



Living the faith of our mothers

Catholic Women's League Australia Inc.

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4, DECEMBER 2006

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Reaching Out Issue



The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council promotes and celebrates the cultural identity of our peoples across the nation.

By Living and expressing in all its endeavours the spirituality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic peoples.

Through this expression and recognition of our cultural identity we will find our rightful place within the Catholic Church in Australia.



Vision statement from: NATSICC
Top photo with kind permission from Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Melbourne



President's Report



CWLA's final Newsletter for 2006 shows Catholic Women's League Australia 'Reaching Out' in a number of ways:

- ◆ to women including Aboriginal and Islander women following our participation in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council Conference in Alice Springs;
- ◆ re-connecting in this Centenary Year with Catholic Women's League of England and Wales;
- ◆ to assist mothers and unborn children in the Developing World via our National Project: 'Mothers and Daughters in Action 2007' to promote and support financially the work of MaterCare International "with the teachings of the Catholic Church and Pope John Paul's encyclical on life at its heart".

Members are 'Reaching Out' whilst continuing the customary activities: Spiritual, Social, Cultural, Intellectual, Caring, Supporting and Ecumenical of Catholic Women's League, for which I thank our 7,000 + members throughout 7 Member Organisations.

I have enjoyed Christmas Celebrations with CWL members in Glenelg, Berri and Barmera and representing CWLA at the Australian Church Women SA Unit Inc. AGM and Dedication Service and a Special Anniversaries (6) Celebration.

On behalf of members I thank Fr Maurice Shinnick, our National Chaplain for inspiring Masses and Liturgies, his interest in the life of Catholic Women's League as well as for being our spiritual guide and counsellor.

I acknowledge also:

Madge Fahy as National International Secretary who represented CWLA as the voting delegate at the 2006 WUCWO General Assembly in Arlington, Virginia USA and attended the 50th UN Commission on Status of Women in New York for her dedicated work and the ongoing research and reporting it entails.

Convenors *Margo Nancarrow* (Bioethics) and *Betty Roberts* (Social Issues) involved in research and work including Submissions, often under pressure of short notice. Betty's recent CWLA submissions are: Inquiry into Petitions, Older Australians and the Law, and The People's Inquiry into Immigration Detention called by the Australia Council of Heads of Schools of Social Work. With members, both convenors have been working for rejection of the current Federal Bill on Human Cloning and Embryonic Stem Cell Research. Margo has circulated pertinent information to members and sent a Submission on behalf of CWLA. I have also contacted the Prime Minister regarding this Bill. We continue to pray and act for life.

I attended the Adelaide Launch of the People's Inquiry, have purchased the First Report and on behalf of Catholic Women's Australia have endorsed the People's Inquiry into Detention.

We appreciate the increased responsibilities *Brenda Finlayson*, WUCWO Vice-President General, WUCWO Board Member Australia, Editor of 'Women's Voice' has and we are fortunate to have Brenda, as commitments permit, present on occasions such as the CWLA Inc. Mid-Term Meeting and reporting for this newsletter.

I thank: CWLA Inc. Public Officer, Anne O'Neill for her support and important role in the business of our organisation.

Aileen Solowiej, National Communications Officer, for her active interest in Catholic Women's League, maintaining CWLA's Website, the much anticipated Media Packages, her initiatives and co-operation in all forms of CWLA communication.

Finally my thanks to our National Executive Pat Madigan, Marie Lally, Maureen Clark, Helen Rodriguez and Pauline Victory for their ideas, input, friendship and support with the ever-present responsibilities of office.

Wishing you and your families Blessings and Joy and as we reach out at Christmas time with warmth and gifts, let us reach out above all to God, remembering that:

" We love because He first loved us."
1 John 4 : 19

Mary Schultz,
National President CWLA Inc.

Editorial Panel

Editorial Team

Mary Schultz, Pat Madigan, Marie Lally, Maureen Clark, Helen Rodriguez, Pauline Victory, Aileen Solowiej

Contributions for the National Newsletter Issue 4, 2006 close on **27.11.06**.

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Portfolio Reports

Latest Update re: resolution no. 1, WUCWO Statutory Assembly, Arlington Va, USA, June 2006.



