

MILITARY ORDINARIATE



Barbara Thuen
Winnipeg, Manitoba

When I joined the League just over 27 years ago, I never imagined I could be standing here today, representing the women of the Military Ordinariate Provincial Council.

But who are these women? They are mothers, sisters, young women, teenagers, senior citizens. They are students, stay-at-home moms, working mothers, career women, retirees, and members of Canada's military. Does this list sound somewhat familiar? Are these the same groups of women that make up your councils? Of course they are. Do we all face the same challenges and issues? You bet we do! Members are very busy, many with young children or full time jobs, or both. It's hard to make another commitment that will take up even more of that precious time with family and home.

Our members face a few additional stresses. Our loved ones are on duty 24/7 and may be called to work at a moment's notice. Often, we are not sure where they are going, when we'll next hear from them, or when they will return. If we do know where they are going, we may not be happy about it. Emotions run high when facing known and unknown dangers, and our members often need to be both Mom and Dad to their children. Add to this the possibility of frequent moves and new beginnings, and you will get a feel for the unique lifestyle of military families. Then we ask these women to make more commitments and take on more responsibilities as members of the League? Please understand, this is not whining or complaining – it's just our life.

At the provincial convention, we experienced many of the same challenges that many other councils face. We had two members willing to let their names stand for office; we had no one for treasurer or secretary. Our spiritual advisor had just stepped down and we didn't know who would replace him. What a state! During the convention, we all became aware of the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit among us. We were reminded that we had all received the gifts of the Holy Spirit at our confirmation to help us through our lives and on our spiritual journey. With a lot of prayer, deep reflection, and strong faith, we returned home from the convention with only one spot on the executive not filled, and a new spiritual advisor. Her name is [Hope!](#) The Holy Spirit works in wondrous ways!

At last year's convention, Father Tim Nelligan challenged each council to choose a female saint, research her story, and present their findings at this year's convention. This

project was a tremendous success, and the presentations were incredible. We saw PowerPoint presentations, musical renditions and costumed enactments. In a very entertaining way, we learned a little bit more about our faith.

Ten years ago, the provincial council and the Protestant Ladies Chapel Guild met at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton for a joint convention. We called this convention Operation Common Ground. We shared spiritual and social aspects of our meetings with our Protestant sisters. We compared challenges and triumphs and learned that we do indeed share common ground. Our convention next year will again be held at CFB Trenton, where we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of Operation Common Ground with our Protestant sisters. Councils have been asked to prepare a presentation which highlights their local interactions with the Protestant Ladies Chapel Guild. I plan to be able to report to you next year on the success of this anniversary convention.

Our past president created a Book of Remembrance honouring our fallen military members in Afghanistan. Sadly, we continue to update this book. We thank you for your prayers and support.

As you can see from these projects, the League continues to be active and involved. I believe this is because our members are strong and resilient. The military lifestyle has prepared these women to face challenges, develop creative solutions and overcome obstacles. Using the gifts the Holy Spirit has given us and believing in ourselves and God's love for us will allow our members to move forward. Our councils will grow and become stronger.

During my term, I intend to encourage our members to rekindle their passions. These include our passion for prayer, faith, the League – its mission and sisterhood – and for discovering and developing our spirituality. We all have these passions – that's part of why we joined the League in the first place! They may remain dormant or buried, but all we really need to do is rekindle our passions. I invite you to join us. ✠

NEW BRUNSWICK



Joyce Green
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Membership in New Brunswick is being maintained at just under 3,000; I am [hopeful](#) that by 2011 we may see a small increase. We are presenting workshops to encourage members to step forward and become the leaders of tomorrow. I personally plan to present leadership workshops in any diocese that will invite me.

Saint John Diocesan Council was sad to report that the amalgamation of the two parish councils reported on last year proved to be unsuccessful, and they have reverted to their original charters. In a letter written to Bishop Robert Harris it appears that a charter could not be issued due to the name St. Stephen not being approved. The individual councils are carrying on and positive feedback has been received.

