

PRIESTS...



Agnes Bedard

WUCWO Vice-President for North America

...are our friends and mentors; they listen and share, giving counsel and acting as mediators and teachers. They are a part of the parish family, and they are our *companions on the journey* that is the League. In this *Year for Priests* we recognize the very positive contribution they make to the League and ask God to bless them and keep them safe.

At all League levels, we are blessed with their presence. I gave birth to my fourth son, David, during my parish council presidency. My parish was home to two priests, both of whom would often come to CWL meetings after celebrating mass for us. I remember the laughter and smiling faces. When I was in the hospital after the birth of David, they brought me a bottle of very nice perfume. I felt affirmed as a woman, mother and CWL president. I will forever treasure their thoughtfulness and friendship.

At the closing mass of a provincial convention, which was also the parish Sunday mass, the presiding bishop identified the League as the “voice of the Catholic church in Canada.” How affirming a moment that was for the women gathered from all over the province! Yet this moment is not unique. Priests/spiritual advisors constantly give us the moral support and recognition that encourages us in all that we do.

Most Canadian priests know about the League; however, parish councils are as different as the individuals involved. Although we work with the same *Constitution & Bylaws*,

councils tend to differ in focus, structure, culture and needs, and expectations of spiritual advisors. How important it is for new priests to be warmly welcomed by the council executive. The initial meeting can be a time of sharing the parish CWL story with the new priest/spiritual advisor and a time of listening to the expectations he may have for the council. Communication between the council and the spiritual advisor must be fostered.

In this *Year for Priests* it is a great time to celebrate the relationship we have with our priest/spiritual advisor. One parish council dedicated one meeting to getting to know its spiritual advisor. He was asked to share his vocational story and dreams for the parish, parishioners and the League. Another parish council roasted its priest. Priests/spiritual advisors have been surprised with parties and cakes and various celebrations.

Father Doiron had been my parish priest for many (25) years. He lived in Milk River, 17 miles from my mission church. He was an important member of my family and of every other family in the area. I loved him very much.

I have worked with many priests. We have shared, laughed, bowled, sang, toured after conventions, discussed issues, joked and played ball. They have been and are my friends and mentors. I thank God for each of them.

Let us celebrate the gift they are to each of us and to the League. †

TOP TEN REASONS FOR BELONGING TO THE CWL

Velma Harasen, National Chairperson of Organization

Please copy and place on your CWL bulletin board or place in your weekly bulletin.

1. The CWL deepens my faith life, enhancing my spiritual journey.
2. The CWL is a supportive sisterhood that enjoys having fun.
3. I get to know the women in my parish community and develop friendships.
4. I am part of the largest national organization of Catholic women.
5. I am part of the united voice for Catholic women when representatives meet with the provincial and federal governments.
6. I receive *The Canadian League* magazine three times per year.
7. The CWL is the heart of the parish and works on many projects in the parish and community.
8. The CWL provides an opportunity for leadership development and education on issues of concern.
9. The CWL is open to women of all ages and embraces many traditions.
10. I can attend diocesan, provincial and national conventions.