A small WUCWO delegation led by its President General accompanied by the Secretary General; Ecclesiastical Assistant; Vice President General/Board Member Australia, representing the proposer of the Resolution, CWLA Inc; and Board Member Hungary, representing the Resolution seconder, KALASZ; was received by HE Francis Cardinal Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments at that Di-castery on Friday November 17th.

The outcomes of that very cordial meeting were an assurance that the process is on-going and a request that WUCWO furnish to HE as soon as possible more specific information in order to enhance the two requests contained in the Resolution.

CWLA asks that in the coming months prayers of members be offered for the special intention of the success of these two requests to the Holy See

St Maria Goretti and Our Lady Help of Christians, pray for us.

Brenda Finlayson
WUCWO

A Child who should be born

Marcia Riordan's article in the Herald Sun 27/11/06 refers to a 6 year investigation into a pregnancy terminated at 31 weeks, when the child was mature enough to have been born alive.

The 'benefit' for the traumatised woman at the centre of the controversy was to prevent the suicide she threatened because she believed that she was carrying a child with a disability. Not a lethal disability, but dwarfism. The problem was not the pregnancy itself, but that the child would fail to grow to a normal height.

Victoria's criminal law states that any person who, with intent to destroy the life of a child capable of being born alive, by any wilful act unlawfully causes such child to die before it has an existence independent of its mother shall be guilty of the indictable offence of child destruction. The penalty is 15 years imprisonment yet no one stood trial and none were prosecuted. Did the destruction of a viable child solve this woman's problem? I guess not since thousands of women throughout the world are coming forward to seek help and healing after an

abortion experience.

The story coincides nicely with the move to create human embryos for experimentation and destruction. Dishonest claims and fraudulent results are already part of the scene, yet not one person has benefited from treatment with embryonic stem cells. There have however been isolated accounts of patients benefiting from treatment with adult stem cells that have no ethical barrier and can be harvested from the olfactory mucosa, the organ of smell in the nose.

Concern for the child even before birth, from the very first moment of conception and then throughout the years of infancy and youth, is the primary and fundamental test of the relationship of one human being to another. (*Familiaris consortio* n26)

The obligation for any society to care for children is primarily a moral one yet the British Nuffield Council on Bioethics says disabled babies who are born prematurely should not be routinely resuscitated. The council is expected to set forth guidelines for doctors and patients suggesting that disabled babies born after 22 weeks into the pregnancy or earlier be left to die rather than given proper medical assistance. According to a report in the Age newspaper, parents' wishes are only to be taken into account beginning at the 23rd week of pregnancy. Pro-life groups and the Catholic Church strongly oppose killing disabled newborns.

"While it is both moral and legal to withhold or withdraw aggressive medical treatment in cases when it is futile or unduly burdensome, it can never be right to sanction action aimed at the deliberate killing of an innocent human being," the Catholic Church said in a statement. Alison Davis of No Less Human, a disability rights group, says disabled people are "appalled and afraid" by the council's suggestions. "Once it is established that killing is acceptable on grounds of disability it is inevitable that it will spread to encompass increasing numbers of victims," Davis, who has both spina bifida and hydrocephalus, warned.

When individual human life becomes subservient to the hypothetical benefits of embryonic stem cells or to the inconvenience of treating and caring for someone with a disability the Western world is in deep trouble.

As P.D. James author of the "The Children of Men" says, "Man has rejected God's greatest gift, procreation, and so He has taken it away". I recommend the film to you all.

Betty Roberts
National Social Issues Convenor

Reaching Out



L—R Pat, Marie, Helen and Mary are seated below the Assembly banner.

NATSICC is the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council. Each State and Territory has a representative elected by local communities, and who is active in their parish, school or organisation.

The Conference in Alice Springs commemorated the 20th year since Pope John Paul II visited and gave his memorable address to the Aboriginal peoples.

The first official National Conference was held in Adelaide in 1991 and they formed a national organisation. This was officially recognised by the Catholic Bishops Conference in 1992 as a consultative body on issues concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the Australian Catholic Church. Assemblies have been held in Darwin 1994, Broome 1997, Kurrajong 2000 and Adelaide 2003.

