



# *Living the faith of our mothers*

Catholic Women's League Australia Inc.

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2, JUNE 2007

## IN THIS ISSUE

President's  
Report—2

Bioethics—4

Around the  
States—9

Back page:  
Pauline Victory  
talks and  
CWLA-NSW  
Leadership—12

## FEATURES

CWLA  
International—5



## The International Issue



## MARY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS

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## President's Report



Catholic Women's League Australia honours Mary Help of Christians, our Patroness, in this Newsletter. The beautiful painting, envisioned by Don Bosco, painted by Lorenzone and housed in the Turin Basilica, graces the cover with kind permission of the Salesian Province of Australia. Fr Frank Moloney SDB, Provincial of the Salesian Society and Fr Maurice Shinnick OAM PP and our CWLA National Chaplain have provided valued accompanying information. National Executive members are still trying to discover when and where Mary Help of Christians was proclaimed Patroness of CWLA. Please help if you can!

International participation is the other focus of this issue with feature articles from WUCWO Vice-President General, Board Member Australia Brenda Finlayson; CWLA National International Secretary Madge Fahy and Pat Walker, Member CWLA and Australian Church Women – National Representative to Asian Church Women's Conference, 2002 – 2006, on Executive Committee.

National Treasurer Helen Rodriguez and I represented CWLA at: "My Dress, My Image, My Choice", a Muslim Women's Fashion Show to promote a greater understanding of the Islamic dress code for women sponsored by the Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship and Islamic Council of Victoria. A panel of women of varying ages and careers spoke of their faith and lifestyles, answered questions and chatted informally during the authentic "scrumptious meal provided".

It reminded me of communication we received in February from the Pakistan Catholic Bishops' Conference, National Commission for Inter - Religious Dialogue and Ecumenism in regard to their project: 'Peace and Harmony in Pakistan through Women'

" ----- women especially mothers are considered as the milestone to achieve the set goals of the commission. The enclosed project is developed to promote peace and social harmony through women (mothers)". Unable to support the project in other ways, we can pray that it will bring peace and harmony to Pakistan.

Recently too Msgr. Follo, Holy See permanent observer, addressing the UNESCO executive council on "inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue is a vital necessity", a phrase pronounced by Pope Benedict XVI during a 2005 meeting with representatives of Muslim communities in Cologne, stated: "religious experience is often engraved in the very heart of Culture. --- Whatever differences there may be, all mankind forms a single family and this family has the vocation to live in unity and peace."

Vice-President Marie Lally attended the ALP Women's Caucus post-Budget Breakfast; National Communications Officer Aileen Solowiej attended the Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Budget presentation. National Executive members enjoyed "Becoming Jane" and mingling at the annual Film and Morning Tea arranged by Adelaide Archdiocesan President Margaret Mariner and Executive on a wintry Thursday.

CWLA's application to join the Attorney General's Forum on Domestic Human Rights has been accepted and an invitation received for the 2007 Forum. Jacqueline Hipwell, CWL Archdiocesan President of Canberra Goulburn has kindly agreed to represent CWLA and report on proceedings.

Of major concern are reports of national decisions being made in a number of countries to abandon the neutral stance on abortion that Amnesty International has held. More recently it has been reported that Amnesty's International executive has adopted a policy to support decriminalisation of abortion worldwide. In keeping with our belief to protect and care for all human life, with CWLA's 2006 Mid-Term motion, and with the August 2007 timing of AI's Council Meeting, in Mexico, we are writing to AIA to ask that Amnesty International seriously re-consider such a change in policy and not abandon its long held neutral stance.

In conclusion, a prayer from the Mass for 'Our Lady Help of Christians': "Under her protection May Australia be granted harmony, justice and peace."

**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  
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## Mary, Help of Christians



The association of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, with the title of "the Help of Christians" has a long and interesting history. The further association with Mary, Help of Christians, with Australia is also interesting.

To the best of our knowledge, Mary has generally been invoked under the title "the Help of Christians" during times of severe political and even military danger to the Church in Europe. In October 1571 the

combined forces of Spain, Venice and the Papacy faced the Turkish invasion at Lepanto. More was involved in the Turkish invasion than a war over territory. A Turkish victor would have brought the Islamic forces into the heart of Europe. As the time for the battle approached, the Pope of the time, Pope St Pius V, called upon Mary as the Help of Christians to aid the Christian forces against the forces of Islam.

A similar situation repeated itself during the papacy of Pius VII (1800-1823). The Pope, during a time of extreme tension between the Vatican and France, was arrested by Napoleonic forces and kept in captivity at Fontainebleau in France. During the period of this militarily imposed exile, Mary was again called upon under the title "the Help of Christians" and was eventually freed.

The figure who developed devotion to Mary, Help of Christians, in more recent times was the founder of the Salesians, St John Bosco (1815-1888). He also lived in troubled political times for the Church, especially under the papacy of Pius IX, who imposed a sort of imprisonment on himself after the republican forces working for the unity of all Italy took over the Vatican States. But Don Bosco gradually shifted away from the idea of Mary, the Help of Christians as a figure who aided the Church in time of political danger.

