



The Catholic Women's League
Manitoba Provincial Council

71st Annual Convention

June 9, 2019

ORAL REPORT

Spiritual Development

Mary-Margaret Patterson,, Chairperson

My report can be found on pages 35-36.

This past year has been a blessing for me. I participated in the usual preparations for Executive Meetings, the February Provincial Day of Celebration, and the Provincial Convention 2018 with its amazing water ceremony as well as the same for 2019. I have been inspired and amazed at the outpouring of help and support from all three dioceses through their reports and messages.

As I have chaired this standing committee at every level of the League except National, I learned a very valuable understanding that I will pass along to all of you. Use every different method of prayer for your meetings and events. Use interactive, meditative, formal, and informal prayer. Use music and instrumentation whenever possible. Use prayers of gratitude, petition, thanksgiving, and praise. I have tried to do this with my term in order to keep our meetings and events within the framework of 1/3 faith, 1/3 fun, and 1/3 fulfillment.

When I sent my annual report to Shari Guinta, my national counterpart, she sent me a reply that I will share part of with you. This is for every one of us as individuals as well as those who hold the chair of this Standing Committee. She said, ***“Well done. You obviously have very active, spirit filled women in your province.”***

Our current National theme is Caring for our Common Home. There are many angles to this theme; education, health, resolution, legislative, and social justice to name the most obvious. I want to address a spiritual aspect of this theme.

Spirituality is the expression of our personal connection with God and there are as many kinds of spirituality as there are personalities. Living our lives with the realization that everything we do is in honour and glory of God leads us to be as I mentioned in my reflection at the Day of Celebration in February – Living Prayer; we are **living** prayer; we **are** Living Prayer. Every act and action is part of that prayer. Taking care of our common home through ecological and environmental improvements is also a form of spirituality and one that we can make part of our own unique method of expression.

As it says in Job 12: 7-9

“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;
or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you.
Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this?
In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.

A poem I read this past year sums it up nicely.

No one owns the water.
No one owns the lands.
No one owns the oceans.
No one owns the sands.
These are given by our mother.
The planet provides for free.
Only by hands of the greedy
Does the Earth require a fee.
Poet Christopher



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SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT
Mary-Margaret Patterson, Chairperson

The Lord has Risen; He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia

Greetings to my brothers and sisters!

We have gone through the most important celebrations of our faith – Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity, and now Corpus Christi. These are the very foundations of our Catholic Christian Church.

What an exciting and appropriate time for celebrating our 70th Provincial Convention. We have much to be grateful for. We are still a living and vibrant part of our dioceses and parishes. If you don't believe me, just check my report on pages 35-36 of the Annual Report Book. This is the summary of all of your work. I am thrilled to be able to showcase it for all of us to enjoy. I am humbled and honoured to be part of your expressions of faith even if it is only in this small way. You are definitely inspired and answering God's call.

Some of us have answered "Yes" to God's ultimate call – the call to join Him on the other side of the veil we call death. We had a large number of sisters leave us bodily in 2017. Here is the breakdown by diocese:

Keewatin-The Pas – 2

St. Boniface – 17

Winnipeg – 39

Our membership for 2015, 2016, & 2017 is as follows:

Keewatin-The Pas – 140/148/149

St. Boniface – 666//637

Winnipeg – 1670/1637/1534

That is 58 deceased members but 61 who have not renewed for 2017. And that is for one year alone! Attrition is going to continue so we need to redouble our efforts to retain our current members while growing at the same time.

I imagine some of you are asking yourselves "Why is she talking about membership? After all, that is the domain of Organization". I want to put a slightly different spin on things as it pertains to how you express your relationship with God – Spirituality. In my communiqués this past year I have mentioned how we each express our spirituality in different ways. We each have our own strengths and weaknesses. Why not try different types of prayers and methods of praying at your meetings? Make some meditative with one person reading a reflection/prayer aloud, others by group singing a song/hymn that speaks to you or is germane to the liturgy of the day or time of year, and still others as an interactive exercise? If you noticed, we incorporated all of these methods this morning. Parts appealed to some of you more than others and vice versa. That is the beauty and purpose of using a variety of types of prayer. Those of you who have participated in either the Spirituality – A Day of Discovery or One in the Spirit workshops are already aware of this.

Another good way to deepen your own faith and relationship with God is to participate in a Scripture Study program. I am partial to Little Rock Scripture Study but there are others out there. The Spiritual

Development Chairperson does not necessarily have to facilitate if that is not her strength but coordinating/sponsoring the program and having another CWL sister lead or someone from the parish is just as good. Especially if it advertised as a CWL sponsored event! Along with helping the members personally, it will raise the council's profile within the parish and could possibly result in attracting members that might not have otherwise been interested in joining the CWL.

As you can see, all aspects of the League have a responsibility to enhance the overall experience of our sisters and brothers in Christ in the activities of the CWL, not just one Standing Committee. I hope I have given you some good ideas and material to work with. I have mentioned at previous times that one of my focuses is on Marian prayer. I would like to finish with this one.

Prayer to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Remember, ☩

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart,
the great things the Lord has done for you.

He chose you for his Mother.

He wanted you close to his cross.

He gives you a share in his glory.

He listens to your prayer.

Offer him our prayers of praise and thanksgiving;
present our petitions to him.

Let us live like you
in the love of your Son
that his Kingdom may come.

Lead all people
to the source of living water
that flows from his heart,
spreading over the world

hope and salvation
justice and peace.

See our trust in you;
answer our prayer.

Show yourself always our Mother.

Amen.