Christmas Prayer

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel’s song, for infant’s cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wisemen. Help us to rise bigger than we are.
Amen

www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer
A Word From Our State Chaplain

Dear Friends,

Firstly let me say how good it was to see so many of you at the State Conference at Coffs Harbour/Sawtell. The speakers were engaging, the camaraderie was obvious, and we had some memorable times of prayer—especially the Mass at Sawtell—and of conversation about all manner of important issues. It was clear to me from listening to people what a valuable part of so many lives the CWL is—and can be into the future. I left having some new friends and a pretty big swag of confectionary.

My special thanks go to those who worked so hard, in big ways and small, to make the Conference such a success.

Our theme was peace, and now already it is time for Christmas, the birth of the Prince of Peace. We have to make a conscious effort to let the peace of Christmas touch our hearts in the midst of what is often a very un-peaceful, busy season. Please set aside some time, however brief, to prayerfully remember how very much Our Lord loves you and everyone in your family. And may 2015 bring more peace, not less, into the world, though our efforts.

Fr Don Richardson
State Chaplain

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

Greeting to all members of CWLA-NSW Inc.

As the year is drawing to a close I extend my thanks for the contribution made by members to the many worthy causes supported financially, the action taken on social justice issues and for your presence, supporting each other in your branch and dioceses. This gift of friendship is the essence of our organisation and allows us to walk hand in hand as we pursue the aims and objects of CWLA-NSW.

The State Conference held in September in Coffs Harbour, Lismore Diocese was a great success. My recent President’s Bulletin No.3 sent to Diocesan Presidents for distribution to branch members and diocesan members detailed my thanks to the CWLA-NSW State Executive Members and Lismore Diocese President Teresa McKinnon and members of Lismore Diocese for their assistance with planning the conference and the hospitality shown to all attendees. The Guest Speakers all addressed the theme of the conference “Peace and Justice” and each brought their interpretation on how we achieve peace and justice.

The Bishop of Lismore Diocese the Most Rev. Geoffrey Jarrett DD officiated at the beautiful opening Mass at Mary Help of Christians Church Sawtell, Fr. Don Richardson CWLA-NSW Inc. Chaplain and Fr. John Casey PP concelebrated with several priests from the Lismore Diocese.

CWLA National President Carolyn Metcalf and members of the National Executive joined the attendees at the conference and their support of the NSW executive is much appreciated.

Recently I attended the CWL Armidale Diocese Conference in Gunnedah, the CWL Maitland – Newcastle Diocese Mass of Thanksgiving in Morpeth and the CWL Archdiocese of Sydney AGM and the CWL Parramatta Diocese AGM is being held in December. On these occasions I have been graciously welcomed and I very much appreciate the hospitality shown to me.

The “Feature Article” in this edition of “The Vine” is written by Esther Doyle AM. Esther has held the position of Sydney Archdiocese President, CWLA-NSW President and CWLA National President in past years. She has been a woman of great vision and a wonderful mentor to me over many years. She is remembered fondly by so many CWL members throughout...
NSW in particular. On discussing the article with Esther we realised that this year has been the 30th Anniversary of the production of “The Vine”!

Over those years from the first editor Dot Nichol followed by Estelle Gillan and Mary Reidy, Noeline Kelly and our current editor Michelle Pedersen, “The Vine” has kept members well informed of the activities taking place in all the dioceses. Of course mention must be made of Roseleen Goldie and her husband Graeme who at the regular “Vine” distribution time seal and post “The Vine” to members. Please enjoy Esther’s article

I conclude with my Christmas Wishes to all members. Peace and Joy!

“May all members and friends who need miracles be blessed. May whoever is feeling unwell and weak be given strength. May all of those who have heavy burdens have their load lightened. May your Christmas be one filled with happiness and joy “

Moya

Our Diocesan Conference was held in Gunnedah on the weekend 11/12 October. State President Moya Potts attended the first day of the Conference and the Mass and Dinner on the Saturday night. We are most grateful Moya was able to attend. Our Guest Speaker at the Dinner was Father Suresh – assistant priest at East Tamworth. Fr. Suresh grew up in India, studied in Switzerland, and has worked in South Africa before coming to Australia. He gave a very interesting talk on his life journey. Delegates and observers enjoyed the peaceful surroundings of the Gunnedah Parish Centre (Mercy Convent previously) as we dealt with the business of our AGM.

