

Catholic Women's League Australia Inc.

WALKING WITH GOD 'WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT' CORINTHIANS 2-5:7

National Newsletter
Issue 3
September 2008

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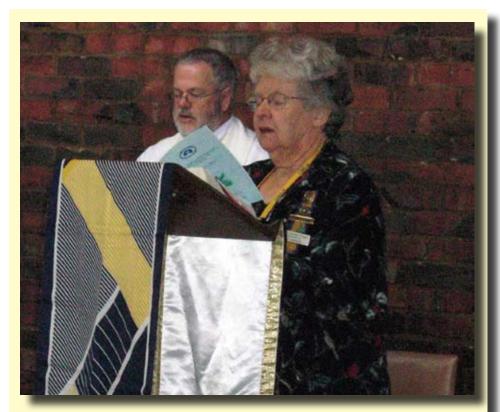
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CWLA mid term meeting 24-26th August 2008 ~ Perth W.A.

(Above) Father Joseph Parkinson in the background with Joan Armstrong, President of CWL Queensland doing a reading at the opening Mass.

(Below) A "group shot" of all who gathered for the mid-term council meeting.



From the National President



National Council Mid-term Meeting 25-26 August 2008

It is with pleasure that I present my Report to the National Council Mid-Term Meeting of Catholic Women's League Australia (Inc.) for the period January 1st to July 31st 2008.

Our journey of "Walking with God" began on January 1st and I thank Vice-Presidents Anne Power and Barbara Paterniti, National Secretary Maria Parkinson, National Treasurer Noelle Guidera, National Publicity Officer Margaret Sullivan and National Chaplain Father Laurence Murphy SDS, for "their personal response to the National Executive of CWLA to administer responsibility to the League for 2008-2009"

Australian Women's Coalition and WomenSpeak organizations, of which CWLA is a member, have held meetings in Sydney, Broken Hill and Canberra and we have been represented at these meetings. I was joined by Catherine McGrath President NSW at the AWC meeting and Barbara Paterniti National Vice-President and Jacqueline Hipwell President Canberra/Goulburn attended the WomenSpeak meeting. On behalf of the National Council I thank them for giving their time and sharing of their gifts in discussions. I have reported to you, the information from these meetings in our National Newsletter and President's Circulars. AWC's main "Hot-topic" "Planning for Ageing in the Future - Health and Finance" has been discussed in depth and we have been asked to contribute by answering surveys and questionnaires.

WomenSpeak's consultation project of "Non Aboriginal Women standing in Solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women" has seen a wonderful gathering of women from each State where the meetings have been held. National Secretary Maria Parkinson and Vice-President Barbara Paterniti attended the gathering held in Midland, Perth on behalf of CWLA. NSW will be the next venue for a Gathering.

CWLA has supported Angela Lecombe and the ACBC in advising MO'S re the "Walking with Love" Seminars that have been held in their State.

Jacqueline Hipwell, President of Canberra/ Goulburn once again represented CWLA at the 16th Attorney General's NGO Forum on Domestic Human Rights held in Canberra. Her report, in part, was printed in the National Newsletter Issue 2. Many thanks Jacqueline for your support and dedication to CWLA.

Congratulations and thanks are extended to National International Secretary, Thora Regan AM who attended the Commission for the Status of Women 52nd Session at the United Nations Headquarters, New York 25th February-7th March (so early in her term).

Thora submitted her report (17 documents) to CWLA. They are very inspiring and we are, indeed, very fortunate, as an NGO, to be able to attend these sessions. We thank God for this privilege and take very seriously the responsibilities involved.

I acknowledge with pride and thanks, the National Treasurer, National International Secretary, National Convenors, WUCWO Board Member and Communications Officer, who, over the next two days will present their reports on behalf of CWLA, with details of papers, reports and submissions from their areas of expertise.

As you are all aware, Aileen Solowiej, resigned from the position of Communications Officer on May 8. Fortunately, all Member Organisations were able to extend thanks to Aileen via the National Teleconference on May 5.

We have been blessed with the appointment of Mrs Mary-Ann Cassar to this position. I thank NIS Thora Regan and National Secretary Maria Parkinson for their contribution in conducting the interviews with me in Canberra which resulted in Mary-Ann accepting the position and commencing work for CWLA on 10 June.

I take this opportunity to publicly express the National Executive's thanks to Past Communications Officer, Helen Keogh. There have been technical "issues" with the Secretariat computer and its programming, and Helen has been a wonderful support, bringing her past qualifications and expertise to the Office and to Mary-Ann.

Mary-Ann, we extend our warmest best wishes, prayers and commitment to you today; that working with the National Executive and Member Organisations you will enjoy a long and happy association with Catholic Women's League Australia.

CWLA's involvement in World Youth Day08 can be attributed to Immediate Past President Mary Schultz and her Executive, Sydney Archdiocesan President Moya Potts (who was CWLA's official representative), members of the Sydney Archdiocesan Office and Catherine McGrath NSW President for their attendance at WYD08 meetings, producing the PowerPoint presentation and being present at the Vocations Expo Booth at Darling Harbour. These women were joined by members from around Australia who travelled to Sydney to be part of this 'once in a life time' experience. It was an honour to invest our time, finance and support to the Church and the Youth of the World at this momentous event.

To date, I have been able to accept invitations as National President to attend the South Australian Biennial Conference at Henley Beach and the West Australian Bunbury Diocesan AGM/Conference in Esperance. Both were

held in great locations and had wonderful and inspiring speakers. My thanks for your dedication to CWLA and for the hospitality, love and care shown to me during my stay.

