

TRANSFORMING INTO A LEADER

Kim Scammell
Executive Director



I've been executive director for The Catholic Women's League of Canada for nine years now. When I first saw the advertisement for an executive director in a local newspaper, it piqued my curiosity. You see, I hadn't even heard of the League before and didn't know what to expect, but it seemed worth trying for. After all, the worst that could happen is the search committee would say "no" and I would have gained valuable interview experience.

As it turned out, I was asked to attend an interview – an interview that was conducted by the national president, national past president, national president-elect and national secretary-treasurer. Had I been a member, I would have probably been so intimidated by these women that I would have been unable to express myself well. However, being naïve about who I was speaking with, I answered their questions to the best of my ability and without a lot of angst and hoped that they would seriously consider me as a candidate for the position.

Little did I know that something would change for me that day. I came away from that interview transfixed by these four incredibly spiritual, gracious, knowledgeable and compassionate leaders. The only thing I was sure of when I walked out of the interview room was that I wanted "some of what they had."

Now, nine years later, I continue to be awed by members of the national executive. While they are all very distinct in their personalities, there are qualities that they have in common – qualities that I believe a "lifetime" of service to the League has developed. They are spiritual, gracious, humble, compassionate, empathetic, well-spoken, well-organized and true leaders in the church and society today.

How did they get to be who they are today? They got involved! They served whenever they were asked. They served when they didn't feel qualified and lacked the confidence to do what they were asked. They served even when they didn't know if they had the time. They knew they couldn't do it alone – they knew they could only do it with God's help. They prayed for the confidence, the ability and the time.

I am in the unique position of being able to watch these women transform into leaders – and they all do! With each term in office, and each challenge that they [sometimes reluctantly] accept, they become more than they were before they began.

We transform when we do things that take us out of our comfort zone – that extend us beyond who we believe we are. There is so much God-given potential in each of us that is untapped, just waiting for an opportunity to be used.

Make a decision to serve! Three deserving beneficiaries will be the better for it – yourself, the League, and your community. Why not give it a try? After all, the League needs leaders at every level and one day you might just be interviewing the next executive director! †

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**Re: Article in Volume 83, No. 1, Winter 2007
"Money Essential to Growth: Part VIII" by Peggy Roche**

After reading your article "Money Essential to Growth: Part VIII" I became distressed to see that one solution to your deficit budget projection was to raise national per capita fees. I think that this will decrease membership even further as higher fees are a major deterrent to joining the League.

Recruiting 24,750 new members seems to me to be a much more positive approach and becomes a win/win for everyone involved. We gain more sisters, our voices increase in representation and our fees remain the same.

As president of a council who has more than doubled their membership this past year I know that it is possible. Enthusiasm, a positive attitude and a supportive pastor are key ingredients to success. I challenge every council in Canada to go out and get new members. If you don't know how, attend diocesan meetings and ask other presidents; have someone enthusiastic come and speak at your membership drive weekends or simply ask members what you can do to encourage all Catholic women to join.

Let us all make an effort to make the CWL all that we know it can be as we all step forward in faith and action.

Your sister in the League,
Roxanne McDonald
President, St. Clare of Assisi Parish Council
Coquitlam, B.C.