

most don't. Your problems are their problems; your prayers are their prayers. The hand they want to hold is your hand.

The organization with whom the League has had its longest involvement is WUCWO. Before the national organization of the League was, there were women in Canada who belonged to local CWLs interested in joining with the women in Europe. Shortly after the inception of WUCWO, the League became very active as a national organization.

The League has recognized the importance of being in contact with, listening to, sharing with, and being there for, its sisters from all over the globe. This contact is absolutely necessary, especially in today's world, as it gets smaller and smaller.

You know WUCWO is having an assembly in Jerusalem in 2010. It's the 100th anniversary of WUCWO and will be a pilgrimage assembly. We will be meeting at the hotel right across from the New Gate. The mornings will begin with prayer, followed by a presentation and then a pilgrimage. Attendees will visit those sights that were walked 2,000 years ago by the Man we call our Saviour. Together we will walk and together we will pray. Each day we will do the same.

This year, five WUCWO board members went to Jerusalem to see how we could plan for the assembly. The first day we had mass in the Filipino language at the Mount of Beatitudes. The next mass in Slovak was on Mount Tabor. The third mass in Arabic was in Old Jerusalem: a picture of the world – a diverse and universal church.

I invite you to come; walk in His footsteps. The theme of this assembly is *You will be My Witnesses*. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8) We know all of you can't come, but we also know that you can take home the message of WUCWO, which is the message of a sisterhood without borders, a sisterhood through which we can share our prayers and concerns.

On Monday at lunch, I met with some dear friends to talk about WUCWO. We talked about the reality; most parish councils know little about WUCWO and what it does so we tried to come up with something pretty basic to start promoting WUCWO. We will be producing a workshop that can be used in parish councils to give a basic understanding of WUCWO and stimulate you to begin developing a prayerful relationship with your international sisters.

We need your prayer. WUCWO is without a structure such as the League. The League is, by far, the best structure of Catholic women in the world. In some African countries, there are as many as 250 languages; how do you possibly communicate with one another on a national scale? How lucky we are.

One of the things WUCWO has is non-governmental organization (NGO) status with the United Nations (UN). When the UN began, WUCWO was one of 30 NGOs; now it is one of thousands. Across the world, WUCWO volunteers cover the UN events. I want you to pray for these women. In New York,

we have Arlene Barron-Champoux; in Paris, Anne-Marie Terreau, Odile Leleu, Chantal Chevallier and Evelyne Johnen; in Geneva, Zina Rassam and Jocelyne de Stadelhofen; in Rome, Maria Giovanna Ruggieri; and in Strausbourg, Anna Schaeffer. Please pray for them to continue to be our voices. †

ALBERTA MACKENZIE



Fran Lucas
Edmonton, Alberta

Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council membership for 2008 increased to 10,098 and, from conversations with the five diocesan presidents, those numbers are expected to increase for 2009.

Councils across the province have embraced the theme *Women of Peace and Hope* by incorporating it in their convention theme. This theme has been carried out with a provincial focus on letter writing to stop human trafficking in relation to the 2010 Olympics in British Columbia. The councils in each diocese have taken a different week of the month to communicate with the mayor of Vancouver, the organizer of the Olympics, and provincial and federal governments on this issue. Sanctity of life issues, from conception to natural death, including euthanasia, assisted suicide and the personhood of the unborn have been brought to provincial and national politicians' attention, again drawing the members together on common issues. Many councils in Alberta wrote to the premier and provincial minister of health indicating displeasure with the pharmaceutical and continuing care strategies for seniors which would lay the heaviest burden of cost on those who require the most care. One diocese cites the Red Letter Campaign for the personhood of the unborn being a powerful activity for its members.

At the provincial convention in June the following four items were some of the highlights:

- 1) Delegates signed a White Ribbon Against Pornography ribbon and at the opening ceremonies presented it to Member of Parliament LaVar Payne, who indicated he would be bringing it to parliament.
- 2) Training workshops were conducted by each of the provincial officers with help from at least two life members.
- 3) A motion was carried to have a donation of 50 cents per member made to the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations from the provincial treasury, based on 2008 membership figures. A further motion was carried to encourage all parish councils to match the contribution.
- 4) Dr. Clem Persaud spoke on the abortion and breast cancer link; and Thomas Bouchard, a third year medical student who belongs to a group called Canadian Physicians for Life,

spoke on the role of the League when it comes to matters of life and how we could support the group he belongs to.