Over the past few weeks I have been working on the National President's Report covering the action/s taken by CWLA on the resolutions from the WUCWO conference in Arlington. These details are required for discussion at the ASPAC conference in Seoul and it would have been an impossible task without the input from past National President Mary Schultz and the Member Organisations which contributed information. I extend my grateful thanks to all involved. It will be my proud duty to present this very extensive report on your behalf.

On Wednesday I will attend the West Australian, Perth Archdiocesan AGM/Conference at Downey House, the State's Headquarters, and during the week of 15-21 September I look forward to attending the Queensland, Tasmania and New South Wales Conferences.

KARYN KAMMANN NATIONAL PRESIDENT CWLA (INC)

STATE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SA INC.

TO BE HELD AT
PORT PIRIE LIONS CLUB
MARY-ELLIE STREET

ON MONDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2008.

MORNING TEA AND LUNCH \$12.00

GUEST SPEAKER: CHRIS BYRNE CHRIS IS THE CEO OF THE RIVERLAND WINE GRAPE GROWERS' ASSOCIATION. HE WILL SPEAK ABOUT THE DAMAGING EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

CWL PROMOTION IN SA

BRANCH SURVEYS ARE BEING COLLECTED AND ANSWERS ARE BEING PROCESSED. THE NEXT STEP WILL BE TO OBTAIN PROFESSIONAL ADVICE IN EARLY OCTOBER AS TO MOVING FORWARD.

Editorial Panel

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Anne Power

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Margaret Sullivan

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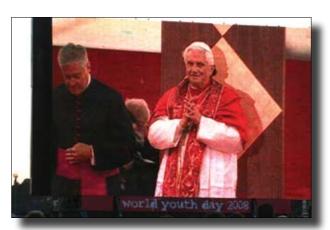
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My week at World Youth Day 2008



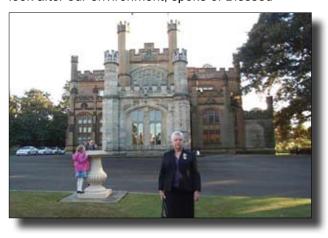
Monday For the week of WYD08 my husband Jim and I booked into an apartment at Darling Harbour to be right in the hub of activity. There were so many things happening that week and CWLA was fortunate in be invited to many of these occasions. First stop was the CWLA Booth at the Vocations Expo in the Convention Centre at Darling Harbour and we set about finalising last minute details. That evening we attended a function hosted by Caritas Australia, meeting with His Eminence Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga SDB. We were later entertained by Pilgrims from Samoa and Tonga and also inspected a Multi Media Exhibition.

Tuesday was the opening of the Vocations Expo where CWLA was represented among the booths showcasing all types of vocations from all over the world. A PowerPoint presentation was a great attraction at our Booth as were the St. Maria Goretti Prayer Cards, CWLA Inc. Brochures and the CWLA mint Iollies. We finally made our way to Barangaroo for the Opening Mass surrounded by happy Pilgrims all singing and chatting. The atmosphere was electric with the magical parade of Bishops resplendent in the WYD robes and white Mitres and then the arrival of His Eminence Cardinal Pell and the celebration of Mass. The evening became cool but the fire in our hearts had been well lit!

Wednesday was a day of activity at our Booth at the Vocations Expo with hundreds of people visiting. National President Karyn Kammann, National Secretary Maria Parkinson and representatives from Victoria and Queensland worked at the Booth.

Thursday was an early start as CWL Sydney had received invitations to attend the Ceremonial Welcome of His Holiness at Government House

and ten CWL ladies, including National President Karyn Kammann and myself as State President, were honoured and grateful to be among the 200 people invited to this function. After passing through strict security machines we awaited the arrival of His Holiness who was to inspect the Guard of Defence Personnel with a Military band in attendance. Mr. Maurice lemma, Premier of NSW, Prime Minister, Mr. Kevin Rudd and Governor General, Mr. Michael Jeffery arrived followed by the motorcade with the Pope. Clapping broke out as he stepped from his car and a 21 gun salute was fired. I was about 2 metres from him! He spoke with fervour of what we should do to look after our environment, spoke of Blessed



Mary MacKillop and how he was happy to be in Australia.

Moya Potts, President of CWL Sydney, at this time was preparing to board Sydney 2000 as she had been privileged to receive an invitation to be part of the Cruise on which His Holiness would visit various parts of our beautiful harbour. His Holiness boarded at Rose Bay and many hundreds of people lined the harbour, particularly at the Opera House and other points of interest. Together



with Karyn Kammann, Sue Meehan, President of CWL Wollongong Diocese, Chris McKirdy of CWL Sydney, we were waiting at Barangaroo for His Holiness to arrive in the Popemobile and the sound was deafening as it appeared. My feelings inside me at this time were humility, joy, amazement - to have been there was just superb!

Donald McDonald was performing The Gospel According to John at NIDA Theatre on this evening. He was sponsored by CWLA for The Youth Festival and we were there to see his great performance which was very worthy of our sponsorship.