Quirindi CWLA celebrated their 50th Anniversary along with their Parish Celebrating 125 years, the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart 126 years in the Parish on the first weekend in September. Diocesan President Deirdre Andren and Margaret Nott from Gunnedah Branch attended the CWLA Mass and celebration Dinner on the Saturday night and the Parish Celebration on the Sunday along with Val Campell (Gunnedah) and Kay Mason (Tamworth) which commenced with a Mass of Thanksgiving concelebrated by Bishop Michael Kenneday – Bishop of Armidale, Father Roel Llave –Parish Priest of Quirindi and visiting priest followed by lunch in the Fr. Stan Campbell Hall and Church grounds.

It was great to catch up with some old friends and meet new friends. Two inaugural members of Quirindi, Mrs Frances Evans and Mrs Joy Turner attended the celebrations along with Life Members Mrs Doris Press (past Diocesan Secretary) and Mrs Sheila McNamara.

15 members of our Diocese travelled to Coffs Harbour to attend The State Conference – the beautiful Opening Mass, the interesting guest speakers and the making of new friends and catching up with old friends. Congratulations to the State Executive and the members of the Lismore Diocese.
Armidale Branch is hosting Hymn Fest this year in the Cathedral. Organist Warrick Dunham played the beautiful pipe organ. Hymn Fest is held annually by the Inter Church Committee, an hour of praise and spiritual music. Members have participated in the Inter Church celebrations. World Community Day was hosted by the Uniting Church. Armidale and Guyra Branches will again come together for a Mass followed by Christmas Lunch.

Quirindi Branch are again hosting a Men’s night with Guest Speakers with the branch providing the supper. This was a very popular event last time.

Tamworth is holding their Christmas Luncheon in November. Gunnedah are holding their end of year Dinner on the 17 November. Moree Branch has had their fair share of illness this year and was unable to attend the State Conference or the Diocesan Conference. We pray that they may soon feel A1 again.

Deirdre Andren
President Diocese of Armidale.

Ladies from Lithgow opted to dine out for their country of study night where Cleopatra (aka Betty Boardman) with her Egyptian friend (aka Moira Murnane) gave us much information about ancient and modern Egypt. Father Brian Murphy was welcomed to dinner and he was happy to share his memories of his visit to Egypt.

Melbourne Cup day was another excuse to socialise for both Branches of Oberon and Lithgow. Diocesan members enjoyed going to Sydney and Parramatta for their AGMs.

With Branch AGMs looming we are all hoping present positions will once again be filled by the faithful few so that CWL can continue into the future.

Dawn Frazer
Secretary / Treasurer Bathurst Diocese

A group of Broken Bay CWL members were very happy to be present at the Triennial State Conference. Especially those who had not experienced the warmth and friendship which prevailed and gave true meaning to the theme “Peace and Justice”. Our thanks go to the State Executive and the members of Lismore Diocese for a most memorable and joyful occasion.

Members of Broken Bay Diocese at the State Conference.
Terrigal Branch hosted the Scholarship Luncheon which is held each year and gives us the opportunity to gather with the Central Coast Branches and meet the students who are the recipients of the scholarships. It is always a delight to hear the students speak of their ambitions.

Six very energetic members from The Entrance joined Jo Poynting’s 24 year old grandson on the Relay for Life held at Mingara in October. In all, Christopher’s team raised $1800. He was diagnosed with cancer when only 16. Please include Christopher in your prayers as he still has to have regular scans. Also at The Entrance, CWL hosted the Australian Church Women’s World Community Day, which was attended by 43 ladies from various churches.

Other Branches have not been idle (is there really such a word in the CWL dictionary?). Lamington drives at Kincumber, a Spring Fashion Parade at Narraweena, Melbourne Cup luncheon at Toukley and raffles at Manly and Manly Vale are but a few fundraising methods to enable donations to the many causes which are supported by Broken Bay members. We continue to sponsor two students at St Lucy’s and St Edmund’s (schools for children with disabilities).

We recently welcomed home, National President Carolyn Metcalfe, from her trip to Fatima for the WUCWO General Assembly. Carolyn has graciously shared her joy and wonder at that great event with us.

Along with all parishioners in Broken Bay, our prayers for a Bishop have been answered. We are rejoicing in the recent appointment of Bishop Peter Comensoli to the Diocese. We wish all CWL members and your loved ones a peaceful and joyful Christmas and a prosperous 2015.

