

# SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE



**Cecile Miller**

National Chairperson of Spiritual Development

**T**he spiritual development committee chairperson works in consultation with her spiritual advisor. Her role is a very important one because, “Spiritual growth is the very heart of the League and the essence of its existence.” So, what is the spiritual development chairperson required to do?

First of all, she should choose a committee of at least three members. If she is not computer literate, she should try to have a committee member who is.

In the *Executive Handbook*, six duties of the chairperson are listed and under each duty a number of actions are itemized. What follows are some other ideas which my sub-committee chairpersons and I suggest.

**Spiritual growth of members.** The top priority of this committee is the spiritual growth of members. Each person has a particular spirituality depending on her background and traditions and where she is on her journey. All members are on different journeys and what appeals to one person may not appeal to another, therefore, offer a variety of spiritual programs. To help members become women of prayer: introduce various forms of prayer such as Liturgy of the Hours, Lectio Divina or centering prayer; suggest booklets and websites for meditations; use music – teach new songs, chants; make use of all of the senses with guided meditations and tastefully decorated sacred spaces; have a memorial service for deceased members in November and invite family members; invite a member who has attended the 49<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress to share what she has learned.

Make use of spiritual programs from conventions at the various levels. Check the League website for prayer services that develop the theme.

Do not be afraid to spend time with the spiritual program. It should be at least fifteen minutes long but could run to half an hour depending on what has been prepared for that particular meeting. Allow for interaction among the members; this is always very popular. Encourage them to share their stories of faith. Include intentions, some written and also spontaneous ones from those gathered at the meeting. Introduce *One in the Spirit*, the new spiritual program available on the website.

**Study of Catholic teachings.** Keep members informed about Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical letters, messages and talks.

**Role of women in the church.** Encourage women to enroll in pastoral ministry courses and formation programs. Some of these are available through distance education.

**Evangelization and mission assistance.** Members are called to evangelize or, in other words, be ambassadors for Christ by spreading the Good News with the help of the Holy Spirit. Called to evangelize under various standing committees, members first need to truly know and believe in the Word of God.

In support of the League's mandate, give witness to a truly Christian life throughout the day at home, work or at leisure. Do not hesitate to discuss religion when the subject comes up, always respecting other religious traditions and cultures. Become involved in public life, demonstrating Catholic values of respect for life and the promotion of justice. Reach out to others as opportunities present themselves in times of marriage, death or personal crisis. Use visual means, audio and projections systems to spread the Good News. Contact the media to present the Catholic viewpoint. Correspond with government on topics that threaten Catholic moral values. At the national level, there is a voluntary fund set up for donations to Catholic Missions In Canada (CMIC). CMIC is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, so it is a good time to raise awareness about its work.

**Lay ministries.** There is always a need for members to accept roles as lay ministers, especially today when fewer are volunteering. Members can lead by example in their service to others.

**Ecumenism and interfaith endeavours.** “Change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name ‘spiritual ecumenism’” (Vatican II, *Decree on Ecumenism*).

It is suggested that members might take the initiative by inviting other Christian denominations to pray, sing, learn and worship together. Take any occasion to come together in prayer. Plan and organize these endeavours together with everyone contributing toward the event.

Arrange for various speakers to address the council on the meaning of ecumenism and how it can enrich the spiritual life of the community. Plan a "hymn fest" with different churches to celebrate Christmas, Easter or Thanksgiving. Organize interfaith bible study groups focusing on what binds Christians together. Christ challenges us to be one together, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20).

Remember that it is the spiritual dimension which sets the League apart from all other women's organizations. Remember also to pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance in all that you do and ask Our Lady of Good Counsel to intercede for you.

With contributions from life members Shirley Bernier, Elaine Black and Karen Lawless. †

## ST. ANTHONY PARISH COUNCIL SUDBURY, ONTARIO



Pictured are [l-r]: Pauline Ramsay, Donna Kivinen, Lisa Urso, Julie Massimiliano and Rosalba Kulmala.

St. Anthony Parish Council held a Birthright shower in the parish on May 2, 2007. Donations were accepted up until Mothers' Day. A play pen was filled to near capacity with donations of diapers, sleepers, outfits and bedding supplied by parishioners and CWL members, who made several of the items. Due to a tremendously positive response, it was determined that the shower should become an annual event.



## PRAYER FOR MARRIED LIFE

O God,

You have created man and woman  
in Your own image.

Bless this chosen man and woman  
whom You have joined  
through the sacrament of marriage.

Open their hearts and minds  
To receive Your great gift of love.

Let this love they have for each other grow,  
as they cherish You and each other,  
so that they reflect Your covenant love,  
revealed in Your Son.

Make this couple a stable family unit,  
faithful to You and to each other.

Gift this holy marriage with children  
as a special sign of Your love.

Keep this couple ever mindful  
of Your constant love  
and their call to share it  
by training their children  
in Your loving ways.

Help them to see beyond  
the bonds of their marriage,  
caring for all of Your creation.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

\*approved for use by members of the 228<sup>th</sup>  
meeting of the national executive

## CONGRATULATIONS!

### Congratulations to Parish Councils Celebrating Anniversaries

#### 75 YEARS

Cathedral of Mary Immaculate, Nelson, British Columbia  
St. Francis Xavier, Trail, British Columbia

#### 50 YEARS

Our Lady of Peace, Trenton, Ontario [MO]  
Sacred Heart, Merritt, British Columbia  
St. Anthony, Sudbury, Ontario  
St. Clare, Edmonton, Alberta  
St. Maria Goretti, Devon, Alberta  
St. Rita, Valleyview, Alberta  
St. Theresa, Dieppe, New Brunswick