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As an example of the varied age range of our members in Nova Scotia, in the month of May, we had a 21-year-old member graduate from St. Francis Xavier University (StFX), a 30-year-old member announce her pregnancy and a 93-year-old member honoured for 70 years of membership. What a wonderful testimony to our organization.

This past year the provincial council took on the buy-a-net malaria prevention program that was presented at the 2008 national convention. Every parish council was given a kit and presentations were made at all diocesan conventions. I do not have an exact account, as it is still ongoing, but I know that we have netted a few villages and many, many children. We are proud of the response to this project.

A provincial/diocesan executive workshop is planned for August. National Chairperson of Organization Velma Harasen will be pleased to know that we will be doing the *One in the Spirit* workshop in the morning. A computer workshop entitled *Computers Don't Byte* and roundtable discussions will complete a very informative day.

A main concern of the provincial executive is the lack of interest in annual reports. The provincial council can't have an accurate idea of what is going on in the province when only 56% of the councils are reporting. We have had a lot of discussion on this and are planning on doing better in the future.

National Chairperson of Community Life Mary Nordick mentions in her communiqué #3 that human trafficking continues to be a concern leading up to the 2010 Olympics. She asks members to continue educating themselves and others on the issue and writing to government. What a surprise for us Nova Scotians to hear that charges of human trafficking were laid in Halifax. We learn so much about so many issues as members, but do we realize it can happen in our own backyard? Thank God for our ever diligent police officers.

There is a 50th anniversary being celebrated in Nova Scotia which is of interest, the anniversary of the Coady International Institute. The Coady is part of StFX and claims well over 5,000 graduates in 130 countries. It uses campus-based leadership educational programs that touch not only attending students but countless others who have had Coady reach out to them in their homeland through training and partnerships. One of its honorary alumni, Mother Theresa (1975) said, "The spirit of concern which St. Francis Xavier University expresses in deeds through its Coady International Institute among the poor of the world, is very close to my heart."

Coady Director Mary Coyle says that future plans include the development of an international women's leadership trust, expanding youth programs to enable more Canadian youth to experience the world first hand and initiating programs to support the development of leaders among Canadian Aboriginal communities. Through the national voluntary fund, we are a part of this great institute. We can be proud that we can offer people [peace](#) and [hope](#) and play a part in welcoming the stranger.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to guide us in all we do. †

As Ontario Provincial Council moves forward in its 62nd year, maintaining, marketing and reenergizing its membership will be some of the major tasks facing the 2009-2011 provincial team. The provincial council celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2007 and a project was initiated to raise \$60,000 for The Call of The Poor, an organization that helps to build schools, drill wells, construct homes and many other worthwhile projects without any donated funds going to administration costs. At the provincial convention held in July, the \$60,000 goal was reached to the great joy and appreciation of all present, especially retiring Past President Shirley George.

After attending a conference entitled *Communities Working Together To End Violence Against Women* President Margaret Ann Jacobs and I realized that this most amazing conference should be shared with others. It would be a progressive vision if the message of stopping the violence against women and children could be shared throughout the dioceses and so "Project Outreach" was born. It was suggested that dioceses should tap into their own resources in their communities to educate members and the community about the phenomena of violence along with other issues such as palliative care.

To help diocesan councils, the provincial council offered \$1,000 toward the costs of having an outreach function such as a day of information with a speaker, panel or workshop for members within the community. Diocesan councils have planned this day with topics such as aging in place and senior friendly communities, community care access, trafficking of women and children, development and [peace](#), Saint Vincent de Paul, Wells of [Hope](#), seminars on youth (police, youth justice system, health unit, positive parenting, youth counsellors), palliative care and violence against women and children.

Membership was a focus for many councils throughout the province and we were happy to see a slight increase for 2008. Chairperson of Spiritual Development Pauline Krupa designed an amazing Pauline resource that included a DVD presentation with scriptural references, prayer and list of resources for use for the Year of St Paul. It can be found on the Ontario Web site. Pauline also has worked on Walking With a Living Saint where councils present a real woman's living history as a saint in our own time.

