

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



Marion Marshall
Cornwall,
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It is a pleasure for me to be here presenting my first report for Prince Edward Island Provincial Council. Canada's smallest province has just over 2,500 members in 44 parish councils. This year 13 of the 37 parish councils that sent in reports noted an increase in membership and were recognized with certificates. The provincial council is fortunate to have one new life member, Judy Lewis. This brings life membership in the province to 14. The council is blessed to have them share their wisdom, gifts and talents.

Each spring, deanery meetings are held when the executive meets with parish council presidents and some of their parish executive. It is an opportunity to pray together, share concerns, ideas, successes and also share fun and fellowship. Members are very enthusiastic about these meetings, knowing they are not alone with their challenges and learning so much from ideas shared with other councils. It is hoped that next year it may be open to any member who wishes to come.

The highlight this year was to have National President Lorette Noble attend the 86th annual provincial convention. Lorette gave a workshop on *Love One Another*. Participants were reminded it is easy to love those who love us, but we're challenged to find ways to love those who are difficult to love.

In May, members joined with the Knights of Columbus for the National March for Life. Mass was held and then members proceeded to the legislative buildings. I had the privilege of giving a presentation along with the Knights of Columbus, Priests for Life, and the P.E.I. Right to Life Association.

In June, members attended the 49th International Eucharistic Congress in Quebec City. It was a spirit filled week where attendees felt one with God and each other.

There are several new members on the provincial executive and they have been paired with life members who will help by offering their wisdom and support. The executive hopes to hold a leadership training day in order to be better equipped to serve the membership.

Membership remains a challenge. A pilot project is planned to survey four parish councils, two that are doing well and two that are struggling. From those that are successful, much can be learned about what works, and

from those that are struggling, much can be learned about what doesn't work. With the results, a plan will be put together to share with every council. It is hoped that the end result will be an increase in membership.

The Catholic church community on Prince Edward Island faces many changes with the restructuring plans that are occurring in the diocese. Change brings with it fear of the unknown. The challenge for the League is to remain united, maintain membership, and support each other and the church community. It is my goal to be available to any and all parish councils that need help and support through this transformation process.

On July 1st, the provincial council was shocked to hear Dr. Henry Morgentaler was named to the Order of Canada. A few days later, the premier of Prince Edward Island was approached by women's groups who expressed frustration that abortion services are not provided in the province. Currently, Prince Edward Island is the only province that does not offer abortion service either in Island hospitals or private clinics. The premier responded by saying the provincial government is not looking to change its abortion policy and the system now in place seems to be working. In response to these issues the provincial council contacted all parish council presidents asking them to have members write to the governor general to voice their concerns. They were also asked to write to the premier, minister of health, and attorney general to commend them for the stand they have taken on abortion and to thank them for protecting the lives of the unborn, the innocent victims of abortion. †

QUEBEC



Ellen Peterkin
Deux Montagnes, Quebec

Wow! A year has passed by already; it seems like yesterday that Quebec Provincial Council was hosting this convention in the *belle province*. I realize that this will be my final oral report as the Quebec Provincial President and I have mixed feelings, feelings that I thought I would never have. I really thought that I would do my time and that would be it, and then overnight it became much more. What a gift the League has given me!

Quebec Provincial Council has much to be thankful for. It is very fortunate to have active life members. Every time they are asked to share their talents, they have done so with open hearts. Since January, they have facilitated three workshops, taken on provincial responsibilities and

guided me with many a decision. Diane Lemay became a life member this past April, so now there are 19 of them.

So what has been done since January? The provincial executive had an informative mid-term meeting. I introduced the round table discussion, something used by the national executive. This gave time to discuss certain topics that may not have made it onto the agenda and also allowed the time to start talking calmly and slowly about decisions that might have to be made in the future. Everyone was invited to add topics to be discussed. This has been a positive experience.

A summary of responsibilities was given to every executive, chairperson and diocesan president. This identified what was expected of them during their two year term. Knowledge makes life easy!

The provincial convention was again a platform for discussion. A policy and procedure workshop was given so that parish councils would realize the importance of having one in place. The convention enabled members to discuss five hot topics, but many other concerns were raised. It all gets back to the basics – how to care for members in good times and bad. And, of course, many of these decisions stem from that five letter word, “money”. Members are known for being the most generous individuals to outside organizations but that spirit of giving should also be extended to members. It is time to invest emotionally and financially in members. Members are the League; content members are its future!

The provincial executive created a motion book. The secretary posted the three previous years’ motions and the book is updated after every meeting. It is important to analyze motions before decisions are made and prepare them correctly the first time.

I have had the pleasure of visiting parish councils as this is where the action is. These members never stop! There are 27 councils throughout Quebec, and although parish councils are the same, they are also different. Every council sometimes feels that its problems are unique but I can tell you that there are many councils experiencing the same set-backs. They feel that they are not doing enough, if you can believe this! Members are too hard on themselves; no other organization can come close to achieving the accomplishments that the League does. I say, if anyone can secure a future, it is the League.

Quebec Provincial Council’s goals for the near future are simple. Learning to use the gifts that members have been given, accepting that change is a natural outcome of life and, most importantly, knowing that the future is in members’ own hands. It has and will always begin with us! †

SASKATCHEWAN



Yvonne Colleaux
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

As members in Saskatchewan look back on the last two years living the theme *Love One Another*, they feel the need to continue living this theme that should permeate their entire lives.

The provincial executive meeting and workshop was held in October in Prince Albert. Honorary Life Member Claire Heron gave a presentation on the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO). She informed participants that WUCWO gained consultative status at the United Nations a number of years ago. The annual World Day of Prayer was an opportunity for members to relate to women from different countries as they take turns preparing the ecumenical service.

The workshop facilitator, National Chairperson of Community Life Dr. Rayleen De Luca, conducted a PowerPoint presentation on various aspects of the community life standing committee with special emphasis on environmental issues.

The provincial convention was held in North Battleford. It marked the 60th anniversary of the council. Participants were delighted to have National President Lorette Noble address the convention and share this anniversary.

At the February provincial executive meeting, several suggestions were brought forth regarding ways of celebrating this anniversary in a significant way. In the end, the provincial executive considered the fact that water is essential to life – so the decision was made to purchase a well in a developing country where there is a severe lack of fresh drinking water. It was purchased through Chalice, a Catholic sponsorship program, formerly known as Christian Child Care International. A bookmark was given to convention participants as a souvenir of this gift.

Past President Joan Petracek graciously contributed by adding the last 10 years to the provincial history book. In addition, a 50 per cent share of the mass collection (\$618.00) was sent to the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace to assist with aid in Burma as a result of the cyclone. This contribution was matched by the Canadian International Development Agency. At the convention, one of two resolutions presented was adopted.

Speaking of resolutions, St. Anne Parish Council, in Regina, saw its resolution on hospice palliative care carried at last year’s annual national convention as Resolution 2007.03.