We are able to look back to the Gospel of John for a biblical source for this title. As Jesus dies He gives his beloved disciple to his Mother and his Mother to his Beloved Disciple (John 19:25-27). For John this scene is a symbol of the beginnings of the Church at the foot of the Cross of Jesus. But the disciple is given to Mary as Mother. In this way, we can say that Mary becomes "the Mother of the Church," as Pope Paul VI used to often say. As the Mother of the Church, she is surely Mary, the helper and support of all Christians.

**Francis J. Moloney, SDB**

### Australia and Mary, Help of Christians

**by Fr Maurice Shinnick, OAM  
National Chaplain, CWLA**

The first public celebration of the Eucharist took place in Sydney on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 1803. The celebrant was Fr James Dixon, a pardoned convict. He was not particularly interested in ministering here and within five years he had left Australia. Other priests who were pardoned convicts did not stay long either. Stability of priestly ministry arrived in the person of Fr John Joseph Therry in 1820.

Seeing the many needs of the Catholic's in Sydney he set about building a church. It was a slow and laborious work because the Catholics were basically poor, and Fr Therry saw the need for a large Church. The dedication of the Church was Mary, Help of Christians, but from the beginning it was more often referred to as St Mary's.

It is hard to know why Fr Therry chose this title. Perhaps he had been influenced by activities in Rome before he came to Australia. Napoleon was full of power, Italy in disarray, and Pope Pius VII had to flee the city. The people prayed to Mary to intercede on the Pope's behalf, and he returned on the 24<sup>th</sup> Mary 1814 and in thanksgiving instituted the Feast of Mary, Help of Christians for the city of Rome as a thanksgiving.

Perhaps Fr Therry, aware of how the Catholics of this vast continent sustained their faith in the long years without a priest, by gathering in their homes on Sundays to pray the rosary, he saw how Mary had been their help through those dark days.

In 1844 the three bishops of Australia – Archbishop Polding of Sydney, Bishop Wilson of Hobart and Bishop Murphy of Adelaide petitioned the Holy Father to declare Mary, under the title Help of Christians, as patron of this continent, a request which was granted.

The first Church which Bishop Murphy built in his Diocese was that of Mary, Help of Christians at Morphett Vale. It was blessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 1846 and is still used to this day. It was in this church that the excommunication which Bishop Shiel had imposed on Mary MacKillop was lifted and she and her sisters could return to their religious life.

The first Mass celebrated at Morton Bay, later to be Brisbane, also took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> May.

The Liturgy which we have for the Solemnity of Mary, Help of Christians, is not particularly good. It was prepared back in the 1980s by the Adelaide Diocesan Liturgical Commission and submitted to the National Liturgical Commission in order to

**Article continued overleaf...**

## Bioethics—Margo Nancarrow

Key issues always of concern to CWLA members are abortion, cloning, euthanasia, stem cell research and reproductive research in general.

At the National level some of us are concerned about the new vaccine, known as **Gardasil®**, to assist in the fight against the Human Papilloma Virus, a major cause of cervical cancer (and some other associated cancers); the Draft Model Bill, "*Children with Intellectual Disabilities (Regulation of Sterilisation) Bill 2006*" before the Standing Committee of Attorney's General (SCAG) held in April, 2007; and the Revised draft 'Ethical Guidelines on the use of Assisted Reproductive Technology in Clinical Practice and Research' (NHMRC 2004 revised in 2007) this included draft criteria for determining human embryos that are unsuitable for implantation to name a few. On your behalf a submission was forwarded to this NHMRC consultation. The NHMRC do not publish the submissions as the Senate does during their requests for public consultation, so if you wish to see a copy of the submission let me know.

### Posttraumatic Mental Health

At some stage in our lives, a relative, friend, or ourselves may undergo some type of trauma and dealing with the aftermath of such a crisis can be overwhelming and dismal. So, on a positive note, Australian doctors and other health practitioners now have guidelines to help people with posttraumatic mental health problems that were launched only this week. The guidelines were developed by the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health (ACPMH), and approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). If you know of anyone who may need this type of assistance you may be able to let them know of the additional resources available through their GP.

### Amnesty International

News world wide is of Amnesty International's plan, as part of a campaign to stop violence against women – its board calling for abortion to be decriminalised globally.

Cardinal George Pell, in his weekly Newspaper column (25/6/2006) reminded us that, "*The organization has done good work struggling to end torture, political killings, the death penalty and "disappearances" .... It has been an aggressive champion of human rights. Formerly Amnesty had a neutral position on abortion, because there was no generally accepted right to abortion in international human rights law*".

"*If there is a consensus and most sections accept the anti-life position, then the international executive will begin to implement the pro-abortion policy for next year. If there is no agreement, the international council meeting in Mexico in August 2007 will decide*".

