

# The Canadian League



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**Velma Harasen**  
National President



**A**s *Women of Peace and Hope*, we go forward *Centred on Faith & Justice*. Within this issue of *The Canadian League* you will find the new theme logo as well as a prayer for faith and justice. I invite you and your council to reflect on the logo and prayer: the cross – the centre and ultimate sign of our faith; the globe – a reminder that we must strive for justice for all; the dove – a symbol of peace with wings outstretched to embrace all people of the world; the sprig of greenery – our hope for the world and its environment.

## Faith

Faith is at the centre of everything members do. *Prayers and Workshops for Women of Peace and Hope* is not outdated. In most cases you can simply change the words “peace and hope” to “faith and justice” or incorporate both. Remember the *CWL Day of Peace and Hope Activities Kit*? I invite you to revisit this resource as it applies to the theme, *Centred on Faith & Justice*.

All members are called to a new evangelization. Pope Benedict XVI has established the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization to rekindle faith in the face of the progressive secularization of society and a “sort of eclipse of the sense of God”. How are Gospel values promoted in today’s world? What is the League’s role or responsibility?

I attended the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (CCCB) Annual Plenary Assembly in Cornwall, Ontario with some 90 bishops and about 25 invited observers. Relations with Muslims and interfaith greetings and reflections were at the heart of the first sessions. Evangelization was one of the key themes, relating challenges that can advance or impede the effort to evangelize including: new bioethical questions and their impact on evangelization; questions about responsible ministry, giving special attention to the issues of sexual abuse; the church’s pastoral approach to non-practicing Catholics; the renewal of parishes; and the involvement of young adult Catholics.

## Justice

As a new theme unfolds, the focus will be on poverty. What are the root causes of poverty? How can members work to alleviate poverty in their communities and the world?

Each national standing committee chairperson will examine specific areas of poverty as it relates to her committee. You will read in this issue some of the direction each chairperson is proposing. Through the work of the chairpersons and the subsequent priorities set by each provincial, diocesan, and local parish council, members will have a variety of options for action on the theme. Reports indicate that many councils are already involved in social justice and working with the marginalized in society. We commend you and reaffirm the good in these projects.

## Women Against Poverty (WAP) – Change for Change

Women Against Poverty (WAP) – Change for Change will be a national project for April 26<sup>th</sup>, the feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

A little change from your purse or pocket can make a big change in the life of someone in need. Parish councils may choose a project that will aid in the eradication of poverty, helping women and children in poverty, in parish families or communities. With the permission of pastors, at Easter weekend masses and services, which fall just before April 26<sup>th</sup>, invite parishioners to empty their loose change into a basket. Promote this in parish bulletins with information on how the money will be used. Consider inviting women in neighbouring churches to join in the cause. On Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, donate the proceeds to the project selected.

Whether it is Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth), Catholic social teaching, the CCCB statement relating to poverty, the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations’ chosen priorities at its centenary assembly, the Dignity for All campaign, or the League theme: *Centred on Faith & Justice*, the same message is shared. †

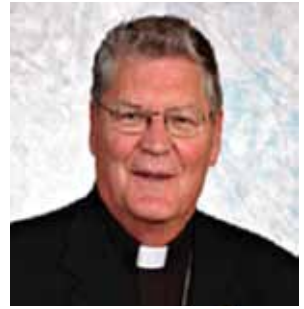
**No peace without justice  
No justice without forgiveness**

**Pope John Paul II**

Message on the Celebration of World  
Day of Peace, January 1, 2002

# THE CALL TO FAITH THAT DOES JUSTICE

**Archbishop Martin W. Currie**  
National Spiritual Advisor



People often ask me, “What is faith?” Because I am asked this question so often, I have done a lot of thinking about it. The answer that I have come up with is that faith is a relationship. It is a relationship between me and God and, in particular, the person of Jesus Christ, in whom I place my faith. It is a relationship of mutual love.

One of the most important insights of our Catholic tradition is that God is always mediated. The God who loves me and whom I love may speak to me privately, in prayer, and in deep mystical insights. In my life, this has sometimes been the case. Much more often, however, God has spoken to me in and through the scriptures, the sacraments, other people, and world events. The key insight of our Catholic faith is that God can and does use any and all means to get our attention, to speak to us, to call us.

My faith calls me to love. Most often, I love the God whom I cannot see by loving the brothers and sisters I can see. Their needs stare me in the face, day in and day out. When I respond to these needs in love, when I respond to the urge that God has placed in my heart to help those in need, then I am making the link between faith and justice. Justice is giving practical expression to my faith – it is putting legs, feet, hands, and heart on my faith. Justice, I think, is practical love.

Sometimes, I think that my actions are so small, so insignificant. Sometimes I stop on the street and invite a panhandler to have coffee or a sandwich with me at Tim Horton’s. Sometimes I take my lunch hour and make my way to The Gathering Place, a local shelter that welcomes the poor and vulnerable in my city. There, I share a bowl of soup and conversation with the men and women for whom life is often a struggle. Sometimes I give a young person on the street a toonie for a coffee. Almost always, I am assailed by the temptation to think that my small action, or even my bigger responses of Christian service, is like putting a Band-Aid® over a deep wound.



Many people have the gift of being able to offer charitable assistance to those in need. Some of us have the gift of advocacy, of lending our voices to those whose voices cannot or will not be heard in our world. I have that gift as an archbishop. People often listen to my voice because of my office. If this is so, then I have a responsibility to work with brothers and sisters to build a more just society, and to do that it is necessary to deal with causes as well as treating symptoms. Acting for justice doesn’t mean that I stop offering the sandwich or the coffee, but it may mean asking why people are hungry, in addition to sharing food with them. I can help people to explore what needs to change in order that the

needs of all can be met. Our church has this kind of voice in the world. Catholic charities and nongovernmental organizations have given aid and voice to the poor and struggling for centuries. The League is the largest faith-based organization in Canada and it uses its numbers to lend its voice and

power to the voiceless and powerless. In this, members make the link between faith and justice.

The call to a faith that does justice invites us to accompany, serve and plead the cause of those people and groups who are made poor or pushed to the margins. We are called to live in right relationship with others and to love and serve our neighbours. In your parish and diocesan councils, I encourage you to think about and discuss the link between faith and justice. Please know that I walk beside you in this endeavour as brother and friend. †

## Pause and Reflect

- Are there any groups of people in your community whose needs, interests and perspectives are neglected? How might you respond to them?
- What do you understand to be the connection between faith and justice?
- Imagine what it would be like to be in right relationship with yourself, others, creation, and God. What would such a world look, sound and feel like?

# SHARE THE STORIES AND EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES



**Mary Nordick**  
National Chairperson of Communications

**W**ith a new year comes a new theme: *Centred on Faith & Justice*. How will members live out this theme in the League for the next two years? How will chairpersons of communication spread the good news of council activities under this theme?

The national executive has taken some steps to live out the theme and now it is time for all members to get on board. At the fall meeting of the national executive, the theme was brainstormed and a focus was developed: Women Against Poverty (WAP). Members of the national executive were challenged to think about how to implement this focus in their standing committees and provinces. Some of the results appear in this issue. Please read the ideas carefully, take them to heart, and put this beautiful theme into practice.

One way that chairpersons of communications can live out the theme and focus is to gather and share stories that put a face on poverty within our communities. But don't stop there; tell the good news of how members can eliminate or at the very least alleviate poverty in their communities. For example, I will share a story from my own city, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

At a large supermarket in a fairly affluent section of the city a family – father, mother, and children – were buying groceries, not an unusual sight at first glance. When the family left the store, the father carefully repacked the groceries into backpacks and bags that the family had brought. Each member of the family, down to the youngest, received what he or she could

carry and the family set out on the long walk home to their core neighbourhood where accommodation is affordable. Why the long walk to buy a necessity, food? The family does not own a car; bus fare for the whole family is too expensive as are taxis; and most significantly, there is no full-scale grocery store in the core neighbourhood. It doesn't require much thinking to figure out that access to good food at affordable prices is essential to health and well being.

Many concerned citizens in Saskatoon are well aware of the problem and have come up with projects and proposals, notably Station 20 West. On November 24<sup>th</sup>, Christian church leaders from several denominations met to sign a commitment of support for the proposed Good Food Junction store (one aspect of the Station 20 West project) for the city's core neighbourhood.

The signatories pledged support and offered prayers before an enthusiastic crowd of people who were invited to add personal signatures. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon is making the Good Food Junction an Advent project. Parishes are urged to inform people about the project and to encourage financial support. This is truly faith in action to support justice. Members of Christ's church, though divided denominationally, are gathering to answer the Gospel call to feed the hungry. This is done not through donations of food, but through the provision of long-term access to good, affordable food for everyone in the city, not just those in the more affluent areas. †

## WOMEN AGAINST POVERTY

On November 6, 2010, national chairpersons gathered to plan their response to this year's initiative. Standing committee chairpersons at all levels are called to share information, energy and expertise.

### National Chairpersons' Topics of Focus

#### Treasurer

- poverty statistics
- low income levels
- numbers of people living in poverty

#### Spiritual Development

- call to act justly
- development of a prayer service on poverty

#### Organization

- explore education programs
- share skills with low income women and men

- access social services and food banks

#### Christian Family Life

- single parent families' needs
- affordable housing
- safe cradles
- mental health services
- networking opportunities
- seniors' needs
- youth needs

#### Community Life

- violence against women
- refugees and immigrants

#### Education and Health

- educational programs
- shopping wisely
- cooking economically and nutritionally
- health issues
- health issues relating to poverty
- inner-city school/ lunch programs.

#### Communications

- will share stories about poverty

- give voice to the narrative of the poor
- explore and share successful responses

#### Resolutions

- encourage councils to write resolutions
  - prompt government to respond to needs of the poor

#### Legislation

- examine legislation on housing and services

# “YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES”

## A Report of the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations Centenary Assembly



**Velma Harasen**  
National President



**Betty Anne Brown Davidson**  
National  
President-elect



**Danielle McNeil-Hessian**  
National Past  
President



“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1.8)

**A**lmost 500 women from 60 countries gathered in Jerusalem, Israel, under the theme *You Will Be My Witnesses* for the centenary assembly of the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO) in October 2010. And witnesses they all became – witnesses to peace, hope, faith and justice.

The assembly consisted of visits to pilgrimage sites, daily reflections and speakers, and the statutory assembly. More than 60 countries were represented; 31 attended from Canada. Official League delegates were National President Velma Harasen, National President-elect Betty Anne Brown Davidson and National Past President Danielle McNeil-Hessian. Honorary Life Member and North American Vice-President for WUCWO Agnes Bedard also attended and played a vital role in the majority of the liturgical celebrations.

### First Impressions

The sights and sounds of Jerusalem were astounding. Imagine people hustling, many wearing long Arabic garb, or Hasidic Jewish curls and top hats, children going off to school with backpacks, thousands upon thousands of tourists from many lands, the rush of traffic in a big city, the Angelus bells three times a day, the minarets’ drone five times a day, the laughter of children, the hawking of merchants, the chatter of

birds and yet absolute silence in some of the inner courtyards. It was in this most holy and culturally rich setting that delegates bore witness to the experience of a lifetime.

### Pilgrimages

The pilgrimages took delegates daily to a number of the holy sites. They travelled to the village of Ein Karem and the two churches named for St. John the Baptist, one on the site where he was born and one on the site of his parental summer home. At this second site, Mary visited Elizabeth and joyfully spoke the Magnificat.

Visits were made to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in the Old City of Jerusalem, considered to be the holiest Christian site in the world. The site is believed to encompass Calvary, where Jesus was crucified, and the tomb where He was laid to rest, rising three days later from the dead.

Delegates were anxious to follow Jesus’ last days and to visit His burial site – filled with heat, confusion and noise. Pilgrims knelt and prayed over the Stone of Anointing, believed to be the spot where Jesus’ body was prepared for burial. Time was spent waiting in a crushing crowd for an opportunity to enter the Holy Sepulchre. It was a very tiny chamber; the tomb is covered with a marble slab and decorated with bas-reliefs which portray the Resurrection.

One evening delegates travelled The Way of the Cross on the *Via Dolorosa* (Latin for way of grief) and also in the Old City. This route is believed to be the route followed by Christ from the place of his condemnation to Calvary where he was crucified. This was a very emotional experience as the participants wound their way along the route that Jesus took to his crucifixion. The journey began with Velma carrying the cross and Agnes leading participants in prayer and song at the stations along the route.

economic impact on their faith community. Peace and hope were scarce commodities in the city.

After delivering the supplies, participants attended mass at the Church of the Nativity, the oldest church in the Holy Land still in use, commemorating the birthplace of Jesus Christ. The church is built over a grotto where the Virgin Mary is said to have given birth to Jesus. The mass was totally in Arabic but was a beautiful experience, one that united all Christians in attendance.



The buses travelled to the Shepherds Field, said to be the site where the shepherds kept watch over their flocks when the angel appeared to them announcing the birth of Jesus. A beautiful chapel, built with donations from Canada, is decorated with murals depicting the events that took place on the site on the night of Jesus' birth. As a group we sang *Angels We Have Heard On High* at the top of our lungs. The experience reduced many of us to tears.

## Reflections and Speakers

Daily spiritual reflections were led by WUCWO Ecclesiastical Assistant Fr. GianMaria Polidoro. His daily messages reminded participants that they are prophets, witnesses to Christ, and as such, every man or woman is considered a brother or sister. He appealed to participants to speak kindly to people and with humility, knowing that God loves everyone. He reminded delegates to learn from each other and appreciate different cultures, customs, and religions and try to understand the beauty of God in each person. He urged delegates to return home bringing the goodness, fraternity, and witness to love that was shared at the assembly, and to promote the Word and feminine genius in both society and church.

