

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
GROUARD-McLENNAN DIOCESAN COUNCIL
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE
COMMUNIQUE #2 – February 22, 2020
Chair: Sister Connie H., SSND**

**Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from
punishing.**

Joel 2:13

The above prayer is the Opening Prayer for Ash Wednesday liturgy. Yes, the Holy Season of Lent is soon upon us. When I was reading and reflecting on this upcoming Season in the Church, it struck me how blessed we are to have another yet timely reminder to “return to the Lord.” As the months and days fly by in a year, we have a merciful God who invites us to come back to Him. We can very easily and maybe even humbly ask, “*Was I ever away?*” or “*Did I wander very far?*” or “*How do I return?*” I leave these thoughts with you, my dear sisters in the Catholic Women's League....

Since the season of Lent is soon upon us, here are a few websites/resources you might find worthy of reflection:

Matthew Kelly, Dynamic Catholic Institute – <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>

Living with Christ (missalette, particularly February and March issues)

Richard Rohr, Center for Action and Contemplation – <https://cac.org>

Pope Francis – Vatican.va

Parish Lenten Resources website (just Google this title)

Let us continue to pray for our Archbishop Gerry Pettipas, CSsR, and all the priests who serve our diocese. We are so blessed to have them to celebrate the Eucharist for the people of God. Thomas Wollis, our seminarian, along with the other seminarians, can always use our prayerful support as they pursue their studies.

On February 8, we celebrated the feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita, who came from the Darfur region of western Sudan. In her youth, she had been sold into slavery many times. Fortunately for her, when she was sold to the Italian

consul, Josephine was treated well with kindness. Upon reaching the age of majority, she gained her freedom. She spent fifty years as a religious Sister in the Canossian Daughters of Charity. Her gentleness and compassion for the poor became known and even today, she has been referred to as “our black Mother.” Sister Josephine Bakhita was canonized in 2000 and is recognized as the patron of victims of human trafficking. Here is a prayer for the victims of human trafficking. It is adapted from Prayers in *Laudato Si'* and I encourage us to pray for our young men and women who become trapped in a trafficking milieu:

All powerful God, You are present in the whole universe and in all of Your creatures. Pour out upon us the power of Your love that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in Your eyes. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of Your love for all people of this earth. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love, and peace. AMEN.

And so, let us go forth into this holy season of Lent with trust and faith to grow in our relationship with the Lord Jesus. Let us as members of this wonderful association of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada also “care for our common home” – the beautiful Earth that God intended us to have.

Let us keep one another in prayer. Our Lady of Good Counsel pray for us.

Submitted by:
Sister Connie H., SSND
Spiritual Development Standing Committee Chair