Pellerin. Front Row, Suzanne Tiffin, Donna Bitondo, and Dora Mammerella

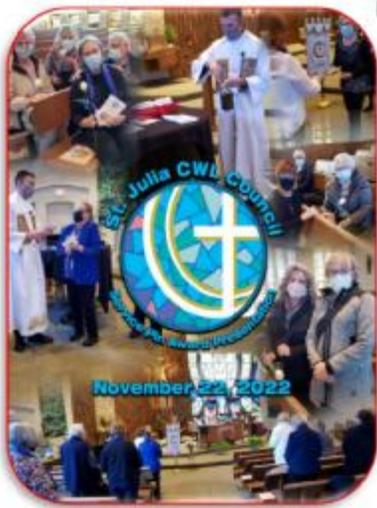


November 22 – For St. Julia's Council, the highlight of the year was on November 22, 2021. It proved to be a beautiful day... a day when friends and members of the Council were finally able to gather, in person, to recognize the sisters in the League.

The event started with a prayer service led by the Spiritual Adviser, Fr. Gregory Schmidt, who blessed service pins before they were presented to the long-time members, as well as to the new members for the year 2019 and 2020. Bernice Côté said in her poem, "that the CWL pin is a "symbol of service to the world" ...a testament to the dedication of our sisters to years "of involvement... of participation... of citizenship... in the finest tradition of volunteerism". We are blessed to be part of this Sisterhood! May our Patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel, continue to guide and protect us".

During the ceremony, Naty Canaria was presented with the Maple Leaf Service Pin.

Here is a collage of pictures of that wonderful afternoon.



On November 23rd, Olga Rosinski was presented with the Maple Leaf Service Pin in recognition of her weekly commitment to phoning many of our members who were isolated by Covid and offering a cheery voice! She has always been generous with her time and talents over the years and has been very supportive of all CWL initiatives.

Thank you for your commitment and service, Olga!

Front Row: Olga Rosinski  
 Back row: Linda Addario, Dorle O'Sullivan and Donna Laroque,  
 Parish President of St. Ann



A Diocesan Advent retreat was held on Friday, Nov 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm via Zoom. It was the first Diocesan Advent Retreat in quite some time, and they are hoping to make it an annual event. The theme, "Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while." -Mark 6:31 was very inspirational, led by Spiritual Development Chair, Deedee Alexandre. 28 women attended via Zoom.

**Warm-venber** - St. Ann Council, Fenwick had a successful Warm-venber initiative. There were several new coats donated as well as scarves, mitts, gloves, and socks. Parishioners had purchased coats last year at the end of the season and several items still had the price tags showing the deep discounts they received. What a wonderful idea!

A donation was delivered to Pelham Cares and although they have little space to accept clothing, they do accept coats and boots. When the woman working was shown the wonderful clothing, she accepted it all and mentioned that she would be going right in to call a person who was waiting for a coat to come in. The council is thinking of doing it again next year!

A CWL Advent Retreat was held at Star of the Sea on December 4<sup>th</sup>. It was live streamed, so all were able to participate in some way. Being Mary in a Martha World. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest" - Matthew 11:28.

Spiritual Development Chair Linda Dirks M.Th. led this retreat. Baskets were made for 8 Chez Marie families (new Canadian families) and each participant was asked to bring gloves or mittens and a \$5/- Tim's gift card. Each set was wrapped individually and handed out to those in need. One family Christmas baskets for Chez Marie.





Our Lady of Scapular CWL celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Our Lady of Scapular parish priest, Father Paul MacNeil, Parish CWL President Carol Lundy and National Communications chair, Betty Colaneri

In lieu of the regular Bazaar & Penny Sale (normally the only fundraiser), Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Catholic Women's League, Thorold, Ontario held a 50/50 Draw. Bishop John A. O'Mara (living in residence in our Parish) did the draw of the lucky winner on December 14, 2021. The winner received \$920/-, and Holy Rosary Parish CWL made \$918/-.



Bishop O'Mara pulling the winning ticket



Diocesan Spiritual Adviser, Father Richard Kowalchuk, has been an inspiration to the Diocesan Council. In collaboration with the Diocesan President and Spiritual Development Chair, Father Richard is the driving force to bring more spiritual endeavours to CWL. Spirituality can always be enhanced, but Father Richard's efforts helps members to take a deeper level and become more faith inspired women.

**Congratulations to Betty Colaneri**

Betty, a member of St. Thomas More Council in Niagara Falls, has been elected to First Vice President and Communications Chair for National. The Diocese is proud of Betty and all her accomplishments.



## Resolution

How appropriate that the Resolutions Standing Chair submits an article for the Provincial Newsletter in January.

Everyone is thinking of resolutions as they ring in the New Year. This is the time when many people make resolutions to benefit themselves, usually health related.



The Catholic Women's League of Canada members think of resolutions for a social justice issue, to speak for the vulnerable and those who have no voice.

