

## NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT



**Marie Raymond**

The highlight of 2006 was attending the WUCWO Study Days and General Assembly. *Women Peacemakers: United in Faith and Action* was the theme of the assembly – and that is

what we all wanted: peace for our troubled world.

Yes, I had heard of WUCWO and I knew what the organization was about, or so I thought. I spoke to so many wonderful women who were gifted, well educated and talented. I listened to many real life stories of women and children being bought, sold and traded, people who suffer so much from AIDS, prostitution and not having the necessities of life. These were real people who talked of real life stories of heartache and poverty.

I told them my story of where I lived and about my life, family and work conditions in my province. They thought I was so lucky and rich. I thought I was just an ordinary person, with an ordinary lifestyle but when I left that assembly, I felt like a millionaire.

I will certainly share my whole experience of WUCWO with councils in Newfoundland and Labrador. I will always be grateful for this wonderful opportunity and gift of WUCWO which was given me to share with others.

The provincial council held meaningful spiritual prayer services which were attended by 14 of our 30 councils. The same prayer services were sent to councils who couldn't attend due to distance and cost.

Our life members are like angels who use their wings to guide us along and keep encouraging us. They stand by us and are always involved. The annual life member luncheon took place again this year at the home of a life member. This is a time for them to get together and reflect on the past year.

A prayer service will be held in October for peace as our world is in such turmoil. We will open it to other religious groups who will take an active part, as well as the padre of the Canadian Forces Base in St. John's.

We were sorry to lose our spiritual advisor of eight years, Fr. David Butler. Fr. Butler offered the League his friendship, guidance, gifts, talents and humour. He served with five provincial presidents, and to celebrate this, we took Fr. Butler out to dinner. We now have Fr. Edward Terry, who comes from the other side of the island. Fr. Terry came recommended to us by our own Bishop Douglas Crosby, so we can't go wrong! Fr. Terry loves the League and is a dedicated person. He will be wonderful.

We had six members from different parts of the island and Labrador speak at our convention on why they joined the League and why they still remain members.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, we have walked through *The Open Door*, and we have certainly *cast into the deep* and walked on water to become *companions on the journey*. Last June we celebrated 25 years as a provincial council. We are on the next leg of our journey. Yes, we are thankful for the past, but now we have to work on our sub-theme from our June convention, *Reshaping Our Future*.

I have asked one of our life members to chair a committee to delve into the reasons for both a decline in numbers and interest in the League. Information will be gathered by questionnaires to every member as well as interviews. This will be compiled and recommendations made to the provincial executive. This is the beginning of *Reshaping Our Future*.

## NOVA SCOTIA PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT



**Shirley MacDougall**

I feel very privileged to give my first report to this convention in my home province. The challenge of hosting the national convention has been a major focus for all of us. Parish councils across the province have participated in

fundraising, designing and making the beautiful convention handbags, and the many other duties assigned to them.

Parish amalgamations and closures present an on-going challenge. CWL roots run deep in councils that have been long established. We recognize that each council is unique and special to its members and, while some want to preserve the status quo, we need to be mindful that blessings do come with change.

It is with prayerful dialogue that we will move through this change, knowing that the knowledge, expertise and diverse gifts of members will enable us to find common ground.

The third annual vision workshop for diocesan and provincial executives is planned for August 26<sup>th</sup> in Truro. The guest speaker will be National Chairperson of Education and Health Velma Harasen. Her workshop will be on clustering/closing of parishes and its effect on councils. In the afternoon, the provincial and diocesan executives will take part in a round table discussion.

Our province is divided into three dioceses: Antigonish, Yarmouth and Halifax. We have 93 parish councils, with a total membership of 5,560. We have two honorary life