With over 600 registrations we attended many moving ceremonies of smoking and water blessing and message stick presentations. More than twelve bishops and many clergy and religious came to give support to the aboriginal people. I am sure our presence was also appreciated. Women were the biggest presence.

To me, the most memorable occasion was the Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation presided over by Bishop Christopher Prowse. Everyone received general absolution and after a water blessing by the bishop, the elders from Balgo (all women) gave individually to all present, including all bishops and priests a hands on prayerful blessing of healing and forgiveness. For about half an hour, all lined up to receive this gift. Then all were given the opportunity to receive the Sacramental Rite of Reconcilia-

tion from the many bishops and priests scattered throughout the crowd in the Sport Stadium.

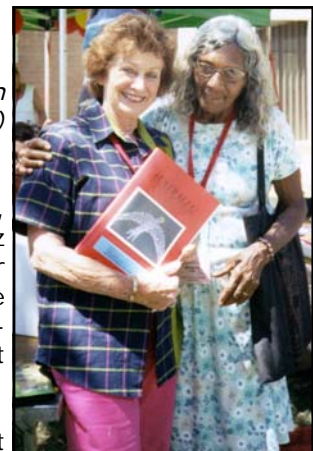
Let us pray that our contact with the people we met will bear much fruit in the furthering of Catholic Women's League Australia.

Pat Madigan National Vice-President CWLA

Dreaming from the Heart

(Marie pictured with booklet artist)

On Sunday October 1, National Officers Mary Schultz, Pat Madigan and Helen Rodriguez joined me at Port Augusta SA for the journey by road to Alice Springs, to participate in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Assembly.



This being a follow up to my visit with Bishop Collins in Darwin in August, in CWLA's quest to regenerate interest in CWLA in Northern Territory and to invite the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to be part on our organisation.

We were armed with many brochures, newsletters and even fridge magnets to give away to help spread the word at our booth at the Assembly market place between sessions.

We attended the traditional welcome to the country followed by Mass, presided by Bishop Collins from Darwin Diocese. The Bishop spoke of his memories of the visit of Pope John Paul II and of the Pope's wonderful address to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Alice Springs in 1986.

The Assembly began the next morning with a prayerful presentation given by people from NT and Tiwi Island. The NATSICC councillors were introduced and Mellisa Brickell of NT very ably chaired the Assembly. A video of the Pope's address given 20 years ago in Alice Springs was screened and for me this was a very high point in the whole week as every session of the Assembly revolved around that speech.

The presentation of the Message Sticks was again a very moving experience, as each State and Territory told of the Message Stick Journey throughout parishes in Australia.

From ancient times the Message Stick has been used to call people from different tribes together. The Sticks were similar in size with symbols of Christ and of the Pope's 1986 message in liturgy, song, dance, story activities and other ceremonies.

I attended a Message Sticks workshop, where participants discussed the Sticks journey. The schools throughout Australia really embraced the journey. One woman told of how peaceful the home was when the stick got there. Another told of her alcoholic husband completely getting over his addiction after the Stick's visit to their home. Others took them to cemeteries to be near their loved ones.

Celebrating Aboriginal Participation and Leadership was a panel discussion including Bishop Saunders from Broome. The discussion touched on many controversial issues especially the lack of Aboriginal Clergy. No Aboriginal man holds religious office higher than a deacon and the question remains: why?

That evening was the community celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation with Bishop Christopher Prowse, Archdiocese of Melbourne, presiding. 600 participants received the General rite of reconciliation and then were given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament rite of Reconciliation from the many Priests and Bishops scattered amongst the crowd in the huge sports stadium.

The Assembly began that day with a prayerful presentation from NSW and the ACT Spirit Dreaming. This was followed by an address by Mark Bin Bakar from Broome. His question was: What is the Heart of the Dream? Where there is no vision the people will perish. He believes that the plight of the Indigenous Australians is the most pressing problem in Australia.

Peter Smith from Mt Isa was the speaker at the next session—Reconciliation through Indigenous participation in the liturgy. His question—Is the European Way the only way to God? "This Assembly would not be happening if change were not happening. Spirit of belief—Jesus brings Peace. The most powerful thing the Missionaries did was to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ into our lives. The Catholic Church has opened its arms and welcomed us." Peter Smith, is an elder of Mt Isa, Catholic Community and World Council of Churches Australian representative at United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Thelma Giros—spoke of shared solutions for all people and the importance of keeping young people connected to the Church. She quoted the Bishop who said: "We don't have all the power; the power is with you too. We all have different skin colour, but the blood is the same colour." Thelma maintains, "That like the Latin rite etc. there should be an indigenous rite with our own Bishop."