Do you have an idea for a resolution? What should you do next?

A member that has an issue should bring that issue to their parish council to discuss. Hopefully there are members in the council who would then help with researching this idea and crafting a resolution. The parish council president would then reach out to the Diocesan Resolutions Chair and advise her that the council has begun a resolution.

Your Diocesan Resolution Chair can help with navigating the process for resolutions and perhaps offer assistance with the research. Life Members in your diocese are also a great resource for you to reach out to. Your Diocesan Resolution Chair would keep the Provincial Resolutions Chair up to date on the progress of the resolution and make sure that important dates for the resolution are adhered to. On the National and Provincial website there are resources to help and guide members through the process for resolutions.

Each level of the League is involved and needs to be kept up to date with the progress of the resolution, but it starts in the parish council. This gives our members the voice they need and shows we are a grass roots organization. Each member has the power to create a resolution. Not all resolutions go to our National Council for adoption. Resolutions that are health or education related usually stay with the Provincial Council as these areas are governed provincially.

Some resolutions may only be related to your diocese but are an important issue to the members of the diocese. No two resolutions are the same, but all resolutions have an action plan for your fellow sisters in the League to implement and assist to bring this issue the exposure it needs for success. Do you have an idea for a resolution? That is awesome-start the process!

.....Submitted by Wilma Vanderzwaag, OPC Resolution Chairperson



## An "Eye on Education and Health" ....

*"Whether it is saving the environment, combatting racism,  
protecting human life,  
ensuring safeguards against access to pornography or many other social  
justice issues, members often feel called to act.  
And it is easier and more enriching to do so when others accompany them  
on the journey."*



*(CWL – Faith, Service, Social Justice Brochure)*

As I write this newsletter on a bitterly cold winter day, I thought about the stable where our Lord and Saviour was born. It reminded me of how blessed I am to have shelter and warmth. It is worthwhile to take a step back from our busy lives and to reflect upon the many gifts that God has given us.

Let us continue to pray for those in our communities who have no place to call home.

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### Faith, Service, Social Justice Brochure

The Implementation Committee has developed a beautiful **new** brochure that you can access using this link: <https://cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/627-Faith-Service-Social-Justice-Brochure.pdf>

The brochure highlights ... **Faith** ... **Service** ... **Social Justice** ... and **Sisterhood** ... the friendship that we know and love as members of the League. It is a great read ... check it out!

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In my October newsletter, I mentioned the League's **new** *Catholic Social Teaching Resources* document that provides members with resources to assist in advocating for social justice and Catholic social teaching.

**GOAL:** The Catholic Women's League of Canada addresses and supports Catholic social teaching through advocacy.

**STRATEGY:** Empower members by providing educational opportunities to learn more about Catholic social teaching.

Here is the link: <https://cwl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/624-Catholic-Social-Teaching-Resources.pdf>. As we flip the calendar to celebrate a New Year, perhaps we can take the time to educate ourselves about one (or more) of these resources.

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.....Submitted by Karen McDonald, OPC Education and Health Chairperson



## **Christian Family Life**

### **Catholic Moms Group Info**

(Summarized from notes taken by Pat Weller, CFL Sub-committee)

Catholic Moms Group is a parish-oriented organization bringing Catholic moms together who are looking for spiritual nourishment and a sense of community.

It was founded by Dorothy Pilarski in the Archdiocese of Toronto. Faithful to the magisterium of the Catholic Church, the group offers programs that span the liturgical year, the saints, catechesis, and social issues affecting Catholic moms and their families through a wide variety of resources and activities. It focuses on the vocation of motherhood and its importance in fostering faith in the family and has a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother. To organize, Catholic Moms Groups require consent of their parish priest.

Training and ongoing support is provided for the leaders. With an annual fee, a newly formed group receives a starter kit with a wide range of print resources and full access to all online material. There are currently over 45 Catholic Moms Groups mostly in the Archdiocese of Toronto, but also in St. Catharines and Hamilton Dioceses, in the United States, and currently in the early stages of organizing in Peterborough Diocese.

For more information go to [www.catholicmomsgroup.com](http://www.catholicmomsgroup.com)

or check [www.vimeo.com/519793080](https://www.vimeo.com/519793080) for the short video "About Us"

### **A Prayer for Walking in Love**

(Taken from <https://forthefamily.org>)

God, we come before you and ask you right now to help us walk in love today and every day. Please give us the strength to resist hurting others through our words and actions.

We thank you now, God, that you loved us first and as a result we are able to love. Give us wisdom to see your people as you see them and love them the way you love them.

Show us your ways, Father, so we can be more like you each and every day. We thank you for all of these things in Jesus' Name, Amen!

### **Loneliness and Isolation and Their Ongoing Side Effects**

*by Pat Weller Christian Family Life Sub-committee member*

It has been well documented that social isolation and loneliness can contribute to a myriad of problems affecting both physical and mental health, especially in our elderly population and more specifically as a result of the isolation imposed by Covid-19 restrictions.