Jacqueline Kemp  
President Broken Bay Diocese

HUNTER HAPPENINGS

Well! Where has this year gone? The kids are counting sleeps until Santa comes and if you are anyone like me, I am counting the, or rather, any sleeps!! So much has happened over the last twelve months.

In September, seven ladies from this diocese travelled to Coffs Harbour for the State Conference. It was a time to catch up with old friends and make new ones during this time. We had a great time. The guest speakers had much to offer and gave us lots to ponder on. They certainly addressed the theme “Peace and Justice” in their own unique way. Having the State Council Meeting in conjunction with the Conference was beneficial as well. Thank you to the State Executive and especially the ladies from the Lismore Diocese who worked diligently and tirelessly to make the conference such a success.

Our Mass of Thanksgiving, held in historic Morpeth, was a wonderful event. Bishop William Wright, Father Paul O’Neill and Father Geoff Mulhearn concelebrated Mass, with Peter Street also assisting them on the altar. After Mass we walked across to the Corcoran Centre for a delicious lunch. Moya Potts, our State President, and Loretta Chester and Sally Fennell, from the Archdiocese of Sydney, joined us in our celebrations. It was so lovely to have them with us. Bishop Bill, Father Paul, Father Geoff and Peter also were able to join us for lunch. East Maitland branch was our host for the day. They did a great job preparing the Corcoran Centre and the Church for our celebrations.

Unfortunately we had to cancel our social event to raise money for the Family Fast Day. Instead at the November meetings, members were asked to make a donation for the cause.

On 29 November, we will be holding our AGM and final meeting for the year. At this meeting, we are hoping to elect a new Diocesan Executive. We ask you to keep us in your prayers so that all positions will be filled. Once the formalities are completed, we hope to share some Christmas fare to complete a packed year. It is with great sadness that I extend our sympathies to Margo Nancarrow and Marie Sevil on the passing of their husbands. Please keep both ladies and their families in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time. Finally, I hope that each of you and your families have a very happy and holy Christmas. I hope that you have all been very good
throughout the year and that Santa finds you and gives you lots of surprises. Christmas is always a lovely time for family and friends. Enjoy the festivities! Keep smiling!

Sandra Kijko
Diocesan President

LISMORE LETTERS

On behalf of members of Lismore Diocese who attended the State Conference, I wish to congratulate our State President Moya Potts and her executive, also, our Lismore Diocesan President Teresa McKinnon and Ann Pereira for the organization and hard work they put into making our State Conference so successful.

I am sure all who attended the Conference enjoyed the fellowship of members who travelled from near and far to be with us, also, to enjoy the hospitality of members of Lismore Diocese.

The choice of guest speakers was great and for this we congratulate and thank the executive. Sue Freestone certainly kept things moving along and no doubt was the 'perfect' choice in her role - Congratulations Sue!

What a lovely surprise it was when President Moya announced that our Lismore Diocesan President Teresa was about to be the recipient of Life membership of Catholic Women's League Australia NSW Inc. It was a very emotional Teresa who went forward to receive her badge from Moya - unfortunately, by the end of the conference Teresa had very little voice to respond and within a few days she ended up very ill requiring four days in hospital. We extend our congratulations to Teresa on obtaining this honour.

Our Lismore Diocesan Annual General Meeting will be held 11 November in Grafton, it is hoped the executive positions for our Diocese will be filled, as Teresa and Ann will not be standing for re-election. I am sure all members of our Diocese appreciate and wish to thank Teresa, Ann, Wendii Heffernan (Wendii was secretary up until her departure from Wauchope to live in Toowoomba) and to Gillian Lewis also.

Wauchope branch was host to a Healing weekend conducted by Sister Margaret Scully recently. Six members from Port Macquarie branch attended and by all accounts were well looked after by their hosts.

Port Macquarie branch enjoyed their WUCWO International lunch with a large variety of Egyptian foods on the menu. The dining room looked very impressive decorated with Egyptian flags in red, black and white and matching serviettes.

Grafton and South Grafton members will once again come together for their combined Christmas lunch on 3 December.

As I write this, Grafton is celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Annual Jacaranda Festival with many varied activities taking place in town. The jacaranda trees have once again not let us down as they came into full bloom with their glorious shade of purple at just the right time to welcome all. One only has to stop and look at these magnificent trees in all their splendour and marvel at the gifts of nature given to us by God.

