

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
The Diocese of St Paul**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2009

APRIL 10, 2010

Thank you to all members of the Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of St. Paul. Because of you, I can honestly say that the spirit of Peace and Hope is alive and well in our part of the world today. God bless you all!

There are twenty councils in the Diocese of St. Paul with a total of 609 members for the year 2009. Members range in ages and participate as they are able. Many do not attend the regular meetings of the councils, but willingly assist in other ways. Some councils struggle to fill executive positions, but they somehow manage to keep the spirit alive and continue to pray for members to be open to new opportunities to serve their sisters in the League. Almost all councils reporting use "word of mouth" as well as their parish bulletins to disseminate news of their activities to their members and parish families.

The spirituality of our members speaks to us from the pages of their reports. Councils report devotions to Mary in the recitation of the Rosary and celebration of mass for Mary's special feast days. They include bible studies, personal and group retreats, and the study of angels as part of their spiritual development. One council expanded on their celebration of Peace and Hope Sunday by displaying their CWL council's memorabilia of scrapbooks, photo albums and promotional materials at Mass. They host and participate in World Day of Prayer and one council reports participating in weekly interfaith Lenten activities with other church groups in their community. They sponsor masses and are honour guards for deceased members; host prayer chains and participate in all of the ministries at mass, including Children's Liturgy. Several report receiving the *Western Catholic Reporter*, *Catholic Digest* and *Prairie Messenger*.

Social justice issues are always areas of concern for our members. Each report that was received had at least one activity related to social justice. Letters were written to governments at all levels regarding euthanasia and palliative care, assisted suicide, human trafficking, sexual exploitation of children, pornography and abortion funding. Other concerns included working towards clean water for all and enhanced funding of Catholic education. Members were also urged to request and use religious stamps at Christmas. Support was strong for the Walk for Life and local Christmas hamper and food bank organizations and Meals on Wheels. Of special interest is the Parish Baby Shower, where parishioners bring baby items that are given to the local crisis centre, and "Warm Socks for Cold Souls" to help homeless during the cold winter months.

Fundraising was an activity that all councils used to help them support their extensive good causes. Fall suppers, strawberry teas, bake sales, sale of croissants and homemade pies, a Hunger Supper, and garage sales are tried and true standbys. Once council coordinated their Community Calendar project,

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another organized a silent auction in conjunction with their Valentine's Tea. Many parishes sell religious items at their churches. Funds raised are used to support the Bishop's Faith Formation (Seminarian) Fund, Development and Peace, Pennies for the Poor and Share Lent as well as local food banks, bursaries for graduates at local schools and local crisis centres. Several councils sponsor children and families through Chalice; one sponsored a young adult who is doing missionary work in India and another gave money to a family in their community that was having an especially hard time and needed support. One council has set aside money to assist in one of their younger members who is planning to bring a Pro-Life speaker to local schools and community for a testimonial.

It is plain that our parish and communities are rich for having such dedicated women in their midst. Time spent in assisting in their communities range from visiting the sick and elderly, planting flowers and cleaning the cemetery to beautify their church property and towns, volunteering at women's shelters and crisis centres. These women bring Peace and Hope to those who see their examples. God bless each one of them!

For God and Canada,

Annette deB.
St. Paul Diocesan President