

## **New Brunswick Provincial President Madonna Clark**

Madame president,

To date, 2023 has been a year of few accomplishments but wonderful results. This year the New Brunswick Provincial Council celebrated, in a big way, I might add, its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This was also the first major meeting to take place since the pandemic, and the ladies were anxious to celebrate. The presence of National President Fran Lucas was the icing on the cake for us all.

The planning and implementation of this annual meeting of members (AMM) has been a major project for members. Originally, we were to have hosted a full convention, but plans were altered. When the national executive/board asked if we would host a scaled-down meeting, all councils stepped up to the plate and here we are!

In 2022, a resolution entitled Enhanced Homeschooling Guidelines was passed at the provincial level. After several attempts at arranging a meeting, this spring a group met with representatives of the minister of education and early childhood development to discuss the issues and the need for change in legislation. The next step was a letter campaign. Letters were developed and distributed to all councils at the provincial AMM, encouraging members to sign and send to the minister. A petition is currently being constructed, which will be circulated this fall for later presentation to the provincial legislature.

The first phase of the Unity Project is underway, with one-third of the councils having received a first visit. Members are pleased to have the opportunity to share their thoughts in a one-on-one environment. They are also pleased that we are once again having our voices heard at the provincial level.

Although not a project per se, members have been actively supporting Right to Life by speaking at rallies, attending the Focus for Life Summit and signing onto the No Options, No Choice website. Several members attended the ordination here in Saint John at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception of two priests in the Saint John Diocese, something that has not taken place for nine years.

Expected challenges for the future include increasing membership, filling executive positions through election, not appointment and modernizing our approach to new members to entice younger women.

Our goals/plans for the two-year term are to create excitement in the province that hopefully will motivate members to continue their support and service to the League, with a new enthusiasm that will be contagious and will spread throughout the province, and also to provide opportunities for leadership training and education.

New Brunswick was saddened by the recent, sudden death of Life Member Gertrude Nowlan. Gertrude and her daughter Mary had reservations all booked to join us here at this AMM.

As we, *Catholic[s] and Living It!*, gather here together, we embark on a faith journey with friends who nourish our souls and help us to continue our work “For God and Canada.” ✚