May you and your loved ones be blessed with joy, love, peace and happiness as we celebrate the wonderful feast of Christmas and throughout the coming year.

Lynne Higham
Editor “the Anchor”

PARRA-MATTERS

How often do people ask, “What do Catholic Women’s League Members do?” Over the years I have just realized that we are constantly learning. Despite the fact that some of us are mature age “students” we are constantly expanding our knowledge through contact with the variety of people that we meet through the League. Close to home, we have our diocesan meetings where we have a Spiritual input with our “sisters” from many Parishes. Guest speakers are always a sauce of information. Recently we had a visit from Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation Elders. This Aboriginal catholic group are doing great work amongst their Aboriginal communities. Family Group Gatherings are held at Holy Family Parish Emerton Community Centre. From these groups
positive support for young mothers, and also support for women applying to do a University course through ACU. Homework Club, Family week-ends at Gerringong and Reflection days at Gerroa are part of their programme.

Places of learning for us are the Australian Church Women functions at Strathfield and Granville. Our Christian sisters are also in touch with overseas workers in humane and educational fields. One lady I was talking to came from working with children in Africa and one problem she has in coming back to Australia is seeing the amount of food in Supermarkets. In Inter-faith dialogue, we put into action “Do unto others as you would that they would do unto you” Our Muslim friends are being persecuted just the same as we have experienced. We can feel for them when their mosques are desecrated.

The Bishops’ Social Issues Statement for 2014 was on Sport (you know that other Australian Religion). While the health and personal development benefits were one of the topics, the negative problems e.g. drugs and gambling were also discussed. I was quite surprized that this wasn’t given massive publicity throughout our parishes. Asylum Seekers has been a contentious issue for many years and while the majority of “boat people” are found to be escaping from persecution there seems to be no one able or prepared-to provide a humane solution to this problem throughout the world. Members who haven’t been able to experience State and/or National Conferences have missed out on a huge educational opportunity.

Members travelling from other Dioceses, bringing their long experience of church and CWL, share with us their huge and diverse expertise. The Future? Well 2015 is special to Parramatta as we are the Host Diocese for the National Conference. While we don’t have to organize the Conference at the Novotel, I am sure we will do our best to make you all welcome. See you there.

Enid Mulcare
Communications Officer

Pat Castellan (Rydalmere) Marilyn Dickinson (Bowral) Robyn Miller (National Sec.) and Glenys Oxlee (Rydalmere President) take in some scenery at the Coffs Harbour State conference.

SYDNEY SNIPPETS

We are approaching the end of a most enjoyable year and will close our office for the Christmas holiday season on the 9 December. We will re-open on Tuesday 27 January, refreshed to commence the New Year.

Our Project of the Year for the Josephite Counter Trafficking will continue until June. We are working to raise much needed funds to assist in the fight to end the trafficking trade. At our first meeting in 2015 our guest speaker will be Associate Professor Jennifer Burn from Anti-Slavery Australia to tie in with our project.

Our Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday, 11 November with the theme ‘Remembrance’. The day commenced with a welcome and prayer, followed by reports and general business. At 11am we had a solemn moment for Remembrance Day and listened to The Last Post. Mass was celebrated by Fr Ray Farrell followed by a delicious lunch. We then heard from the CWLA Inc National President, Carolyn Metcalfe, who spoke about her time at the WUCWO Assembly in Fatima, Portugal. CWLA-NSW Inc State President, Moya Potts spoke about the NSW State Conference held in Coffs Harbour in September. The day ended with raffle and lucky door prizes drawn. It was a successful day enjoyed by all.

On Wednesday 12 November, Helen Cook and I attended the Installation Mass at St Mary’s Cathedral for the 9th Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev Anthony Fisher. It was a most inspirational and memorable Mass. The homily that Archbishop Fisher gave was particularly
outstanding. We kept a copy of the Mass booklet; it is full of interesting information about the history of Archbishops in Sydney including profiles of past Archbishops, a short biography on Archbishop Fisher and his past achievements, as well as an explanation of the installation ceremony.

We are sad to farewell two of our long serving members from the Sydney Council, Mary Harrold and Mary Cantrall. These beautiful women have contributed so much pleasure, joy and friendship, as well as hard work. We thank them most sincerely and wish them much happiness in retirement.