The Liturgy by the New Zealand Maoris, was enjoyed by all as they expressed their solidarity with Indigenous Australians.

Our National President Mary Schultz was then given an opportunity to express the thanks of our group for the welcome we all received at the Assembly and to tell of CWLA and our mission of inclusion for all women.

This was followed by a faith presentation by a very inspirational young man named Daniel Garlett of WA. He told the Assembly that he had been an activist since year 6 when he walked out of the history lesson because it wasn't being told the truth. He now works for the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry. "We must listen to help healing, also things are better said than unsaid."

We met with Mother Theresa's Sisters at Ngkerte Mikwekenhe—a centre for Aborigines. We participated in Holy hour and were able to meet with the Sisters and local women and discuss the possibility of them becoming part of CWLA. We were very lucky to also meet with Sister Helen Parer IBVM, a social worker in Alice Springs. I'm sure she will be a great influence on the women as well. We visited Sr Helen's home where she carries out much rehabilitation work with people.

That night was the youth Mass and the Message Stick presentation with Bishop Saunders from Broome and clergy from all over Australia including Bishop Hurley from my Port Pirie Diocese. This was another very moving event.

The book: "Land, Culture and Faith-Listening, Respecting, Responding, Connecting" a special issue from the Pacifica Australasian Theological Studies commemorating the 20th Anniversary Pope John Paul's address was launched. As was another book—Australia! - The Great South Land of the Holy Spirit - dedicated the renewal of Australian hearts.

We all felt very positive with our *reaching out* and the outcomes of our participation in the Assembly and look forward to a response from a wide area of God's far flung parish in the north of this great land. And we thank him for our safe 5400 kilometre journey to spread the word of Catholic Women's League Australia.

Marie Lally AM
National Vice-President CWLA



Around the States

Victoria/Wagga Wagga

RACV CLUB Proudly Supports Catholic Women's League Melbourne Archdiocese Annual "Pink Ribbon Day Morning Tea" held on October 23rd 2006 at the new RACV Club 501 Bourke Street Melbourne. The event was a sell out with 155 women attending and a waiting list of over 20.

With the lovely room showered with lots of Ladies dressing in the "Pink " theme, the Hon. Andrea Coote, Patroness of the Melbourne Archdiocese Pink Ribbon Committee reminded those in attendance of those women who were currently fighting their battle with Breast Cancer and of all those who bravely fought but had succumbed to the disease.



Above L—R: Hon. Andrea Coote, Madge Fahy, Jeanette Sheahan, Denise Doolan

The audience was then entertained by two very bright young enthusiastic people. Tanya Fullarton, Manager of the all female racing syndicate of 44 women racing their horse for "Pink Ribbon" Breast Cancer Research, led us through the journey of the syndicate and the horse *Permasucious* trained by David Hayes and has Sahne Crawford as their Mascot.

Tanya was followed by Luke Wilkinson, a Blood Stock Analyst who advised the group to lease the horse. Luke a 25 year old who also had his Mum with him touched all present with his humour and openness.

Great prizes were donated for the 17 Raffle prizes, an Overnight Luxury package Bed and Breakfast at the RACV Club, a B&B overnight at Geelong for 4 people together with many more fabulous prizes.

The Morning Tea raised over \$3,000 of which all monies would go towards Research.

Denise Doolan
President
Melbourne Archdiocese Committee

Tasmania

At the AMG of CWL Tasmania, we wanted to devote time to seeking ways to increase our membership in order to carry CWL into the future. As a result we spent the day prior to the AGM under the guidance of a facilitator, Sister Carmel Drew discussing ways and means to make belonging to the League a more attractive option for Catholic women. The conclusions reached were carried forward to the AGM.

They were as follows:
To support youth and the initiatives of World Youth Day 2008 as a major project for the next two years.

Form a sub-committee to research and advise the Executive of alternate ways by which CWL could be governed

To seek a positive and creative approach to attract new members.