Friday dawned and was the day of the Stations of the Cross and we decided to remain at the 7th Station - Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry His Cross. How perfectly the timing was with the sun setting at the actual Crucifixion and then the moon shining through. Fr. Franco a job well done with the staging of this event. A 6.30pm that evening the doors at Expo were reopened with a huge crowd waiting, it was the last opportunity to visit the site as it was due to close at 10.pm. It was unbelievable to see so many Religious Orders plus priests and brothers and the nuns from all over the world in their habits. We were fortunate to meet people from so many places, plus many from around Australia, as well as the pilgrims and visitors from everywhere.

Saturday morning we woke around 6.30am to movement in Darling Harbour as Pilgrims came from walking across the Sydney Harbour Bridge and down into Darling Harbour on the Pilgrimage Walk to Randwick for the Saturday night Vigil. We made our way down to be among the pilgrims and what a joy to be with them and how excited WE were to be a part of it all. The walk of the pilgrims continued all day but we did not make the journey to Randwick for the Saturday Night Vigil or sleep out – we watched it on television.

Sunday we woke early as we had booked a taxi for 6.00am not knowing how far the taxi would be able to go before the roads were blocked. We arrived at the actual course then walked and were in our seats by 6.20am. We were about 80 metres from the altar and once again were able to see everything and how wonderful to be seated among the hundreds of thousands expected at the Final Mass celebrated by the Pope.

Slowly the site came alive with people waking, arriving, deciding where to sit or stand and before long the motorcade and the Popemobile arrived with everything in readiness for Mass to begin

with the altar beautifully adorned with native flowers and the colourful robes of the Cardinals and Bishops. Twenty-four people from various countries, including Australia, received the Sacrament of Confirmation from His Holiness. What a joy for us as we listened to the Pope give



his Homily at Sunday Mass and then renewed our Baptismal vows with him in English. The Mass continued with the distribution of Holy Communion done so reverently and efficiently. In his final farewell his Holiness announced the destination of the next WYD will be held in Madrid Spain. Before we realised it Mass was over but we all felt inspired by what we had been a part of and witnessed.

Now for the return!! We were now officially Pilgrims as we set out from Randwick for the return to Darling Harbour with a continuous river of people. We rested awhile at Moore Park and Fox Studios then on through the streets of Sydney towards Central Station with everyone happy and chatting and the Police, either on foot, bicycle or horseback, all friendly and wishing everyone well as we went on our way back to our apartment. I can't believe I walked all that way - the feet were weary but the spirit was good! We decided to stay an extra night and were able to visit Blessed Mary MacKillop's tomb at North Sydney, saw the statue of St. Joseph that Pope Benedict gave to the congregation when he visited the Chapel, also the bronze bust of Blessed Mary the Sisters gave to the Pope. We visited St. Mary's Cathedral, saw the painting of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, the new altar which was dedicated on Saturday and the relics of Pier Georgio Frassati.

On Tuesday we headed for home wondering how we can keep the WYD spirit constantly with us and the whole experience - how do we adequately describe it!

Catherine McGrath
State President CWLA NSW

CWLA Mid-term Meeting, 24-25th August, Perth, W.A.



Thora Regan AM (NIS) with Peg McEntee (NSW)



Anne-Marie Clark (SA), Noelle Guidera (Nat Treasurer) Kath Smith (SA).



Margaret Ker (WA), Margaret Sullivan (Nat Publicity Officer), Marcia O'Donnell (Qld).



Karyn Kammann (Nat Pres) with Peg McEntee (NSW)



Madge Fahy (Vic/WaggaWagga), Margaret Lucas(Vic/Wagga Wagga), Karyn Kammann (Nat Pres), Maria Parkinson (Nat Sec).



Moya Potts (NSW), Margaret Sullivan (Nat Publicity Officer).



Anne Robinson & Jeanette Sheahan (Vic/Wagga Wagga) with Anne Power (Nat vice-President).



Anne Power (Nat vice Pres) with Helen Armstrong (Presenter)



Kath Smith (SA), Joan Armstrong (Qld).



Sister Frances Stibi (Presenter), Rosemary Francis (NSW), Madge Fahy (Vic/Wagga Wagga).



CWLA Members enjoyed a tea break in the sunshine and a chance to catch up with new and old friends.

WUCWO Report



In accordance with CWLA Policy and Procedures Manual I am obliged to report to the National President of Catholic Women's League Australia Inc. (CWLA), and provide her with specific answers to 8 directives. This was done in Part A of my report to her, at the Mid–Term National Council Meeting held in Perth August 24 – 26th 2008. If any member of CWLA wishes to read those responses, she should contact her CWLA Inc. Member Organisation Secretary and ask for a copy.

One point that I shared was the fact that to reduce WUCWO costs, the members of the Executive now hold their meetings via computer teleconferencing. WUCWO Executive members from 8 time zones meet and attend to the pre-sent agenda. I start that 'internet' meeting at 20.00 hours and usually end at midnight to enable executive members spread across 17 hrs time difference to participate.

In Part B and in Additional Remarks I made reference to the following:

The presentation I made, as WUCWO Vice President General to the 'Mulieris dignitatem' International Congress, hosted by the Pontifical Council for the Laity, in Rome in February 2008, can be accessed at www.wucwo.org > Latest > News > Other. This was the only address to concentrate on what 'ordinary' women experience in the 'ecclesia domestica' – the Domestic Church – the family.

Planning for the Centenary General Assembly of WUCWO in October 2010 in the Holy Land is under way, and the 2009 Board meeting will be held there in February 2009 to continue this task.

More details will be forthcoming from the National International Secretary in the future, but if it is at all possible, please think about attending this historic General Assembly in the land of 'Christ's Redemption.' [Message, page 18, 'Women's

Voice' No 7. December 2004.]