We are pleased to welcome back from Fatima our National President Carolyn Metcalf and all the CWL members who also attended the conference. It is great to hear all the news from such an exciting trip.

The following prayer by Elizabeth Walrond has been chosen by Helen Cook to share with you:

Lord Jesus, take me this day and use me.  
Take my lips and speak through them.  
Take my mind and think through it.  
Take my will and act through it, and fill my heart with love for you.

I would like to extend Christmas Greetings to all members, and look forward to catching up in the New Year.

Sydney CWL Members at the State Conference.

Loretta Chester  
Sydney Diocesan President

WOLLONGONG WHISPERS

Thank you to State President Moya and CWL in the Diocese of Lismore for providing an informative and enjoyable State Conference. The 22 members from Wollongong were praising the efforts of the Conference team upon return from Coffs Harbour. The ‘in memorium’ presented at the Conference reminds us that we know not the hour when we are called into the Kingdom of God. We also reflect upon the work of the hospital and medical staff who care for our sick and dying, they are very special professionals.

We are now looking forward to the National Conference to be held at Parramatta in September 2015 and wish the National Executive God’s blessings in their preparations.

In November a combined Branch function was held at Goulburn. This social day gathered over 70 Members from the Wollongong/ South Coast/ Northern area /Macarthur/ Southern Highlands/ Canberra region and Boorowa Branches. It was an opportunity for us to meet informally with those Branches from the Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese that have joined with our Diocesan Council of CWL. It was certainly a very joyous occasion with plenty of laughter and friendship.

Diocese of Wollongong was fortunate to have three members attending the General Assembly for WUCWO conducted at Fatima: Catherine McGrath Board Member Australia (Bowral Branch) together with Mary Smith and Margaret Frew (Wollongong Branch). The members shared their experience at the AGM and provided members with an insight into the WUCWO organisation.

Bowral Branch had Mass and luncheon for their 50th anniversary, congratulations President Robyn and members. Anne Meredith received Life Membership – a very emotional and heartfelt moment when Anne received her badge. Thirroul Branch celebrated their 50th Annual Luncheon, this is a great achievement. The Branch has produced two Diocesan Presidents, Joan Ryan and Carmel Maloney, and are very dedicated members to their Parish and the Diocese. Thirroul has a great record for mother-daughter memberships: Grace Parker, foundation Secretary and later President, was the mother of Joan Ryan, Mollie Brown the second
Branch President, was the mother of Carmel Maloney and Veronica Algie. Cecily McGuire, outdid every other member – she has had four daughters and a daughter-in-law.

Along with State Development Officer Peg McEntee, I attended the WUCWO Liturgy of the Canberra Central, North Woden and Weston Creek Branches. It was lovely to meet with the members and to congratulate Angela Devlin personally on her appointment as National Interim Social Issues Convenor. Sonia Di Mezza, National Research Officer was also present as she resides in Canberra and was an opportunity for Sonia to meet with our local CWL Members.

Next year is the final year for the current Diocesan Executive. It is our hope to visit areas

as an Executive and conduct workshops with groups of Branches to strengthen personal development, impart information on our roles, provide some computing assistance and encourage participation on the Diocesan Executive.

May the Christ child bring you and your families His love and peace this Christmas.

Sue Freestone
Wollongong Diocesan President

SOCIAL ISSUES

As we look back over this past year, we give thanks for our many blessings. We reflect with sorrow those fleeing from their homes and country, the Ebola disease in Africa and so many people still living in poverty.

There are said to be 51 million displaced people in the world. All religious groups, including Christians have been affected. We can take a stand for those fleeing persecution by calling on the Australian Government to seriously consider increasing our humanitarian migrant intake.

In a statement released prior to International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on Tuesday 25 November 2014 (White ribbon day) the Australian Catholic Bishops, referred to the ‘Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus Report’ (1999.) The statement mentioned the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia, quoting Pope St John Paul II who wrote: “Transcending the established norms of this own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness.” Violence against women has no place in our society, the Australian Catholic Bishops stress.

Submissions were forwarded, on behalf of members, to the Australian Government Senate relating to both ‘Foreign Same-Sex Marriage’ and Dying with Dignity’ Bills. These submissions outlined our strong support of the current ‘Health and “Definition of Marriage” laws in Australia as they stand and urged the committee to maintain present laws. The bills are still listed to be addressed on the Senate website.