One of the most amazing sights was the Garden of Gethsemane. It was not difficult to picture Christ in the garden praying on the night He was betrayed. The garden is at the foot of the Mount of Olives and is inside the walled grounds of the Church of all Nations. There is a large slab of rock which is said to be the rock where Jesus prayed.

Through a variety of speakers, delegates were invited to reflect on

On Sunday, participants were scheduled to attend mass at some of the local churches. Agnes had invited the Canadians to bring school supplies for the children in Bethlehem. To deliver these supplies, participants travelled by bus from Jerusalem and past a 10' high concrete wall with checkpoints, manned by machine-gun-wielding guards, that divides the West Bank from the rest of Israel.

- *How to be Christ's Witness in a Globalized World* through the reestablishment of the family and family values, advocating against secularization, where individuals' rights eclipse the needs of community and society.
- *The Importance of Formation to be an Efficient Witness in Today's World* by modeling a motherhood role where women are willing to literally offer their lives to preserve

In Bethlehem, the majority of residents are Muslims with Christians making up a minority; Christians are leaving in great numbers mainly because of the conflict and resulting



and promote faith for the coming generation, in the true concept of family.

- *You are Witnesses of Love* through an examination of *Mulieris Dignitatem* (On the Dignity of Women) which stresses that the feminine and masculine are complimentary to each other and integral to all humanity.
- *Mary, Testimony of God's Love, yesterday and today* which included a look at Mary's portrait in the bible and Mary working humbly toward peace in the church today.
- *Jesus and women: meeting him, following him, being His witnesses* when delegates were regaled with a reflection on three women who became His witnesses, even in His last hours.

Most moving were personal stories shared by two separate panels of women from the Holy Land. The first was a panel of Christian women. They shared stories of the unemployment, poverty, despair, and violence that Christians in the Holy Land face, causing out-migration and leaving even fewer Christians to face the deplorable conditions under which many live. These women choose to stay, despite these conditions, noting it is a privilege and a burden to be a Christian in Israel. They choose to stay behind and be witnesses to the plight of Christians. Their witness bears fruit by the very presence of WUCWO in the Holy Land, lifting their spirits and giving them hope for a peaceful future.

The second panel was an interfaith panel of young women involved with the Focolare Movement. The members of the panel – their faces, their words, and the sincerity with which they spoke – gave the audience hope for the future, perhaps

even peace. These panelists had spent 10 days together learning of the cultures and norms of each religion – Christian, Muslim and Jewish. They were committed to being builders of peace no matter where they were and recognized the need for everyone to love every person they meet every day. Despite the religious and political barriers which cause so much strife, despair and even hatred, these young women were determined that if they failed to love each and every day, they would try again. They received a much deserved standing ovation and were recognized as the future of the Holy Land if their ideas and beliefs are permitted to flourish. There is indeed hope.

## Centenary Assembly

WUCWO President-General Karen Hurley reported financial stability, corporate registration of WUCWO in France, the selection of Mary Queen of Peace as patroness, the appointment of a new secretary-general, and the establishment of a new office. Challenges included reaching out to non-members, increasing the visibility of WUCWO, and reducing expenses of board meetings.

WUCWO Treasurer-General Joann Hillebrand reported 491 in attendance. The United States had established an endowment fund in 2008 which successfully solicited pledges in the amount of \$136,913.

The Canadian endowment fund, with Chairperson Agnes Bedard and Treasurer Kim Scammell, reported on investments of \$833,757. A cheque for over \$18,000 was presented to WUCWO.

Amendments to the *WUCWO Statutes and Bylaws* were



voted on, as well as 13 resolutions. Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada National President Luba Kowalchyk, of Edmonton, was elected to the board and will represent all member organizations in Canada for the next four years. The newly-elected board then elected Maria Giovanna Ruggieri, of Italy, as the president-general for 2010-2014.

Through regional meetings and discussions, delegates participated in choosing a theme, *Love in Action*, and priorities to give focus to WUCWO activities. The particulars of the work are to be determined by the different regions but include fighting poverty, promoting the education of women, and fighting human trafficking and the "sexploitation" of children.

Gratitude and appreciation are extended to Agnes Bedard who completed her term as vice-president for North America. She did a great job as the cantor/choirmaster for the liturgies and was always attentive to her delegates. Agnes has represented the League extremely well over the past four years; a job well done!

### Final Thoughts

The journey has made Canadian participants more aware of the blessing it is to live in Canada where citizens live free from wars within its own borders and without armed guards present as we move place to place. There are many reasons to hope for our future, for the future of our children to be free to roam the land, and to practice our religion.

We are called to be mindful of the plight of the people of the Middle East, particularly the Christians and to keep them in our prayers, to become more educated, and to assist in

whatever way we are able. We must pray that all citizens of the world may live free from war, that we all may live in peace with hope for the future. †

The World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, established in 1910, brings together associations of Catholic women for the purpose of establishing global priorities and sharing witness to the faith. More information on the centenary assembly may be found at [www.wucwo.org](http://www.wucwo.org).



### ST. MARY PARISH COUNCIL, LINDSAY, ONTARIO

For the last three years, St. Mary Parish Council and St. Mary's Church Catholic Girls' League have prepared a tree of remembrance each Advent to honour Canadian casualties of the conflict in Afghanistan. Each year, students of St. Mary's School in Lindsay make a handcrafted dove for each fallen member of the Canadian armed forces.

The doves, each bearing a name of a deceased soldier, are placed on an evergreen tree and displayed in the church on the fourth Sunday of Advent.

Joanne Hough notes that in 2009 "two trees were needed to hold more than 130 doves.... Parishioners were asked to take a dove home and place it on their Christmas tree in support of the families who have lost a loved one in Afghanistan. They were also asked to keep the families of the Canadian forces personnel and the goal of world peace in their prayers during the Christmas season." †

# JERUSALEM AWAKENING

**Huguette Boulet**

President Our Lady of Fatima Parish Council, Cochrane, Ontario

On reading the invitation to the WUCWO Centenary Assembly to be held in Jerusalem in 2010, the very first paragraph of the article lit a fire within me. “Come and join with Catholic women from around the globe as they share their stories, grow in faith and explore the assembly theme, *You will be my witnesses*”.

For the longest time I had felt the need to feel the pulse of feminine catholicity as experienced outside of my cultural environment, so I felt drawn to participate in the assembly, which had an added bonus of being held in the Holy Land.

I was not disappointed.

From my position in the second balcony at the assembly hall in Jerusalem, I glanced around at the diversity of women present, and as we all stood up to pray before the opening session, tears came to my eyes and a lump formed in my throat as I thought jubilantly, “Yes we are one in Christ!”

The first few days were heavily loaded with a wonderful array of timely subjects, and I opted to simply listen to the speakers all the while praying that the speeches would be available at some later date on the WUCWO site to refresh my memory.

The tight schedule, the language differences, and the logistics of being spread out in various hotels restricted interactions to some degree but the Lord arranged for me to meet the women that would bring about changes in my life.

Such an encounter was with a woman living in Jerusalem who sat beside me during the panel discussions, and who openly shared her views on these discussions, as well as her opinions on the Israeli/Palestinian situation. This was a grace-filled moment for me as it embodied exactly what I had sought to experience.

I was floored by the number of pilgrims at each site we visited (You’ve guessed it; I’ve always lived in small towns with lots of space.) and I felt rushed, unable to interiorize the experience having very little time to recollect prayerfully. But now as I read the bible, I am better able to situate myself in the narratives.

I have touched and felt the stones of the past, and I have walked the paths Jesus may have walked. I have seen what is described in the bible, filled my nostrils with the aromas of the land, listened to and interacted with the living stones the very people who live, work, and struggle for justice in the Holy Land, and the experience will indeed be deepened through daily scripture reading. *Shalom, Salem.* †



# SALT OF THE EARTH

## **Claudette Smith**

Chairperson of Membership

St. Columbkille Parish Council, Uptergrove, Ontario

**W**hat was the single most outstanding experience? To me, it was being called *salt of the earth*.

It was realizing with much humility and gratitude blessed gifts and hidden talents God has given to some amazing women, especially a panel of young women from diverse backgrounds and faiths. Participating in the centenary assembly of WUCWO in the land of Jesus called me into a strong spiritual experience and bonded friendships that will never be forgotten.

WUCWO accomplishments showed me how to network the genius of women that gives inherent skills and motivation by shared experiences to create new ideas in service to society at regional, national and international levels.

I was touched by the Holy Spirit during many talks: Women are created “to bring the best out in men”; “virtue is a 21<sup>st</sup> century longing to be ‘alive’ in the world, in family, and in vocation”; “Mary is called Queen of Apostles and has more than apostles”; “To receive Mary’s joy, we rejoice because we can reveal her again in us.” Jesus and women – meeting Him, following Him, being His witnesses – these were blessed gifts as we walked Jerusalem and toured Galilee.

I learned of Pope John Paul II’s belief in theologian Hans Urs von Balthazar’s description of the balance between the Petrine and Marian principles in the church, between the hierarchical and the charismatic.

Meeting, praying, praising, and walking in the Lord was truly awesome with sisters from Africa (especially songs on Bus E by Malawali and Cameroon), South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, Mali, Mexico, the Philippines, Senegal, etc. It was impossible to meet everyone from all five regions. We listened to the Word, shared meals, talked and lived as friends; words cannot magnify such immense joy of the Holy Spirit. While sailing the Sea of Galilee, it was in joyful dancing I recalled a few steps from my youth to an Israeli folk song.

Five hundred women being told “we are salt of the earth” is a very special gift, carrying responsibilities to not merely return to our homes, but to proclaim the goodness of the Lord. Thank you to our organizers and spiritual advisors for an outstanding experience, especially Agnes Bedard for her leadership, and Danielle and Velma for their friendship and request for this report. †

## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PARISH COUNCIL, PERTH, ONTARIO

When a member noted that St. John the Baptist cemetery has many visitors, especially seniors, but lacked a place to rest, sit, or pray, the parish council responded. A raffle was held for an oil painting donated by a parishioner and enough money was raised to buy a beautiful granite bench engraved with “The Catholic Women’s League” and the crest. In June, with several members in attendance, Pastor Father Al Albio blessed the bench. †



# THE BIRDS

## **Huguette Boulet**

President, Our Lady of Fatima Parish Council, Cochrane, Ontario

**T**he first day of our arrival in Jerusalem found us checking in to our hotel and exploring the surrounding streets before having a late afternoon rest in our room. Our window was open to a small interior courtyard with two rather puny trees in the middle, and not a sound coming from that area.

As the afternoon light faded, we suddenly heard a flutter of many wings. The courtyard was filled with dozens of small birds the size of house wrens tweeting noisily as they jostled for positions on the trees. The twittering went on for a good five minutes or more, then as if by magic they all fell silent the very same instant...not one peep afterwards.

They remained silent for the entire night and at day break they all flew off to whatever site they enjoyed during the day, returning just before sundown to roost again.

One night as I lay thinking about the birds, I was reminded of how in our lives we are often too busy, twittering from one obligation to the next, and that if we don’t somehow back off and make time for quiet in our lives we cannot rise the next day rejuvenated in the Spirit, ready to go out and be the witnesses we ought to be in Christ’s name. †

# ...AND THE WOMEN WEPT



**Rebekah Sass**

Future League Member

In October, I accompanied my mother, Kim Scammell, and my sister, Nikki Sass, to Jerusalem for the WUCWO Centenary Assembly. There we joined 500 other women and some men from countries all over the world. The convention was eight days long, and every day was filled with different religious historical sites. Eight sites we visited are believed to be places where the holy family lived and died. These magnificent places were so beautiful and sacred that they moved women to tears.

We visited the birthplace and home of Mary, the place where Mary visited Elizabeth when they were both pregnant, the tomb of Mary, the birthplace of Jesus, the Garden of Gethsemane, the room where the last supper took place, where the crucifixion happened, and the tomb of Jesus.

The home of Mary was beneath a little church within the walls of the Old City. The church was very simple, and had been built overtop of the home. Inside the little house there were many beautiful shrines and statues of Mary.

The place where Mary and Elizabeth met during the time when both were pregnant was at the top of a tall hill, and had been built over by a church for Mary. The church

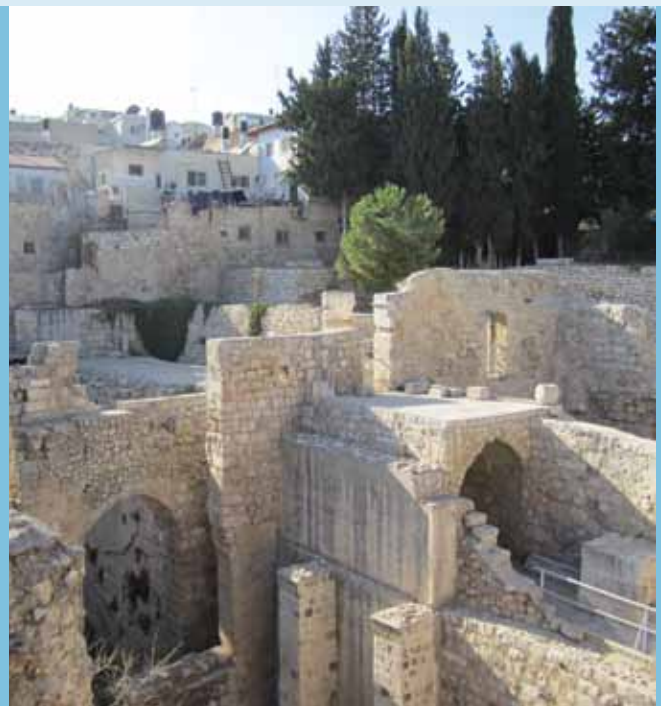
had a beautiful courtyard filled with different plants. All the interior walls were covered with different paintings of angels or Mary. The back wall of the church had the most beautiful mural of Mary that filled the whole wall.

