



THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF CANADA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REGINA, Saskatchewan – 747 members and spiritual advisors attended the 93rd annual national convention of The Catholic Women's League of Canada from August 11-14, 2013, at the Delta Regina Hotel in Regina, Saskatchewan. Under the theme, *We Have Seen the Lord!* they gathered in prayer, were challenged and inspired by gifted presentations, and were engaged in important discussion on a number of social justice issues.

In his homily at the opening mass on August 11th, Most Rev. Daniel Bohan (Archbishop of Regina) encouraged members to “let their journey through life be carried on the wings of hope.”

Presenter Sr. Fay Trombley (Tuktoyaktuk, NT) focused on religious outreach to the Inuit and Inuvialuit peoples, especially children. Presenter Bishop Emeritus Gerald Wiesner praised members for their missionary work announcing, “the church needs you: you are dedicated ... enthusiastic missionaries.” Fr. Bill Burke from the CCCB national Liturgy Office gave a lively presentation on the Year of Faith and challenged members to reclaim Sunday. Member Ann Chase, a 15-year ovarian cancer survivor, gave a presentation on ovarian cancer awareness. Kathryn Perry, author of *The Courage to Dare: The Spirituality of Catherine Donnelly, Founder of the Sisters of Service*, discussed newly found documentation on the role Catherine Donnelly played in founding the Sisters of Service and the impact she had on the Church in Canada. Kathryn drew a parallel between the writings of Sister Donnelly and the comments of League members about their spirituality. Maribeth Stewart, World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO) vice-President for North America, explained the organizational structure of WUCWO.

Those attending were spiritually enriched and moved to both tears and laughter by the witness of four honorary life members, Irene Lefort, Claire Heron, Agnes Bedard and Danielle McNeil-Hessian, as they shared their deeply personal experiences of having seen the Lord.

An anti-pornography campaign was launched, and members will be working to raise awareness of the evils of pornography while inundating members of parliament with postcards, letters, and emails.

The League, founded in 1920, is one of the largest organizations of women in Canada with in excess of 91,000 members represented in every province and territory and in the military. The League is organized and pledged to serve all citizens and has often received the commendation and keen appreciation of federal, provincial and municipal authorities for the voluntary services ably performed by its nationwide membership.

Two resolutions were adopted this year by the national council for action by members:

Building Relationships and Partnerships with Canada's Indigenous Peoples "urges the current national executive to build relationships with indigenous women leaders, and to identify ideas and programs for members through the national standing committees on building or deepening relationships and partnerships with the indigenous peoples of Canada."

Employment Insurance Benefits for Cancer Patients and their Caregivers "urges the federal government to provide employment insurance sickness benefits up to 52 weeks for cancer patients; and increase the employment insurance compassionate care benefit to 26 weeks, accessible during a 52-week period, for caregivers of cancer patients."

At the closing Eucharist, Bishop William McGrattan (Toronto) was installed as national spiritual advisor for the next five years. Outgoing National Spiritual Advisor Archbishop Martin Currie (St. John's) was thanked for his years of service at the closing banquet by the national presidents with whom he served: Danielle McNeil-Hessian, Velma Harasen and Betty Anne Brown Davidson.

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