Many members participate in the World Day of Prayer held the first Friday in March. The spiritual growth of members is a priority and the one third prayer, one third business and one third social activity guideline is implemented as much as possible. Guest speakers made presentations to the diocesan and provincial conventions on palliative care and caring for the addicted and vulnerable in our communities. Bobby's Hope House in Saint John is the first residential palliative care home in eastern Canada. Guest speaker Sandy Johnson stated that fearing death is natural, facing it alone is not. Sister Arlene Brawley spoke about the Sophia Recovery Centre, a non-residential house where women come to continue healing from an addiction after having already gone through a program. Counselling is offered to these women and assistance is offered for those who wish to go back to school or university. Many of the centre's clients volunteer at the house.

April 26th, CWL Day of Peace and Hope, was celebrated by most councils with special masses, dinners, pot-lucks, awards and pin presentations. Members were the greeters, readers, Eucharistic ministers and presenters of the gifts and petitions at mass.

In April, Ann Doucet and Connie Firlotte represented the League at a ceremony remembering the Longshoremen's union's action on July 3, 1979. They blockaded the port of Saint John, refused to load a shipment of heavy water going to Argentina's nuclear generator, and protested the repression of human rights in Argentina. A song was written commemorating this action with the refrain, "No hot cargo for Argentina, No hot cargo for Argentina". At that time the League also participated in a letter writing campaign during the presidency of Jean Mahoney.

This being the *Year for Priests*, a spiritual bouquet was presented to Father Stanislas Paulin to thank and honour him as he continues to serve as provincial spiritual advisor for a second five-year term. He goes above and beyond as he serves the League. After our fall executive meeting, he will present a mini-retreat and expand on the new theme when announced.

We continue to be proactive, writing to present opposing views to government officials, but also thanking them when they take positive steps in legislation. For example, a letter was sent to thank members of parliament when Bill C-384 *An Act to amend the Criminal Code (right to die with dignity)* was defeated.

Provincial council has submitted two resolutions, Prescribing Statin Drugs to Children and Youth and Addition of Chrysotile Asbestos to Rotterdam Convention List of Hazardous Chemicals for Prior Informed Consent.

There was a good turnout at the annual March for Life in May. Blue scarves were much in evidence. In Jackie Waye's absence, I brought greetings to the 400 plus men and women who marched to the Mother and Child House. Jackie and I also attended the

annual New Brunswick Right to Life dinner where Mary Ryan spoke about the right of the aborted fetus to a proper burial.

Celebrating together builds community; Jackie was invited to attend the 50th anniversary at St. Anthony Parish Council, Glen Levit where members gathered to celebrate mass and enjoy a banquet followed by a guest speaker, awards and pin presentations. Jackie was also invited to be guest speaker at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Council's 75th anniversary celebration. She spoke about our theme, *Women of Peace and Hope*, and assisted in the presentation of awards and pins. It is an especially rewarding part of being provincial president.

The fall is shaping up to be a busy few months. We have sent out a notice of meeting for the fall executive meeting and retreat and sent along an e-copy of the policy for review. The focus will be on education and workshops for the new executive. An annual report mini-workshop was presented at the provincial convention and it may be repeated at the regional meetings. With the assistance of life members and guidance of Father Stanislas Paulin, we will move forward and become *Women of Peace and Hope*. †

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



Agnes Kenney
Mount Pearl,
Newfoundland and Labrador

This has been a very good year for the provincial council of Newfoundland and Labrador. Many positive things have happened for which we are very grateful to the

Lord and Our Lady of Good Counsel.

One of our largest councils – Basilica Parish Council – did not have a president for two years. Now they have a new president and a full executive. They are certainly letting us know that they are "alive" and "on the ball". They organized and brought to fruition two meaningful endeavours in April and May just after they were installed as a new executive.

On April 15th they invited Regional Palliative Care Manager and Consultant Laurie Anne O'Brien to speak to members of all 15 councils in St. John's area on the topic of palliative care. Ms. O'Brien's presentation was very informative and with her dedication and commitment to palliative care, she had a fund of knowledge to draw upon when speaking on the topic. Of course, afterwards we had our eats and get-together with friends.

Then on May 8th Basilica Parish Council hosted a Health and Wellness Day and invited all councils in the area. The day began with a brief reflection and opening prayer by the spiritual advisor followed by the opening presentation, "Spiritual Dimension of Wellness", by one of the council members, a