An update on the ‘funeral notice complaints’ shows that after further enquiries it has been verified that funeral notices have been sent overseas to Indonesia by the media, to be scribed and returned for publishing. As a result of this over phone process, words and dates have been misunderstood. The outcome has been incorrect information in print. Larger funeral directors now have an app which enables them to scribe a notice and forward directly for printing. Due to the cost of this app, smaller directors still use the indirect service.

Greenpeace and the Australian Marine Conversation Society have launched the Label My Fish campaign calling for seafood labelling to be extended to the restaurant industry, allowing consumers the right to make a full purchasing decision.

The following quotes were taken from a recent Family, Life and Marriage article, New United Nations population predictions alarm the West, written by Shannon Roberts; “In the last couple of weeks you have probably read numerous alarmist articles discussing the United Nation’s new population predictions – headlines like “Climate change isn’t the problem. A population bomb is killing us”. “World population to hit 11bn in 2100 – with 70% chance of continuous rise” and “As World’s Population Booms, Will Its Resources Be Enough for Us?”’. Questions and comments have been raised about birth rates in different parts of the world. Many people
living in the west forget that they are the main consumers of the Earth’s resources – not the African people who consume far, far less per person.

Chris Meney, Director of the Life, Marriage and Family Centre and lay expert at the Extraordinary Synod on the Family in Rome shared insights: “This Synod on the Family was very much part of the vision of Pope Francis and of his desire to support family life and to reach out pastorally to those in difficult situations. Whilst the interim Relatio report was rather sensationalized in the wider media, the final Relatio was a much more balanced and considered reflection of the various perspectives aired by Synod participants. There was no concerted desire to seek to undertake any doctrinal reversals in relation to the Church’s teaching around sexuality, marriage and family.” Read article on their website November issue.

May the HOLY FAMILY watch over you and your family this Christmas and the HOLY SPIRIT bring peace and good health to ALL in 2015.

Beth Stewart
Social Issues Convenor

WUCWO

The WUCWO 2014 General Assembly was recently held in Fatima, Portugal. Below are some pictures of members of CWL attending the conference.

Catherine McGrath and other Australian members of CWL at the conference

THE MARIAN COMPLEX

In 1986 the Sydney Archdiocese was divided into 3 separate dioceses - Sydney, Broken Bay and Parramatta. This story is about CWL in the Sydney Archdiocese. Prior to the “break up” there were about 100 C.W.L branches in Sydney. Apart from the myriad of ventures you would expect a Catholic Women’s organisation to undertake, some courageous women, and the C.W.L Chaplain, Monsignor Michael Cronin, took on an exciting task. Their goal – the building of 78 retirement units for women over 55 years of age.

With two thirds of the necessary finance supplied by the Federal Government, we had to raise more than a hundred thousand dollars. Residents paid $2,000 (if possible) entrance fee and fortnightly maintenance charges based on the Aged Pension – 30% to be precise. After a few years male residents were accepted also. Not all residents were able to pay the full entrance fee, and I know many deserving people were accepted free. All office work and management was handled by CWL volunteers. Slowly CWL came out of debt and Marian Court Units became a good and reliable source of income. Marian Court Units were officially opened in June 1965. Next year we will celebrate our Golden Jubilee!!

The units were built on a large block of land in Strathfield on which stood a magnificent two storey mansion – “Wellbeck”. This property had been purchased in 1942 by the Church for the then “Legion of Catholic Women” and used mostly as a hostel for girl students and was renamed “Maryknoll”. After sometime we were given permission to demolish Maryknoll and build a 31 bed hostel. This was completely funded (apart from furnishings) by the Federal Government and opened in 1978. The thought was that a hostel would be beneficial for Marian Court residents when they could no longer care for themselves. Once again CWL members were involved in the office and management. Not to mention the great loads of shopping that had to be done. Every year a monster fete and barbeque were held and members from all over Sydney came to help and even after the “break up” they still came from Parramatta and Broken Bay and took part in what was a significant annual event.
Sadly, as it turned out, very few Marian Court residents became Marian Villa residents – either going to nursing homes or dying. So we had to take other people to keep the Hostel financially viable.

After some time it was agreed that we should close the Hostel in 2003. Staff problems and Government regulations made things very difficult. The Federal Government granted permission with the proviso that the remaining buildings be used for the benefit of aged persons. We were allowed to sell the 31 bed licences and with the proceeds converted the building into a chapel, a function room, a library, a board room, a hairdressing salon and several rooms for relatives/friends of Marian Court residents for short term use only.