The tomb of Mary was under a church in the Old City. Mary's tomb was in the centre of the room, and statues and shrines filled the rest of the church.

When the group was taken into Bethlehem, we went to a mass at a church that was built over the birthplace of Jesus. We were able to stay for the mass which was all spoken in Arabic, but afterwards the passageway that led to the birthplace was too crowded, so we were unable to go downstairs.

The Garden of Gethsemane was located in a pickpocket area of the city. The Garden had many beautiful pink flowers in full bloom. There was a piece of the original walkway still intact. A cave in the ground was said to have sheltered Jesus and His disciples, and pieces of the ten commandments had been found.

We were able to visit the room in the Old City where the last supper took place. The room was on the second



## HOLY FAMILY PARISH COUNCIL, FERNIE, BRITISH COLUMBIA



When Catherine Knight George joined Holy Family Parish Council in 1939, meetings were held in members' homes, began and ended in prayer, featured speakers on topics relevant to community life and

faith, and included a social component with games and a luncheon. By 1950, meetings were held in the church hall and Catherine remained a faithful League member.

Over the years, she worked tirelessly for the League, held various executive positions, participated in fundraising events, crafted items for sale, and sewed items for use by the altar servers and clergy. She baked countless sweets for church events. Typical of her generosity, three years ago Catherine donated to the council a statue that had been given to her by charter council president Josephine Klauer. Formed in 1920, Holy Family Parish Council was the first chartered council in British Columbia and the ninth in Canada.

Current council president Betty Schianni was delighted to recognize Catherine for 70 years of faithful and energetic service to the League and her kindness to everyone she meets. †

floor, had plain white walls and simple decorations. A large group of people were praying in the room when we visited.

Within the Old City, there was a square close to where the crucifixion had taken place. On all four sides of the square were buildings; one in particular held the tomb of Jesus. The tomb was in the ground beneath a huge four storey building. The whole building was filled with incense, with more placed over the tomb and shrine to Jesus. The tomb was a little room with four walls and a roof in the middle of the building. There was a very long line to get into the tomb. The outside of the tomb had incense all over and was very beautifully decorated in red and gold. The inside held a little shrine at the very back and was covered with paintings and writings of Jesus. After visiting the tomb, many women cried, and were touched deeply by the experience.

I am so very thankful to have been able to go to Jerusalem with many amazing women, and to have seen so many beautiful sights that I will never forget. †



# HOW IS MY NATIONAL PER CAPITA SPENT?



**Kim Scammell**  
Executive Director

By the time this article reaches you, many members will have already voted on the request of national council to increase its national per capita allotment from \$8.00 to \$13.00 per year, effective January 1, 2012. I have been privileged to serve at the executive table for the past 12 years and can give personal witness to the faithful stewardship demonstrated by the national executive and its sub-committee in charge of finance. All decisions that affect finance are made thoughtfully and carefully, balancing fiscal prudence while responsibly providing members at all council levels with appropriate material and services. These goods and services are carefully designed to create awareness, provide education, promote a positive image of the League, and advance the ministries and initiatives so essential to the marginalized and vulnerable.

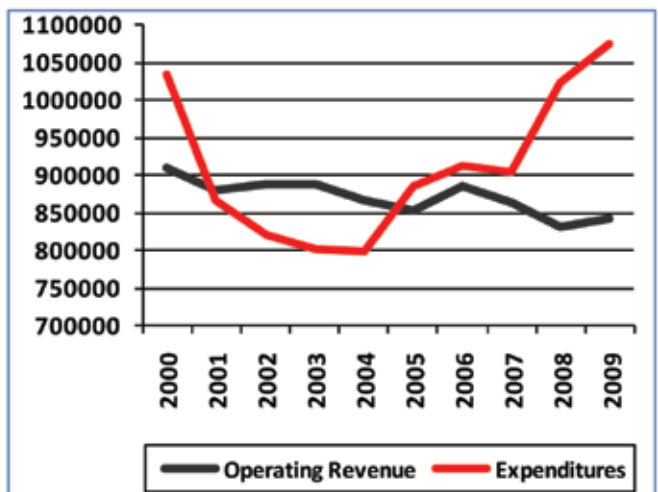
One example of this stewardship in action in recent memory is the creation of the e-newsletter. Councils had traditionally submitted stories for publication in *The Canadian League*, which is published three times per year. Because of the cost per publication page (\$2,500), the editorial board was limited in the number of stories that could come to print. Because of the infrequency of publication, articles and news were delayed in reaching the membership, or not published at all.

A creative solution was introduced – for \$125 per page, the national executive began to publish these stories in a monthly e-newsletter and made it available online at [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca). More information could be communicated in a more timely way at a greatly decreased cost. The national executive acknowledge that some members do not have easy access to the Internet, but research indicates that at least 1/3 do, with numbers increasing since the last survey. League sisters have been encouraged to help each other in printing and circulating *Be League* where needed.

Even though fiscal prudence is clearly evident when one sits at the national executive table, it is understandable that it may not be apparent at local council levels. The magnitude of monetary amounts needed to operate a national organization and the concept of hundreds of thousands of dollars and surplus reserves, etc. might be overwhelming. For this reason, I have been asked to share with you some of the fiscal realities of the national treasury in graph and chart form.

**Operating Revenue vs. Expenditure For the Past Ten Years**

Year	Income	Expenditures
2000	910,830	1,035,955
2001	879,533	865,357
2002	887,582	819,665
2003	888,121	802,777
2004	867,608	797,710
2005	853,591	885,091
2006	886,284	913,355
2007	863,673	904,304
2008	832,013	1,023,558
2009	841,108	1,074,883



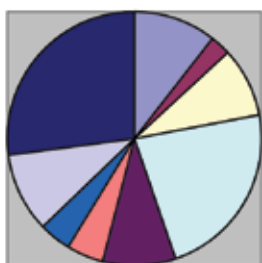
The red line indicates the total expenditures. When this line dips below the black line, the national treasury is able to set money in reserve. When the red line is above the black line, the national treasury needs to draw on its investments.

The graph points out that, since 2005, the national treasury has needed to draw on its investment income and reserves in order to cover a shortfall, which has grown to almost \$250,000 per year.

To examine in closer detail how the monies are spent, a pie chart has been included.

The pie chart reveals that the largest expenditure is staff, the second largest expenditure is the magazine, and the third is convention. It is in the areas of convention and League development that increases in costs have been the highest in recent years.

## Breakdown of Expenses by Category



■ Convention	■ International relations
■ League development	■ Magazine
■ National executive	■ Office building
■ Office equipment	■ Operating costs
■ Staff	

Expenditure	Amount
Convention	113,075
International relations	28,059
League development	95,341
Magazine	244,495
National executive	99,778
Office building	50,532
Office equipment	43,654
Operating costs	108,882
Staff	291,067

Staff expenses and the magazine have always been the largest of the expenditures. Staff resources, a total of eight full and part-time employees, are used to administer the membership from across Canada, provide a point of contact for ordering resources, assist the national executive with the daily administration of a nationwide organization, and coordinate all communications. The magazine, which was reduced from four to three issues per annum in 2002 when a federal postal subsidy was withdrawn, continues to be the main communications tool for members and a vital link across Canada.

In recent years, the convention costs have been borne more by the national treasury, instead of the attending members or the local planning committee. It was felt that the increasing fundraising burden on the local planning committees was neither realistic nor fair. Nor did the national treasury wish to charge attendees the true cost to attend a national convention, which would be in the order of \$200.00, not the \$50.00 that is currently charged; it was agreed that the convention should remain as affordable as possible for local members.

## How is Your \$8.00 Spent?

Expenditure	Amount
Convention	\$ 1.16
International relations	0.28
League development	0.98
Magazine	2.51
National executive	1.03
Office building	0.52
Office equipment	0.45
Operating costs	1.12
Staff	2.99
Total cost	\$11.04
Subsidy from national	3.04
Total fee	\$8.00

In regards to the cost of League development, parish councils have overwhelmingly asked for assistance with public relations and recruitment. Given the gradual decline in membership, it is important that resources be allocated to assist councils with attracting the next generation of members. Items such as *Be League*, the e-newsletter, the *CWL Day of Peace and Hope Activities Kit*, the *Handbook for Organization Chairpersons*, and the *Prayers and Workshops for Women of Peace and Hope* have all been supplied free-of-charge to help councils in the quest for attracting, retaining, and the formation of women who will become the leaders of tomorrow.

The table shows how much of your \$8.00 pays for the costs of the national treasury. As you can see, the national treasury is currently subsidizing each of the over 95,000 members' fees by \$3.04. Without any other significant sources of revenue, the national treasury cannot sustain or maintain this level of subsidy, which is why the appeal for a \$5.00 increase has been made. An additional \$5.00 would cover the existing deficit as well as provide a small cushion for inflationary increases.

The future direction of the League is in our hands.

A vote in the affirmative will allow the national treasury to continue to promote the League and develop future leaders.

A vote in the negative will require the national executive to rethink what it can and does offer to members. It is up to each of you!

What will you decide? †

# FAITH IN ACTION



**Margaret Ann Jacobs**

National Chairperson of Spiritual Development

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.” (James 2.14-17)

**W**hat a challenge we are given in this letter from James. We are indeed our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. Catholics have a special obligation to care for one another and preserve and care for all of God’s creation.

Jesus came to bring the Father’s healing, saving love to the human family – one person at a time. People, on His journeys, were never interruptions, distractions or obstacles. They were opportunities to carry out His mission. Serving others was the very core of the meaning of His life and ministry.

Members of the League, rooted in these gospel values, are committed to this same service. Faith demands a response to the needs of others in a just manner. Justice requires that all actions in today’s world be purposeful, respectful of the dignity and rights of all people, and mindful of a responsibility for stewardship.

Every standing committee is called to generate thoughtful, intuitive methods for members to live out the theme, *Centred on Faith & Justice*. Embrace these opportunities to respond to James’ challenge.

As national chairperson of spiritual development, I invite all chairpersons of spiritual development likewise to offer opportunities to members to grow spiritually through prayer services and programs focussing on issues of justice including poverty, homelessness, immigration, refugees, violence and abuse, mental health, and aboriginal peoples. Provide the spiritual framework to heighten awareness and gently urge thoughtful responses to injustices in all communities.

Study Catholic social teaching, papal encyclicals, and pastoral letters. This sounds like a huge undertaking but, by planning ahead, chairpersons of spiritual development could link programming for other standing committees with the teachings of the church, heightening members’ responsibility for action.

Examining the women of the bible will help women of today emulate their amazing qualities to make the church better. Do we as women understand our just role in the church?

Evangelization and mission assistance offer unending opportunities for this standing committee to pursue justice. Find ways to connect with mission partners and extended communities through prayer, study, and commitment.

Likewise, opportunities for ecumenism and interfaith endeavours abound. Every community has several faith groups currently active in addressing issues of justice. Accept the challenge to reach out and connect with them and strengthen the bonds of faith, friendship, and support for those less fortunate. Together with them, plan programs that are enriching, life-giving, and fulfilling for all, but most particularly for those most in need.

I am poignantly reminded in “A Creed” by Joe Wise to “... be me, be my greatest sacrament...” Members are sacrament but must also be sacrament for others. They are called to be Christ for the world. By living the mass, they become living tabernacles of Christ. It is humbling to realize members are making Christ’s coming present in the world today.

Going forth from the Eucharist, members carry Christ with them, recognizing Christ in every brother and sister. Be present and welcoming to those in the church and communities who are isolated and alone and who have suffered the loss of personal dignity, respect and the resources needed to have the quality of life they deserve.

St. Augustine queried, “What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like.”

I believe that the cries of the poor, whether poor in body, mind, or spirit, must first be heard with the ears of the heart. Listen with the ears of your heart and respond in loving service.

Chairpersons of spiritual development are encouraged to be the hands, the feet, and the heart of Jesus, gently welcoming all back to the Father. Support, encourage, and affirm other members to accept active roles in lay ministry. Be the inspiration which prompts others to say, “See how these Christians love one another.”

May we each accept the challenge to be women *Centred on Faith & Justice*. †



*For God and Canada*

# FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES CONTINUED COMMUNICATION WITH THE LEAGUE



**Anne Gorman**  
National Chairperson of Resolutions

For the 37<sup>th</sup> year, the League met with the federal government to present resolutions adopted at the most recent annual national convention, and revisit past resolutions. National President Velma Harasen, National Chairperson of Legislation Terri Scott, and I completed nine appointments with ministers, policy advisors, a parliamentary secretary, the prime minister, and officials of the opposition from November 30 to December 2, 2010. The delegation visited Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Department of Justice Canada, Department of Finance Canada, Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and Health Canada.

Tickets for Question Period on Monday were arranged through Member of Parliament Mike Allen (Tobique-Mactaquac) who met with us following the hour-long session. During the delegation's visit, Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq announced new restrictions on the content of lead in children's toys and other consumer goods in Bill C-36 *An Act respecting the safety of consumer products*. Resolution 2003.06 Health Danger from Exposure to Lead in Consumer Products also addressed this matter.

At Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, the director of policy to Minister Lawrence Cannon, was presented with a copy of Resolution 2010.01 Chrysotile Asbestos and Resolution 2007.02 Corporate Responsibility of Canadian Mining Companies. Rather than address the two resolutions, the delegation was made aware that among communities that strongly advocate on issues, Catholic women are almost non-existent, a point that would be echoed by several ministries.