The Pennies for the Poor project continues to give reason for celebrating the power of such an insignificant coin. Since the project began in September 2006 to February of this year a total of \$24,054.10 has been collected. Through our association with Sister Maria Goretti in Burundi, Africa, many orphaned children have benefitted from school and health necessities from these dollars.

The provincial resolution Proper Burial of Preborn Human Remains has been renamed Dignified Burial of Unborn Fetal Remains and was submitted to the national resolutions committee.

Goals for the provincial council include the offering of membership to every Catholic woman that members meet and then ensuring all memberships are retained. Finding an effective way to work with Catholic school boards to ensure Catholic education is not jeopardized will also be a key discussion item.

This was an election year for us and unfortunately all officer positions were not filled through this process. A plan will be set to ensure adequate training is afforded all provincial and diocesan officers so they have the desire and the confidence to let their name stand in the future.

Provincially there are six Catholic Girls Leagues which continue to flourish. The new provincial life member liaison is Lynne Persson from Devon.

Catholic Conference 2010 will be held in Edmonton in March and councils are encouraging members to participate. The theme is *Stand in the Light: Washed, Anointed, Sent*. In the past other provincial representatives have attended and we are hopeful this will happen again. Information is available on the provincial Web site. †

aging, a doctor indicated that interaction with friends provided mental stimulation – was very good for our health and for memory retention – so it appears to be a gift that keeps on giving.

I have had the wonderful privilege of attending four of six diocesan conventions and witnessing how each council has enthusiastically embraced *Women of Peace and Hope*. At the provincial convention this was enhanced by National President Danielle McNeil-Hessian's presence and workshop. In addition, Sean Murphy, from the Catholic Civil Rights League, spoke on Protection of Conscience & Religious Freedom, an insight into the emerging changes and challenges facing Christians. In a video entitled *Cutting Through the Spin on Stem Cells and Cloning*, Fr. Tad Pacholczyk examined the science and ethics of stem cell research and cloning, throwing light on the various media myths surrounding this area of science. Members appreciated the fact that it was well-prepared, informative and easy to understand. B.C. & Yukon Provincial Spiritual Advisor Fr. Tien Tran addressed prayer and worship, challenging attendees to be visible Catholics and emphasizing the importance of listening as being an important part of prayer. He also reminded attendees of the power of the mass. A trafficking presentation by two life members was followed by a particularly poignant Way of the Cross, featuring the voices of women caught in trafficking. Buttons declaring "Buying Sex is not a Sport" were distributed to everyone with a request that they speak to at least one person about trafficking while wearing the button.

Life members in the province were thrilled to announce the recipient of their first annual Arts & Cultural Award, Kaila Piller, a graduate of St. Ann's Academy in Kamloops.

In keeping with a provincial goal toward education of members, a resolutions workshop entitled *Let's Change the World* was presented at each diocesan convention. It develops a better understanding of how a resolution evolves from a concern to the final product. Members participated with a personal resolution and were then guided through the steps of writing, researching and presenting a resolution commencing at the parish council level.

The issue of trafficking of humans was threaded throughout the year. The council was once again privileged to meet with governing Liberal and opposition New Democratic Party politicians to present the 2008 resolutions and two previous resolutions still of interest, with the issue of trafficking at the Olympics at the forefront of discussion. The provincial government was commended for establishing the Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The minister of state for the Olympics and ActNow BC pointed out that a higher level of monitoring was needed and that hotels and restaurants have been approached to help in relation to this. It is encouraging to note that several members of the legislative assembly have spoken in the legislature on this issue. The provincial council was commended for its presentations over the last 13 years.

Our members are women of conviction and strength – prepared to accept the challenges of today, bold enough to stand

B.C. & YUKON



Marianna Caldwell
Aldergrove,
British Columbia

What a pleasure it is to be in St. John's once again and to bring greetings from the west coast of Canada. Exciting news from B.C. & Yukon Provincial Council! It is growing and having an impact. Membership increased last year to 9,400 bringing the council closer to its goal of 10,000. Through total commitment, and with encouragement, diocesan officers have nurtured parish councils on the verge of folding and welcomed two new parish councils. It has been said many times that membership in the League is a gift you give to yourself. According to a recent radio program on