### A Moral Stance

I know that there are some members who may be confused about bioethics, justice and 'rights' of the person, so I like the way Fr Ronald Rolheiser, writes and addresses issues in his columns. A recent column said:

"Perhaps more than anything else, moral issues are what divide us. Sincere people, who can agree on almost everything else, often find themselves painfully divided over issues such as abortion, gay marriage, just war, capital punishment, immigration, and economic justice. One of the reasons for this is because, purely at the level of justice, each of these is very complex. This is true too of abortion: In justice we can argue about the competing rights of the unborn for life and the mother for the freedom of choice, even if one does outweigh the other. Biblically though it's clear: God is the author of all life and human life is sacred, all of it, and it is not our prerogative to ever actively snuff out a human heartbeat.

As painful as it is to divide ourselves from others by taking an unpopular stand on moral issues, Christian discipleship demands that we continue to try to make a case for what we believe to be right inside the arenas of public discourse and politics".

### Continued from Page 3

stimulate discussion. However, the suggestion was adopted and approved of by Rome. We are still in need a much better text for the Mass of our National Patroness.

The Preface for the Mass of Mary, Help of Christians, published in the *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary* unfortunately has a military flavour praying that "we might be fearless in waging the battle of faith...tranquil in the storms of this world". At a time when there is widespread tension between Christians and Muslims and Christians and Hindus we should avoid such overtones in our prayers.

Better that we understand this title of Mary in its biblical foundations. Mary was, first and foremost, the help of Jesus – in her motherhood, in protecting him, along with Joseph, against the murderous plans of Herod, in raising him in Nazareth, in being there during his ministry and in standing there at the foot of the Cross. Mary is shown as the help of the first Christians: in accepting from Jesus at the cross, the role of a wider motherhood, and in being united with them as they prayed, waiting for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In our Catholic tradition we honour Mary as the first disciple of the Lord, the model of a Christian life. Drawing inspiration from her life and holiness, we strive to draw ever closer to her Son, Jesus, looking to Mary as a favoured Help and Mother.

## The International Issue

### 13<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ASIAN CHURCH WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (ACWC) 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2006.



Pat Walker and Marie Majoor

The Theme – Celebrating the Legacy, Visioning the Future, Living the Jubilee was addressed in our opening service. Dr. Usha Joshua, from India, told us that nothing could be more fitting for Asian women at the dawning of a new Day. There is life surging

within us at this opportunity of sharing one another's experiences and working together for the future. Pat Walker, Australia, told us that ACWC has promises to keep as we are committed to demonstrating Christ's love in all areas of life. We are charged with enhancing the status of women and equipping them to look to the future with faith and courage.

Annamaney Arumanayagam, Malaysia, the ACWC President told us of the themes of earlier Assemblies when we were called to service. We have grown numerically and spiritually and can now do all things through Christ. Today we are called to live the Jubilee.

As Assembly Secretary, Pat Walker took all minutes and recorded the business of the Assembly.

We heard about the history of ACWC and the Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC) and how they have worked for fifty years to educate the women of Asia and equip them for leadership in their churches and communities.



### PANEL PRESENTATION from International Committee for the Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC).

Shirin Samuel, a former Executive Secretary told us that God chooses people and uses them. He makes us family. FLC is unique in that it builds bridges between women all around the world – bridges of faith and prayer that helped to heal a world shattered by war.

Reverend Valamotu Palu, from Tonga, and General Secretary, Pacific Conference of Churches referred to the Bible where a Jubilee Year was a year of rest, but God still provided for His people. This jubilee is for the forgiveness of debts, for renewing our lives and for gaining strength and guidance for the future so that we can be God's bridges of peace, love and reconciliation for the future.

Catreli Hunter, a Negro from USA, said that God has hallowed the 50<sup>th</sup> year of ICFLC. This global, ecumenical women's movement offers hope, peace, justice and reconciliation. Prayer can help overcome barriers one coin at a time. By God's grace we will carry the FLC movement forward.

**Pat Walker**  
**Past Australian Representative**  
**ACWC**

## Apologies

*Helen Wybourn* was omitted from the State CWLA-NSW list of Office Bearers in CWLA Issue 1, 2007.

Helen is CWLA-NSW State Bioethics joining a fabulous team of CWL Bioethics Convenors Australia wide.

CWLA's National website has a CWLA-NSW web page at [www.cwla.org.au/pages/nsw](http://www.cwla.org.au/pages/nsw) that comprehensively captures all their latest News as we were unable to publish it in this Issue.

However their

### CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Can be found on the back page of this Issue or visit CWLA-NSW website on:

[cwlansw.wordpress.com](http://cwlansw.wordpress.com)

## National International Secretary of CWLA



by Madge Fahy

As stated in the CWLA Inc Constitution, the National International Secretary (NIS) is responsible for receiving and distributing to the designated officer of Member Organisations all matters dealing with the work of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO).

A change in the Constitution resulted in the NIS representing CWLA Inc at WUCWO General Assemblies and Regional Conferences. Added to this is the representation at the CSW Sessions in New York. While this certainly doesn't sound too onerous, in reality, not only is one obliged to understand the workings of WUCWO, one is also required to keep up to date with what is happening both within the Church, the United Nations, States Parties (governments) and in civil and secular society.

