

National Chairperson of Organization Shari Guinta

It was encouraging to hear from councils across the country that had re-started activities after the pandemic restrictions.

Provinces and dioceses have been organizing, visiting councils and offering workshops and presentations in leadership training as well as membership recruitment and faith programs. The resources from the working groups organized through the implementation committee have been utilized, and it was encouraging to hear about the positive feedback. Much more presentations are needed however, and encouragement.

Recruit Members and Maintain Membership

The League has continued with a decline in membership, which in some ways was anticipated due to the pandemic, death of older members and demographics and even a decline in church attendance in general. A number of councils have decided to become inactive or close altogether, which was hard to accept. Councils were encouraged to think twice before becoming inactive or closing, and diocesan councils worked hard to help them survive. There were some success stories as well. Resources have been designed to help with membership recruitment and retention.

A separate initiative is the Unity Outreach project that was initiated in fall 2022 and has been rolled out across the country. Visits have been made to all provinces and dioceses and parish councils are in the process. Feedback is being obtained across Canada in the hopes of improving communication and collaboration and realizing the needs of councils. Follow-up has begun and data has been collected for further action. Reports back have been very positive.

Leadership Development

I want to promote the *Joy in Leadership* program that is offered as a resource developed through strategic planning initiatives. Leadership development is so important, and I encourage councils to take advantage of the League Development Fund for workshops and presentations. I continued to meet with provincial chairpersons of organization throughout the year, and this helped create a relationship whereby I could learn about initiatives in the provinces, problems and information sharing. I encourage other levels to do this. The meetings were virtual and cost-effective.

League Resource Material

The national website, other websites and *The Canadian League* magazine were reported, once again, as the most used resources. The national website has changed and improved and has become more user-friendly in order for members to find sections that they are looking for, particularly resources. I again encourage councils to use the resources that are there—no need *to reinvent the wheel!*

Annual Reports

The online annual report/surveys were received with thanks this past year. The surveys were modified from last year and will be again this year, taking into consideration the feedback that we received for modifications and changes. Information from these reports now comes into our national office, is summarized and one annual report is done with a view of the whole organization. This is a more streamlined way of reporting and alleviates all of the reporting from national officers

and provincial presidents. Reports and particularly reviews of work done, activities and presentations are important and wise planning for future activities within all levels of the League.

Life Membership

The recommendations from an *ad hoc* committee that suggested changes to the criteria for life membership were adopted and put into place last year. Thirteen life members were nominated and were accepted by the national board. These women will help in work done by the League across the country. Letters will be sent to life members every other year as well, asking them of their willingness and interests in areas of service to the League. Councils nominating women should check the criteria to ensure everything is sent in that is needed to process the nomination.

This concludes my report. †