At Natural Resources Canada the delegation met with the chief of staff and was advised that the asbestos file was "sensitive". Assurance was given that the minister takes seriously the health of miners, while respecting the needs of the economy. He maintained that mining could be done safely and cited *The Minerals and Metals Policy of the Government of Canada* (June 2009).



Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Rob Nicholson voiced his support for Resolution 2010.02 Income Tax Credit for Children's Participation in Arts and Cultural Activities. Because budget hearings were under way, it was timely to request the addition to the budget, a point reiterated by Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty. Both ministers focussed on the federal government's efforts to alleviate poverty and what the

League can do to assist. Both agreed education in provinces about the programs presently in place is very important.

Two examples were highlighted by Minister Flaherty. The Working Income Tax Benefit is designed to provide tax relief for eligible working low-income individuals already in the workforce. The minister also cited Pathways to Education, "a unique program of early interventions and support for high school students". This "community-based, volunteer-supported program provides tutoring, mentoring, and counselling and financial support to disadvantaged youth and their families". Twenty million dollars for Pathways to Education was provided in 2010 to provide private sector, other government levels', and non-governmental organizations' support of the disadvantaged. (More information may be read on these two programs at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca>, and <http://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca>

It was also noted that the federal government has increased social transfer funding to the provinces by three per cent annually. Ministers Nicholson and Flaherty agreed that everyone has a responsibility where poverty is concerned.

Minister Nicholson also restated his commitment to mandatory sentences for those who traffic in and/or import drugs.

Serendipitously, we met Member of Parliament Bob Rae on the Parliament Hill shuttle and raised the issues of the 2010 resolutions and the League's concerns about child poverty. The delegation missed no opportunity to share members' concerns.

During the meeting at the ministry responsible for the CRA and the Atlantic Canada Opportunity Agency (ACOA), the delegation was reminded that ACOA is just one of several regional organizations with the mandate to encourage and support economic opportunities. The message received here was that alleviating poverty relates to a strong economic base and work for the country's citizens.

The delegation met with HRSDC regarding Resolution 2009.01 Exit Strategies for Prostituted Persons, to receive an update and discuss children living in poverty. There are many programs in place aimed at improving lives and the minister is actively involved in the evaluation of the programs.

The delegation's final appointment was with Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health Dr. Colin Carrie from whom updates were sought on triclosan, toxic substances in household products, and food labelling. Food labelling remains a very complex issue.

Regarding hospice palliative care, the delegation was told that national strategies cannot be developed on matters that fall within provincial jurisdiction. This means members need to remain vigilant at the community level to monitor programs in place and urge the establishment and maintenance of hospice care wherever it is needed.

A highlight of the Ottawa sessions was a meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper during which time Velma was able to describe the League's new theme, *Centred on Faith & Justice*. The prime minister intimated that some progress might soon be seen toward an income tax credit for children's participation in arts and cultural activities.

The delegation met with two policy advisors in the leader of the opposition's office to discuss 2010 Resolutions Brief. A national childcare program is one of the ways the opposition feels it can address poverty issues.

Truly a learning experience, the continuing privilege of meeting with federal officials offered insights. The most consistent advice received from all ministries was that the League needs to communicate with the federal government regularly through official and personal letters. The League needs to be more visible as an organization as it moves forward *Centred on Faith & Justice*. †

# DO OUR LETTERS MATTER?



**Terri Scott**  
National Chairperson of Legislation

Have you ever wondered whether the letters members write to members of parliament get anywhere? Do they actually reach the people to whom we addressed the envelopes? Do they read them? Do they care?

I have often pondered these questions. Is it worth the time and effort to sit down to put words to paper? Apparently it is, as I just found out.

On November 30 – December 2, 2010 the delegation to government included Velma Harasen, Anne Gorman, and me. My questions were answered.

Meetings with various heads of departments, included Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty, and Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada Rob Nicholson. We were pleasantly surprised that they were aware of our concerns, had read our letters, and were taking them into consideration. We were told to keep on writing because it is organizations such as the League, which bring concerns to their attention. So yes, those letters do matter and the members of parliament do care. †

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear editor,

After much discussion among our faithful membership, we have a suggestion to make in regards to the League magazine. As the e-newsletter is now available on-line to our members, we would be delighted to see more "human interest" stories on the printed page, while reserving some of the business aspects such as oral reports and resolutions, for the Internet product.

Our seniors especially love the League stories and photos. More of them would be an asset to the printed/published page.

We would also like to say how grateful we are to all of you who work so hard to keep us connected.

Sincerely,  
HM Forest Coultury on behalf of Holy Family Parish Council,  
Fernie, BC

# COME TO TORONTO AND SEE THE WORLD!

AUGUST 14 TO 17, 2011

TORONTO NATIONAL CONVENTION COMMITTEE

## We really want you to come early and stay longer!

**N**o matter who you are, where you're from, or what your mother language is, you will find some piece of your heritage in Toronto. Mass is celebrated in more than 30 languages and the city has changed greatly from what was once called "Orange" Toronto to a multicoloured, multinational festival of all the good things the world has to offer (...except a winning hockey team! Maybe this year?). You can see all this and more on a double decker bus tour on Sunday morning or on a walking tour on Monday for family and friends who come with you.

There are museums, galleries, towers, and palaces to see. The CN Tower has become Toronto's symbol: from the top, you get a miles-wide view of the city and Lake Ontario. The palaces are gold and silver skyscrapers dedicated to commerce and industry, and a castle, Casa Loma, was built by Sir Henry Pellatt for his wife. He brought the materials from Europe and spared no expense to build the finest private home in North America in its time. With its soaring battlements and secret passageways, five-acre estate gardens, and 98 rooms, marble stables and more, it is a stop every visitor to Toronto wants to make. Casa Loma cost \$3.5 million to build, quite a fortune in 1915.

When it comes to churches, history surrounds you.

St. Michael's Cathedral has been the seat of three cardinals and their hats hang there. This historical church became familiar across the country as the site of the Radio League of St. Michael throughout the 1930s up to the early 1960s and as the first home of the daily televised mass seen on Vision TV. It also contains the grave of Bishop Michael Power, the first bishop of Toronto, who gave his life to help establish the faith in the English-speaking area of Canada.

St. Patrick's Parish on McCaul Street, the fifth oldest church in Toronto, is the home of the National Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help and many League members follow these devotions regularly on television.

St. Paul's Basilica, where opening mass will be celebrated, was the first Catholic church in Toronto. It was built by early Irish settlers to give glory and praise to God in their new homeland and has recently been restored to the beauty and grandeur they first gave it. Many of the settlers are buried in the Irish cemetery near the church.

Close to St. Michael's, you will find the Anglican Cathedral Church of St. James, also a place of architectural beauty and the royal family's place of worship when in Toronto. It contains many historic monuments and commemorates the first Christian service held in York (Toronto) in 1793.



There are wonderfully diverse neighbourhoods to visit. Chinatown, close to the convention hotel, has many wonderful shops and a myriad of restaurants. The Greek Village on Danforth Avenue, known by locals as The Danforth, abounds in bakeries, shops, and restaurants. In Little Italy you will find food and fashions to rival any found in Rome, Florence, or Sorrento. In addition, there are shops and stores representing cultures from almost any part of the world. Queen Street West is the place for boutiques and artisan treasures.

The Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre Hotel is near the famous namesake mall with 230 shops, restaurants, and services. This is one place where you can literally “shop til you drop”. The hotel is also close to the entrance to the Path, which is an underground city in itself, where you can wander through shops and places of interest from Eaton Centre down to Union Station.

A short walk east leads to Dundas Square which has become the event centre in the city. It is fast becoming the “Times Square” of Toronto. To the west is the Art Gallery of Ontario with one-of-a-kind architecture and many famous collections of Canadian and international artists. The new sculpture court designed by renowned architect Frank Gehry is featured prominently in the film *Score, the Hockey Musical*. Just north of the AGO on Baldwin Street is another collection of diverse shops and gourmet restaurants and St. Patrick’s historic church.

Your Toronto League sisters are excited about your visit to the annual national convention, August 14-17, 2011. Lots of fun-filled activities are being arranged for you! First is the convention itself – just joining some 600-700 members from across the country to celebrate faith and what it is to be a Catholic woman is worth the trip! Plan to meet and make friends from every province and territory. Daily prayer together makes members part of a faith-filled community like no other. Speakers, resolutions and discussions connect us with others, to give a powerful witness to the world. This is the core reason for your trip of course, but even more is planned for you.

On Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, there is a choice of evening events. August weather is great, so how about a leisurely dinner boat cruise on a perfect natural harbour plus the possibility of a glowing sunset? You will have a panoramic view of the city as you enjoy food and fun with your sisters in the League.

If water is not your cup of tea (sorry!) then you might choose a fun evening with Famous People Players. This internationally renowned black light theatre company of uniquely-gifted performers offers a three-course meal followed by an evening of music, dance, and special effects. The company has recently moved to a larger venue for the new production “Disco Fever”.

Sunday evening brings the opening mass at St. Paul’s Basilica. As the national executive process in with the flags of the League, country, and provinces, accompanied by voices joined in song and prayer, members truly become “rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God.”

On Monday evening, a Taste of Toronto will offer a feast of international cuisine with special entertainment. On Tuesday evening, the provinces may choose from a wide variety of restaurants for their dinners. On Wednesday afternoon, the Eucharist will be celebrated at St. Michael’s Cathedral followed by the gala banquet at the hotel.

By request, on Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, a full-day guided bus tour will be offered to the Martyrs’ Shrine, approximately 80 miles north of Toronto in Midland. This national shrine near the actual site of the martyrdom of fathers Brebeuf and Lalemant, was a favourite stop of Pope John Paul II on his visit to Canada. Originally dedicated to the Canadian Jesuit martyrs, the shrine now honours martyrs from many countries with many individual shrines.

We will join the Jesuit Fathers for mass in the unique shrine church. It was built to mark the canonization of the martyrs in 1925. Lunch may be purchased at the small café and time will be provided to visit the many sites at the shrine: the outdoor Stations of the Cross, the Rosary garden, St. Theresa’s garden, the Polish altar, the Italian shrine, the variety of shrines to other martyrs, and the altar built to mark the 1984 visit of the Holy Father. Bring walking shoes and dress comfortably.

Our two-hour drive to and from the shrine will provide a chance to see some of the Ontario countryside in air-conditioned comfort, and we will arrive back at the hotel by late afternoon.

We can hardly wait for you to join us for fun, faith, food, fellowship, and lasting friendships. We hope you will arrive well before the convention and stay longer to see more of our hometown!! You are personally invited, wanted, and welcome. †

## ST. JOSEPH PARISH COUNCIL, STREETSVILLE, ONTARIO

“The Archdiocese of Toronto Office of Refugees has selected 200 Iraqi Christian candidate families for resettlement in Canada. St. Joseph’s Church is sponsoring a family for one year under this initiative,” reports Priscilla Gomes, chairperson of communications.

In support, St. Joseph Parish Council hosted a second annual fall and winter fashion show on October 21<sup>st</sup> with clothing courtesy of Sears Square One in Mississauga and desserts courtesy of Viva Retirement Homes.

Models were parish members, males and females of all ages, who looked “absolutely professional on the runway.” Profits from ticket sales and the sale of refreshments netted \$1,300 which was presented to Father Marc André Campbell for the Iraqi Refugee Resettlement Fund.

Special guest Mayor Hazel McCallion praised the efforts of the League in this important cause. †

# 91<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

TORONTO MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN EATON CENTRE HOTEL

AUGUST 14 -17, 2011

One person per registration form. (Photocopy additional forms.)

REGISTRATION FORM

**Deadline Date: July 5, 2011**

For Office Use Only:

Reg. # \_\_\_\_\_

Amt. Paid \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Diocese \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I am attending this convention as a: (please check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> National Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> Honorary Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Hierarchy
<input type="checkbox"/> Voting Delegate (Provincial President)	<input type="checkbox"/> Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> National Spiritual Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Accredited Delegate	<input type="checkbox"/> CWL Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Spiritual Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/> Diocesan Accredited Delegate	<input type="checkbox"/> Military Ordinariate Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Diocesan Spiritual Advisor
	<input type="checkbox"/> Guest	<input type="checkbox"/> Parish Spiritual Advisor

Delegates are responsible for accreditation through the national office.

This is my first national convention  Yes  No

Registration Fee: \$20.00 per day  Mon.  Tues.  Wed. OR \$50.00 for all three days

(No guaranteed refunds after July 15/2011.)

Please complete both sides of the registration form and mail with payment as indicated on reverse.

**NOTE:** All those attending the convention are responsible for making their own hotel reservations.

### Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre Hotel

525 Bay Street

Toronto, ON M5G 2L2

Tel: (416)-597-9200 Fax: (416)-597-9211

Toll-free: 1 (800) 905-0667 (reservations only)

Room rates (taxes extra): \$199.00 single/double.

Ask for **Catholic Women's League** when booking.

Special rate expires July 15<sup>th</sup> so book early.

