

# IMPRESSIONS

February 2008

*Impressions is a tool to encourage Young Woman Representatives after their convention experience as they serve in their home districts. It can be used as an instrument to educate and inform other young women about LWML.*

## From the Heart of a YWR

### Christmas Letters and Blessings

Christmas letters make a lot of people reflect on the year that has passed and think about the year that is to come. I really appreciate and look forward to receiving Christmas cards from our family and friends each year, a time to reconnect with those we don't often see or talk to. How amazing it is that this secular activity could be such a good reminder of what I should be doing with my Lord! Advent reminds us to wait and prepare for Christmas, to remember the gift of God-made-flesh and to regain the sense of joyful anticipation that we should maintain as we look forward to the second coming of our Lord. Indeed I should not need to reconnect with God as He would have me talk with Him at all times, but sinful reality is that the "busy-ness" of life moves us away from spending time as we ought (even when we're attending church regularly) and a way from joyful anticipation.

This year our family Christmas "cards" were Christmas e-mails with attached photos of our three children, ages five, two and a half, and four months. It seemed impossible that cards would make it out before Christmas, so I sat down to type a note about our family in 2007. I wrote a bit about each child and the activities

that were keeping my husband and I "busy" during the year. For myself the list included mainly "mom-stuff" ... going to doctor's appointments for and giving medications to all the children (thankfully nothing too serious), changing diapers, and doing laundry. I wrote:

"The blessings of raising a family are many! They truly are blessings, even though some days they feel like chores. Blessed by my children as we know too many families who lost children and other loved ones this year. Blessed by our health as many others we know will spend the holidays in hospitals. Blessed to have diapers and clothes and a washing machine. And especially blessed during this Advent season to know that God loves each of us so much that He came to us as Jesus, a miracle beyond comprehension and the whole reason to celebrate Christmas. Praise God for this most precious blessing and the blessing of faith."

Christmas cards and New Year's greetings continue to arrive in our mailbox and my inbox even now that 2008 has arrived. I am thankful for each of them and for the little reminder they give me of all of my blessings.

*Rhonda Menze*

YWR Minnesota North District  
Ottertail, Minnesota

### We want to hear from you!

The Leader Development Committee takes great care to be sure we are giving you information that you need and want about the LWML. Please tell us how we are doing with this newsletter. We would love to hear how you are using *Impressions* to share with other young women in your congregations and zones. Please e-mail us at [sabartels@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sabartels@sbcglobal.net) and let us know what you think. We can't wait to hear from you!

### Meet the Leader Development Committee

The 2007-2009 Leader Development Committee is ready to serve you! Amy Bartels of Osage Beach, MO, was a YWR to the 2007 LWML Convention in Sioux Falls, SD. Cheryl Mattil of Sherman, TX, served as Vice President of Christian Life in the Texas District LWML. Patti Ross of Tulsa, OK, is completing her term as Oklahoma LWML District President. Barb Virus of Orange, CA, is a past Pacific Southwest District President and recently served on the LWML Nominating Committee. We pray God's blessings on you as you seek ways to use your gifts to serve the Lord with gladness.

### Did you know?

#### Mite Box History

Perhaps inspired by the various "cent" or "mite" societies of the early 1800s, the Woman's Mission to Woman (Baptist) urged members in its first circular letter in 1871 to use their new mite box to raise funds. The entire family was encouraged to contribute. Your LWML mite box offerings are divided up with 25% sent to the national organization and 75% staying in the district that collected it. Many churches have "Mite Box Sundays" once a month with the entire congregation adding their offerings for mission support. The name "mite" box comes from Mark 12:41-43, the widow's offering pointed out by Christ to his disciples.

# A Message from ... the VP of Servant Resources

## Encourage One Another

During my personal Bible study last November, I came across Hebrews 3:13: "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today..." That struck me as an exhortation to use every opportunity the Lord places before me to encourage my sisters in Christ. It seems like a good exhortation for the new year as well.

To encourage is to give **courage, hope** or **confidence** to another. Do you find yourself in need of encouragement? We all hunger for a bit of extra courage, hope to get through a difficult situation and renewed confidence. It is a universal need. To thrive, we need it daily. Not the cosmetic, superficial encouragement that attempts to provide props for our self-image and gets us through the day, but *real* encouragement. The kind that says, "You don't fool me, I know who you are — your limitations, your corrupted motives, your apathetic attitudes — your basest nature. I know you inside out."

Doesn't sound much like a lesson in achieving self-esteem, does it? But it *is* where we must start because that is how we measure up in the eyes of a perfect God. But our Lord doesn't stop

there. It is our same God who says, "I know the plans I have for you, I have loved you while you were unlovable. I have called you with a holy calling, not because of who you are but because of who I am and the purpose I have for you. You have my promise of my boundless, overflowing grace that I prepared for you before time began."

"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today."

God's encouragement tells us we can be of good **courage** because the Lord Himself fights for us. When the waters are turbulent and dark, and uncertainty looms like a sinister shadow at every crossroad, we can walk with a confident, forward step. He who directs the planets in their orbits and the stars in their galaxies also directs us. He has promised to never leave nor forsake us.

When shattered dreams, disease, disappointments or the disaster of lives torn apart weaken the footings of our lives, God's encouragement comes to us to offer **hope**. He commands us to

be still and know that He is God and we are still His beloved children. He whispers in our ear the sweet assurance that all works toward good for those who love and live in the Lord.

God's encouragement tells us that we are set apart for His purposes. He who has called us to be His own people and made us His by the perfect sacrificial death and resurrection of His Son has a plan for us. Knowing that we are a product of His craftsmanship, we can live in the **confidence** of His absolute Lordship over our lives.

We come full circle in our faith when we become the vehicles of His encouragement to one another. We have been enlightened so that we become the encouragers. We come to maturity as a Christ-follower when we accept the Lord's commission to go and make new disciples. To accept that commission is to obey His wishes. To accept that commission is to recognize the urgency in His voice - while it is still called Today. Sending us out to be His love to the world is the highest compliment He can give us. **That's encouragement that only our great God can give!**

Eloise Kuhlmann

Vice President of Servant Resources

## Devotional Thoughts

*Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid* (Matthew 14:27b).

Dear concerned one,

Trust Me for all your needs.

My love for you and your family is so great that I

...will never take you out of my sight

... know the very hairs on your head.

You are worth more than many sparrows to Me.

Just as I watched over and protected Moses, Joseph, Esther, Mary, and

others who came before you, I am faithful and will strengthen and protect you from the evil one, too.

I command My angels to guard and protect you in all your ways. You are special to Me.

Do not let your heart be troubled. Do not be afraid.

Your constant Companion and Friend,  
*Jesus*

From *Lead Me Lord Through...*  
*Motherhood* by Annetta E. Dellinger  
LWML Catalog Item #21000

## Coming Soon

District Conventions are scheduled beginning this spring. Plan now to attend and register soon – you may even receive a discount for early registration! You will have the opportunity to worship with your LWML sisters, to connect with friends and make new ones. If you need information, contact your District President.