When I first took on this position little did I realise what a steep learning curve I was about to embark upon. That learning curve continues today. The work is very interesting and varied. One is obliged to look at issues from both sides of the fence. It doesn't allow for 'fence sitting'.

Having had Gloria Flynn as my first tutor in all things WUCWO and the experience of being part of the Planning Committee for the General Assembly in Canberra, 1996 I at least had some working and background knowledge of WUCWO. As for the United Nations, that was another matter entirely.

The position of NIS is quite different to that of the WUCWO Board Member Australia. The NIS works for CWLA Inc. The WUCWO Board Member Australia works for WUCWO and reports to the National President only following a WUCWO Board Meeting. Upon request, the National President has passed this report to me to be distributed to the International Secretaries of Member Organisations.

As NIS, I receive all my information from the Secretariat in Paris, not from our Board Member. All information with regards to the WUCWO ASPAC Conferences comes via the Vice President, Asia Pacific.

Being a Member Organisation of WUCWO opens a gateway to the Catholic women of the world which enables us to experience the universality of the Church through our sisters in WUCWO.

WUCWO provides the opportunity for us to have an input into various issues that are vitally important to us women in the Church and society. They provide an avenue for our statements to be put forward on the world stage within the UN world wide bureaucracies. For instance, WUCWO campaigned against trafficking of women in 1910 and again in 1958. Today, many seem to think that this is a new issue. It isn't. CWLA Inc and the NIS at the UN, has been dealing with it since 2000 to my knowledge and maybe before that.

In 1949, WUCWO sent a denunciation to the President of the 4<sup>th</sup> United Nation's General Assembly on the attack on freedom, justice and peace constituted by religious persecution, the violation of demographic freedom and inhuman terror unleashed by some UN member states. Another issue was the suppression of procurement of prostitutes.

The history of CWL in Australia shows that the members here, although not part of the WUCWO at that stage, were protesting about the same issues. Today, with WUCWO being erected as a Public International Association of the Faithful according to the Code of Canon Law, we now have a stronger voice within the church through WUCWO as part of the Pontifical Council of the Laity.

As a Non Government Organisation, the CWLA Inc delegate (NIS) can attend all meetings of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. Currently we only attend the Commission on the Status of Women Sessions at the UN in New York.

**Gillian Badcock and Madge Fahy**

This is where the learning curve begins. Apart for the necessity of being computer literate, it requires much reading and research to come to grips with the Declarations, Conventions and Guidelines of the UN, the reservations by governments, what can be legally enforced by the UN and what documents are only guidelines for States Parties even though they have signed on to such documents. States Parties are required to send in reports every four years on their progress with the implementation of declarations etc. to the relative committees. If the Committee is not happy with what the States Parties have implemented, then they tell them what they must do. This is where the problem comes in as these committees continue to re-interpret the actual convention and manipulate the language to suit their own agenda. The Committee for the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is a perfect example of this type of re-interpretation and manipulation of language.

Representing CWLA Inc at the UN gave me the opportunity to be invited to participate in the Doha International Conference for the Family (IYF + 10) in Qatar. This was the most amazing experience. It was an all expenses paid invitation courtesy of Her Highness, Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser Al-Messned, Consort of His Highness the Emir.

Are the reports from these meetings gathering dust on shelves around Australia? I hope not. They are meant to inform the members of what many within the UN system, including NGOs are pushing as 'so called' human rights. I have come to the conclusion that the UN will not, in its present state, solve any of the world's problems. In fact, I would go so far as to say it is the cause of many of the problems. Sadly, we as Catholics are now faced with the issue of withdrawing our support for Amnesty International as they have included in their

policy 'abortion as a woman's human right'. Looking back at the issues brought to the UN by WUCWO over the years one can see that Amnesty International picked up a good many of those issues to bring before the citizens of the world so that a united protest could be made. Today, they have broken with their tradition and can no longer defend the rights of some while supporting the killing of the most vulnerable of human beings, the baby in the womb.

The Church, in providing the new Pontifical Council of the Laity Lexicon on the Ambiguous and debatable terms regarding family life and ethical questions (946 pages), an excellent reference book, and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peaces' Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church (426 pages) enables those working in these areas to have instant access to the Church's teachings.

In the past five years I have had the honour and privilege of working with Arlene Champoux, WUCWO delegate to the UN in New York. Arlene is an inspiration and a woman of great faith and integrity. I have been most fortunate.

**WUCWO members with Archbishop Migalore**

Without the continued prayers of League members and friends I doubt very much that I would have been able to carry out the duties that were required of me as the NIS.

To the 2008 – 09 incoming NIS, I say, enjoy the experience. It is an honour and privilege to represent our great organisation at the international level.

**Madge Fahy,  
National International Secretary  
CWLA Inc.**

## Message from WUCWO

**Tasks of Brenda Finlayson: World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO) Board Member Australia. Vice President General.** Convenor: Communications, Information and Publications Permanent Committee (CIP); Convenor: Permanent International Committee, Editor: "Women's Voice."

