

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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National President

My first year as president ended with a bang, of the gavel so to speak, as I chaired the 89th annual national convention in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The responsibility struck terror into my heart and I couldn't understand why no president that went before me warned me of this mind chilling responsibility.

The first day, Gathering Day, which featured two inspiring keynote speakers, was not too difficult for me to chair as Dr. Myrtle Power and Fr. Mark Miller invited members present to reflect on the League's theme *Women of Peace and Hope* through their presentations. Gradually I began to realize that conventions are organized with Gathering Day at the beginning in order to lull the chairperson into a sense of false security.

Over the next two days of the convention, excellent reports were presented by the provincial presidents and the standing committee chairpersons. These reports chronicle the work of the members in the parish. Congratulations and thank you for your dedicated service "For God and Canada". The oral reports are reprinted in this magazine along with the wonderful convention highlights written by guest journalist Joan Bona.

On Tuesday afternoon Dr. Robert Walley, founder and executive director of MaterCare International, enlightened the assembly on the difficulties he encountered in Ghana when building the obstetric fistula facility. MaterCare was successful in completing the facility in 2006 when it was turned over to the Archdiocese of Cape Coast and a board of trustees. Unfortunately, the hospital has not opened to this day.

MaterCare continues its work internationally by raising funds for hospitals, training and research. To find out more about its work, visit its Web site.

Three resolutions were presented at the convention and the chairperson is required to think very fast on her feet. It is no small wonder that a parliamentarian is seated to her left. It is necessary to stay impartial through the amendments, and the amendments to the amendments, as passion sometimes take over the debate and discussion on the convention floor.

I would say that if I learned anything from chairing a meeting with upwards of 700 individuals present where emotions sometimes run high, it is the necessity to follow the rules of order. The rights of voting and accredited delegates to speak and to make motions may take you in a different direction, but if you follow the

rules of order the meeting will stay on course.

On the whole it has been a very interesting year. I have been blest by meeting members from coast to coast as I travelled on my League journey. The warmth and hospitality I have received have been heartwarming. I have heard your stories and have been touched by your caring and sharing. Keep up the good work as you gather with your sisters in the League and live out your gospel values by being an example of hope and peace in your home, church and community.

I look forward to the year ahead as we continue our League journey to become *Women of Peace and Hope*. ✚



For God and Canada