

## **OPC Oral Annual General Meeting Report July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

### **Annual General Meeting Report: Mary Capobianco – Community Life**

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Madame Chair,

When I first started my term as Community Life chairperson, I wondered how I could best incorporate the provincial theme of loneliness into my goals for the next two years.

To that end, I initiated the C.A.R.E Connection Project.

C.A.R.E. - To CARE - to ACT - to RESPECT and to ENGAGE and most important of all to CONNECT.

Well, that was in the Fall of 2019. Little did we know how very significant each of these actions would become. As always, when it counted the most, the members of the dioceses throughout Ontario did not disappoint. Despite the lockdowns and fears of pandemic spread, our members found ways to overcome these challenges and continued to support one another and their communities.

Creative initiatives were introduced in each diocese and virtual activities prevailed. Telephone Trees were ramped up and porch drop offs with home baked goodies took place across our province.

Companions on the Journey, the 3-in-One Club and Zoom Chat in the Hat were just some of the ways the councils connected with their members. Many councils became little production lines to produce Masks for COVID and others worked on Extensions for Masks for front line workers. Many councils reported Food Bank Drive By's and Drop Offs as well as Egg Carton Drives for the Food Banks. Knitting groups continued to support Catholic Missions and Blessing Bags continued to be filled for the homeless shelters. Everyone did whatever they could safely do to help those in need.

Globally, the CWL also rose to the national challenge when we were asked to save a broken water well in Pieta Bhavan, India. Despite not having the benefit of their usual annual fundraisers, the councils in Ontario donated over \$1,200. The goal was met and the well was saved.

It was amazing to read how so much had still been accomplished proving that a global pandemic is no match for CWL courage and determination.

And now to conclude my report, I would like to share with you a poem that I think not only speaks to the work that the CWL does but for me, it specifically makes me think of Community Life:

This is a Franciscan Benediction and it came from The Contemplative Monk website.

*A Franciscan Benediction*

*May God grant you restless discomfort  
At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships  
So that you may live deep within your heart.*

*May God bless you with holy anger  
At injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,  
So that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.*

*May God bless you with tears  
To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,  
So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and  
To turn their pain to joy.*

*And may God bless you with enough foolishness  
To believe that you can make a difference in the world,  
So that you can do what others claim cannot be done.  
To bring justice and kindness to all our children and all our poor.*

Madam Chair,

This concludes my report.

Mary Capobianco  
Chairperson of Community Life