

The Catholic Girls League

-Yvette F. (May 2010)

The Catholic Girls League is for girls aged 10-15. This group of girls would be mainly to:

- unite the girls to achieve individual and collective spiritual development
- promote social justice, recognizing human dignity of all people
- promote lasting bonds of friendship through enjoyable programs
- develop leadership qualities and skill

The Motto is “Faith, Friendship, Fun and Formation”

Membership Fee would be set up by the sponsoring CWL, depending on what they had in mind for the girls’ activities.

The guidelines would be to advertise and promote the CGL.

Organize a gathering to meet parents or legal guardians of prospective members.

Distribute membership applications and review them for any concerns or incomplete information.

Call a CGL meeting, notifying them by telephone.

Appoint a temporary executive.

Schedule elections for third meeting.

Arrange installation of elected officers by religious leader.

Sponsoring CWL should provide at least two counselors and a religious leader. One would be the lead counselor. All shall be screened prior to approval.

Their duties would be:

Guide and direct all activities

Report regularly to parish council Christian Family life chairperson

Assist with annual membership report

Obtain written permission from parent or legal guardian for all outside-of-regular-meeting activities and any publicity.

The meetings could have the same format as the CWL council or at least have some similarities.

All leaders must exercise all Ethical Guidelines to ensure all are treated with respect and dignity.

This League could be very beneficial in our parishes as it would promote the values of the CWL and would certainly prepare the girls to become very good members when they become 16.

The coming together of the girls with supervision is a way to have a time and place for the girls to gather for mutual fun, friendship, faith and formation.

There are 7 councils in the Edmonton Diocese.

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Yvette F. did a survey with each of these councils (in Spring of 2010) to gather information to share.

QUESTION 1:

Do you have a spiritual program for the girls or do you just say a prayer?

ANSWERS:

They cover topics relating to our faith at meetings depending on liturgical calendar, favourite prayer, Saints. This year they talked about and prayed the Rosary and Stations of the Cross.

The meeting is opened with the *League Prayer* and includes own intentions.

The Girls rotate writing the opening and closing prayers.

They have a set opening and closing prayer, as well as grace before their snack. They also usually have a specific spiritual such as a prayer, reading meditation or project depending on time of year, feast days and celebrations.

Mostly they say prayers or sing and occasionally have a spiritual program

QUESTION 2:

Do you have specific crafts or project to work on at each meeting?

ANSWERS:

They often have crafts at meetings. This year they did some quilting, made gingerbread Nativity scenes and made finger rosaries. They are looking at doing scrapbooking and crocheting/knitting.

The girls choose a project and work on it. In 2009 they raised money for wheelchairs by making Easter egg treats and sold them for 50 cents each. They raised \$150 and were awarded a Certificate of Achievement from the Knights of Columbus. These girls also participate in the Parish CWL Christmas Stocking by making 100 or so Gift Tags for them, which are given to Catholic Social Services for Safe House and Safe Passages programs. They have also raised money by selling rice krispie squares.

One CGL raised money by doing various things. They raised a lot by doing the coat check for the Knights of Columbus at Padre Night. These girls participate in KIVA, which is a microfinance group. It is an accredited group that loans money to women of developing countries to start a business to earn money. The women repay the money as soon as they start making a profit. The loan is interest free. This League is already getting some of their money back. They loaned \$400, with \$100 to 4 different women.

The girls usually have something specific planned, most often around the time of year and celebrations such as Mother's Day. They just pull out the supplies and get creative. They also do scrapbooking with their pictures.

The girls have done hand sewing, machine sewing, pottery, scrapbooking, crocheting and various crafts that are pre-planned.

QUESTION 3:

How often do you have a meeting?

ANSWERS:

Try to schedule twice a month, but once a month works.

They meet Monthly for an hour.

They meet 1 and 3 Monday of each month for 1 hour.

They have meetings bi-weekly, every second Saturday, although it sometimes changes around holidays and leaders' availability.

They meet every 2nd Firday for 2 ½ hours after school.

QUESTION 4:

What kind of Community work do the League members work on?

