

Oral Report of the 68th Ontario Provincial Convention For the Organization Standing Committee

As part of the on-going organization social justice project, I ended my report last year, challenging you to pay it forward for someone who, at this time could not, for whatever reason, pay for her membership. I also invited you to use your talents to spread the good news of the League. How fitting those challenges were in light of our theme, *One Heart, One Voice, One Mission*.

I am still hearing wonderful stories of membership angels across the province. Members helping members what could be more awesome than that! I encourage councils to keep finding ways to pay it forward. Never under estimate the joy of giving... its priceless!

When I think about "spreading the good news of the League", I often reflect on the words of St. Francis who asked us to spread the good news of the Gospels, using words only when necessary. Recently I have been drawn to websites that embrace volunteerism. Looking for whom the volunteer is and what it is people are volunteering for. The list is endless. It's all about people helping people. In his writings, George Bernard Shaw stated that his life belonged to a community and for as long as he lived it was his privilege to do for it whatever he could to help out.

Provincial council was reminded many years ago that we are not merely volunteers. Rather we are women of service, living our Baptismal promise. As members we hold our Baptismal candle and take that single light in hand, reach out into the darkness and tenderly take another's hand into the light. In other words we live our call to service in the Lord and we do what needs to be done. I believe Shaw summed it up when he said, "Life is no 'brief candle' to me. It is a sort of splendid torch, which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to the future generations" (Shaw, 1925). As women of action uniting our candles, together with our *One Heart, One Voice, One Mission*, we not only glow in Ontario, we are a roaring blaze visible to all generations!

It is very important to make members aware of the impact their hard work is having in the parish, the community, the province and across the world. You can showcase the power their works are having in a variety of ways including: photos, videos, email newsletters, social

media networks, blog posts, and pages on your website. No matter which medium you ultimately choose, it's important to think about how you can tell the story in a compelling way and celebrate the accomplishments. Always celebrate! Celebration is an amazing tool that "spreads the good news of the League".

The last point I'd like to share in this report deals with one very important aspect of our role as organization standing committee chairpersons. It is our mandate to foster league development and leadership training. In the past we have been able to participate in a number of workshops, and presentations as we gathered for development days, conventions and other special gatherings. The future of The League is depending more and more on technology. I encourage you to embrace technology. During this term diocesan organization chairpersons gathered together via teleconferencing for our league development. I'd like to share some of the comments made by your diocesan organization chairpersons:

- A unique opportunity and good tool to use
- Gave us the chance to get to know each other and know what is happening in other parts of the province
- A good use of our time ... one hour ... and from the comfort of my own home we were provided with a solid frame to share in a concise manner.

It has been said, but let me say it again. We must embrace technology. It is here to stay. Not all of it is necessarily good, but let's use what is good. You might not know this but teleconferencing is actually "old" technology in this web-world. The future holds video conferencing and linking as a group on such things as Skype and Facebook. There are free websites for video meetings to be held. Many not-for-profit groups and corporations are using these methods for more effective ongoing communication and meetings as cost saving means. In a time where councils seek to be fiscally prudent it is well worth investigating newer means of communication and gathering for meetings. Imagine a diocesan executive meeting... a pajama meeting in the middle of winter from the comfort of your own home.... sharing information and developing plans... everyone on the same page at the same time.

Technology has the power to make a difference and to change lives, or at the very least make someone's day more luminous. The time has come to think outside the box!