On-line booking:

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/yyzec?groupCode=cwlcwla&app=resvlink&fromDate=8/10/11&toDate=8/19/11>

Group Code on-line: **CWLCWLA**

### EARLY BIRD INCENTIVE

For registrations received by  
**May 15, 2011,**  
names will be entered into a draw for a  
**registration and banquet refund**

# SPECIAL EVENTS TICKETS FORM

One special event form per person – please photocopy additional copies as needed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

DAY	DATE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	ATTENDING
Saturday	August 13 <sup>th</sup>	Toronto Harbour dinner cruise on the Northern Spirit (6:30 p.m. boarding) OR	\$70.00	
		Famous People Players Theatre – dinner and show – <i>Disco Fever</i> (5:30 p.m.)	\$70.00	
Sunday	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Toronto sightseeing double decker tour bus (9:00 a.m.)	\$35.00	
Monday	August 15 <sup>th</sup>	Taste of Toronto international dinner and entertainment (6:00 p.m.)	\$65.00	
Tuesday	August 16 <sup>th</sup>	Life members' luncheon (12:00 noon)	\$40.00	
		Spiritual advisors' luncheon (12:00 noon)	\$40.00	
Wednesday	August 17 <sup>th</sup>	Gala Banquet (7:00 p.m.)	\$65.00	
Thursday	August 18 <sup>th</sup>	Post-convention day trip by coach bus to Martyrs' Shrine	\$50.00	
Other	Transportation bus to opening mass St. Paul's Basilica		\$8.00	
	Transportation bus to closing mass St. Michael's Cathedral		\$8.00	
Registration	\$20.00 per day or \$50.00 per week			
	Late special events fee: If registering after July 15 <sup>th</sup> , add \$50.00.			
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$</b>

Please specify any special needs (dietary, wheelchair, allergies, medical conditions or other special circumstances, etc) of which the committee should be aware.

Please make cheque payable to **2011 CWL National Convention**

Deadline for registration for special events is **July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011**.

No guaranteed refunds after that date. Your cancelled cheque will be your receipt.

Complete and mail your payments to:

2011 CWL National Convention  
 Celestine Hall  
 51 McDonald Avenue  
 Scarborough, ON M1L 3Y7  
 Telephone: (416) 694-8922  
 Email: [cf.hall@sympatico.ca](mailto:cf.hall@sympatico.ca)

**You are responsible for your own transportation to the hotel. Taxis and public transit are available.**

# A CALL — A RESPONSE



**Ardis Beaudry**  
Honorary Life Member

“And all who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure.” (1 John 3.3)

Most members did not have the opportunity to hear Doctor Nuala Kenny’s presentation at the 90<sup>th</sup> annual national convention in Ottawa and that is regrettable. The church faces major renewal if faith and hope in the institutional church is to be restored. Where do League members stand in all of this?

On gathering day, Doctor Kenny, a Sister of Charity and renowned pediatrician, expanded the theme *Women of Peace and Hope*. In her presentation she reminded the assembled that those suffering directly from sexual abuse were not the only victims – all people are victimized. The suffering of bishops and priests will not go away. The whole world is suffering. It is an opportunity for women to develop the virtue of hope. All members are to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, to be resurrection people living the gospel despite the challenges.

This article, representing the combined efforts of honorary life members, reflects a deep concern regarding the sexual abuse crisis in the church and expresses a faith that clergy and laity working together will bring true renewal.

Church authorities have opposed sexual abuse of minors since the earliest days of the Christian community. Sexual abuse is condemned under the sixth commandment and is ranked with sacrilege against the Eucharist and the violation of the sanctity of the sacrament of penance.

A few cases of child abuse were uncovered in the mid 1980s and reports increased in 2001. Some documents revealed that church officials knew about certain predatory priests and that the complaints had been ignored. Some priests received rehabilitative treatment and then returned to parishes; there were allegations of cover-ups and offerings of money to “seal lips”. It was no longer possible to protect the church from scandal. Courageous victims of abuse, their families, and many lay members came forth; the abuse scandal was worldwide. While charges of sexual abuse of minors affected 4% of priests, all priests and bishops suffered from loss of esteem and trust, as did the whole church.

The church began to take action. In 2001 Pope John Paul II proclaimed an important document, the *motu proprio Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela*, (Safeguarding of the Sanctity of the Sacraments) which gave the Congregation for the

Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) responsibility to deal with and judge a series of particularly serious crimes within the ambit of the *Code of Canon Law*. Since then changes have been made and were given to the CDF on May 21, 2010. The guide to understanding CDF procedures can be found at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

Pope Benedict XVI has made it clear that keeping silent to avoid scandal is not an option for a church leader. He has offered an apology to victims, and he has met personally with a number of them. He has met the situation head on; as head of the CDF and as pope he has reviewed the files of suspect priests, rebuked the abuser priests and challenged the bishops. He has overseen a series of procedures that has allowed the church to respond more quickly when it is necessary to restrict, suspend, or even laicize a priest. He understands that, at its heart, this crisis is a spiritual challenge to the whole church.

In particular the selection and formation of seminarians must be improved. Pope Benedict, in his Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Ireland (March 19, 2010) suggested some of the causes of the crisis include poor screening of candidates for the priesthood and insufficient human, moral, intellectual, and spiritual formation of seminarians.

As Pope Benedict speaks about the abuse crisis around the world, it becomes clear that he knows the hardest spiritual truth is that healing comes from forgiveness and reconciliation. Even as he identifies with the victims’ profound sense of betrayal, he respectfully calls on them to see in Christ’s own wounds “the very means by which the power of evil is broken and we are reborn to life and hope.” He begs victims and their families to draw closer to Christ as a means of finding reconciliation, deep inner healing, and peace, and finally admits the need for “a Church purified by penance and renewed in pastoral charity.”

“Healing, to be complete, requires attention to the systemic and cultural forces that have allowed this crisis to go on unchecked: the cultivation of the image of clericalism rather than priesthood; power and image rather than humility and holiness; the disempowerment of the laity, especially women. True renewal is sorely needed if we are to restore faith and hope in the institutional church. Hope based on trust and the gospel message of the kingdom of God, which is both here now and in the future will help to bring about forgiveness and reconciliation.” (Doctor Nuala Kenny)

Renewal, to be truly effective, must involve the entire world. Such reform and renewal of the church must begin with each one of us. Some people say their faith in the church has been shaken by the scandals. Others say they believe in God and the Eucharist but have concerns about the church as a hierarchical structure. A look at church history shows us that the church has always renewed itself and it will continue to do so. Many Catholics want to hear the church's side of the story. Only when the truth is known will Catholics know how to reform themselves and the church. Future actions must be just.

Doctor Kenny noted that, through participation in the priesthood of the baptized, women's gifts and talents are needed by the church today. Members are called to pledge their support for bishops and church leaders as they consider the implementation of church renewal in a transparent approach that involves clergy and laity, working together to become people of hope, people of the gospel.

"We must never lose hope because we know by faith God will, in His way, redeem what was lost so that in the mystery of God, not a single life will remain unredeemed." (Archbishop Martin Currie, *The Canadian League*, spring 2010 issue)

"In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Mt 5:16) †

## Prayer for Healing in the Church

Holy Spirit, comforter, advocate, and guide,  
inspire a new springtime of holiness  
and apostolic zeal for the church.

May our sorrow and our tears,  
our sincere effort to redress past wrongs,  
and our firm purpose of amendment bear  
an abundant harvest of grace  
for the deepening of the faith  
in our families, parishes, schools,  
and communities,  
for the spiritual progress of society,  
and the growth of charity,  
justice, joy, and peace  
within the whole human family.

To You, Holy Trinity,  
confident in the loving protection  
of Mary and all the saints,  
do we entrust ourselves, our children,  
and the needs of the church in the world.  
Amen

(Adapted from Pope Benedict XVI's Pastoral Letter to the Catholics of Ireland, March 19, 2010)

## LET'S MEET FOR COFFEE AND *Be* League

Although separated by miles, League sisters can keep in touch through a variety of media. You're invited to enjoy the perfect cup of coffee or tea (perfect, because you know just how you like it) and visit [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca) updates for the latest issue of *Be League*, the League's monthly on-line newsletter. You can catch up on council news from across the country, learn a little League history with pictures from the archives, try your hand at a quiz, celebrate your sisters' achievements, get new ideas for council activities, and more. Each issue focusses on one of the League's nine decades.

If you haven't visited the site before, you can catch up on back issues under the "Media" section of the Web site. This is a service by and for members to exchange current news across the land.

Don't have a computer? Your local library may have one available and the library staff can help you to connect. You will find many useful resources available free of charge at [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca). Perhaps a member of your council can print out a copy for members to share.

Please drop national office an e-mail and let us know what you think. If you have good news to share, please send it along by e-mail or regular post. †



**Women Against Poverty**  
"Change For Change"

**Remember the needs of the poor at Easter.**  
**Mark the Feast of Our Lady of Good Council**  
**with a special collection in your parish.**  
**Spread the word. Choose a project to support.**  
**Share the bounty.**  
***Centred on Faith & Justice***

# PAPAL HONOURS



Left to right: Barb Dowding, Pat Battensby (a recent papal honoree), Elaine Moonen and Patricia Iverson (missing: Monica Roddis)

Papal honours were bestowed on several League members at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver by Archbishop Michael Miller, CSB. Of 21 honorees, only six were women and of those six, four were League members.

Elaine Moonen was presented with the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* Medal (For Church and Pope) and Barbara Dowding, Patricia Iverson and Monica Roddis were presented with the *Benemerenti* Medal (To a well deserving person). †



## ST. JOSEPH PARISH COUNCIL, KINDERSLEY, SASKATCHEWAN

When Kindersley celebrated its centenary in July, St. Joseph Parish Council prepared a float for the town's parade. Bernie Schwartz made a double-sided quilt banner for the float and members framed it with planters full of blooms from their gardens. The float, redecorated with fall flowers, made an encore appearance in September for Kindersley's Goose Festival. †

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

*Congratulations to the following centenarians!*

**Rita Babcock** 103 years August 22, 2010  
Precious Blood Parish Council, Sioux Ste. Marie, Ontario

**Lilian Griffin** 103 years September 6, 2010  
St. Louis Parish Council, Waterloo, Ontario

**Dorothy Whelton** 102 years August 26, 2010  
St. Simon St. Jude Parish Council, Black Rock, Ontario

**Angeline Sturgis** 102 years October 6, 2010  
Our Lady of Sorrows, Aylmer, Ontario

**Patricia Mulrone**y 102 years November 13, 2010  
St. Carthagh, Tweed, Ontario

**Valerie Clarke** 101 years July 17, 2010  
St. Joseph Parish Council, Sarnia, Ontario

**Aldea Kneafsey** 100 years March 3, 2010  
St. Julia Parish Council, St. Catharines, Ontario

**Beatrice Tompkins** 100 years April 2, 2010  
St. Michael Parish Council (Margaree), Inverness, Nova Scotia

**Helen Chandler** 100 years July 1, 2010  
St. Dunstan's Basilica Parish Council, Charlottetown,  
Prince Edward Island

**Lena Dawson** 100 years September 3, 2010  
St. John the Evangelist Parish Council, Bath, New Brunswick

**Marion Hall** 100 years September 28, 1910  
St. Pius X Parish Council, Toronto, Ontario

**Edna Dube** 100 years October 2, 2010  
St. Francis of Assisi, Islandview, New Brunswick

**Frances Cover** 100 years October 27, 2010  
St. Joseph's Basilica Parish Council, Edmonton, Alberta

**Caroline Jankoski** 100 years November 4, 2010  
St. Stansilaus, Ituna, Saskatchewan



## ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PARISH COUNCIL, WELLAND, ONTARIO

As part of the Ribbon of Signatures Campaign facilitated through Canadians Addressing Sexual Exploitation, members distributed ribbons at mass October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Mary Mollica, first vice-president, was quoted in the *Welland Tribune* on October 9<sup>th</sup>, "As mothers, as women, we have to promote that this is a terrible exploitation of our kids..."

Mary also presented a white ribbon to Member of Parliament Malcolm Allen (Welland). †

# THE SINGLE-PARENT FAMILY

## HOW CAN WE BE OF ASSISTANCE?



**Peggy Roche**

National Chairperson of Christian Family Life

“The family is the basic cell of society. It is the cradle of life and love, the place in which the individual ‘is born’ and ‘grows.’” *Christifideles Laici* (On the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World)

**A**s noted in a news story in, 2007 regarding the recent release of census information, “Statistics Canada uses the term ‘families’ to define a variety of households – couples (married or common law) who don’t have children, couples who have children and an adult with at least one child. . . . Lone-parent families have been a phenomenon since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with rates in the 1930s almost as high as they were in 2006.” The report goes on to note, “Twenty-six per cent of families with children are headed by a single parent. Of the 1.4 million single-parent families, about 20 per cent are headed by men. The number of men at the head of single-parent families is growing more than twice as fast as the number of women. . . . Financial struggles are a common thread among single-parent families. In 2005, the median household income for two-parent families in Canada was \$67,600. For lone-parent families, it was \$30,000.”

In the past, the stigma of shame of pregnancy out of wedlock was compounded with doubt regarding the ability of the mother or father to raise their child. Some couples toughed it out, had their baby, and were successful in raising their child together.

Many were forced by well-meaning parents to give their baby up for adoption. There are those who were sent away to stay with a fictitious aunt, hiding the reality of a scheduled abortion. These common situations must have been a nightmare for both parents-to-be. Many are still tormented years later.

Thankfully, over the years society has changed, and while not condoning, has become more accepting. The stigma is reduced and many are keeping their babies and raising them on their own. We are all children of God, part of a global family that includes our sisters and brothers, the single parents.

Not all single parents are unmarried. Some are young widows or widowers left behind to raise their children after the death of a spouse. Some are mothers or fathers who find themselves and their children separated from their spouse after many years and are now suddenly a single-parent with very limited financial means and teenagers to support.

Children suffer quietly when they meet other children who have both parents, especially as they may not fully understand why they have only one parent.

Single parents who have the help and support of their families, loved ones, and friends, are fortunate; they will probably be able to raise their child successfully with the support they have around them. But, single parents trying to raise children on their own while working or trying to finish school face many challenges, including provision of child care, transportation, food, and housing.

How do they cope? Who can they turn too? How can we help them in their struggle when everything seems hopeless? There are many government and community agencies available to assist. Food and clothing banks are not accessible to all and much less accessible in smaller cities or communities.

