

2019 Presidents Oral Report for OPC Annual Meeting of Members

Good morning.

It seems odd to be speaking to you virtually, although in the last sixteen months we have gotten used to it. 2019 was a year of transition, within our parishes, councils, and communities. There was so much joy and laughter at the 2019 provincial convention. It was a fitting tribute to the inspiration that Anne Madden provided during her term.

Saint Mother Teresa said, "We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our homes to remedy this kind of poverty." I am so proud of how members in Ontario transitioned from our provincial themes of *Homelessness* to *Loneliness*. It was seamless and inspirational. The loneliness focus resulted in a new awareness of those in our midst who may experience loneliness and how small gestures, a smile, a "hello", a hug can make a profound impact.

The national theme, "Care for our Common Home", was enthusiastically embraced by members across the province. Awareness campaigns related to recycling, our use of scarce resources, and how to make small adjustments in consuming behaviour inspired members to action.

There were workshops to educate members on everything from public speaking to environmental issues and human trafficking. All members were welcomed to participate, and their response was overwhelming.

Spiritual development has always been a key objective for this council and its members. Members across the province enjoyed Rosary Rallies, Lenten and Advent Retreats, and Twelve Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care. There is nothing quite like praying together. It emphasizes the sisterhood we all feel.

Even though we were unsuccessful in acquiring a visit to the provincial government in 2019, we kept in touch with our legislators through mail and email. The resolutions passed at the 2019 provincial convention were forwarded to the premier and all relevant ministries for their information. Members followed up with letters of support to their own MPPs. We are a strong voice that will not be silenced.

I am honoured to have represented the members of the Ontario Provincial Council at meetings with the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO). The support of the bishops is unwavering.

The future is unfolding before us.

This concludes my report.