In response to a request from President Mary, I will try to give you a glimpse of the responsibilities I have and the work I undertake as WUCWO Board Member Australia.

Since the 2006 WUCWO General Assembly in Arlington, USA, my already busy life as far as WUCWO is concerned, has taken on a new dimension. Not only was I asked to continue in the role of Editor of 'Women's Voice' - the official WUCWO Newsletter - which is published in English, French and Spanish, I was elected to the position of Vice President General. This, with a collaborative President General (PG), means that almost daily, there is a 3-way communication process between her, the Secretary General (SG) and me. I cannot count the number of e-mail messages that I have to deal with relating to every aspect of decision making for which WUCWO is responsible, including planning for Board meetings, assisting with the drafting of official communications, involvement with planning for the Regional (ASPAC) conference, and many other more confidential matters. I am also in touch with the Administrative Assistant (AA) at the Secretariat in Paris.

When I have any personal/family, CWL, or other commitments that will interrupt my availability for WUCWO matters, I need to communicate this fact to the PG and the SG, and pick up the backlog of work when I am available again. One factor that impedes effective interaction is the difference in 'seasons,' i.e. the 'summer vacations' of the northern and southern hemispheres. We manage the daily time differences (8-10 hours plus or minus/daylight saving time) reasonably well, but when I have a summer break they are working, and I am still working with 'a hiatus' in the European summer!

The work as Editor of the WUCWO official Newsletter is constant and demanding, as the size and finished publication does not reflect the immense effort expended in its production. First comes the translations into English when necessary before the choice of any article, cover selection, choosing of final copy, translations into French and Spanish, final edits which sometimes involves tens of pages of emails between the PG, SG and the AA. It is set up by the AA, and printed and posted in Paris.

The fact that not every CWL branch around Australia receives this publication is disappointing, especially **as every member of CWL is a member of WUCWO.** How can members of branches around Australia deepen their understanding of what they are a part of, and what the WUCWO Board Member does in their name if they do not have access to any information about it or exposure to it? It seems that in many instances in CWL there is much time, effort and money expended towards many 'non-WUCWO activities', and that WUCWO comes in last on the scale of priorities. Why is this so?

The role of Convenor of the CIP means I have to coordinate and call on the input of the Board members who constitute the CIP Committee, as we deal with matters relating to communication, information and publications of WUCWO.

As International Convenor I am responsible for the 12 international representatives who work in the name of WUCWO at various international locations. These are at UNESCO in Paris, HRC in Geneva, FAO in Rome and ECOSOC in New York (all United Nations agencies), and at the Council of Europe in Salzburg, Austria. I oversee all relevant reports and documents/statements produced by these agencies that are submitted for "sign-on" by the President General for her approval, and coordinate all of the inputs.

I am obliged to submit reports on all activities under my charge to the Board annually, and to CWLA Inc National President as per CWLA Inc. Policy and Procedures Manual. I work within the rules of that constitution and within the Statutes and Bylaws (constitution) of WUCWO as well, so I am also constantly writing reports!

In addition I am required to respond to the directions/invitations of the President General to represent her whenever she deems it appropriate. One instance was in November 2006, when I was requested by her, to present a paper at the Conference of International Catholic Organisations 'Public Act' - an open forum - in Jerusalem, on the subject 'The Role of Woman in Educating for Peace'. CWLA supported me in this task and others given to me there. Another example was the request to me to formulate the draft for the 2006 Assembly Declaration. This draft was worked on by the 600 Study Day participants in 3 language groups, and it was then my responsibility - in a very short time frame - to incorporate the consensual changes for presentation to all involved. It was adopted as the Final Declaration of the 2006 General Assembly and is now an official WUCWO document, as is every edition of 'Women's Voice.'



## Around the States



**Brenda Finlayson**

Now that WUCWO has been erected by the Pontifical Council of the Laity as an 'International **Public Association of the Faithful**' under Canon Law, the responsibility for **WUCWO and its Member Organisations**, including CWLA Inc. (although they are not international), means that this 'juridical status' is accompanied by the onus to always **act and speak in the name of the Church**, undertaking works of the **Church**. This differs from an International 'Private' Association of the Faithful which speaks/acts in its own name as a group of Catholics. It is now obligatory that anything published, disseminated or enunciated by these organisations or their representatives is in accord with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Moreover, this status carries with it the responsibility for MOs to be guided by and actively lobby for the implementation of Church teachings in their communities and by their actions.

If any CWLA member feels that endeavours such as these are not important, may I just say that being part of a world-wide advocacy system reflects the commitment and support Australian CWL women offer to less fortunate Catholic women and families around the world, giving them 'voices' at the Holy See and the United Nations, because so many are 'voiceless' without such actions. Our shared faith demands these endeavours from us.

So, I thank you for supporting me in my efforts to represent you in that whatever service I have been called to perform, I thank you for your prayers and I especially thank you for the donations you generously make to WUCWO to enable it to continue its global mission.