CWLA Member Organisations are invited to suggest a theme for this Centenary General Assembly. I would be delighted to receive any suggestions by the end of the year. I will then take them to the Board meting in February. A reminder was given to the effect that WUCWO, because of its juridical status as 'an international public association of the faithful' that 'speaks and acts in the name of the Church' (as distinct from a 'private association' that speaks and acts in the name of the group of Catholics), its Member Organisations are expected to behave likewise.

Mention was also made of the need of CWL Organisations to source correct information about all matters relating to women and families at the United Nations. One source is from the office of the Apostolic Nuncio, Permanent Observer of the Holy See in New York. Important Statements from His Excellency Archbishop Celestino Migliore are posted regularly on the WUCWO website, see: www.wucwo.org > Women in Society > Holy See Statements. Another source is the Friday Fax, sent out from the CWLA Secretariat, and of course the 'LEXICON' from the Pontifical Council for the Family, containing with important information about CEDAW, particularly the actions and power of its Committee and reasons why the Optional Protocol should not be signed by Australia, and the unchristian ideology of UNFPA, UNDP and UNIFEM is clearly explained.

The importance of WUCWO having a voice not only with ECOSOC, as does CWLA, but with 2 other UN Councils and 2 other UN Agencies, should never be forgotten. WUCWO speaks for the women of the world, including CWLA Inc, at all these locations.

I thank all CWLA members for their continuing financial generosity to WUCWO, and for their prayers and other spiritual support. It is a privilege to work in this unique way, in your name

Lastly, WUCWO has, after consultation, chosen 'Our Lady, Queen of Peace' – 'Regina Pacis' - as its patroness.

May we use this lovely title from her Litany, to implore her intercession with her Son.

Brenda Finlayson, WUCWO Board Member Australia, Vice President General.

National International Secretary Report



Preparation and attendance at the UN CSW at 52, New York was an early undertaking at the commencement of my term of office, 1 January 2008. From that, I prepared a detailed report for the National President and her Executive, including relevant attachments critically selected from the hundreds of papers available at United Nations Headquarters. This was also sent to all Member Organisation International Secretaries. An edited Report was posted on the CWLA Website as well as articles in Newsletters. The Agreed Conclusions of the theme "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women" has been made available on request. Communication between Government and non-Government attendees at this UN event continues and I can now advise that the 53rd Session of CSW will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 2-13 March 2009. The priority theme for this event is "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS."

World Day of Prayer: Reports received to date from International Secretaries have been positive in regard to attendance and there has been general appreciation of the Service.

WUCWO Day of Prayer: International Secretaries have reported good attendances at this special day. The Service was prepared by Catholic Women's League of the Philippines; the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace was able to be celebrated in many Parishes.

WUCWO Newsletter: I take this opportunity to congratulate WUCWO Vice President General Brenda Finlayson for the content and production of "Women's Voice." To Brenda and her editorial teams I record the appreciation of many readers. In a world where the advancement of Technology allows us all to be part of the "global village", messages and articles printed in "Women's Voice"

enable us to reflect the spiritual, cultural and personal messages of our sisters in WUCWO.

The WUCWO Asia Pacific Regional Assembly: Preparations are well underway for ASPAC. I have regular contact with Theresa Duck-Choo-Oh, WUCWO Vice President for Asia/Pacific and Kyung-soo Helen Kwon, President of the Korean Catholic Women's Federation as well as Pascalina Hwang, Secretary KCWF. These ladies are working to ensure a positive Conference outcome and endeavouring to meet all the needs of visitors to their country. There is a fifteen member delegation from CWLA, who together with two husbands will leave Sydney on 26th October for Seoul, South Korea. As CWLA National International Secretary, I have been invited to be the panellist representing Australia in Panel Talks by three countries. In the past months I have been in regular contact with the Conference participants. dispensing information on many and varied issues and to date have produced two "Traveller's Circulars" to keep them up-to-date and aware of changes and additions to arrangements.

In the period under review, I have issued four Circulars for the information of CWLA Inc. National Executive, International Secretaries of Member Organisations, National Convenors, the WUCWO Board Member Australia and National Communications Officer. I have also sent important announcements to Member Organisation International Secretaries, including the message from WUCWO President General Karen Hurley that on April 12, 2008, the WUCWO Secretary General Gillian M. Badcock received a Papal Honour in the form of the Bene Merenti Medal. I was pleased to send our sincere congratulations to Gillian. In June, I forwarded to Member Organisation Presidents for the attention of CWLA Member Organisations' International Secretaries and Editors of their publications, a Memo prepared by Brenda Finlayson, WUCWO Vice President General, Convenor of Communications, Informations and Publications Committee (CIP) with suggestions to assist in clarifying and understanding the roles and duties of the CWLA Inc. National International Secretary in relation to WUCWO and the Commission for the Status of Women (CSW).

To all members of CWLA Inc. National Executive, National Council members, National Convenors and to Mary-Ann our new National Communication Officer, congratulations and my appreciation of your work.

Thora Regan AM CWLA NIS

TASMANIA

What a wonderfully uplifting event was World Youth Day! These young people give us hope for the future. I was particularly impressed with the two who played the parts of Jesus and Mary in the "Stations of the Cross", and with the following:

A WYD "Pilgrims' Progress" Survey, conducted at the Australian Catholic University, yielded 12,275 responses, showing that "The majority of pilgrims expressed a strong faith. And, of those who were not yet at that point, many seemed to be seekers, like the centurion in the Gospel, who went looking for Jesus......

