



FLOWERING LWML LEADERS

November 2008

I am an addict. I admit it. I'm addicted to gardening. If you were to drive up my driveway, it would confirm my confession. I'm sure many of you share that addiction to planting and growing.

You may notice the big orange flower that is on the new Leader Development logo. We like to think of you as growing flowers that will blossom into beautiful flowers and here's why: As a gardener you purchase a good, quality seed. You plant that valuable seed in a specific place. You give it good soil, plenty of water and fertilizer. Then you stand back and watch it grow and eventually bloom.

Think of yourself as seed, a potential LWML leader seed. God has made you a quality seed. He's given you spiritual gifts, a certain personality and certain physical qualities that He has taken into account as He fashions you as a leader. It is well worth your time to investigate those spiritual gifts through self study or group study. It may also help to have a spiritual mentor who can bring his or her own observations about you to your attention.

With great anticipation God now plants you in fertile soil. You can think of the soil as His Word and Sacraments in which you diligently partake in your growth process. By His grace you are growing in your relationship with Christ.

Water and fertilizer for the growing LWML leader come from many sources. Learn about the organization that you are serving; get to know the rich and inspiring history of our organization. Tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience that previous and current LWML leaders have. This is a great way to grow and also to establish rewarding relationships with other LWML women. Ask questions! Find out what has worked in the past and what hasn't. Ask the questions that someone else is too scared to ask!

More ideas, information and useful facts can reach the flowering leader through the LWML website and its linked resources, The Lutheran Woman's Quarterly publication and the Meeting and Event Planner. Get to know the LWML Catalog and the resources available through it.

One last aspect of the cultivation of the leader is very important and that is to recognize and affirm the spiritual gifts of others. This will allow you to find out who to ask to help you accomplish tasks and help you see who you can delegate things to so that you do not try to do it all. God does not expect you to grow into several different varieties of leader from the seed that He has planted. Having leadership abilities does not mean that you should do it all yourself.

God is addicted to gardening. God has planted you—his specially made and dearly purchased seed – and has given you rich soil, fertilizer and water to help you grow. Now He stands back to see that beautiful flower you will become.