

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Danielle McNeil-Hessian
National President

In 1920 the national council was formed, with seven subdivisions in Halifax, Sherbrooke, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Regina and Edmonton. It is fitting that we celebrate the 90th anniversary of The Catholic Women's League of Canada in Ottawa, one of the founding subdivisions. One has to wonder about the vision of our foremothers 90 years ago. I don't believe that they could have imagined what the world and the church would be like in 90 years. I have difficulty believing what I have witnessed in my lifetime, and I certainly could not have envisioned how the world has developed over the last six decades. The fact that the League has stood the test of time speaks to the solid foundation on which it was built.

The Ottawa committee has promised to make the 90th anniversary a celebration of a lifetime. A convention highlight this year will be the development of the theme by Doctor Nuala Kenny on the topic of *Hope* in the Gospel of Life. Dr. Kenny is a Sister of Charity, pediatrician, professor of medicine, researcher, former deputy minister of health and founder of Dalhousie University's department of bioethics. Highlights will also include presentations by Velma Harasen, Cecile Miller and Mary Nordick on their respective trips to India and Africa.

There is promise of many opportunities for *faith, fun and fulfillment* at this convention. As part of the fun, members from across the country are busy putting together costumes representing the decade assigned to their province. I encourage you to give serious thought to attending. Don't miss the celebration.

In celebration of the *Year for Priests*, the national executive, through random selection, invited two priests who are spiritual advisors to attend the national convention, all expenses paid. I am pleased to report that the first two chosen accepted the invitation and will be in Ottawa. I look forward to meeting Father Ron Thompson of Our Lady of Assumption Parish in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia and Father Edward House of Cathedral of Christ the King Parish in Hamilton, Ontario.

Once again this year, April 26th was the CWL Day

of *Peace and Hope*. The theme, *Women of Peace and Hope*, focussed on *peace* through palliative care, and *hope* through outreach under the heading "Welcome, friend!" Resolution 2007.03 Hospice Palliative Care: An Integral Component of the Canadian Health Care System, encouraged provincial councils to lobby governments to make palliative and end-of-life care programs a top priority by taking action on Recommendation Two of Senator Sharon Carstairs' report, *Still Not There: Quality End-of-Life Care: A Progress Report*, 2005. It has been three years since this resolution was adopted and Canada is still not there yet. Members still have work to do in order to ensure access for all Canadians to quality hospice palliative care. National Hospice Palliative Care Week, May 2nd-8th, was a one-week campaign that focusses on raising awareness about this important issue. It was also a time to celebrate, recognize, and share the achievements in hospice palliative care throughout the nation. The provinces of British Columbia, Ontario and New Brunswick support hospice care, and hospice societies are springing up across the country. Let's keep the issue of hospice palliative care on the agenda of provincial and federal members of government through letter writing and personal contact.

During the month of February, my parish bulletin included a reflection,

"Fasting During Lent – A Different Approach"

Fast from judging others. Before making any judgements, recall how Jesus overlooks our faults.

Fast from complaining. When you find yourself about to complain, close your eyes and recall some of the little moments of joy Jesus has given you.

Fast from resentment or bitterness. Work on forgiving those who may have hurt you.

Fast from discouragement. Hold on to Jesus' promise that He has a perfect plan for your life. (Jer.29.11)

The suggestions struck a chord with me and reminded me that this is the basis by which one should live her life, not just during Lent but 365 days a year. These four simple rules can help all of us on our journey to becoming *Women of Peace and Hope* and

keep us on our path towards Jesus.

The Canadian League has had many faces since the first issue in April 1921. Members describe waiting for the magazine and reading it from cover to cover; many note that it is an excellent resource for use at meetings. Recently a life member suggested that parish councils form “book clubs” with members reading and sharing articles for continued conversation. Of course, you can always use your magazine for recruitment by sharing it with friends who are non-members.

The League is a gift. This year parish councils have received new brochures and recruitment cards to assist with attracting new members. Use the resources; include a personal invitation and reap the fruits of your labour. There is still a full year to meet the membership increase target of 10%.

Please remember that if your parish council records the highest percentage increase in members or the highest absolute increase in members for 2010, your council’s per capita fees for 2011 will be \$0.00

Each year, spring brings signs of rebirth, [hope](#) for the world and confidence that through Jesus we have the promise of eternal life.

Spring also brings conventions, guest speakers and [hope](#) for the future – women sharing and caring as they continue on the journey becoming *Women of Peace and Hope*. †



For God and Canada

Spiritual Advisor Extraordinaire

In this, the *Year for Priests*, Father Gilles Surprenant, is a superb example of the enthusiastic and faithful support offered so generously to the League by spiritual advisors. Father Surprenant has stated his fervent desire “to enhance this important level of life and activity of the League within the life and vitality of our Church.” He serves as pastor and spiritual advisor to St. Luke Parish Council in Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Quebec and is spiritual advisor to Montreal Archdiocesan Council. He works energetically with other spiritual advisors across Canada and can be found at every annual national convention. In a recent brief on the role and relationship of parish spiritual advisors and the League, Father Surprenant wrote that members have a unique opportunity to “enrich their Parish by their presence and involvement, for their own personal holiness and happiness, for the glory of God, the growth of the Church and the League and for the good of Canada.”



Welcome To Reactivated Council

St. Philip Neri
Toronto, Ontario

Welcome To New Councils

Holy Spirit
New Westminster, British Columbia

Our Lady of the Valley
Vernon, British Columbia

St. Andrew
Ottawa, Ontario

St. Leo the Great
Brooklin, Toronto

ERRATA

In the Winter 2010 issue’s article, “Howdya Do? Ottawa Awaits”, paragraph three should read, “The Dutch royal family was accorded safe harbour in Ottawa during the Second World War, and Princess Margriet, **sister of** the present queen of the Netherlands was born here.” The Queen of the Netherlands is Queen Beatrix.