

HONORARY LIFE MEMBER VIVIAN BOSCH

NATIONAL PRESIDENT: 2000-2002

Theme: *The Open Door*



Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I; send me!’” (Isaiah 6:8) The new millennium echoed with a new hope, a new joy, and a new beginning, not only for League history but also a new beginning for the rest of Vivian’s life as she accepted the position as national president. It all began in the Jubilee Year 2000 at the national convention held in Charlottetown, when the League celebrated 80 years of service as a national organization.

The Open Door, the League theme for 2000-02, was a call to a new evangelization that invited members to open the door to their hearts. An ad hoc committee, chaired by Life Member Velma Harasen, compiled valuable resources into a comprehensive teaching manual entitled *Leading the League*. The *Executive Handbook* was also prepared as an excellent resource for executive members on all levels.

The World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations General Assembly was held in Rome, March 17-25, 2001, with the theme *The Prophetic Mission of Women*. It was evident that the 650 representatives who came from 56 countries were very active in their communities and committed to working in the church and society. Two phrases that echoed throughout the assembly were, “For whom are we supposed to walk?” and “For whom and for what will we take a stand?” The League resolution on same-sex marriages was presented at the general assembly along with seven resolutions from other countries.

The League responded to the issue of same-sex marriage by requesting the federal government to maintain the traditional definition of marriage. A letter was written in response to the statement made by the federal government that it would penalize provincial governments that refuse to pay for abortions performed in private clinics. The League issued a joint press release (with the Catholic Group for Health, Justice and Life) regarding the Supreme Court decision on the Robert Latimer case. The League addressed women and pensions in Canada, an issue most pertinent to elderly women on their own because they have the highest poverty rate of any group of women.

The 2001 annual national convention, held in Calgary, was full of special moments of teaching, sharing and reaching out. Joanne Chafe, keynote speaker, addressed the

members on the “new evangelization” concept and invited them to bring the good news to others in ordinary ways. Father Thomas Rosica and Dr. Katherine Rouleau, two leaders of World Youth Day 2002 (WYD), invited members to open their hearts and homes to the pilgrims from 150 countries and challenged the League for a \$250,000 donation toward WYD activities. Members contributed a gift of \$210,000, an historical achievement that was the ultimate highlight of the new evangelization process.

At the 2001 annual national convention, the League established a voluntary fund to give financial support to the Catholic Missions In Canada catecheses projects across Canada. Parish councils were also invited to support a twinning project with a mission in order to provide moral and spiritual support to mission communities and those who bring the word of God to these communities.

Many doors were opened to the 700 delegates who attended the 2002 annual national convention, held in Moncton. The convention theme *The Open Door: You are the Light of the World* gave members the opportunity to explore two different aspects of spirituality through the eyes of refugees and the personal journey of an Aboriginal person. Mary Jo Leddy, Executive Director of Romero House, Toronto, shared stories of people who come to Romero House every day. She urged members to befriend refugees. In doing so, they would come to realize that “refugees are people in need, not an issue to be resolved.” Judge Graydon Nicholas, a member of the Maliceet people, joined Bishop Douglas Crosby, National Spiritual Advisor, in helping members see how Christianity and Aboriginal spirituality share many common signs and traditions.

Attending diocesan and provincial conventions in every province during her term as national president was a gift Vivian will treasure forever. She made many dear and lasting friends. *The Open Door* theme gave a significant and remarkable focus for members during Vivian’s two-year term as national president. It was the spark that ignited the fire of desire in members’ hearts to see the face of Christ in others, to share Christ with others and to be Christ to others, which defines their call, as Beatitude women, in League ministry. †