In the *Executive Handbook*, League members are directed “to promote programs that enrich and support aspects of home and family.” Members love God with their whole heart and their neighbour as themselves by reaching out to sisters and brothers in the parish and community who are members of single parent families.

Councils in small and large parishes can encourage and help single parents and their children on their life and spiritual journey.

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13.2) †

### Prayer for Single Parents

Lord, we pray that you will give strength, patience and wisdom to single parents trying to be both mother and father to their children, while at the same time facing up to their own needs. Put into the hearts and minds of loving family, friends, and neighbours the need to give support and help, to provide the benefits that are lacking.

Author unknown

“Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile.”

Mother Theresa

# HOW TO START A SINGLE-PARENT FAMILY MINISTRY

By Khalidah Tunkara, eHow Contributor  
www.ehow.com

Starting a single-parent family ministry can be a rewarding experience. Meeting new people and sharing the same single-parenting lifestyle is a great way to enhance a child's life as well as his parent's life.

Get to know the single parents in your congregation. Starting a family ministry requires building relationships. Take time to know these parents and their families and get an idea on their situations. This means spending time with them.

Decide on what is the ultimate goal of your single-parent family ministry. Make sure each activity you plan will meet the needs of the single parents in your congregation and will gear to the direction of your ministry objectives.

Notify your parish priest and parish pastoral council of your intentions for your ministry. Ask them to support you and if they would like to appoint someone who can oversee its operational duties. It is important they are aware of the ministry so it does not overlap with other, similar ministries in the parish.

Advertise your group meeting times and location through the use of posted fliers and church bulletin. Make an announcement before Mass to the congregation.

Host small group studies for single parents. Invite single parents to a support group meeting where you and/or your parish priest or guest speaker can come and address their needs. Provide refreshments and childcare so the parents can be comfortable while attending the meeting.

## OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP, PARISH COUNCIL, ROTHESAY, NEW BRUNSWICK

On October 4<sup>th</sup> on behalf of the parish council, Life Member Ann Doucet presented 25 copies of the activity book, *John and Emily Visit Catholic Missions In Canada*, to Marilyn Holder, parish religious education coordinator.

The 48 page books are recommended for ages 10-12 years and describe the memorable trip of John and Emily to visit their uncle, a missionary priest in the Northwest Territories. †

# CONGRATULATIONS!

## Congratulations to Parish Councils Celebrating Anniversaries

### 90 Years

Holy Family Parish Council, Fernie, British Columbia  
Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish Council,  
Sherbrooke, Quebec

### 85 Years

St. Anne (Emyvale) Parish Council, North  
Wiltshire, Prince Edward Island  
St. Anne of the Prairies, Trochu, Alberta  
St. Joseph Parish Council, Three Hills, Alberta

### 80 Years

St. Brigid Parish Council, Foxley River,  
Prince Edward Island  
St. James Parish Council, Vernon, British  
Columbia

### 75 Years

Holy Family Parish Council, Bathurst,  
New Brunswick  
St. Joseph Parish Council, Langley,  
British Columbia

### 50 Years

Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Freelton) Parish  
Council, Campbellville, Ontario  
St. Ambrose Parish Council, Thessalon, Ontario  
St. Alexander Parish Council, Chlemsford/Azila,  
Ontario  
St. Anthony of Padua Parish Council, Kincardine,  
Ontario  
St. Jude Parish Council, 100 Mile House,  
British Columbia

Should your council wish to be listed as having celebrated a significant anniversary, please send your request in writing to national office. Notices will be placed in the issue directly following the anniversary date.

# “STRONG WOMEN BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES”



**Barb Dowding**

National Chairperson of Community Life

What does one percent look like and how do we measure it?

Since 1969, the League has supported women's projects in developing countries funded by the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) using the 1% Program. The program encourages members "to contribute one percent of all personal and luxury items as well as one percent of funds raised by CWL councils to Development and Peace programs that empower women."

Over the years, members tell of collecting loose change at meetings (emptying out the coins from the bottom of their handbags) or leaving a CCODP jar on the table, just in case. Yet, the League has been hugely successful in its contributions over the years when councils make an intentional effort to calculate their fundraising dollars and find the one percent.

Questions arise though; how many of us take this seriously? How can we possibly relate to the poverty, hunger, and oppression of women when they are so far away? And what is a luxury item?

I suggest luxury is subjective and different for all of us. I can imagine that so many of the items or services we take for granted would be luxuries for the women we support through this program. Take a minute to read about the three new projects the League will be supporting for the next three years. Try to see yourself there; picture what kind of life is being lived; and imagine what a luxury would be to those women.

The theme, *Centred on Faith & Justice*, calls us not to feel guilty for all the good things we have but to give thanks to God daily, always and everywhere! Through the 1% Program, members are called to stop and think each time they buy something, have a special treat, or go on a wonderful holiday, that there are so many without. Faith calls members to be good stewards of their many gifts, to detach from material goods and possessions in a way that raises awareness of the plight of others.

"Strong Women Building Stronger Communities" is an example of women helping one another to eliminate poverty at the grassroots level. With our national focus for the next two years being poverty in its many shapes and forms, the programs listed below will help eliminate poverty – the lack of human rights and dignity, water, food, health and, a safe place to live.

In 2000, world leaders made a series of pledges called the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty by 2015 stating an essential goal was to eradicate extreme poverty and

hunger. CCODP states, "It is unacceptable that more than 1 billion people still go to bed hungry each night, when access to food is the most basic of human rights and is a question of fundamental justice. Lack of access to food is not only a symptom of severe poverty, but also impacts directly on other poverty indicators."

CCODP believes that Canadians of all religious beliefs have a responsibility to help the world's poor and disadvantaged, either by urging governments, corporations and others to implement change, or by donating time or money to support development efforts.

Let us persevere as never before, placing ourselves in another woman's shoes. Try to imagine her life. In an Afghan village, a mother lives in fear for her family, never knowing when NATO forces will leave or the Taliban will strike. A young Bolivian woman is bullied and abused without any recourse in her factory job afraid for her safety and those she must support. Many women in Northern Nigeria struggle everyday in abject poverty, praying for the opportunity to take control of their lives.

Join with Catholic women across Canada "to enhance the role of women in church and society, to recognize the human dignity of all people everywhere...and to contribute to the understanding and growth of religious freedom, social justice, peace and harmony" through support of these programs. As members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, we must be strong women too. We have the unique potential to safeguard humanity and bring about peace.

We can support, affirm and teach women, where they live and work, to instill the belief and conviction that through the gift of faith they hold the key to justice. Together we are making a difference and together we can do even more.

One percent – what does it look like to you? On April 26<sup>th</sup>, make your own personal list of all those little things you purchase that make you happy, that make your life nice and comfortable, things you give to those you love because you can. Then add it up if you dare. And if you are anything like me you will be astounded – not only at the dollar value, but more importantly at all those wonderful things that we have and so often take for granted.

If you are in a group or at a council meeting, take time to discuss and be mindful of your luxuries and blessings.

One percent – how much is it worth? ✚



## **The Afghan Women's Resource Centre**

The situation of Afghan women is critical. Community resistance to women's rights presents a significant barrier to the participation of women and girls in social and political activities, attitudes which severely undermine the nation's prospects and degrade the life situation of Afghan women and children. Afghanistan currently ranks 173rd out of 178 countries on the Human Development Index, with an estimated 79% of its 23 million inhabitants living on less than \$2.00 a day. The maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world. This multi-faceted three-year program for Afghan women is providing vocational and literacy training, start-up loans, and health education to poor families in Sherkhankhail village in the impoverished Kapisa Province. This project has proven itself courageously adept at carrying out its culturally complex and sensitive work.

## **Strengthening the National Federation of Bolivian Domestic Workers (FENATRAHOB)**

Bolivia is one of the poorest and least developed countries in Latin America with 60% of the population living below the poverty line. Working to defend the rights of domestic workers, a largely female and heavily exploited segment of the workforce, FENATRAHOB and its affiliates are committed to defend and serve the interests of domestic workers, providing educational material, and offering opportunities for professional and other training, including the provision of early childhood education. This program will take full advantage of favourable changes in the law governing working conditions of domestic workers that it strove tirelessly to enact. FENATRAHOB will also mount efforts to obtain a health insurance program appropriate to domestic workers.

## **Community development and empowering women in Northern Nigeria – Development Exchange Center**

The population of Northern Nigeria is 141 million with nearly 60% living in poverty. The Development Exchange Center works in an area where religious misinformation and cultural practice combine to condemn many women to isolation in their homes, deep poverty, illiteracy, and a state of dependence that effectively excludes them from active participation in areas that affect their lives. This program is dedicated to improving the living conditions in the region, enhancing women's place and role within society, increasing educational opportunities for girls, and bringing direct assistance to those suffering with HIV/AIDS.

# SHEDDING LIGHT ON GREENWASH

**Julie LeLievre**

Sub-committee Chairperson of Education and Health

“...*biblical anthropology* has considered man, created in God’s image and likeness,... as a responsible custodian of the environment in which he has been placed to live. The Creator offers it to him as both a *home and a resource*.... This is why Christian culture has always recognized the creatures that surround man as also gifts of God to be nurtured and safeguarded with a sense of gratitude to the Creator.” (Pope John Paul II Address to the Conference on Environment and Health, March 24, 1997)

“Preservation of the environment, promotion of sustainable development and particular attention to climate change are matters of grave concern for the entire human family. ... I am encouraged by the growing recognition that the entire human community – children and adults, industry sectors, States and international bodies – must take seriously the responsibility that falls to each and every one of us. ... highly industrialized countries must share ‘clean-technologies’ and ensure that their own markets do not sustain demand for goods whose very production contributes to the proliferation of pollution.” (Pope Benedict XVI Letter to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople on the Occasion of the Seventh Symposium of the Religion, Science and the Environment Movement, September 1, 2007)

**W**e are all aware of the three Rs of the environment “reduce, reuse and recycle” and the green movement, but we must be ever vigilant to select products that are genuinely environmentally-friendly. While there are many valid and worthwhile products available, there are also many that are not what they seem. It is estimated that up to 98% of consumer goods promoted as “green” products may not perform as advertised or are not as environmentally friendly as they claim. The categories most prone to false claims are cosmetics, cleaning products, toys, and baby products.

There are reliable services to help consumers make good choices. Terrachoice issues regular reports on environmental claims made in the North American consumer market. Terrachoice is part of the UL (Underwriters Laboratories) Global Network described as “UL’s global family of companies

and network of service providers – including Underwriters Laboratories of Canada Inc. and ULC Standards – is composed of 68 laboratory, testing and certification facilities serving customers in 102 countries.”



Since 2007, Terrachoice has published a report called “The Sins of Greenwashing” that defines greenwash as “the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service.”

How can we protect ourselves? Wise consumers examine products, read labels, ask vendors about products before purchase, and become more informed.

In 1988, the federal government founded EcoLogo™ which is now recognized internationally and has become a well-known and respected environmental standard and certification symbol. The “Environmental Choice” logo with three birds linked within the form of a maple leaf can be found on thousands of products. The EcoLogo program is described as “a Type I eco-label, as defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). This means that the Program compares products/services with others in the same category, develops rigorous and scientifically relevant criteria that reflect the entire lifecycle of the product, and awards the EcoLogo to those that are verified by an independent third party as complying with the criteria.” †

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## THOMAS A BECKET PARISH COUNCIL, PIERREFONDS, QUEBEC

Parish council member Catherine Lemieux heads a mission called Angels of Mercy that provides a healthy meal for over 70 homeless people in the park at the corner of Berri and St. Catherine streets in Montreal.

Between the months of November and May the angels leave St. Thomas a Becket Parish each Sunday after mass with a large pot of soup. In the car on the drive downtown, they build 70 lunch bags, each with a sandwich, a power bar, and a juice box. Upon arrival at the park, they serve the food from the car to a line-up of people. A couple of volunteers walk the streets to find those in need and invite them to the car for a cup of hot soup. Many homeless stay to eat, socialize, and enjoy second helpings.

Winter clothing collected each October is distributed and small gifts are given out at Christmas and Easter. On the last trip each spring a picnic in the park is a celebration for the street people and all 60 volunteers. Volunteers include drivers, soup makers, sandwich makers, and distributors. More volunteers and financial help are always welcomed. †

## Terrachoice’s Seven Sins of Greenwashing

**“Sin of the Hidden Trade-off:** committed by suggesting a product is “green” based on an unreasonably narrow set of attributes without attention to other important environmental issues. Paper, for example, is not necessarily environmentally-preferable just because it comes from a sustainably-harvested forest. Other important environmental issues in the paper-making process, including energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and water and air pollution, may be equally or more significant.

**Sin of No Proof:** committed by an environmental claim that cannot be substantiated by easily accessible supporting information or by a reliable third-party certification. Common examples are tissue products that claim various percentages of post-consumer recycled content without providing any evidence.

**Sin of Vagueness:** committed by every claim that is so poorly defined or broad that its real meaning is likely to be misunderstood by the consumer. “All-natural” is an example. Arsenic, uranium, mercury, and formaldehyde are all naturally occurring, and poisonous. “All natural” isn’t necessarily “green”.

**Sin of Irrelevance:** committed by making an environmental claim that may be truthful but is unimportant or unhelpful for consumers seeking environmentally preferable products. “CFC-free” is a common example, since it is a frequent claim despite the fact that CFCs are banned by law.

**Sin of Lesser of Two Evils:** committed by claims that may be true within the product category, but that risk distracting the consumer from the greater environmental impacts of the category as a whole. Organic cigarettes might be an example of this category, as might be fuel-efficient sport-utility vehicles.