Chairperson of Community Life Carmel Rumleskie worked with a committee that designed a kit with information on

violence against women and children, abuse and neglect. The kit includes brochures from Women's Shelter and Support Services, shelters, fact sheets including description of kinds of violence and abuse, and a complete fact-giving workshop called *Let's Stop The Violence*. The kit was given to each executive member at the pre-convention meeting in July. Diocesan presidents can take this back to their dioceses and tailor it to their area.

Chairperson of Communications Marylou Watson continued to work on the Web site making it very attractive and up-to-date. Chairperson of Resolutions Marlene Pavletic prepared a pamphlet entitled *Building a Relationship with your MPP* for the diocesan councils. This pamphlet offered tips on how to approach and develop a relationship with your member of parliament.

A delegation met with government to discuss our resolutions. Attending were Senior Policy Advisor Kathleen Murphy for the attorney general, Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues The Hon. Deborah Matthews, and Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry The Hon. Michael Gravelle. Our meetings were very courteous, interesting and fruitful.

In an effort to attract members to attend provincial convention, a travel subsidy was offered to members travelling over 1,000 km. Criteria and an application form were designed and this year we had more members attending convention for the first time than ever before.

In addition to this, provincial council wanted to entice and encourage members to attend national convention and so a \$2,000 subsidy per diocese was established for this purpose. It was interesting to see how dioceses used this tool to invite women to come to national convention.

Provincial council continues to support seminarians with the Bishop Bernard J. Pappin Memorial Bursary of \$1,000, given to any seminarian fulfilling the criteria and planning to serve the church in Ontario. A \$100.00 seed money gift was given to seven parish councils that organized a Catholic Girl's League.

Treasurer Glenda Klein not only was the keeper of the books but also worked diligently to be a good steward for investments as well as offering inventive ways to assist dioceses with the above-mentioned incentives.

The focus of the provincial convention was Catholic education in Ontario. There is a dark threat to this gift in Ontario and we have tried to get the message out to members that we need to protect Catholic schools. Bishop Paul Andre Durocher, of Alexandria-Cornwall, was the keynote speaker and spoke on the challenges we as a community face in protecting and keeping Catholic schools in Ontario. As well, we had a panel which included Sr. Joan Cronin, executive director for the Institute of Catholic Education, Mr. Michael O'Keefe, director of education, Pat Bullock, high school chaplain and Rebecca Ryall, youth panellist. The treasure of Catholic education in Ontario will remain a focus for members during this coming year.

Members in Ontario are dedicated, committed Catholic women who love the church and hunger for spiritual development and enrichment; the provincial council is committed to a vision that offers direction and assistance to fulfill their hunger. Cooperation, prayerful thought and concern for each other binds our team as never before. ✚

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



Marion Marshall
Cornwall,
Prince Edward Island

The past year has been an exciting one for parish councils in Prince Edward Island. There have been many anniversary celebrations marking 50, 60,

65, 75, and even an 86th anniversary. Our history is rich, and it is evident we have much to celebrate.

Our new theme, *Women of Peace and Hope*, is an exciting one. Councils have celebrated at masses and social gatherings inviting their whole parish to participate. Some have developed prayer programs. The *CWL Day of Peace & Hope Activities Kit*, prepared by national officers, was well received and many are using those ideas in their parish councils.

Membership is a challenge. Membership is down slightly from 2,509 to 2,449. There were 51 deaths last year. However, 14 of 44 councils reported an increase in membership in 2008. It is *hoped* that through our visibility, enthusiasm, and reaching out by personal invitation this will result in an increase in membership in 2009.

Deanery meetings were held in March. Councils from all over the Island were invited to attend the meeting in their area. These meetings provide an opportunity to open lines of communication between the provincial council and grassroots members. This year, short workshops were given on leadership roles. Members are very enthusiastic about these meetings, knowing they are not alone with their challenges. They learn so much from ideas shared with other councils. As with all gatherings, the fun and fellowship is a bonus.

The highlight of our year was having National President Danielle McNeil-Hessian attend our 87th provincial convention. She presented a workshop on *Women of Peace and Hope*. We were challenged to be instruments of *peace* and to be a beacon of *hope* for others. There was an increase in attendance at this year's convention and, even more exciting, we had 27 members attending their first ever convention. We also had the pleasure of presenting certificates to recognize the 14 councils that increased membership during the year. We said goodbye to Fr. Gerry Tingley