May Our Lady of Peace pray for us, and intercede for women and their families in Church and society everywhere.

**Brenda Finlayson**  
**WUCWO Board Member Australia**  
**Vice President General**

### Victoria/Wagga Wagga

Anyone fortunate enough to hear Professor Donna Orsuto's address given during her short but very busy time in Melbourne was richly rewarded.

Donna, a Professor of Spiritual Theology and a very gracious lady, told of the three women Doctors of the Church: St Catherine of Siena, St Theresa of Avila and St Theresa of Lisieux (the last mentioned as seen through the eyes of Dorothy Day). As their story of their lives unfolded it was evident the difficulties, hardships and problems they faced and worked with (during the 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), differ very little from those present throughout our world today. The saints mentioned relied on strong faith, perseverance and total dependence on God, not counting the cost to themselves. We are encouraged to live out our faith as they did, using the same 'ammunition' i.e. trust, along with a firm belief that God is with us during the good times and very much so during the difficult times.

The generosity of the Catholic Church Administrators Conference made the address available to the Catholic Women's League members and open to other interested people.

Diocesan Conferences are being held with some new office-bearers taking on duties, their time given and generosity is appreciated, as was that of the retiring office bearers. Melbourne Archdiocese will host the General Conference in August.

A Marketing Committee set up to promote and make known the work of the Catholic Women's League both spiritually and physically, continues their task. A DVD and leaflet are being prepared and the possibility of information days discussed. The committee capably chaired by Beryl Marr, consists of representatives from the five Dioceses.

Thoughts and prayers are with those members and their families throughout Australia experiencing hardship coping with the drought conditions. We pray drought breaking rains will very soon bring the relief needed and eliminate the worry and hardship present.

**Pat Stanhope**  
**Liaison Officer**

## Around the States

### Catholic Women's League Far-reaching Networks —CWL SA

International, National, State and Diocesan efforts *"to make the world a better place"* were shared and aired by 63 members from 23 SA branches at Catholic Women's League State Council meeting at Murray Bridge on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007.

Spiritual assistance was invoked at the Eucharistic service, and welcoming hospitality of Murray Bridge members at their upgraded facilities, enjoyed.

*"Trafficking of Women and Children"* and the efforts of Religious Orders – particularly the Mercy Justice Network in the Asia-Pacific region, through local knowledge and contacts to lobby governments to continue to provide funding and tighten legislation for prevention of the enslavement of up to 12 million victims at any time was the topic of Sr. Helen Owens, rsm.

Promotion of the CWLA National Conference – September 12-14, at Adelaide Town Hall – hosted by SA's National executive – will include Cathedral opening Mass with branch banners; a lunch and cultural experiences at Tandanya; speakers, panel discussions; presentation of funds raised Australia-wide for MaterCare International, and dinner with comedienne Fiona O'Loughlin. Excitement is mounting with registrations from local and overseas women to this 'once-in-14 years SA' event. All welcome.

SA resolutions to be presented include: request for a Federally funded cord-blood bank; more opportunities individually and communally to meet and understand women of non-Christian faiths (inter-faith dialogue).

Reports included:

World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO) annual Mass held on May 15 in the Cathedral (with liturgy prepared by African women of Mali); The recent announcement that "WUCWO has been erected by the Pontifical Council of the Laity as an 'International Public Association of the Faithful' under Canon Law", and that the WUCWO 2006 Assembly in Arlington was attended by our two SA delegates Mary Schultz and Pat Madigan; Twinning contact with UK branch of Jersey CWL has begun.

CWL's Child Care Centre, East Tce., continues well with nursery, toddler and junior kindy care for 60 children.

A new branch adding to SA's diverse CWL membership is the Aberfoyle Park group of young mothers.

A City branch caters for working women who meet at an evening meal.

CWL supports the Aboriginal Catholic ministry at the Otherway Centre and other indigenous issues.

### Western Australia

CWL in Western Australia continues to move at a rapid pace. In April we held our Annual Presidents Morning Tea. This is hosted by State Council to acknowledge and give thanks for our hardworking Branch Presidents - we also extend the invitation to guests from other organizations. Guest speaker this year was Barbara Harris, co-ordinator of the Emmanuel Centre – a self-help centre for people with disabilities. The Centre accepts the challenges that often seem too difficult – they first find meaningful work for these people within the community, and then help them feel they are making a contribution to the wider community. Barbara spoke with great passion attesting to her commitment of 25 years with the Centre so far.

At our State Council meeting which followed the morning tea, we welcomed the WA President of St Vincent de Paul, Genevieve de Souza, and the CEO of the Knights of the Southern Cross, Chris Hunt. We sat in awe as they spoke of the work being undertaken by their respective organizations. Genevieve said that home visitation was still the core work of the Vinnies and that mental illness was a major trauma issue in many of the homes. In WA there are 43 retail centres which provide the main income for the St Vincent de Paul charitable works. Chris Hunt from the Knights explained how the order has changed over the years – it is no longer the secretive organization of earlier times. Some of their current works include scholarships for young people studying religious education teaching - last year \$75,000 was shared among 30 students who teach in Catholic schools throughout WA. They also support seminarians studying at the Redemptoris Mater Seminary and are supporting Notre Dame University in the introduction of Ethics in Law and Medicine.