"What pilgrims most wanted was a spiritual experience, and in that context, to see and listen to the Holy Father. For the vast majority of pilgrims, celebrating faith in Eucharist and prayer, learning about faith, sharing faith with other young people, were the experiences they looked forward to....

"Their hopes for what they would gain from WYD were in the same vein: most of all they said they wanted a closer relationship with God and Jesus, they wanted to really live what they believe, and to have a stronger sense of what it means to be Catholic. "The most surprising finding from the survey so far," according to researcher Dr. Michael Mason, "was the strength of the younger group's spirituality."

(Survey of World Youth Day pilgrims – Cath News. 15/8/08)

October is the Month of the Holy Rosary. I urge you to answer Our Blessed Mother's request for us to recite the Rosary daily. The many promises attached to this devotion must surely mean that God wants it. Also, I remind you of Our Lady's promise that when enough people are praying and doing penance, Russia will be converted and an era of peace granted to humanity.

Tasmanians are concerned that their priests are having to work very hard and cover long distances. To aid them in their work, we have re-introduced "Prayer Support for Priests." All parishioners are asked to "adopt" a priest in prayer. Sealed envelopes, each containing the name of a priest, are placed in the church porch, and people are asked to take an envelope each, then to pray daily for the priest named inside.

One Branch has taken a further step. They have had printed, and laminated, a prayer card to be

handed to residents of nursing homes and also to "shut-ins", to pray for our priests in general. We thank the Carmelite Sisters for composing the prayer. May God be Glorified in All We Do.

Bernice McKenna President - Tasmania

VICTORIA / WAGGA WAGGA

I am sure that many will have wonderful memories of the 'Days in the Diocese" events that happened throughout Victoria/Wagga Wagga leading up to WYD in Sydney. Members and families were certainly involved with these happenings whether it be hosting, catering ,volunteering or just being swept up by the enthusiasm that surrounded this time.

Diocesan Conferences have now been held and we wish the new incoming committees all the best and continued support.

State Conference held at Traralgon, hosted by Sale Diocese was well attended and we were pleased that four resolutions were presented. Excellent speakers, WYD had a presence and it is pleasing to hear that the youth are seeking to continue meeting and are still on such a high after this event. Some Governing body members were able to attend a 'Theology in the Pub' evening along with 100 plus young Catholic people. Bishop Prowse was the speaker and the subject was 'After WYD. What Now?' Inspiring for us to be present and realize this is our future speaking.

Another speaker was Barbara Erskine the wife of an ordained Deacon. This was very interesting and a new experience for many of us who do not have Deacons in their Diocese.

Our new DVD, "More than Tea and Cake" which is part of our promotional package was launched at the Conference and was very well received. We did apply for and receive a State Government grant to help with the production. All present were also given a copy of our beautiful Mary Glowery prayer pamphlet.

Four members received the highest Victoria/ Wagga Wagga honour 'The Mary Glowery Award' for their commitment to the League beyond reasonable expectations. They were Margaret East, Monica Clark, Eileen Hanrahan, Sale Diocese and Barbara Mellican Sandhurst. Four members of the executive attended the mid term Council Meeting of CWLA in Perth. Very interesting speakers and a chance to renew friendships with other state representatives. Congratulations to CWLA Executive members for their hospitality and a well run meeting.

In our State, members are being asked to continue with their prayers and letters to our Parliamentarians as they consider the Abortion decriminalization Bill to be presented sometime in September.

Jeanette Sheahan Vice President Victoria/Wagga Wagga

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

On the Western Australian scene our members of Catholic Women's League continue to be out there working together in the participation of women in the Catholic church.

We continue to focus on the needs of marginalized women. Thinking not only of the practical reality of their lives but also the underlying issues that affect their participation in the community. We are happy to see the government at both State and Federal level developing policies of social inclusion based on human dignity.

Two long term interests of CWL in Western Australia are women in prison and women affected by domestic violence. Working from a deep conviction that they are our sisters in Christ, loved and valued by God as we know ourselves are, we express this in practical ways such as supporting the Christmas party which enables women in each of our women's prisons to celebrate with their children. We have also provided toilet bags to various agencies working with marginalized women. Such as aboriginal women sent to Perth for Medical treatment, women in refuges and women leaving prison.

At the same time we are deepening our awareness of some excellent initiatives in the area of domestic violence, which target both men and women and focus on the need to foster healthy and respectful relationships. We note the often multiple problems faced by women in these groups, especially substance abuse, and women in prostitution. The new legislation in WA enabling brothels to be licensed is currently still attracting concern from a community planning perspective, whereas our

long term hope would be for a strong emphasis on programmes enabling women to leave an industry with so detrimental an impact on the human dignity of both women and men.

CWLWA (Inc) delegates have just attended the CWLA Mid-Term Meeting held in WA. A big thank you to the team on CWLA for a wonderful meeting over two days, prayerful reflection, informative guest speakers and getting to know members from other states.

Our best wishes and love go to our National Team who we know are working so hard to continue the wonderful work of Catholic Women's League throughout Australia and we look forward to supporting them in all their endeavors, and working with them towards the National Conference in 2009.

We are now looking forward to our Annual State AGM and Conference which will be held on Friday 17th October at the Redemptorist Retreat House in North Perth. We have some wonderful speakers included – together with Bishop Don Sproxton celebrating Mass and joining us for our meeting.

