



# The Catholic Women's League of Canada

## The Catholic Women's League of Canada St. Paul Diocese - President's Annual Report 2014

Reporting Councils: 14

### **We Have Seen the Lord!**

We've had a busy year in the Diocese of St. Paul! Members Have Seen the Lord in many ways over the past year. The evidence of this shines forth from their annual reports.

Members faithfully support their parishes by filling ministries at Mass, holding bible studies, Taize prayer, leading the rosary, and organising annual retreats. The Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel is celebrated by all councils.

This year, the Diocese of St. Paul held opening Masses for the Year of the Family. The CWL played an important role in these celebrations. Members worked on banners, filled ministries at the Masses and coordinated luncheons after each Mass. The feeling of community was palpable at each of the four Masses celebrated across the diocese.

Our parishes benefit from the work of our members as catechists for sacramental preparation, RCIA/RCIT and children's liturgies; and their involvement with youth groups. Councils present gifts for graduating students, support graduation retreats and provide scholarships. Many councils support youth involved with the National Evangelization Team. Parish suppers and speaker nights are popular events and many of our councils cater funeral lunches for their parish communities.

As well as being active in parish life, our busy members took time to support others in their communities and beyond with works of social justice. They helped with food banks, community Christmas hamper projects, warm socks and clothing collections for social agencies, Meals on Wheels, and soup kitchens. Gift of Life baby showers were held; Operation Christmas Child, Save a Family Plan, Chalice, Development and Peace and Catholic Missions in Canada are popular ways to help the needy. Participation in World Day of Prayer is an important event for councils and some also host other ecumenical celebrations in their communities. Some councils place CWL pamphlets in their community welcome packages to promote the League.

Our members recognize the need for priests, and support seminarians at St. Joseph's Seminary in Edmonton. Nickels for the North are collected to help our CWL Sisters in the North with travel to meetings and conventions.

The CWL in the St. Paul Diocese is concerned about our country. Letters have been written to government representatives at all levels showing support for some things and asking for more work on others. Some of our councils had the opportunity to meet with Minister of Health Rona Ambrose regarding Lyme Disease and other issues affecting women, youth and families.

When tragedy and sadness strike our community, our ladies step up to help wherever they can, providing a helping hand to members with illness in their families and taking on extra roles in their councils while members deal with crises. This year we lost a much loved Diocesan Past President when Pat Hillson passed away after a long illness. Also, our immediate Past Spiritual Advisor Father Hamilcar Blanco succumbed to a stroke. We were honoured and privileged to serve as an Honour Guard at both of their funeral Masses. Another loss to the diocese was Father Gilbert Dasna. CWL members provided a luncheon after his prayer vigil.

While difficulties building memberships and convincing ladies to take on leadership roles are a concern, Catch the Fire Training (CTF) Days have been successful. Four training days were held and with each one hosted, at least one new member has been gained! Both long time members and new ones learned a lot about the Catholic Women's League. It is hoped that with each CTF our members will come to realize that they are strong and capable of taking on more responsibilities in their councils and that they will be willing to share their gifts to further strengthen the League.

The Diocesan Council was pleased to present our Annual Dorothy Roberts Award to Joanna Sehn of St. Catherine's in Lac La Biche. Joanna is a dedicated CWL member and demonstrates what it means to be a member of the Catholic Women's League of Canada! She serves her parish, her council and Diocesan Council with zeal and humility.

For God and Canada,

Betsy Fletcher,  
President, Diocese of St. Paul

*“Consult not just your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.” Pope John XXIII*