A major change for us has been the resignation of Father Greg Donovan as our State Chaplain and the subsequent appointment of Father Richard Rutkauskas. We give thanks for Father Greg's time with us – his inspirational, reflective talks and his enthusiastic support for us all. We welcome, Father Richard with open arms – he is currently Father Greg's assistant Parish Priest, and we know he will have been brought "up to speed" about the workings of our great organization. *Thank you Lord, for providing these wonderful men to share in your mission on earth and to be among us in Catholic Women's League!*

The women in Geraldton are among the many in branches throughout the State who have embraced the "Mothers and Daughters" fundraising. They organized a morning tea, and invited others to set up stalls alongside their craft and cake stall. A fantastic sum was raised! Most of our branches have or will be undertaking fundraising in one form or another for MaterCare and apart from the worthi-

ness of the cause, it has been a wonderful opportunity to become more aware of the plight of our sisters in a third world country.

The Bunbury Diocesan Annual General Meeting and Conference took place on 26 May in Kojonup and was well attended by around 40 members from 12 branches. Bishop Holohan was in attendance and took time to answer many of the questions which only bishops can answer! Guest Speaker for the day



**Maria Parkinson, Bishop Holohan and Dr Angela McCarthy**

was Dr Angela McCarthy who is a lecturer in theology at Notre Dame University and a wonderful liturgist. She led us in reflection and song and her ensuing presentation on "Women in the Church" left us with much food for thought.

Whilst the National Constitution is being updated we are reminded that our State Constitution is also dated and in need of a re-visit. Currently we are looking at the two questions of Life Membership and Diocesan Membership. We are grateful to our sisters in other states who have responded to our request for information of their policies on these matters. It is very interesting to note the very different ways these things are/are not being dealt with elsewhere – all very helpful in formulating our own policy. Incorporation law is being updated in the State of WA and this also needs to be taken into account (accountability) in the update.

And, of course, almost foremost, in the minds of Catholic Women's League Western Australia is the fact that we will be taking on National in 2008-2009!! To date we have accepted nominations for all executive positions and undertaken a voting process for the position of National President. In due course, the National team for 2008-2009 will be named. There is still much to be done.

A large contingent of members is preparing to travel to Adelaide for the National Conference and once again we look forward to sharing with members from throughout Australia.

**Maria Parkinson**  
State Secretary  
CWL Western Australia

## TASMANIA

### CATHOLIC YOUTH

At our AGM in Hobart last year, the League adopted as a project for the forthcoming two years, World Youth Day. Many and varied are their activities leading up to WYD, and we aim to support them in these and to provide accommodation for many expected visitors to Tasmania in the week before WYD. We are very proud of what the young people are doing. They are very busy fund-raising. On Palm Sunday they organised a pilgrimage from the North-West, North and the South, to Hobart, culminating in Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral. About 2000 people took part.

A worry for some parents of school children is the recent introduction of lessons on homosexuality in some of our schools. These lessons were prepared by homosexual activists in Victoria, and consist of lessons of 50 minutes duration for six weeks. The reason given for wanting the lessons was to counter-act bullying, and of course we are in favour of no bullying, but we don't think it was necessary to teach the students the details of the homosexuality lifestyle to ensure this.

Most members who have spoken of this are not anti-homosexuals. We all know that we must love them as people, but also are unable to approve of their activities. We should pray for them. Many claim that that's the way they were born, others used to claim (before the AIDS illness) that no, that's the way they chose. But whether it's nature or nurture is not the point, according to a well-known Catholic Bio-ethicist. He rightly states that we are all called upon to live good lives.

Let us be alert to watch out for our children.

**Bernice McKenna**  
State President

## QUEENSLAND

Members of the Townsville Diocese celebrated the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians early this year. It was celebrated on 17<sup>th</sup> May commencing with Mass which was celebrated by Bishop Putney and concelebrated by Father Lancini, Father Lyons and Father Ward. Following Mass we gathered in the Holy Spirit Hall for a delightful lunch and entertainment by the Choraliers and Kathy a Bush Poet. This was followed by a Cent Sale which is one of the main fundraisers for the year in Townsville.

I was fortunate to be able to attend and as the State Conference for 2008 will be held in Townsville I took the opportunity to meet with the executive and start planning for this event.

On May 24<sup>th</sup> Roma branch from Toowoomba Diocese celebrated their forty years. Following Mass three members were presented with 25 year badges and these three ladies were foundation members of the branch. What a wonderful achievement that was. The Mass was followed by a luncheon and the cutting of the celebration cake.

Many events are also taking place throughout the State for the CWLA National "Mothers and Daughters" Project.

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June Rockhampton diocese will be holding their annual Diocesan Conference/AGM in Mackay. The theme which they have chosen for their conference is "From Small Things Big Things Grow".