Bev Macri State Secretary – Western Australia

CANBERRA & GOULBURN ARCHDIOCESE

Excerpts from the Canberra/Goulburn report to the recent CWLA National mid-term council meeting

We have seen the closing of two Branches of Catholic Women's League this year - Aranda and Page; some of the members have joined other Branches. Batemans Bay Branch has gone into recess for a year and most members have become Regional Members. We acknowledge the work of these Ladies who have achieved so much over the years. There are now fifteen active Branches in the Archdiocese with a total membership of 250.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge presented Joyce Purcell OAM with the Badge of Honorary Archdiocesan Life Membership and thirteen members were awarded Certificates of Appreciation.

Our Bioethics Convenor, Nola Drum has continued to remind us of the issues involved, especially stem cell research, cloning, abortion and genetic modification of crops and other food. Nola requests our help with lobbying etc - she does a magnificent job. Our International Secretary, Eileen Hogg, has put in a lot of time and effort keeping us all informed on matters pertaining to WUCWO at international, national and archdiocesan level.

As Archdiocesan President of CWL, I accepted with great pleasure an invitation to attend the Pope's WYD08 Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney.

The ecumenical spirit continues to flourish between Catholic Women's League and other denominational women's groups throughout the Archdiocese. CWL supported, and, on occasions, hosted Special Day Services; World Day of Prayer Service in March, Fellowship Day in July and World Community Day in October; as well as supporting various group's celebratory functions. Four members of Catholic Women League hold positions on the National Executive of Australian Church Women and four members hold positions on the Australian Church Women ACT Unit's Executive.

Several Branches hosted "The World's Biggest Morning Tea" to fund raise for Cancer Research,

held Luncheons, Masses and Christmas Functions. Members continue our affiliation with National Council of Women and the International Women's Day Breakfast Committee and Australian Church Women. A special mention must go to Young Branch who had their 50th Anniversary this year, the Mass and Luncheon was well attended.

A small Committee led by Thora Regan, revised and updated our Constitution and Rules - this has been approved by the Archbishop and is about to be printed.

We extend our thanks to Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Bishop Power and the various Chaplains/Spiritual Advisors for their interest and support of the League. Our deep appreciation and thanks to Archdiocesan Chaplain Fr. Kennedy OAM who is a tower of strength at all times. To the Archdiocesan Executive, Branch Executive and Members I would like to say a heartfelt thank you. Last, but by no means least, to National President, Karyn Kammann and her executive I extend my thanks for their support and friendship and for a job well done.

Jacqueline Hipwell
President - Canberra/Goulburn

Move to disallow Medicare funding for second trimester and late term abortion.

It is God's design that has us spending the first 40 weeks of our lives in the womb.

Medical science divides this into three time zones:

The first trimester up to 13 weeks, the second 14 to 26 weeks, and the third, 27 to 40 weeks.

Medicare Funding is determined by the Federal Government, and is provided for abortions up to 26 weeks. Third trimester abortions, lawful in some states, are not funded by Medicare. Where lawful, and performed in public hospitals, they are funded by State Health Grants, not Medicare.

Medicare funding regulations date back more than 30 years, to 1974, and reflect the medical technological understanding and capacity of the day.

Present regulations fund abortion for interuterine foetal death, gross foetal abnormality and life threatening maternal disease. But the rationale

used to justify them is out of date.

'Gross foetal abnormality' has no fixed meaning. Correctable conditions like cleft palate or hare lip, or conditions like missing fingers or dwarfism are not excluded. In Victoria in 2003-4 at least three post 23 week babies were aborted because they had cleft palate or lip.

Abortion for disability sends a hurtful message to the disabled. Two men affected by a variety of dwarfism have responded with their own messages:

"It makes me angry, it makes me sad. We're short so what? Mr. Frances Kelly, National Chairman of the Short-Statured People of Australia (2000)

"It doesn't affect your intelligence or your ability to get on with life". Alan Eggleston, Obstetrician and Senator for Western Australia.

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Social Issues Convenor Report



The National Plan to Reduce Domestic Violence asked the question "why is domestic violence and sexual abuse happening in Australia?" SEXUAL ABUSE AND PORNOGRAPHY are a threat to the safety of the family.

There are persons driven by money and greed, by sexuality and lust, sometimes by their own psychological damage, who would have us misunderstand, falsify, ignore and misuse sexuality.

Consumers of pornography become sexually addicted and require more and more varied and violent sexual experiences to satisfy their craving. They make such sickening demands on their wives that porn is now a major cause of marriage breakdown.

Everyone ought to be safe from sexual abuse, but the Sexual Assault Support Services are now dealing with pre school children who are sexually abusing each other. We are not told whether the young offenders have been abused themselves or whether they have witnessed sexual activity.

Sex addiction is without a doubt the fastest growing addiction in Australia and there are very few Clinical Psychologists equipped to deal with it.

The news brings us stories of men in high places acting entirely inappropriately with women in the workplace. Teachers, both male and female, have been dismissed following sexual liaisons with students. Trusted Priests and Ministers have shocked the community by their sexual abuse of minors.

The problem of overeating and poor dietary habits is being addressed in the fight against obesity. Yet there is no campaign to control the sexual appetites resulting from viewing pornography. Australia is sorely in need of a campaign to rid the nation of pornography that has become a multi million dollar industry earning millions for its investors and fast becoming impossible to control.