Health care professionals use the term deconditioning. It is defined as a complex process of physiological change following a period of inactivity, bedrest, or sedentary lifestyle and can lead to functional losses in such areas as mental status, degree of continence and ability to accomplish activities of daily living<sup>1</sup>. Although deconditioning can be a result of a medical condition, doctors are observing its occurrence among the elderly who have been isolated during Covid-19 restrictions. A recent story on CBC's *The National* included an interview with geriatric physician, Dr. Jacques Lee, Research Chair in Geriatric Research Medicine at Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital<sup>2</sup>. Dr Lee referred to ongoing research to determine long term medical outcomes of deconditioning as a result of the pandemic. Dr. Lee suggests it may take five or ten years to understand the full effects of isolation and loneliness.

Combating the effects of isolation and loneliness has been a focus for our members. They know, only too well, how devastating isolation can be. This CBC story is a reminder that we must continue to seek out the isolated with phone calls, visits, written notes, zoom calls, FaceTime, or any other means that will make a genuine connection. As "witness(es) to the love of God through ministry and service", it is in our Mission Statement to continue to reach out in love and compassion within our own circles, on the peripheries or wherever we see a need.

.....Submitted by Colleen Martin, OPC Christian Family Life Chairperson

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<sup>1</sup> Angela Gillis, Brenda MacDonald, "Deconditioning in the hospitalized elderly", accessed 20/11/2021 [pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16121472/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16121472/)

<sup>2</sup> "Experts worry about lasting effect of seniors' health declines during pandemic", CBC The National, aired 16/11/2021, accessed 21/11/2021 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0glBzipxjc>  
(Please note the segment on the lasting effect of COVID on seniors' health start time is at 21.26)

## ORGANIZATION

### Membership

January is the month when councils focus on collecting memberships for the new year. This task has been a challenging one, as everyone tries to cope with the COVID virus and all its variants. Many councils have seen a reduction in the number of members during this time. It is important to keep in touch with all members, both those who choose to renew their membership and even ones who opt not to.

Make everyone aware that the League is still around. Place articles in the parish bulletins about the League and reminders about membership renewal, hold an outdoor membership blitz to collect dues or have a drop-box to deposit envelopes.

Please remember that membership dues must be sent to the National Office by February 28, 2022.

.....Submitted by Linda Squarzolo President-Elect/Organization Chairperson



## AWARD

**Alexandria-Cornwall Diocese** was pleased to award Bernadine Greffe, the Bellelle Guerin award at their Advent Retreat on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The special moment was extra special as when Bernadine was Diocesan President (2012-2014) our Spiritual Advisor Msgr. Kevin Maloney had requested prayers for vocations, the members prayers was answered.

Pictured below is Father Steven Gaudet (newly ordained) blessing Bernadine's pin.

The council is truly blessed to have Bernadine as an active member of their diocese.

**Congratulations Bernadine well deserved!! God Bless**



Food *for* Thought



Big and Heavy Doors  
Swing on Small Hinges...  
Similarly all Long term Relations  
remain Alive on small Gestures  
of CARE and CONCERN..

Every season has a beautiful  
reason  
Every Problem has a meaningful  
message  
All we need is a fresh vision

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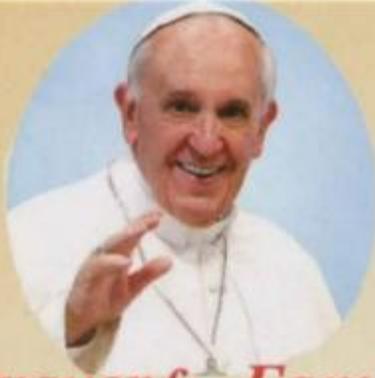


Food *for* Thought



Life is like a dice  
You never know  
what comes next,  
You can face  
anything if you have  
God at your side.





## *A Prayer for Families*

**H**eavenly Father, You sent Your own Son Jesus to become part of an Earthly family with Mary and Joseph. And so you understand what families face each and every day.

**G**ive this family the gift of **JOY**. May they find laughter and happiness in the moments shared with each other as they grow together.

**G**ive this family the gift of **STRENGTH**. May they turn to you in times of struggle and may they know the power of Your love, to help them through their darkest challenges.

**G**ive this family the gift of **PEACE**. May their lives be free of worry and sadness. May they treasure every moment You have given them together.

*Amen*



Wishing you and your loved ones a Happy New Year.

I know that so many of us have great hopes for 2022. As the clock turns to the first day in the year, wherever you are, celebrate a fresh start after the last two difficult years.

Let us be optimistic, let's pray and have great hopes for this year. Hoping that soon we can be together, with one dream and thousands of heartbeats. Because it's only by coming together that we can build a strong brighter future for our League.

