

MIRIAM

By Angela Pellerin

I have chosen Miriam as the woman I am studying this year.

Miriam was a devoted sister to her baby brother, Moses. When the pharaoh's daughter found baby Moses, Miriam offered to find a nurse for him allowing him to still be cared for at home.

Miriam teaches us to love our brothers and sisters and to openly express concern and kindness for others. Are we as catholic women not also called to act in this way?

Miriam's brothers Aaron and Moses lead the people out from the oppression of the Egyptian pharaoh while Miriam was the leader of the women. In what ways are we, presidents of our councils called to lead our members? Do we set an example for our members in our prayer life and our service to others?

Miriam helped Moses and Aaron by attending to the needs of the women as the Israelites began their journey through the wilderness. How do you help those in need in your council, your parish, your community?

A leader is a follower – Miriam followed the example of her mother. We follow the example of those who went before us.

A leader is a pray-er – prayer brings us the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. Do you pray regularly to God to give you the energy to carry out your role?

A leader is an initiator – she is willing to take risks. As a president are you open to new ideas or do you stick to the old “we've always done it that way”?

Miriam was a follower, following her brothers as they lead God's people to freedom. She was a pray-er as a prophetess, inspired by the Holy Spirit. She was also an initiator, leading the women.

Miriam taught us to serve others, serve family, serve God, assist others in their love and worship of God.

Being a president is not an easy task sometimes, it requires us to follow Miriam's example. We also need patience as we are often called upon to deal with difficult situations. Let us be example to those who will follow after us.

It is hard to believe I am half way thru my term as your diocesan president. What a year it has been. It has been a pleasure to attend many significant anniversary celebrations for your councils, from 10 years to 90 years of giving to your parishes and communities. I have also had the pleasure of bringing greetings on your behalf to meetings of Anglican Church Women, United Church Women and Presbyterian Women. Although we practice our faith a bit differently, we have so many things in common. One of the roles of the diocesan president is to attend the provincial executive meetings. These ladies have been so welcoming and helpful as I learn my way in this position. It is an opportunity to share ideas and experience uplifting spiritual programs. Representing you at the provincial convention right here in Stratford was a great privilege. I also represented you at the national convention in Halifax where we heard great speakers. One of the highlights for me in Halifax was meeting 2 of my husband's cousins. Cousin Ralph was the husband of past national president, Shelegh Pellerin. Ralph passed away 2 weeks ago.

Members of our executive were present at a fair at King's University where they represented the Catholic Women's League with a display and provided another opportunity for the students to get involved in their faith. Executive members also stepped in for me at various events when I was unable to due to health problems.

I cannot thank them enough for their help.

We have also represented the Diocese with prayers and guidance when meetings with councils, who have asked us for our help in meeting challenges on different issues

– the greatest of these being finding women to come forth to take on leadership roles. Sometimes we have to find creative ways to keep our councils going. These are all opportunities to sell the League, on the merits of being a member, on the benefits of being part of an organization that has over 11,000 members in the Diocese of London alone.

You ladies are to be commended on all you have done this past year. Your efforts in opposing Medical Aid in Dying was marvelous and we need to keep up our fight along with advocating for more funding for palliative/hospice care. The fundraising and donations to the various hospice centres in our diocese were amazing. Keep up the good work. I commend all of you for persevering with the new annual report system. It was a challenge but you met it with a large number of councils responding. Hopefully we will have more notice this year and we will be able to help you with this task.

As anyone who attended the Mass of Chrism heard from Bishop Fabbro, the groupings of “family of parishes” will be announced in May. I ask you to support this change to how our parishes function. We may have a change in mass times, a different pastor, etc. There will be an opportunity for more lay involvement in how the family functions. As CWL councils, you do not have to amalgamate together with your other “family” members unless you choose to do so. Let us lead the way by showing other parishioners how to work together in these changing times.

The average age of members is rising and we need to find ways to encourage younger women to join us. I suggest you contact the younger parishioners to determine where their interests lie and what you can do to entice them to become members.

I thank you for your support over the past year and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help you in any way.

Dates to remember: You may want to mark these on your calendar so you don't miss anything

Our Fall Regional Days will be as follows:

Huron Perth/Ingersoll Region – Oct 14th at Precious Blood, Exeter

London/Sarnia - Oct. 28th at St. Michael's, London

Chatham/Essex/Windsor, - Sep. 23rd at Our Lady of Atonement, Windsor

Provincial Convention in Thunder Bay – July 9th to the 12th

Our Merlin Shrine Day will be on July 19th

National Convention in Charlottetown, PEI – August 6th - 9th

Peace be with you as you continue to work for God and Canada.