

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 26th 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

members and 23 life members.

Our provincial convention was hosted by Yarmouth Diocesan Council. A new executive was elected, including the appointment of a secretary and a life member liaison. Two life members were installed. Our guest speaker was Honorary Life Member Irene Lefort.

A motion was passed to increase our provincial membership per capita fee to \$3.00. The extra dollar will be used for the next national convention held in Nova Scotia. Three resolutions were adopted. One, entitled Amendment to the *Incompetent Persons Act*, was directed to the Nova Scotia provincial government and the other two will come to the convention floor this week.

The provincial council formed a committee to present workshops at the deanery level. Our first workshop was held in Sydney on March 11th and we met with eight parish councils. These workshops with their focus on resolutions, legislation and leadership development will continue through the fall.

A provincial website is being developed.

The play, "Lost in Traffic," is on tour with three designated stops in Nova Scotia. Performances in Halifax, Antigonish and Sydney will soon be advertised. The purpose of this play is to raise awareness of the exploitation of women and very young girls who involuntarily become involved in human trafficking and the sex trade. Councils are involved and some have already made monetary contributions and attended planning meetings to help advertise the play.

Given that our mission as a League is to address the problems that threaten our society in light of the gospel, then the strong voice of the CWL is greatly needed on the issue of human trafficking. The theme has awakened us to the fact that our companions are many and varied as we make this League journey. It is easy to make companions with like-minded people, but to companion with the downtrodden presents its challenges.

Recognizing the strength of our membership, we have to – more now than ever – lobby our governments and work on behalf of the under-privileged.

several parish council anniversary celebrations. It is good to meet the members who do all the work and give us such a good reputation.

In early September, the president-elect and I had the privilege of meeting with the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops to discuss resolutions and other pertinent matters. We will repeat this pleasant experience on September 28th this year. Tom Reilly, the general secretary who retired at the end of June, was presented with a gift for his very valuable contributions to the resolutions process and for his assistance in obtaining insurance for provincial council. He has been a wonderful asset and we are very grateful for his assistance.

I had the opportunity to attend two conferences dealing with euthanasia and assisted suicide, one organized by EPC, and the other by COLF. The former had speakers on demographics which focused on the aging of our society with fewer children and two speakers with disabilities who would be prime candidates for euthanasia in a more liberal society. If you look around, you need to be concerned about a society that sees the aged as a financial handicap and may encourage you to shorten your life as a fiscally positive move. The second conference included many working in the medical field and was equally interesting, stressing the positive ways of dealing with challenged individuals. An interesting part of the latter conference was a speaker on end-of-life directives. Many people who have made a living will apply it only to very specific circumstances when they would not want to be resuscitated (when they are 99, terminally ill and not mentally alert). The conference certainly pointed out the need for people to be aware of the ability of the medical profession to keep patients comfortable in the last stages of life with good pain management.

Though April and May are somewhat hectic in Ontario with 13 diocesan conventions, what a great shot in the arm they are for those privileged to attend them. Alexandria-Cornwall Diocesan Council celebrated its 80th anniversary. The seven conventions I attended this year along with those the president-elect and vice-presidents visited were wonderful joy-filled celebrations.

The WUCWO Study Days experience was a second-in-a-lifetime experience for me, as I attended in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, in 1983. This trip was a learning experience from beginning to end. We are proud to have Agnes Bedard as the North American representative to the WUCWO board.

Our provincial convention, ably hosted by Peterborough Diocesan Council in Lindsay, was a great inspiration with speakers on evangelization and understanding our Muslim neighbours. A very positive atmosphere prevailed contrary to what you may have read on LifeSiteNews. Be wary of the truthfulness of your sources of information. Resolutions on greenbelt legislation, euthanasia and assisted suicide, pest control products, Ontario Works program, plastic bags, marriage and renewable energy

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT



Shirley George

What a joy this past year has been for me as it relates to the League. Working with national and provincial officers, provincial and diocesan presidents has been a real pleasure, as has attending