The theme for the AGM was "Living our Faith"

We hope and pray that the new Executive will be able to uphold these ideas in order to make us a stronger body to carry us into the future.

Kath Pearce
CWL TAS State Secretary

Canberra/Goulburn

We are pleased to announce the formal opening of a new evening Branch of the League in St Vincent's Parish, Aranda ACT on the 19th October. The Office Bearers are President Sally Fitzgerald, Secretary Irene Scholtens and Treasurer Annette Charge. We welcome these new members to the League and wish them every success.

The Archdiocesan President was successful in her plan to visit each Branch of the League in the Archdiocese before the end of November. On Behalf of CWLA, Jacqueline attended the White Ribbon Launch at the National Gallery on the Lake, ACT and Marie Gallagher Senior Vice President attended the National Foundation for Women's event at the Helen Maxwell Gallery, Braddon ACT.

The Archdiocesan Executive were pleased to welcome Pauline Smit National Liaison Officer of World Day of Prayer to afternoon tea during her recent visit to Canberra

On October 5th the Archdiocesan Executive were delighted to entertain the new Archbishop of Canberra/Goulburn Archbishop Mark Coleridge to morning tea. He evinced a keen interest in the activities of the League in the Archdiocese.

Sister Pauline M Coll SGS paid a call on the Archdiocesan Executive to expand on her reason for visiting the Capital. Sister Pauline and her colleagues were here to see members of Government to talk about Violence and Trafficking of Women and Children.

Bribbaree (NSW) Branch hosted a most successful Fashion Show and Luncheon in September and also catered for a camp draft in October, which was also successful but tiring.

St Christopher's (Canberra) Branch hosted a successful World Community Day Service and Luncheon on 27th October. Fellowship of the Least Coin collections were taken and dedicated, and a special 50th Birthday Cake was cut by the two National Life Members of ACT Unit of ACW, one of whom was veteran member Vonnie Sullivan.

Following ten years of sterling service as Archdiocesan Public Officer Patricia McLinden re-

cently relinquished the position due to indifferent health. Her successor is Lorraine Birch, Archdiocesan Treasurer. We wish Pat a happy retirement and Lorraine every good wish in her new position.

The various branches are preparing for Christmas celebrations and for their Annual General Meeting's in February 2007. We take this opportunity of extending to National Executive and all members of CWL our sincere best wishes for a Happy and Holy Christmas and everything good for 2007.

Jacqueline Hipwell
CWL Archdiocese President,
Canberra/Goulburn

New South Wales

ARMIDALE DIOCESE

Armidale Branch In Armidale, October is the month for the well patronised Hymn Fest. Catholic Women's League is on the organising committee for this wonderful programme of sacred music, performed by the individual churches in Armidale. Proceeds from this event usually go to a local charity – with a new one nominated each year. Again this year CWLA will be present for a feast of beautiful music and singing followed by afternoon tea and great fellowship. Branch member Claire Keoghan, who has so much musical talent, once again organised the items for our Church. Branch members spent time with students of St Mary's Primary School teaching them how to pray the Rosary. Certainly time well spent!

Tamworth Branch held a very successful Pink Ribbon Morning Tea raising \$800 (and still counting) in two hours as a contribution to Breast Cancer Research. The Centenary Celebration Dinner was also a very successful event with many young women attending as well as parishioners from East, West and South Tamworth (including some males). Peg McEntee OAM was the guest speaker and gave a very interesting talk as she recalled many details of her life with CWLA.

Warialda Branch held very successful Centenary Celebrations and were delighted with



the involvement of the local school in these celebrations. A guest speaker was Donna Robertson who spoke so sincerely of the Community Visitors Scheme and branch members hope there will be some involvement in the Warialda area. Their Pink Ribbon Day Morning Tea for Breast Cancer Research was very successful with excellent support and generous donations.

WOLLONGONG DIOCESE CWLA Wollongong Diocese recently celebrated their 20th Anniversary with guests and members travelling from near and far to be present at the celebrations. The day commenced with Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin Manning assisted by Fr Dave Hume, Fr Paul Hopper and Fr Bernard Shah. The beautiful organ music played by Bernard Kirkpatrick with the help of Elizabeth Sheppard, the Cantor, enthused members to participate with full voice.