"The pornography industry damages the viewer,

damages the performer, damages the partners of the viewers and performers. And that's pretty much everybody who is in any way touched by this industry". Dr. Layden, August 2005.

A picture of children who appear to be enjoying sex with addicts is permanently stored in the brain. It's easier to treat a cocaine addict than it is to treat a pornography addict. It's more likely that the cocaine addict will stay in remission than it is the pornography addict, because "this is the first addiction that we're going to have to treat where the addictive substance is permanently planted in the brain." Dr. Layden.

Pornography is mis-education. It teaches that sex is not about gentleness, vulnerability, responsibility, sweetness, intimacy, communication, commitment, procreation, marriage – it's not any of those things. It is about selfishness, violence, stranger, groups, faeces, objects, children, manipulation, body parts, casual recreation, prostitutional lingerie and using women's bodies as entertainment. Is that the message we want to send?

CWLA wrote a letter of congratulation and encouragement in immediate response to Senator Conroy's promise in January to remove pornography from the Internet.

Parents cannot be omnipresent in their children's lives and this incipient evil is difficult to contain so we are heartened by Senator Conroy's statement that he is "undeterred" by the difficulties and will proceed with his plan to block pornography at service provider level so that it doesn't enter the home or school.

SUGGESTIONS from Catholic Women's League Australia to reduce sexual violence:

- Internet filtering of Porn at Internet Service Provider level.
- A genuine attempt be made to free girls from the violent sex industry
- · Making of pornography be outlawed in Australia
- Pornography be removed from video stores and newsagents
- Any adult who allows pornographic videos to be returned by a child must be made libel to prosecution
- If a child is discovered in possession of pornography it should become a police matter
- Police and Welfare personnel actively seek to free children trapped by pornographers.

Betty Roberts OAM

ABOUT BIOETHICS



Organ Donation after Death

Many of you will have thought about the life saving gift of donating organs when no longer needed by us or our relatives. Many of you will have made a notation on your license or have enrolled through the Australian Organ Donor Register web site to indicate your willingness to be an organ donor. Some of you may have already been part of this type of decision making when a relative has died, however distressing that may have been.

Remember that in January 2005, all Australian Health Ministers agreed that the Australian Organ Donor Register would become a Register of consent, enabling individuals to record their legal decision to becoming an organ or tissue donor after death. They agreed that the Australian Organ Donor Register would be the only national register for organ and/or tissue donation. The Donor Register will ensure that your consent (or objection) to donating organs and/or tissue for transplantation can be verified 24 hours a day, seven days a week by authorised medical personnel, anywhere in Australia. In the event of your death, information about your decision will be accessed from the Donor Register, and provided to your family. It is important that you talk with your family before registering your decision about this as it is to talk about your wishes for care when you can no longer decide for yourself.

Australia has one of the lowest donor rates in the world and if you wish to register you can do one of the following.

- Download a registration form from www. medicareaustralia.gov.au/public/services/aodr/ files
- Visit your local Medicare office, where you can pick up a Donor Register brochure and registration form
- Telephone: 1800 777 203

- To request a registration form to be mailed to you, please email your full name and postal address to aodr@medicareaustralia.gov.au or
- Register online

The Catholic Church encourages organ donation - The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: "Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity." The following is taken from a resource sheet "Catholics and organ transplantation" from the Catholic Life Office Sydney.

"....when organs are freely given in order to improve the life of another person, and taken in a way which is respectful of the dead and sensitive to the living, organ donation after death can be a final act of generosity by the deceased. It is of course, fundamentally important to establish that death has in fact occurred. This is often referred to as the dead donor rule.

Vital organs which occur singly in the body can be removed only after death, that is from the body of someone who is certainly dead. This requirement is self-evident, since to act otherwise would mean intentionally to cause the death of the donor in disposing of his organs.

The moment of death consists in the definitive loss of a human being's constitutive unity of body and soul – the separation of the 'life-principle' from the bodily reality of the person. Medical science cannot directly identify this moment, but it can judge that death has occurred by determining and identifying "signs of death" such as loss of the heartbeat, circulation and breathing, followed by decomposition of the body.

Today, technological means of sustaining life and preserving individual vital functions – e.g. assisted ventilation, cardiopulmonary bypass – can obscure these traditional signs of death. Therefore in some circumstances doctors also look for neurological signs that there has been complete and irreversible cessation of all brain activity (in the cerebrum, cerebellum and brain stem) as an indication that death has occurred.

The Church currently accepts that the complete and irreversible loss of brain function is a sign of the death of the human person. It is important to understand, however, that "brain death" is accepted as being equivalent to the death of the person, not because there is no longer any capacity for consciousness or other mental activity, but because the brain is no longer able to exercise its "integrative capacity." Once the brain is totally and irreparably damaged, the body has lost its integrating centre and no longer exists as a single living system. Although intensive life support systems may give the appearance that a living body is present, the body is no longer functioning with its own unity and integrity: this is an indication that the lifegiving soul of the person has departed".

Many people have expressed concerns about the actual definition of death and worry that their loved ones who are becoming close to death will not be treated well and indeed I have heard someone say that death was hastened to allow procurement of organs. Let me state categorically that is not the case. All patients who are critically ill or dying continue to receive the appropriate and best care available. In fact, the NSW Health Guidelines for Organ Donation After Cardiac Death, notes that "Donation after Cardiac Death (DCD) requires a sensitive approach from all health professionals involved in caring for the potential donor and their family. These guidelines affirm that quality end of life care for a potential organ donor, as with any individual whose treatment is being withdrawn, is the absolute priority and must not be compromised by the donation process". This is exactly the same if the issue of 'brain death' is considered.

