



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

ALBERTA MACKENZIE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Alberta Mackenzie President's Oral Report Convention 2023 Edmonton

My Dear Sisters:

The past year has been a blur of activity and change as with gratitude we were further able to close the door on the COVID-19 pandemic. It was wonderful to gather again last year in Lac La Biche after not being able to meet in person for two years. We yearned for the physical connection with one another which was and is manifested in the many hugs being offered and received.

I have learned there are definitely some perks in serving as Provincial President as was evidenced during April and early May when I had the privilege & joy of attending Conventions in four of the five dioceses. The women I met shared a love of the League and the graced opportunity it provides to grow in sisterhood, faith, service and social justice. My first stop was Hay River in **Mackenzie-Fort Smith** where ravaging fires are now on their doorstep after experiencing unprecedented flooding last year... they are in desperate need our prayers and support. There is a strength of spirit and joy in these women of the North and they made me feel very welcome as did their Bishop Jon Hansen. Along with Judy Look, my next stop was Peace River in **Grouard-McLennan** where during the past year the Diocesan Executive have focused on reconnecting, honouring and showing appreciation to their members through visits to their councils to build and strengthen relationships...it appears to have worked: the women at their convention were engaged and interested in the program prepared for them. Following their convention I attended the **Edmonton Diocesan Convention** whose theme was ***Rise Up*** which proved a meaningful stage for spirituals, speakers and lively discussion. I travelled home with Doris, a woman from my Council and throughout our trip we had an animated discussion about the Convention and what we had experienced. My last gathering was the **Calgary Diocesan Convention** whose theme was ***Steadfast: Our Call to Love*** where the women gathered were treated to a great program which was highlighted by an exceptional presentation by Deacon Michael Soentgerath entitled ***Love at Last Breath*** which included his personal experiences in his work with palliative care. We learned about ***The Medicine Tree***—a place of gathering, offering and healing. We were

reminded that we are called to Love—God, our neighbour and ourselves. I was unable to attend the **St. Paul Convention** as I had already accepted an invitation to attend the Convention in Grouard-McLellan but provided a message and look forward to next year as I have promised St. Paul, I will be with them.

It is important that we find motivation in the words of Albert Einstein who said “***The World will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything***”. On May 11th, I attended the **Alberta March for Life** and spoke as Alberta Mackenzie CWL Provincial President to the more than 1000 people who had gathered on the grounds of the Alberta Legislature Building to **Build a Culture of Life** by showing their support for the Sanctity of Life from Conception to Natural Death. I shared with them a quote from Blessed Mother Theresa who once said “***It is a poverty to decide that a child must die so that you may live as you wish***”. The CWL must be an advocacy voice for the vulnerable in society who have lost their voices and cannot fend for themselves which includes the elderly who need care, the mentally ill, the homeless, the unemployed, the terminally ill; all who become invisible because they place demands on the system.

In early April, Mary Molloy, Betsy Fletcher and I met with two Alberta Cabinet Ministers (Adriana LaGrange & Kaycee Madu). It is important that we meet regularly with Government to share our concerns and recommendations which included the **Growing need to an Independent Seniors Advocate, the Need for Good Palliative Care, Our opposition to Pornography** and the passing of Bill S-210 which marks the most significant progress in Canadian history for legislation designed to prevent children from accessing pornographic content online. We as CWL members can take pride in the national postcard campaign we have continued for many years; **we reaffirmed our support for publicly funded Catholic Education and we spoke to them about Resolution 2022.1** which calls for the government to enact Federal Legislation to Reduce Food Loss and Waste which was brought forward by the Diocese of Calgary.

We have much to celebrate this weekend as we think about who we are as Catholic Women: Our shared Catholic faith has brought us together. Our record of outstanding service in our communities is a source of shared pride. Our vision and motivation for Social Justice are the impetus for Resolutions and for Change.

Enjoy these two days and remember, we share a profound calling to care...we are the authors of our future...we are Catholic and Living It!

Mary Hunt