In his homily Bishop Kevin spoke of CWLA as an organisation that welcomes all women, excluding no-one and therefore is a "real means of evangelisation in today's world". Following Mass the congregation proceeded to Murphy House for a viewing of the Museum and then onto the Cloisters for lunch. Nola Buck, current Co-Leader of the Parramatta Council welcomed guests and members.



During luncheon Daphne Peterson a past President of Parramatta Diocese gave a brief

history of Parramatta CWLA and as with any celebration there must be a cake which was cut by Phyl McKinnirey and Jean Diskon (pictured) who had previously held Executive positions in the Diocese. The celebration was a most successful and enjoyable day.

Wollongong were very thankful to the Caritas Office in Wollongong for their generous donation of a printer to their Diocesan office and are putting it to good use. **Milton Ulladulla Branch** held a very successful Spring Luncheon and Morning Melodies and were very grateful to the Pastor of St Martin's Anglican Church for making the church hall available. The rousing sing-a-long was great entertainment as was the item provided by Branch members!

Building Bridges of Friendship and Understanding. Approximately 60 people, members of the Muslim Community, the Uniting Church, the Congregational Church, the Catholic Church including representatives of the Knights of the Southern Cross and Catholic Women's League, gathered together recently in St Francis Xavier's Parish Meeting Room Wollongong.

Mr. Jim Lyon of the Knights of the Southern Cross (KSC) welcomed all and spoke briefly on events over the 12 months resulting in the meeting together with our Muslim brothers and sisters and with other churches. Mr Lyon introduced Dr Mustafa Bas from the Turkish Consulate. Dr Mustafa indicated his pleasure at being in attendance. His speech, "Religion, Acquaintance and Living Together with Common Values" was presented in Turkish – all were presented with a copy in English, which was sincerely appreciated.

Fr Ron Peters, the new Dean of the Cathedral, welcomed all and spoke of his faith journey to priesthood and appointment as Dean. Afternoon tea followed which afforded the opportunity to renew old friendships, make new friends, share our stories and recognise the many things we have in common. Father Ron led Dr Mustafa and the Muslim group on a tour of the Cathedral.

SYDNEY ARCHDIOCESE CWL Sydney Archdiocese recently held their AGM with 100 members and guests attending. President

Moya Potts welcomed all present including CWLA-NSW Inc. President Mary Harrold, State Communications Doreen Ford, representatives from the Dioceses of Parramatta, Wollongong, Broken Bay, Carmel Keys President ACW and Olya Kolomyjec from the Ukranian Catholic Women's League. Fr Ray Farrell led the beautiful Opening Liturgy with the theme "spread your wings – continue to EVOLVE in faith and friendship". Prayers were offered for the rural community in the drought stricken areas of our country. Sr Enid Doherty from the Sisters of Charity Outreach spoke on the distressed towns in the Wilcannia-Forbes area where many people are suffering from depression. A collection was taken up and proceeds will be distributed prior to Christmas to areas most in need.

Guest Speaker was St Anne Jordan from Cana Communities which has been the Project of the Year for CWL Sydney. Sr Anne spoke of her involvement with people who are most in need, suffering from loneliness, mental illness, addictions, homelessness and other factors that alienate them from within society. She quoted Mother Teresa "The Poor must know we love them, that they are wanted. They themselves have nothing to give but love. We are bring to bring peace to the world through our work".



AGM participants

The AGM was then opened and following the Business Session, President Moya presented her report highlighting the activities and projects undertaken throughout the year and thanking all branch members and Sydney Council for their wonderful contribution made throughout the year, with particular reference to the successful State Conference. Secretary Helen Cook and Treasurer Denise McCaffery spoke to their reports followed by reports from all portfolio holders.



Following lunch, Jo Grainger, left, Evangelisation & Catechesis Project Officer for WYDO8 addressed the meeting and profiled the preparations in hand for WYDO8. Jo also presented the World Youth Day O8 DVD "get with the spirit" and copies were given out to the members. This wonderful event will be a highlight for all. Jo asked all to do their part in helping young people to "get with the spirit".



Above: Jo Grainger, Moya and Mary

The day concluded with the closing liturgy.

