

Saskatoon Diocesan CWL Council's President's Annual Report 2016

This year the new on-line Annual reports put out by National were introduced for our annual reporting; from them I received 31 responses out of 46; I also received 4 reports that missed the on-line deadline of December 31st 2016. So, I am basing my report on 76% of total Councils; 24% did not submit reports; hopefully next year we will have a better response as Councils get used to the idea.

- 93% got information from The Canadian League magazine with which to inform their members.
- 77% from Diocesan Newsletters
- 74% from Parish Bulletins
- 68% from National communiqués
- 58% from Provincial League websites/newsletters
- 45% from local newspapers ie; Prairie Messenger
- 42% from League website
- 40% from other sources

Some of the current issues that have been introduced, discussed or/and acted upon by Councils in Saskatoon Diocese are:

- Physician assisted dying and palliative care topped the list at over 94%.
- Refugee crisis, youth mental health; and pornography were 48% 42% and 26%.
- Other issues mentioned were Aboriginal Treaties, Alzheimer issues, Youth suicide and Housing for low income seniors.

90% of Councils set aside time at the general meetings to discuss and take action on issues. 42% got their standing committee chairperson to work on issues. 26% arranged for a speaker on the subject.

In our diocese the main focuses of Councils in 2016 were palliative care/physician assisted suicide as was our theme; many Councils are struggling to maintain leadership and membership and working within their own parish community; but manage to still see the bigger picture of who we are as a National Organization. I like a few answers on these main priorities: "Becoming a close knit community of women dedicated to becoming rooted in gospel values;" "Personal and Spiritual growth/ friendship to each other and to others"; "Spiritual development for our members and to promote the teachings of the Catholic Faith". The needs of Parish and Community in today's world are overwhelming many Councils, who feel their call is to keep their Parish/Community going.

One of the main issues acted upon in our Diocese this year was sponsoring our Bishop in a fundraising event as he experienced 36 hours of homelessness on the streets of Saskatoon to raise awareness and funds for a hospice for pregnant Aids patients; we raised a total of \$3900 as a combined response from our Councils.

Most presidents felt they were aided by past-presidents in their Councils as well as their executive; all of which made their role doable. 62% of Presidents met with their Spiritual Advisors monthly, 7% weekly, but 32% rarely; I am hoping this communication can be more open in including Spiritual Advisors in all Councils in what and who we are as

CWL Members. Yet 98% felt their Spiritual Advisors were supportive of their Councils. 80% of Councils meet monthly; others skip the cold months of Dec- Jan; still others meet every 2nd month and a few only meet when they have an issue or what they consider to be a necessity; they adapt to what works for them.

Resources used as guidelines for meetings: 58% used Executive Handbook, 52% have a council policy and procedure manual, 39% use the constitution and by-laws, 20% used Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules of Order Revised.

Documents signed on behalf of Council: 94% cheque signing and 74% banking documents; 52% letters directed within CWL; 58% petitions/letters to government etc.; 36% letters directed outside the CWL; as well as minutes.

Presidents represented their Councils at the following:

- 81% Diocesan convention
- 48% Provincial convention
- 71% Special Masses
- 42% fundraising dinners/events
- 34% workshops
- 10% conferences
- 20% attended other events such as K of C's, Regional Meetings, and retreats.
- 3% met with politicians
- Only 3% attended National conventions and
- 3% attended no events.

In response to reading of Executive Handbook 84% yes and 16% no. 77% stated that Executive Handbook was a help while 23% state it was not a help. 84% of Councils keep Council Members informed by telephone; 77% by meeting reports; 71% by e-mail; 20% by personal contact/involvement.

Annual summary provided to Council members by 61% oral reporting; 29% by written report; 29% by written report; 26% by parish bulletin; 23% by e-mail; 10% by newsletter; and 30% do not provide a summary.

88% of Councils find having a National theme/logo is beneficial while 12% do not find it beneficial.

From the responses, I keep hearing the same story from most of our Councils in Saskatoon Diocese; we are struggling to keep an executive; we are recycling our executive or keep doing same convenorship over and over again; our members are aging, so we try to do things that they are able to enjoy; we see that younger members do not have time for meetings with their busy lifestyle and children's involvement. In 2016 two Council disbanded and I see this as a growing concern as rural councils become more and more isolated and members move away to retire in larger centers.

This concludes my Annual Report for Saskatoon Diocesan CWL
Marlene VanDresar