**Sin of Fibbing:** the least frequent Sin, is committed by making environmental claims that are simply false. The most common examples were products falsely claiming to be Energy Star certified or registered.

**Sin of Worshiping False Labels:** The Sin of Worshiping False Labels is committed by a product that, through either words or images, gives the impression of third-party endorsement where no such endorsement actually exists; fake labels, in other words.”

# TOOLS OF THE TRADE



**Betty Anne Brown Davidson**  
National Chairperson of Organization

In any team sport, excellent equipment managers are essential. Their role is to provide and maintain the correct and latest equipment so the players can perform to the best of their abilities. Teams depend on the equipment managers' keenness, ingenuity, and enthusiasm.

Chairpersons of organization are like good equipment managers. Their task is to provide members with resources to "bloom and grow" in their leadership skills and effectiveness. Have you checked recently the on-line list of workshops that are available to councils? All kinds of personal and League development resources are available to be downloaded at no charge from [www.cwl.ca](http://www.cwl.ca) or on request from national office.

There are short, day-long or longer training sessions on how to run a meeting, speak in public, write a letter, prepare

resolutions, run a convention, learn about parliamentary procedure, and more. As a way of combatting poverty, think about sharing these practical skills with those in our midst who are needy, so they can effect their own necessary change.

Our role in the church is to provide the tools, the equipment for members to grow, not only in their faith, but also to tend the "fruit" of that developing relationship with God that is the urge to go out and share the good news. There are ways and means to effect positive change in the world today. Centred on faith, members can learn the skills to work for justice in their local communities, provinces, Canada, and the world.

"I must be willing to give up what I am in order to become what I will be." (Albert Einstein) †

## ST. CATHARINES DIOCESAN COUNCIL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OUTREACH

**Linda Marie O'Hagan**  
Diocesan President

Inspired by Archbishop Martin Currie's words, "we are all children of God", St. Catharines Diocesan Council undertook to help students learn more about the League. School board directors in the diocese were quick to exchange ideas and offered generous support, and one project soon grew to several for elementary and secondary students.

As a result, diocesan school Web sites now list the League as an active supporter and a link is provided to the provincial Web site. Members of League executive were invited into the schools to make presentations on the role of standing committees designed to fit a variety of classroom situations. For example, a presentation on Christian family life was made to a Grade 12 history class studying pro-life issues. In another class, groups of students prepared displays on the topics covered. Students were asked to share what they knew about the League before and after the presentations, with striking responses. Thank you letters from students have included requests to make the presentations an annual event. By the end of this year's program, presenters had spoken to over 1,000 students.

Input and response from male students were also affirming and included the design for a new promotional pamphlet.

School choirs sang for the diocesan opening mass and convention. The information the students had already gained through the school presentations fired their enthusiasm and enhanced their enjoyment and understanding of the convention activities. An invitation for students to envision Mary through art resulted in a display of posters, banners, and pieces of art that were displayed at the convention. The Catholic school board conducts food preparation classes in the hotel that hosted the convention, so students were given permission to provide food service to the delegates.

It was agreed that the experience was a positive one for both League members and students within the Catholic school system. The energy and vitality of youth can give much to the League. The diocesan council is currently examining an outreach program for local college and university students and will continue to spread the good news. †

# DIABETES



**Pearl Bridgwater**  
National Chairperson of Education and Health

**M**embers are committed to making a difference when the needs of the poor and marginalized are not met. An important area of advocacy is the securing of adequate government funding for those suffering from diabetes.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) states, “Diabetes is a chronic condition that stems from the body’s inability to produce and/or properly use insulin. The body needs insulin to use sugar as an energy source. Diabetes can lead to serious complications and premature death. However, controlling the disease can lower the risk of complications.

- **Type 1 diabetes** occurs when the beta cells of the pancreas are destroyed by the immune system and no longer produce insulin. Individuals with type 1 diabetes rely on an external supply of insulin for the body to function. Type 1 diabetes usually develops in childhood or adolescence and there is no known way to prevent it.
- **Type 2 diabetes** occurs when the body does not make enough insulin and/or does not respond well to the insulin it makes. People are usually diagnosed with type 2 diabetes after the age of 40, although it is now also being seen in younger adults, as well as children and adolescents.
- **Gestational diabetes** is a form of diabetes that develops in women during pregnancy and typically disappears after delivery. Gestational diabetes occurs in about 4% of all pregnancies, and increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes”

PHAC predicts that by 2012, almost 2.8 % of Canadians will be living with diagnosed diabetes, with 38% of diabetes sufferers being in the 55 to 69 age range. Individuals with diabetes often develop other related health problems: hypertension, ischemic heart disease, heart attack, heart failure, chronic kidney disease, stroke, and lower limb amputations.

Type 1 diabetes requires the affected person to take insulin by injection, continuous insulin infusion (pumps), or inhalation. Diet and physical activity are also important. Those with type 2 diabetes unable to control blood glucose levels by following a healthy meal plan, exercise program, and losing excess weight may need to take oral anti-diabetic drugs and/or insulin to maintain target glucose levels. Similarly for those with gestational diabetes, in some cases insulin injections will be needed.

People living with diabetes may also need to take medications to control cholesterol and blood pressure because of an increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

According to the Canadian Diabetes Association, “Many diabetics spend \$1,200-\$15,000 on required medications.” Many type 1 diabetic patients require 1,460 needles a year (4 injections per day) and 2,190 lancets a year to test blood sugar.

Diabetic persons in lower income groups, and those without medical insurance may be forced to abandon necessary treatments, cutting down on medical expenses in order to meet other family expenses. The Canadian Diabetes Association offers diabetics 75% coverage for meters or \$75.00 maximum per year but this falls short of actual expenses incurred.

Although Canada has a publicly-funded health care system, prescription drugs are rarely covered for those under age 65. Adequate government or other agencies’ funding would definitely help diabetics to control the disease.

### **Suggested action plan:**

Failure of early and proper detection of diabetes places a heavy burden on the health care system. Family incomes are reduced when complications of the condition in a breadwinner interferes with his/her work.

Members are encouraged to advocate through letter-writing campaigns for better health services for sufferers of diabetes. Anne Gorman’s article in this issue on page 37 gives details on how best to conduct a letter-writing campaign. †

## ERRATUM

In the last issue of *The Canadian League*, a spotlight on Holy Family Parish Council’s personalized embroidered aprons incorrectly placed the council in Namao, Alberta. Holy Family Parish Council is located in St. Albert, Alberta.

## WELCOME TO REACTIVATED COUNCIL

St. Patrick Parish Council  
Markham, Ontario

# PAST PRESIDENT: A VITAL ROLE

**Danielle McNeil-Hessian**  
National Past President



“There is nothing so past as a past president”, so goes an old saying often heard in the League. I have even been known to use it myself.

So, in August I began to prepare myself for the coming two years and my role as the national past president. I purchased a new easy chair and prepared myself to kick back and relax, to enjoy my term as part of the past.

Alas, I was in for a rude awakening. First I was called into service for an interpretation of the *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*, an awesome responsibility and one that required careful study of its content. I was now the resident expert based totally on my position and, of course, experience. Interpretation of policy and procedure is part of the role for all past presidents at every council level.

Next I became the chairperson of the *Constitution and Bylaws Amendments Committee*; the duties of this position resonated with me as never before.

The past president serves in a consultative capacity – not an easy feat. Despite often-conflicting advice, the past president must remain ready to give good advice while also stepping aside to allow the new president room to take the reins.

While archives and history had not previously been my cup of tea, I have jumped into this activity as the contact for



the National Archives Committee. After one meeting with the dedicated and committed women on the committee I began to enjoy looking through the old material currently stored at the national office in order to determine what needs to be preserved and stored in the archives in Ottawa. I encourage all councils to establish an archive committee to preserve and celebrate council histories. Where possible, make digital copies of pictures and important documents and keep all archival materials in a space free from mould and mildew.

Other duties as assigned by the president are another responsibility. I am pleased to say that in my experience most past presidents are prepared for this responsibility – ready, willing, and able. I am no exception; I am now standing on guard ready to serve.

I like the idea of being national chairperson of laws the least, but I am sure that over the next two years

I will adjust.

I applaud all past presidents at parish, diocesan, and provincial levels. They are an important cog in the workings of the League machine with an important role if the League is to move forward as *Women of Peace and Hope, Centred on Faith & Justice*.

I have discovered that the role of president-elect is indeed a six-year commitment. There is no time for the past president to put up her feet and rest. I think I'll need to move that easy chair to the basement for another two years. †

## NATIONAL COUNCIL REGRETFULLY ADVISES

### THE PASSING OF LIFE MEMBERS

Mary Bennett  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dorothy Roberts  
Maple Ridge, Alberta

Jacqueline Schneider  
Burlington, Ontario

## CATHEDRAL PARISH COUNCIL, GRAND FALLS, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

After two years of work and negotiation, two council members were instrumental in the opening of a palliative care room in the local hospital. Cecilia Hickey, chairperson of legislation and resolutions, and Florence O'Brien, chairperson of education and health, were proud to be invited to the opening ceremonies and the council was pleased to join other organizations in its funding. †

# LET US WIDEN OUR TENT



## Life Member Eleanor Arless

CWL national conventions are an education. Members were truly informed at the annual national convention in Ottawa about the devastation and needs in both India and Africa. The presentations by Velma Harasen, Cecile Miller, and Mary Nordick were compelling and thought-provoking.

In 2007, I was appointed by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops to the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada (WICC) for a three-year term. In light of the convention presentations, I was pleased to be reappointed for another three years, enabling me to continue to do my small part to work for social justice here and elsewhere in the world. Mother Theresa said, "We can do no great things – only small things, with great love". I have learned to love WICC because of the World Day of Prayer and the grant process that distributes all the generous offerings received on that special day.

The appointees to WICC must review grant requests and choose appropriate recipients for funding, and elected members may review the grants as well if they so wish. It is time-consuming but also valuable in terms of understanding the grant applicants. It is a humbling experience to compare how much Canadians have to the limited means available to sisters and brothers in developing countries.

I am happy to have the company of life members from Ontario, Glenda Klein and Margaret Ann Jacobs, sitting at the WICC table with me. We are about 25 in number; the experience is very comparable to sitting at the League national executive table. We are blessed. "God is good, all the time, God is good."

The women of WICC are *Women of Peace and Hope* and are *Centred on Faith & Justice* too. In March 2011 the World Day of Prayer Service will come from the women of Chile. Like many

other foreign countries, Chile needs prayers. It is recovering from a major earthquake in 2010. As a result of the earthquake, 12,600 men and women took jobs relating to the aftermath of the disaster, cleaning debris, installing emergency housing, and such. Now the government program has ended and these people are pleading with the government to reinstate these 12,600 jobs in the name of justice. To that end, 33 women went into a mine on a hunger strike to make their voices heard.

Chile is just one country drawing international attention. Haiti stands out even more with its recent cholera epidemic. The poverty has always been devastating but has now dramatically increased.

I am pleased to say WICC sent \$2,000 to the Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund which was matched by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

An amount of \$10,000 was also sent to the Pakistan Relief Fund, also matched by CIDA. Each WICC appointee was able to indicate her choice of aid associations and I chose Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace to receive \$2,000 of the \$10,000.

For WICC's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Judith Snowdon, former president and music composer, wrote a song to celebrate the occasion. Here are the words:

"Let us widen our tent  
so that all are included,  
let us open our hearts  
to embrace one and all,  
for our world is too small  
and our vision impeded,  
yet the sphere of God's presence  
encompasses all."

WICC has "widened my tent." †

## NATIONAL OFFICE NOTES: PAY PAL AVAILABLE FOR NATIONAL OFFICE SUPPLIES ORDERS

National office is pleased to announce that payment for supplies and materials may now be made through Pay Pal, a trusted on-line payment system that protects users' financial privacy. This system can be accessed by your council's on-line administrator. If your council has not yet designated an on-line administrator, now is an ideal time to do so. For further information, contact Executive Director Kim Scammell at national office at (888) 656-4040 or [executivedirector@cwl.ca](mailto:executivedirector@cwl.ca).

As announced in the Fall issue of *The Canadian League*, the national administrative committee determined that that all orders of supplies and materials from national office will be filled upon receipt of payment and payment could be made by cheque or credit card.

Senior Accounting Clerk Valroy Anderson at national office is ready to assist you in placing your orders quickly and accurately. He may be reached at (888) 656-4040 or [accounting@cwl.ca](mailto:accounting@cwl.ca)

# INTRODUCING



**Joyce Green**  
New Brunswick Provincial President

It was hard for Joyce to imagine that when she said 'yes' to a friend's invitation to join the League 29 years ago that she would become the New Brunswick provincial president. She has often been asked to step out of her comfort level and take on new challenges.

Joyce is a convert to Catholicism, but with the support and encouragement of her husband Paul and family Paula, Noella (Sean), Derrick (Jill), Carrie (Chris), grandchildren Madison and Emily Owens, and Blake and Julia Green, she has become very involved in the work of the League.

Through the League, Joyce has been given the opportunity to attend many retreats and workshops. Father Ralph McRae has told her that, "When you make a sacrifice you receive a blessing." By watching and learning from others, she has gained the confidence to present workshops. While chairperson of community life, she led her parish council through the five session workshop Breach of Trust, Breach of Faith. In her first year as diocesan president she was blessed with time to travel through New Brunswick and learn from Honorary Life Member Vivian Bosch who gave workshops on Discovering My Story and Mentoring. Without the mentoring of Vivian, Joyce would not have had the confidence to go forward. Joyce was asked to be guest speaker at the Moncton Diocesan Convention in May 2008. She spoke about Why I Love the League and shared a bit of her own story.