**Doreen Ford –
Communications Officer CWLA-NSW Inc.**

Queensland

Hello from Ayr Branch in North Queensland! We have just completed our year with a beautiful Prayer Morning to prepare our hearts and minds to receive Jesus this Christmas. We had a Christmas Break-up in the middle of November and were waited on and entertained by the students of Year 6 and 7 from our local Primary School. It was a great morning! Our Branch combined with Home Hill Branch for a Think Pink Trivia Night and raised \$2020 for Breast Cancer Research. We wish the National Secretariat and all our sisters in CWL throughout Australia a Happy and Holy Christmas and may 2007 be filled with many blessings for you all.

South Australia



State Catholic Women's League Annual General Meeting was held at the Kadina Football Clubrooms. on Monday, October 30th, and as always it was an enjoyable day of fellowship and friendship. The day began with Mass in the Church celebrated by Frs Leon Quinn, Arthur Hackett, Laurie Quinn, and Monsignor Don Victory. Honorary Life Membership badges were presented to Denice Fetherstonhaugh (from the Murraytown Branch) and Mary Benton (from the Burra Branch) by Fr Leon Quinn our CWL Port Pirie Diocesan Chaplain. 110 members from 27 branches enjoyed our guest speaker – Jessica Adamson – who spoke of her life as a Channel 7 journalist.

Pat Walker (Clearview CWL Branch) – Social Justice Award

Pat Walker from Pooraka was presented with the **Social Justice Award**, from the Knights of the Southern Cross on November 11, 2006, by Bishop Greg O'Kelly at a dinner at the Adelaide Pavilion.



Pat has been involved in the following organisations:

Catholic Women's League – Pat is Treasurer for her branch at Clearview, which she started 35 years ago, and she was instrumental in beginning the branch at Brooklyn Park 30 years ago.

Asian Church Women – Pat was the Australian Representative, of Australian Church Women to Asian Church Women Conference.

Balgo Aboriginal Community – Pat worked at the Balgo Aboriginal Community in the north west of Australia, for two years as a volunteer, when she was 65 years of age. Her duties were to look after the office, keep the

Parish House clean and run a mini motel of the visitors to the community.

Neighbourhood Watch – Pat is the Secretary of the Pooraka Branch.

Southern Cross Homes Social Club – Pat began a Social Club for the Southern Cross Homes residents at Pooraka, e.g. darts and games, etc. on a weekly basis, also caters for dinners and lunches, monthly for this group.

Pat has made the best of herself for others to get the benefit from, at all levels. She is very community minded and is always conscious of the underprivileged.

Pat's nomination came from her CWL Branch at Clearview.

Western Australia

Catholic Women's League Western Australia held its Annual General Meeting and Conference on 27 October at the Redemptorist Retreat House North Perth. Around 50 ladies attended the one day conference and enjoyed the diverse group of speakers - our esteemed National President, Mary; Sr Dora Maguire who presented a powerpoint presentation "Good Grief" which outlined an excellent programme for adults and children on dealing with grief; Manuela Macri a young "pocket dynamo" who took us on a journey to Africa where she has spent time as a missionary; and Sr Margaret Culhane who also spoke of Africa, where she has spent time as a missionary, but more importantly her current work among the African refugee women and families in WA.



Above: Margaret, Karyn And Maria

State President, Karyn in her address spoke of her first year at the helm and how "her comfort zone has been ever widened and that she

has learned to pray and listen, to be respectful of everyone's opinions and ideas". Karyn accepted many invitations to branch meetings and looks forward to catching up with others in the near future. State Council members met together in prayer and work during the year and covered many and varied issues.



Above: some past and present State Presidents pictured with current National President Mary Schultz.

Looking forward to 2007, State Council Members will commence the year with a day of Reflection and an invitation has been extended to any interested Branch Presidents and members to join in this exercise. With National 2008-2009 looming on the horizon there is much work and prayer to be done – we look to the Lord for guidance and support.

On Sunday 29 October, 100 past and present members gathered to celebrate 100 years of Catholic Women's League firstly with Mass in the Redemptorist Monastery Church and then with lunch at the Royal Park Hall. It was a wonderful time of sharing with women of all ages, some who have been with the League for many of the almost 70 years that it has existed in WA together with Bishop Justin Bianchini, bishop of Geraldton who celebrated the Mass and National President, Mary.