Definition of 'death'

There is much talk in the media and in bioethical and with health care personnel at the moment about 'brain death' and 'cardiac death'. Death can be determined in two ways — after the irreversible loss of all brain function or the irreversible cessation of circulation. Tissue or organ donation may be possible after death has occurred, determined by either of these methods.

Brain death, a legal definition of death, was only defined in 1968 when the ability to perform CPR and resuscitate individuals and keep the heart and lungs working by using machinery became common practice. Harvard Medical School was responsible for the report that produced this definition. Brain

death is the irreversible end of all brain activity (including involuntary activity necessary to sustain life) following the loss of blood flow and oxygenation. It should not be confused with a deep coma or 'Persistent Vegetative State' or 'Post-coma Unresponsiveness'. And again ... Death determined by the irreversible loss of all brain function — means that the nature of the brain injury is such that all function of the brain has ceased and the loss of function is permanent. Factors that may temporarily suppress brain function are excluded and the nature of the injury is known and likely to have led to loss of brain function. Clinical tests confirm that the extent of the injury includes loss of brain stem activity. Ancillary tests may be done to confirm absence of blood flow to the brain.

The term, cardiac death, refers to a death declared on the basis of cardiopulmonary criteria (irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory function). There are still some legal and ethical issues surrounding organ donation after cardiac death causing much discussion in legal and medical circles. *Death determined by irreversible cessation of circulation* — irreversible means:

- a) sufficient time has elapsed to eliminate the possibility of autoresuscitation so that, in the absence of resuscitative attempts, cessation is irreversible;
- b) resuscitative attempts are either contraindicated on medical grounds, given the progressive nature of the condition, or the patient (or the person with legal authority to make his or her medical decisions) would consider resuscitative measures to be unduly burdensome.

Re discontinuation of treatment.

Patients who have the potential to become organ donors following death determined by irreversible cessation of circulation are likely to be unconscious and may require high levels of medical support. Their wishes regarding organ donation may not be known. In some cases, patients admitted to an emergency department with catastrophic injuries are given ongoing treatment to allow time for assessment and for the family to be contacted. During that time it may also be possible to ascertain the wishes of the patient and the family about organ donation.

Families and health professionals have an obligation to work together to make compassionate and respectful decisions for patients who lack decision-making capacity, taking previously expressed patient wishes into account where known. To ensure that decisions are fairly made, the decision-making process and its outcomes should be clear to all those involved.

It is fair to say that there are many issues surrounding organ donation and new questions are being raised about those issues. In a recent article by Scaraffia, she said, "the acceptance of the cessation of brain activity as death would seem to equate the human person with brain function, contradicting Catholic teaching about the dignity of every human life from the moment of conception". We must be careful that that is not the case.

Be assured that organisations such as The National Institute of Clinical Studies (NICS) is part of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the National Organ Donation Collaborative work to improve health care by getting the best available evidence from health and medical research into everyday practice. Their goals are to lead and support clinicians in finding and applying best and ethical practice. Catholic Health Australia's Code of Ethical Standards contains much valuable information about such issues.

Ultimately the decisions about organ donation rest with the individual and the family. These decisions are not easy and often occur when families are more likely to be distressed and grieving. There are a number of people and communications that can be used as resources and your local hospital or church agencies can assist. The Federal Government through the NHMRC have a booklet entitled, *Making A Decision About Organ And*

Tissue Donation After Death (Endorsed 15th March 2007) that is available via the website.

Cardinal Pell stated in his column in the Sunday Telegraph in 2004,

"Decisions affecting our dying are also decisions which involve our loved ones deeply. People will be grieving, confused, vulnerable. Organ donation is best discussed in the family when we are still hale and hearty. Talking about death is not comfortable; nor should it be. But it gives us a chance to prepare and to support our families' decision-making in the future.

People should also be well-informed about what donation involves. In particular, they should be assured that nothing will happen until we are morally certain death has occurred."

If you would like some information about organ donation from living donors please let me know.

Margo Nancarrow

(References are available for the above information)

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In September, Tasmanian Senator Guy Barnett will move in the Senate to disallow Medicare funding for second trimester abortions. If he succeeds, the laws allowing abortions would not change only the funding.

The move is timely. A national opinion poll conducted in 2005 by Market Facts (Qld) found that 67% of Australians are opposed to Medicare funding of second trimester abortions. Only 13.9% support the current arrangement.

The law governing the performance of abortions varies among the states and territories. Tasmanian law allows abortions throughout the 40 weeks.

The use of prostaglandin to induce labour, can result in the birth of a live child. He or

she is then left to die. In Victoria in 2005 this happened to 47 post 20 week babies.

Now very premature babies can survive outside the womb. Zac Rowles, born at 23 weeks, Eli at 25 weeks, and Amillia Taylor, at 22 weeks, are thriving. At 21 weeks, whilst still in the womb, baby Samuel, was operated on to correct spina bifida. His hand came through the incision and grasped the surgeon's finger. Samuel is now a lively school boy.

DO NOT LEAVE IT TO OUR POLITICIANS TO GUESS WHAT WE ARE THINKING – WRITE OR PHONE NOW C/O PARLIAMENT HOUSE CANBERRA.

Pat Gartlan, CWL Tasmania.