

BELONGING



Nancy Simms

B.C. & Yukon Provincial President-Elect

What does it mean to me to belong to The Catholic Women's League of Canada? It means love, acceptance, friendship, personality struggles, prayer companionship, learning, understanding, faith and growth.

I was trying to decide what to write for this magazine and the word that kept coming to my mind was "belonging". Maybe that is because I am experiencing a little empty nest syndrome right now and having a sense of belonging in my life is something that I presently need and, for that matter, have always needed.

I remember approximately 12 years ago when I was on the diocesan executive, my family and I had begun our travels down to the lower mainland for my grandfather-in-law's funeral when my husband suddenly suffered a grand mal seizure. We ended up in a hospital and town still within our diocese, yet two hours from our home. My four frightened children, ages seven to 11, and I wandered in a nightmarish daze out the doors of the hospital to find a motel for the night, when I suddenly heard a woman calling my name. She was a member who worked at the hospital gift shop and she recognized me from our diocesan meetings. This wonderful woman hugged and consoled me when I so desperately needed it and gave each of the children

a little gift of candy. She assured me that members would be praying for us and promptly went home to make a few phone calls; within a day, members throughout the province were praying for my family! That's what belonging to the League means to me!

By belonging to the League I have shared members' concerns, thoughts and ideas through national resolutions and have written many letters to government. I know I am not alone; over 96,000 women share my voice, and I belong.

I belong to a sisterhood of women for whom I pray in their times of sorrow and joy. I love getting e-mails that announce "I'm a Grandma!" just as much as I enjoy sending them – as I will this June when my two new grandbabies arrive. Sharing is what the League is all about.

In the back recesses of my mind I remember lines from a poem I wrote when I was 11 years old.

"I want to be found and not put down.
I want to be an individual in this town."

Belonging to The Catholic Women's League of Canada has brought that desperately shy 11 year old girl's dream to a reality.

The League accepts me for who I am and challenges me to continue to grow as an individual.

Why do you belong to The Catholic Women's League of Canada? †

