

## 2020 Presidents Oral Report for OPC Annual Meeting of Members

Good afternoon.

We live in unprecedented times that call for unprecedented measures. 2020 was, to say the least, one of those times.

The year began as usual with retreats, League Development Days, and provincial workshops.

Then the world, as we know it, came to a sudden halt in March of 2020. The global pandemic stopped travel and meeting in general. Wave after wave of lockdowns and shutdowns and isolation overwhelmed us all. Conventions were cancelled and the constitution and bylaws of this organization were tested beyond any recollection.

Despite the difficulties, or perhaps inspired by those difficulties, members in Ontario excelled at staying connected. We used the obstacles of the pandemic as learning opportunities by learning to "Zoom" and "Go TO" and plain old-fashioned telephone calls. Councils across the province met virtually to pray, exchange ideas, and support each other. There were many cards sent. The provincial life members became "prayer warriors". Members initiated unique ways of reaching out to the lonely and isolated.

Life Membership was awarded to four members: Karen McDonald, Joanna Sisk, Wendy Tedford, and Pat Weller. Ladies, your commitment and dedication to The Catholic Women's League of Canada is appreciated and an inspiration.

The Ontario Provincial Council 2020 Social Justice Award was presented to Miranda Pinto, St. Barnabas Council, Scarborough Region, in the Toronto Diocese at a mass in her home parish (when we could still attend mass) for her work with new immigrants and refugees on resettlement issues, sponsorship, government support and assistance. Congratulations, Miranda!

Monthly, and often weekly, prayer services renewed our personal commitments to our faith and encouraged us to continue our rosary devotions for support and guidance.

Almost one hundred and fifty trees were planted to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Catholic Women's League of Canada. Many councils recognized significant anniversaries as best as they could. I even heard a story of a council meeting to remember its deceased members in a cemetery where they could safely physically distance but still be together.

Collecting membership fees became a challenge since we could not attend church or hold in-person meetings. Drive-by dues collection was not an unusual sight.

With all the struggles this year has presented to us, my hope is that all members have found some good. The Holy Spirit has guided us through rough places before now and will continue to show us the way.

With the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel the members of The Ontario Provincial Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada will continue to flourish and grow in faith, service and social justice.

This concludes my report.