May God bless all members of Catholic Women's League throughout Australia and we look forward to meeting in Adelaide in September.

**Joan Armstrong**  
State President CWL State of  
Queensland

# CWLA Newsletter 2, 2007—International Issue

As my Parish Priest often says, we are a Pilgrim People, a people on the move, marching towards our home with God. For me, and I'm sure for all of you, that march often becomes a quick-march and sometimes even a sprint. Such is the pace of life these days.

We are all becoming engaged in the preparations for World Youth Day to be held in Sydney in July 2008. This will surely be a 'once in a lifetime' Pilgrimage for many of our young people throughout Australia, and a wonderful opportunity for the Church as a whole, and for all Catholics, to rejuvenate, re-energise and re-evangelise our communities for years to come. The countdown has begun, and it promises to be a wonderful journey.

Meanwhile, with much less fanfare, the countdown to our own National Conference is also moving very fast. As I write, in only **109** days from now, many of us will be gathering in the city of Adelaide for 3 days of stimulating, interesting and varied experiences, to renew acquaintances, make new friends, and enjoy ourselves, all in the context of our Catholic faith.



The Adelaide Town Hall, pictured left, located in the centre of the City, and a short walk from St Francis Xavier Cathedral, is the venue for most of the Conference. It is fitting that, in this year of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Constitutional Referendum, which gave meaning to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' citizenship in their own country, one afternoon of the Conference will be spent at the Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute. Their lunch menu looks spectacular!

We are delighted that Bishop Eugene Hurley from the Port Pirie Diocese, and Bishop Greg O'Kelly, Auxiliary Bishop of Adelaide will be addressing us and celebrating the Eucharist with us. Bishop Hurley, who needs no introduction to us, is Chairman of the Bishops' Commission for Pastoral Life, and Bishop O'Kelly, while a relatively new Bishop and a member of the Bishops Commission for Catholic Education, has been involved for many years in Catholic Education in South Australia, most recently as Principal of St Ignatius College.

The Conference Dinner, to be held at the Adelaide Town Hall in beautiful surroundings, will be a highlight, including excellent after-dinner entertainment.

A representative from MaterCare will accept our donation to continue the work of caring for young mums throughout the world.

Our National 'Mothers and Daughters' Project has captured the imagination of many CWL branches all around Australia. We've heard of some wonderful events that have taken place, and we hope to have a record of as many of these as possible. To date, we've received reports from Burra and Unanderra, Sydney and Manjimup, Alberton and Leschenault, and many in between. We've heard of functions like "Bubbles at Sunset"; an event at the Queen Victoria

Tearooms; a "Bring & Buy Cake, Plant and Bric-a-Brac" Stall; Morning and Afternoon Tea with Guest Speakers; a Supper Club Dinner. So keep them coming in. Reports and photos are welcome, by digital or printed media, via email or post.

Postal address: 74 Stuart Rd, South Plympton 5038.  
Email : [bvictory@bigpond.net.au](mailto:bvictory@bigpond.net.au)

To have these reports and photos in a presentable format by the Conference, the **cut-off date for entries is July 31**. So if you haven't already done so, **send your Registration Form** for the Conference to:

Mrs Helen Rodriguez, CWLA National Treasurer  
15 Crombie St, Hove SA 5048;

Gather the report and photos of your MaterCare function and send them to either of the addresses above;

**prepare** your trekking boots/marching shoes/sprint shoes/get your skates on, for the 109 days ahead as you venture out on the Pilgrim path to Adelaide arriving in time for the Opening Mass of the 43<sup>rd</sup> National Biennial Conference at 9am on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2007.

We're very much looking forward to meeting with many of you in Adelaide in September.

**Pauline Victory**  
**CWLA National Publicity Officer**

## CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The recent launch of this project by Catholic Women's League Australia-NSW Inc. (CWLA) has evolved from the Advisory Body of the State Council of CWLA NSW meeting with a Consultant to discern a new direction for the League into the future and to increase membership.

The aim of the Catholic Women's Leadership Development Project is to link women with the resources they require to develop their leadership skills. This project makes women's leadership development available in three ways - Workshops, Scholarships and Mentoring.

During 2007-2008 four leadership development workshops will be held on Saturday mornings in different centres in NSW. The topics will focus on various aspects of leadership such as "Leading, Meetings and Committees", "Women Leading International Development", "Leading People with Creativity and Grace and "Leading Your Family To Health and Wellbeing".

Catholic Women's League Australia-NSW is making available up to four scholarships, each to the value of \$1500 to provide funding for recipients to undertake a course or program that will assist their leadership development.

Each successful scholarship applicant will be offered the services of a leadership mentor who will be available to support and encourage them through their course or program. CWLA-NSW Inc. is establishing a Directory of Leadership Mentors who would volunteer their time during the Project.

To make a donation to the program, register for a workshop or apply for a scholarship visit [cwlansw.wordpress.com](http://cwlansw.wordpress.com) or call (02) 4861 7048. Brochures available.