ANSWERS:

Made quilts for Quilts for Kids. They collected socks/mittens for homeless, did a spring clean-up around the church, assisted with children's program at "Nothing more Beautiful"

They helped clean Church grounds twice and Seniors Tea.

Donated toys to Santa's Anonymous, bought with money girls raised. They are planning more community service projects for next year such as visiting seniors and volunteering within their Parish.

QUESTION 5:

To what extent do the girls participate in the CWL? e.g. help with Bazaar, help with CWL fundraisers, or do they do their own fundraiser?

ANSWERS:

Help with some events – All Saints Day Party, Family Games Night, Spring Supper, Mother’s Day Rose sale. Are invited to attend CWL potluck suppers. This CGL does not do any fundraising of their own.

The CGL works as an extension of the Parish CWL and the girls attend one meeting a year (usually April) to report on their activities to the members. We support their projects by purchasing the tickets or Easter eggs and the Council gives them a donation for the projects they work on. They help with the Strawberry Tea. We also provide them with Rice Krispie squares for them to sell at school. Mainly the girls decide on their own projects, fundraising, and we assist where possible.

They help at the Bazaar, Fashion Show, Seniors Tea, participate on CWL Sunday as ushers.

They organize the craft table at the CWL Bazaar, make the crafts, accept donated crafts, run the table. They keep the proceeds from that table.

The girls help at our fall bake sale, help with our tea and bake sale and help plant flowers in front of church on our last day.

QUESTION 6:

Do the girls participate with the Youth Group if you have one in your Parish?

ANSWERS:

There is no Youth Group in our Parish.

The girls may participate in the Parish Youth Group but we haven’t asked them to.

The Parish just started again in the fall, so they have not done anything together but the youth are a bit older than our CGL members.

QUESTION 7:

Do the girls participate in the Liturgy of the Mass?

ANSWERS:

Some members are altar servers; one helps serve coffee/tea/juice after mass.

We have two girls who are Junior Servers

A lot of the girls do not attend church and we invite them and their parents. This is another way of Evangelization in our Parishes.

I was able to contact Lynne P. from Provincial Council, who was instrumental in starting up a CGL in Devon. I visited the Devon CGL on a Saturday afternoon to see what they actually did and was pleasantly surprised. The girls started by participating in the Stations of the Cross, since it was during Lent. The girls assembled to socialize, have a snack which they made, and proceeded to do a craft, which they finished and sent along to me via Fran L. (provincial president).

This particular CGL started out with \$1000.00 donated by their CWL sponsoring Council.

They also were taught and participated in the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary.

Their leader, a very crafty lady, usually has a craft for them to do.

They sometimes study Bible verses through a puzzle.

They have a retreat once a year that the leader, a CWL member, organizes.

They help with children's liturgy on Sunday.

Help the CWL with their bazaar.

Help decorate the Church for different feasts.

Participate in the liturgy as readers, gift bearers, greeters.

Participate in Youth Mass on 3rd Sunday of every month.

Practice their readings on Saturday.

Participated in Christmas pageant

Belong to the Church Choir.

Participate with older youth in different projects.

They help with Mother's Day and Father's Day celebrations.

Take photos at most meetings and have made a beautiful photo album of all their activities.

Their pastor always comes for a visit or participates when requested.

They learn team work.

They have their own account and treasurer.

This money would pay for supplies for crafts, lunches, retreats and other expenses as they come up.

For their meetings they have:

Gathering Music and prayer "Angel of God"

They have a project or craft to do. / They have a lunch. / They prepare for Mass for those reading.

The feeling that I got was that the girls were happy and really loved to come to meetings so that they could have fun and do things together.

There were two mothers who come most of the time to help with crafts, lunch and other activities and have since joined the CWL.

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I hope this information has been helpful to give you ideas on what a CGL can do.

Fran L. wanted me to let you know that she is thinking of a Mini-Convention for the CGL: perhaps a day or day and evening at the National Convention 2012 in Edmonton. Your thoughts? Good idea?

We would invite CGLs across Canada. Would any of you ladies want to sit in on a focus group to further discuss this question?

If anyone would like a copy of this presentation, I would be more than happy to email it you.

-Yvette F., CWL ABMK provincial Christian Family Life chairperson