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE AUSTRALIA INC.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2007

**September 11—
National Council Meeting**

12, 13, 14—Conference

**More details e.g. Accommodation,
will be on our website and in future
newsletters.**

Living the faith of our mothers

Portfolio Reports

Bioethics

As we enter the Advent season and prepare for Christmas, most of us turn our thoughts to family. Our own close families, our extended families, maybe families less fortunate than ours, and of course the birth of Jesus that actually created what we call the Holy Family, all occupy our minds. I find it interesting that the area of bioethics also concentrates on 'family' – from the creation of life that starts a new family, to decisions about conception, contraception, abortion, illness, health research and choices about treatment for illness that may either, shape and sustain our family, or in some cases, devastate or damage a family. There are decisions related to end of life care and organ donation that can profoundly effect our family, if even for a time.

Our care about our individual families is, of course, transferred to all of God's family and so we find ourselves becoming more aware of the bioethics issues in our community, country and world. More than aware – we become active!

The latest issue of concern is Private members Bill, Prohibition of Human Cloning for Reproduction and the Regulation of Human Embryo Research Amendment Bill 2006. Congratulations to all members who individually and collectively provided submissions to this enquiry. You can look at the submissions online at the Senate website. The submission I presented on your behalf is submission number 107.

No doubt you were disappointed with the voting in the Senate as I was. As you are aware the voting was very close - the Senate voted 34 to 32 to pass the Bill to allow the creation of cloned human embryos for destructive research. The voting was so close, wasn't it? As I write this, the 'Patterson Bill' is being debated by the House of Representatives; it started on Monday, November 27. We have written, we have lobbied and we must continue to pray that reason will prevail – and if it does not – well perhaps there is our first challenge for 2007. But not the only one, so rest and enjoy the Christmas season with family – however it is constructed!

**Margo Nancarrow
National Bioethics Convenor**



CWLA Scarf

A new poly-chiffon scarf for sale in Australian colours combined with our CWLA colours, is now available.

It can be purchased from the National Treasurer, Helen Rodriquez.

It would be great if we could all have one to wear at the National Conference in Adelaide next year.

The cost is \$32.
Postage is \$1 per item.

Please fill out the form below and return with your remittance to :

**H D Rodriquez
15 Crombie St
HOVE 5048 SA**

Name :

Address :

.....

No. of Scarves

Amount Enclosed

(\$32 each plus \$1 postage)



Centenary Celebrations Brighton, England

It was at Brighton, Sussex England, that Margaret Fletcher first gathered support from a small number of women to promote women's role in the laity of the Catholic Church. Thus the CWL was constituted in 1906.

From 20th to 23rd Oct this year it was my great privilege to be present when over 2,000 women gathered to commemorate 100 years of service to women and to the Church.

The highlight was of course the Centenary Mass, co-celebrated by many numbers of supportive bishops and priests and Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor gave the address. Held in the Brighton Convention Centre, it was a very colourful Mass with representatives from all over England and Wales bringing in their wonderful banners. Many of these bore the effigy of Margaret Clithero (patron saint of the CWL). The embroidery was beautiful.

On the Sunday I was able to formally pass on to all members of CWL England and Wales our congratulations, prayers and love from all of us in Australia, and to read a message from our National President Mary Schultz. I also gave them a brief outline of our activities here.

Our presence was very well received, and I am so pleased that someone from "Down Under" was able to be there as they were delighted to know that we are still carrying on the work of Margaret Fletcher here in Australia.

All those I met were thirsty for knowledge of Australia, and many have relations out here.

"It's a small world"

**Helen Rodriquez
National Treasurer, CWLA**



Helen Rodriquez
(pictured above middle in England wearing the CWLA scarf)

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE AUSTRALIA INC.
presents...

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS IN ACTION 2007

OVERVIEW

- A 10 month project designed to raise money for MaterCare International
- Each CWL Member Organisation can contribute by encouraging each CWL Branch to organise an event to take place in April 2007
- Photos of events will be collaged on a compact disc and sold
- All funds raised from events will be presented to MaterCare International at the CWLA Conference in September 2007



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE AUSTRALIA INC.
is...

Living the faith of our mothers