All of this involved two thirds of the original building and is known as Marian House. The remaining wing is leased to the Bethany Holistic Centre which was funded originally by several orders of nuns. The Centre provides podiatry, physiotherapy, massage, counselling etc. All good things for the elderly!

On the surface Marian Court has changed considerably, but the original charitable ethos is still true. We are able to accommodate some needy residents who are unable to find good affordable housing elsewhere. We support many worthwhile charities – Catholic and non. All these factors contribute to a very happy and successful “Marian Complex”.

We must acknowledge that it only became a reality originally because of the courage and initiative of those CWL Sydney women who took the first giant step.

When the decision was taken way back in 1986 that Catholic Women’s League in the three dioceses would operate separately CWL Sydney was in the happy situation of being able to lend money to Broken Bay and Parramatta dioceses to help them get established. Obviously, a 50 year old building like Marian Court constantly needs attention; but our fervent prayer is that Marian Complex and Catholic Women’s League will continue to prosper. It is a result of what happened over 50 years ago that Sydney CWL has prospered financially. Most of those wonderful “girls” are in heaven now, but we know they are still caring for us.

Esther Doyle AM

The Vine celebrates 30 Years

Deep in the warm earth are formed the roots of the vine.
They gather the riches needed to nourish them.
From this bed it bursts forth into the sunlight
Growing stronger
The tendrils enveloping, holding, anchoring.

Let it grow freely unhindered by restraints that would bind it too firmly,
But gently anchor lest its fruit be lost.
The first fruit of the vine are sweet indeed
Savour them early
Lest untended on the bough, they wither and fall.

May all have access to this beauty to ponder
long the wonder of it all –
And gently be entwined into its form.

D. Nicol

“The Vine” celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year. The purpose of “The Vine” was and is to bring to CWL membership the latest in what’s happening within their membership in NSW as well as articles of interest on a wider scale.

This message from Cardinal Clancy is taken from the first issue of “The Vine” on 1 March 1984:

“The decision of the Catholic Women’s League to publish a newsletter is further evidence of the League’s vitality and sustained enthusiasm. One might also suggest that there is a certain inevitability about the decision, given the imperatives of contemporary communication.”

“The name of the League’s newsletter – “The Vine” – is well chosen and rich in symbolism. It suggests a kind of benevolent omnipresence. To that extent it accurately reflects the aspirations of the League to be a gentle but persistent influence for good, reaching out at every level of the community. The newsletter will surely provide the League with a very effective instrument in its efforts to promote the virtues and values of the Gospel throughout our society.”

“I congratulate the Catholic Women’s League on their new venture and wish it every success.”

Esther Doyle AM
Chaplain                      Fr. Don Richardson BTh Sydney  
                                STB MA (Liturgy) KCHS PP  
President                     Moya Potts Sydney  
Vice President               Sue Freestone Wollongong  
Secretary                    Denise McCaffery Sydney  
Treasurer                    Sue Halliday Sydney  
International Secretary      Nancy Lagudi Sydney  

Portfolio Positions  
Bio-ethics                  Vacant  
Communications Officer      Vacant  
Development Officer          Peg McEntee OAM Wollongong  
Editor “The Vine”            Michelle Pedersen Sydney  
Public Officer               Irene O’Grady Lismore  
Social Responsibilities      Beth Stewart Wollongong  
Ex-Officio Member            Catherine McGrath WUCWO Board Member Australia  

The theme for this Executive’s term of office is "Peace be with You" John 20:21

The Vine is produced by CWLA – New South Wales Inc. It is published as a means of information and communication for Members of Catholic Women’s League in New South Wales. The Vine is published three times a year.

Opinions expressed by contributors are their own and are not necessarily those of the Committee or CWLA-NSW Inc.

The Team: Michelle Pedersen and Roseleen Goldie.

Contributions and correspondence to:
Michelle Pedersen  
8/103 Kirribilli Avenue, Kirribilli 2061  
Phone: (02) 9957 3378    Email: mlepedersen@optusnet.com.au  
Closing date for the next issue is April 2014.

Cut along this line------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Change of address:  
Name:____________________ Branch:______________ Diocese________________
Old Address___________________________________________________________
New Address___________________________________________________________

Forward to: Roseleen Goldie, 27 Grandview Drive, Campbelltown 2560