Joyce has been active in formulating resolutions on fetal alcohol syndrome, protection of human life, universal day care, and toxic substances in household products. She and Anita LeGresley co-presented resolution workshops.

Joyce also co-presented the One in the Spirit Workshop on two separate occasions. These were rewarding experiences as she learned about the saints and saw others grow spiritually. At the past two provincial conventions Joyce presented mini-workshops on the Words of Peace and Hope and an Annual Reporting Workshop. It is always rewarding when delegates have questions; it means they must have been listening.

Joyce looks forward to the next two years and has used the New Brunswick newsletter to ask for a "grassroots" response in development of the new theme Centred on Faith & Justice. She is proud to serve the League and will continue to do so with New Brunswick Provincial Spiritual Advisor Fr. Stanislas Paulin's guidance and God's help. †



**Mary MacDonald**  
Nova Scotia Provincial President

Mary MacDonald was born in Antigonish but lived in Glencoe, Guysborough County, with her parents, five brothers and four sisters, as well as her paternal grandparents. She completed her high school education at St. Joseph's Convent High School

in Mabou and graduated from Cape Breton Business College, Sydney, with a secretarial diploma.

She worked for many years in the secretarial field with both the federal and provincial governments and the private sector.

Mary joined St. Joseph Parish Council in Halifax in 1988 where she held various executive positions and was parish president for four terms. When her church was closed in 2005 she joined neighboring St. Theresa Parish Council where she has served as chairperson of legislation, resolutions, and spiritual development. She currently serves as parish council president as well.

Mary is a member of St. Brendan's Chapel at CFB Halifax where she has served as vice-chairperson of parish council, as well as lector and Eucharistic minister.

For six years, Mary served on the Halifax diocesan executive as secretary, chairperson of communications, and chairperson of education and health.

At the provincial level, Mary has served as secretary, and chairperson of legislation, resolutions and organization.

In 2010, she was elected president of the Nova Scotia Provincial Council and during the 2010 provincial convention, received her life membership.

Mary has two sons, one daughter and five grandchildren, all living in the Halifax area.

Over the years Mary has been active in all aspects of parish and community life. Throughout her time in the League Mary has met many wonderful women who have become life-long friends and have helped her grow in her faith and love for the League. Spending time with her family and grandchildren is her greatest joy. †

## Magazine Deadlines:

Spring issue – February 28, 2011

Fall issue – July 31, 2011

Winter issue – November 30, 2011

# THE GREY NUNS IN THE NORTH

In the fall of 1867, four Sisters of Charity of Montreal open first mission school in the Mackenzie-Fort Smith diocese in the Northwest Territories

**Anne Hanley**

National Development Assistant Catholic Missions In Canada

A time capsule is waiting to be unveiled in October 2012 at Deh Gah Elementary School in Fort Providence in the Northwest Territories. First named Sacred Heart School in 1867, the school was later named Elizabeth Ward Day School in 1958, before becoming Deh Gah Elementary School in 1992.

At 21, Sister Elizabeth Ward was the youngest of four Sisters of Charity of Montreal – also known as the Grey Nuns of Montreal – to accept Oblate Bishop Alexandre Taché's invitation to journey from Montreal in September 1866 to the northern Athabasca-Mackenzie Vicariate to open the first mission school in what is now the Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith.

Arriving at St. Boniface in Manitoba just under a month later, the Sisters were about to experience their first northern winter before journeying further northwest to Fort Providence in June 1867 – just one month before Canada's Confederation. The Sisters arrived in Fort Providence on August 28, 1867, with Oblate Bishop Henri Faraud, and opened the first school within a month of their arrival.

The bishops, priests and brothers already in the area knew how important the Sisters' presence would be. "Without nuns, we shall not be able to do any permanent good here," said Venerable Oblate Bishop Vital Grandin.

The Grey Nuns were founded in Montreal by St. Marguerite d'Youville in 1737, when she was joined by three young women in consecrating their lives to serving the poor. Even before this nation was formed, Grey Nuns worked alongside Oblate bishops, priests and brothers to build churches, schools and hospitals while introducing the Catholic Faith and working to improve quality of life for children and orphans, the elderly and the sick through education and medical care.

That journey to Fort Providence wasn't the first trip undertaken by Grey Nuns to Canada's now western provinces. In 1844, and at the invitation of Bishop Provencher, these heroic witnesses to our Faith arrived in St. Boniface, Manitoba – after a harrowing 59-day voyage of 3,500 km "in two-wheel carts drawn by oxen, in birch bark canoes, (and) doing at least 78 portages," writes Sr. Therese Castonguay [in] her book, *Leap in Faith – The Great Nun Ministries in Western and Northern Canada*.

Of the trip, one of the Sisters wrote, "We nearly always had bad weather. We have hardly slept since we left. Serpents and snakes camp with us. The portages are long and tiring. We have to climb steep slopes, make our way through bushes, walk through ravines and dead trees."

Fourteen years later in 1858, three Sisters – the two youngest, Sisters Adèle and Alphonse, were just 23 – traveled from Montreal to St. Boniface and then in 1859 established a mission in Lac Ste. Anne, in what is now Alberta. They stayed at Lac Ste Anne for five years before moving to St. Albert. Between teaching people how to read, write or pray, the Sisters devoted themselves to studying the Cree language to such an extent that they compiled a 185-page Cree grammar text.

Eventually a school, orphanage and basic hospital became part of the St. Albert mission. The Sisters taught at St. Albert until 1975, providing over a century of residence and service to the community. And 2009 marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Grey Nuns' arrival in Alberta.

Charles Kennedy was a student of the Grey Nuns at Fort Resolution in the Northwest Territories. "Their legacy of devotion and caring are still very real for many of us," he writes in *Northerners Say: "Thanks, Sisters,"* a book written by Sister Agnes Sutherland, S.G.M. "For the many years of caring, of hard work, of teaching and healing us, 'Thanks, Sisters.' We shall never forget you."

Today and in locations from New Brunswick to Alberta and the Northwest Territories, Grey Nuns are responding to the needs of the poor in women's shelters, food and clothing banks, centres for people with disabilities, seniors' residences, and in their continued service in health related areas.

In doing so, they are creating time capsules in the hearts of those they serve to be treasured for years to come. †

**With files from:** Alberta's Francophone Heritage; Manitoba History: The Grey Nuns and the Red River Settlement; "Northerners Say: Thanks, Sisters" by Agnes Sutherland, S.G.M.; Oblates in the West – the Alberta Story; Sisters of Charity of Montreal, "Grey Nuns"; Sisters of Charity of Montreal (Grey Nuns); *Western Catholic Reporter*. Reprinted with permission from *Catholic Missions In Canada* magazine. ([www.cmic.info](http://www.cmic.info)).



## ST. MONICA PARISH COUNCIL, TORONTO, ONTARIO

For the third year in a row, parish council members have gathered donations to fill new backpacks with school supplies for children in need. The student recipients are identified through two Toronto women's shelters; 93 recent recipients are from some 500 families who struggle with homelessness and domestic violence.

Kathleen Wong, chairperson of community life, reports, "The two shelters truly appreciate the support of our council as a community partner helping end family homelessness, one family at a time and help the marginalized population of women and children served by the shelters." †

# TWO BISHOPS TRAVERSE HARSH LANDS TO BRING FAITH TO REMOTE COMMUNITIES

**Charles Lewis**

From: *The National Post* November 28, 2010 Reprinted with permission

**T**hey live an 8,100-kilometre drive apart and the history and geography of their respective lands could hardly be more different than any two places in Canada – at least on the surface.

Bishop Gary Gordon of Whitehorse and Archbishop Martin Currie of St. John's and Grand Falls both deal with the vagaries of extreme weather and traversing great distances to bring the faith to handfuls of Catholics in remote communities in their dioceses. They share a deep love for their adopted homes, and revel in the natural beauty and peace of the landscapes they constantly traverse. But they are realists who understand how tough it can be to be a priest in places where isolation, cold, alcoholism and domestic discord, brought on by men leaving for months at a time to make a living, are constant problems.

Added to that, they both struggle getting the right men into the priesthood and overcoming the legacies of the sexual abuse that had specific histories in each place.

"Necessity is the mother of invention," said Bishop Gordon. "That's been a healthy thing. We're the leading edge of the wedge in finding new ways of bringing the Church to the people."

The two bishops were in Toronto this week visiting the office of the Catholic Missions in Canada, the group that funds 90% of the activities in Newfoundland and the Yukon.

Bishop Gordon came to the Yukon 10 years ago after former bishop Thomas Lobsinger was killed piloting his own plane. It was a tragic event but it inadvertently paved the way for Bishop Gordon to leave Vancouver and find a "dream" location in which to minister, albeit one that was severely under-manned.

"The transition from having 22 priests in the 1970s and 1980s to having four priests two years ago has created a huge

gap between the expectations of parishioners and what we're able to deliver," Bishop Gordon said. "That meant that many of the 22 missions would only have mass once every three months."

In the past two years he received four new priests, which means mass can be served at least once a month in the remote communities outside of Whitehorse. But he constantly has to tell parishes that they will have to develop lay leadership

because new priests are not coming anytime soon.

For Archbishop Currie, who [is] from rural Nova Scotia, the cultural transition to Newfoundland was not as great but he still had to face a staffing crisis, one that had started years before.

Over the past few decades, for example, 14 priests in Grand Falls – 40% of all the priests in that area – left the priesthood.

"We never really recovered from the loss of priests but the expectation remained the same. We're relying much more on the resources of lay

people and religious sisters to fill up the gaps," Archbishop Currie said.

The Archbishop brought in six priests from the Philippines and two from Africa, but the experiment has been fraught with problems.

"They're not sure what to do when they arrive here," said Archbishop Currie. "They're used to seeing big crowds in the street and overflowing churches. I've had to send one African back and the Filipinos want to move to Toronto where there is a big ethnic community. They're not committed to the diocese they way they should be, so we have a constant turnover."

Though Bishop Gordon has one Nigerian priest, he agrees with Archbishop Currie that the cultural challenges may be too much.



Martin Currie, Bishop of Grand Falls, Newfoundland (left) and Gary Gordon, Bishop of Whitehorse, Yukon, pose for a portrait near the Archdiocese of Toronto offices, Monday afternoon, November 22, 2010. (Photo courtesy National Post/Aaron Lynett)

“If we get 12 people at a service in one of the missions it’s like the Super Bowl. It’s too big a shift. The cold is incredible. I have to worry about their mental, spiritual and psychological health.”

However, having Canadian priests may not be the answer either. The men who used to cover the far North, priests from the Oblate order, were tough men whose self-reliance made them ideal candidates for the North.

“I don’t want an individual priest in some of these places. The guys coming out of the seminary today don’t have what the old guys had. The young priests coming out of seminary don’t have the toughness physically, intellectually or spiritually to be by themselves.”

Bishop Gordon is looking at bringing Catholic families into remote communities, where they can take a leadership role and become the focus of the Church where there is no resident priest.

“If I have good Catholic families living the Catholic faith they’re going to be the witness that will be transformational in the community.”

In Newfoundland, the situation is a bit different because there are larger urban centres – though Archbishop Currie noted that outport communities are dying out and it is almost impossible to service those communities as it was in the past.

“So instead we are trying to get the adults to take the role of educating the young in the faith.”

Always hovering above all the best intentions of both men is the history of abuses scandals – the residential schools in the Yukon and the Mount Cashel Orphanage in Newfoundland.

“Just when you think you’re making some headway, along comes something like the Lahey issue that stirs it all up again,” Archbishop Currie said. Bishop Lahey of Nova Scotia was arrested earlier this year for allegedly having almost 1,000 child pornography images on his computer.

“We’re trying to do our best, but I now realize that there is a systemic problem in the worldwide Church that is bigger than just Newfoundland,” he said.

But at least in Whitehorse, the problem of overcoming bad memories may find a solution in the demographic shift.

In the past few years, Filipino families have come to Whitehorse and Dawson City to work in the service sectors. They are also starting to fill the churches in Whitehorse, which may have the side benefit, along with increased lay leadership, of helping the Catholic Church move out of the shadows of the residential school crisis.

“The people who are moving here don’t have any of this history,” said Bishop Gordon. “The face of the church is changing.” †

## LETTERS... WE WRITE LETTERS... WE WRITE LOTS AND LOTS OF LETTERS...

**Anne Gorman**

National Chairperson of Resolutions

**W**omen of the League are called to be *Centred on Faith & Justice* through their witness. One way to say “yes, we can” is through contact with provincial and federal politicians.

I propose that councils begin to collate the number of letters sent to the ministries relative to the issues at hand. The process would be similar to reporting donations contributed under standing committees and the number of letters written could be included in annual reports.

If members are not comfortable writing letters on their own, they are encouraged to join with others for a letter-writing session at the church or at someone’s house as a social event. They are encouraged to write letters by hand in their own words, keep the letters brief, and politely request responses.

Feel free to send the same text of the letter to several ministers in Ottawa including the prime minister and members of parliament, sending each letter as an original.

Begin with addressing the two resolutions adopted at the 90<sup>th</sup> annual national convention in Ottawa: Resolution 2010.01 Chrysotile Asbestos; and Resolution 2010.02 Income Tax Credit for Children’s Participation in Arts and Cultural Activities. Also, please have a council discussion about letters that may already have been written throughout 2010. Stand up and be counted as women *Centred on Faith & Justice*. Concerns voiced in letters will affect change especially for the voiceless.

Remember, no postage is required when sending letters to the federal government. (For example send to \_\_\_\_\_, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6.

Remind members to write as private citizens as only the national president speaks for the League. Please calculate the number of responses received to any letter writing campaign.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to bless your good work. †



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*For God and Canada*

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E-MAIL: MEMBERSHIP@CWL.CA

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