

**Nova Scotia Provincial Council
Spiritual Development Annual Report 2017
Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call**

Annual reporting was done, once again, online with a very slight increase noted in reporting from both dioceses. Brenda Johnson, Antigonish Diocese, noted 22/40 councils reported (55%), an increase of 3 councils. Carol Pottie, Halifax/Yarmouth Diocese, reported an increase of 1 council over 2016 for 15/30 (50%) reporting. I would like to thank Brenda and Carol for their well written reports on the spiritual activities of councils throughout the province. This report is a compilation of information received from both Diocesan Councils for 2017.

Spiritual Growth of Members

It was reported that most councils studied/reflected on the theme "Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call" at monthly meetings, workshop/prayer services, retreats or invited guest speakers. More than half of the councils indicated that they spend one-third of their meeting time on the spiritual aspect of membership.

On the National website, there are ready-made prayer services and workshops which some councils indicated they used and others prepared their own services. Liturgies and programs were organized by councils for their members. Halifax/Yarmouth reported 100% of all their councils provide services for deceased members and funeral honour guards. Some of the liturgies and programs provided by members include participation in World Day of Prayer, Stations of the Cross, rosary, recitation of League Prayer, scripture reflection and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Other events held were retreats, pilgrimages, Crowning of Mary, candle light vigils, Litanies and Novenas.

Study of Catholic Teaching

Liturgies and Spiritual programs were developed by members using some of the following resources: CWL Ceremonies Booklet, CWL Prays Booklet, ALPHA Course, Cursillo and Ultreya programs, Marion Helper Magazine, Catholic Digest website and Word Among Us magazine. The Antigonish Diocese reported a Women's Prayer Breakfast was held and one member is in the Diaconate Formation (wife of a candidate in third year). Our Lady of Good Counsel is celebrated with a mass in most parishes or combine with other councils and held one mass. Luncheons, retreats and watching the CWL televised mass were also done. Some councils have familiarized themselves with the church's protocol for cremation of the deceased, including the spiritual advisors in these discussions. Three councils in the Antigonish Diocese reported studying "Laudato Si". Members were encouraged to study and share information from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, join lay formation programs and use the CCCB and Vatican websites.

Role of Women In the Church

A few councils undertook the studies of Women In Scripture. Most of the councils promoted an awareness of women's place in the church and society. Members are involved in leadership roles throughout their parishes: serve on Diocesan and Parish committees, Parish

finance committees, Parish Pastoral Council, Pastoral Associates, Regional Pastoral Council and Trustee. In the Canadian League Magazine, Spring 2017, there was an article on “joy of service”. This was shared at general meetings, council newsletters and some prepared a reflection. Some members have joined their parish liturgy committee.

Evangelization and Mission Assistance

Councils reported that some participated in the “Keeping Christ in Christmas” campaign put on by the Knights of Columbus. The CWL of Canada supports Catholic Missions in Canada as its primary missionary outreach in Canada. Councils provide assistance through clothing, food, monetary, school supplies as well as support to ESK-OMI Missions, Kee-Pas Missions and St. Francis Xavier Mission.

Lay Ministry

League members continue to be very active in various Lay Ministries in their parishes such as Choir/Music, decorating, cleaning, Sacristans, Lectors, Ushers, Eucharistic Ministers, Hospitality, Facilitators and Catechists. Some members are also chairpersons/organizers of these ministries.

Ecumenism and Interfaith Endeavors

CWL members reached out to women of other denominations or faith by initiating joint prayer services, inviting women to council meetings and inviting women to social events. Members also promoted and participated in Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Women’s Inter-Church Council of Canada, World Day of Prayer, WUCWO and Fellowship of the Least Coin.

Conclusion

At the end of the online survey, there is a “final thoughts” section where councils reported other activities they were involved in such as visiting nursing homes, group homes and hospitals throughout the year but especially at Xmas. Halifax/Yarmouth Diocese felt these actions and more were in keeping with Ministry of Compassion and Caring that they felt did not seem to be addressed in the survey. The Antigonish Diocese reported councils supported “Mass for Shut-Ins” at a local TV station, financially, attending the taping of the show and helping with the ministries.

There were 127 deceased members reported for the year 2017 and these names were placed in the Book of Life: 73 from the Antigonish Diocese and 54 (including 1 Life Member) from the Halifax/Yarmouth Diocese.

This is my final report as Spiritual Development Chairperson. It has been a joy and a privilege to serve on this Provincial Executive. May God and Our Lady of Good Counsel bless us as we continue to be “Inspired By the Spirit, Women Respond to God’s Call”.

Mary ten Brinke
Spiritual Development Chairperson

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