



JANUARY 2015

"HUG-IN-A-MUG"

from Pat Reck, Oregon District Leader Development

OVER THE SPEEDBUMPS!We're Called to Be Fisherwomen

I came across a piece this weekend that I submitted to The Quarterly exactly ten years ago...it was rejected. But I sat & chuckled at the **timelessness** of it, and the decade swept by! I wonder sometimes, if at any given time in our wonderful walk with God, we **really know** what we are called to be? I only say that because "my calling" these past two decades has changed a half dozen times or more. I am in league with the Lord and a fisherwoman, and I don't even own hip boots! I just needed to be still, and listen, and let Him lead. (Jer. 29:11-13) We are all caught up in strange currents, even beached and left to cough for fresh air. Today marks six very long, painful, discouraging and empty, cloudy months since my auto accident in Gresham...on my way to rent the cars for the Kitkatla Mission Team. My body and brain have not done very well; I am still "not the old me" (And that's why this Mug-Come-With-A New Year-Hug has been three months since Sept. in coming. And I do apologize, to Pres. Carolyn and all of you.....)

But I woke at five this morning, torn shoulder parts aching mightily, as they do, with a surge of what this first week of THE new year means to me! And how urgent it is that we all be fisherwomen, pull up our hip boots, bait the hooks, and wade into the stream, allowing the Holy Spirit to work through us! (Jn. 4:14.) Praise the Lord, thank you God for a newfound peace. This needs to be a great and growing year for our precious Societies as we meet changing currents, specifically dwindling numbers and seeming lack of interest in our mission center as we know it. And we need to work with, **flow with and for**, our younger generations, swirling about us and yet caught up in horrific tides of today's society, demands for their time, and seeming disinterest in what we might have to offer! It's scary how fast this has happened, to the life of LWML **as we knew it**, in the past decade, yes?

So it was, this past Advent season, if I may speak of my home congregation, that our original and atrophied in number "Society" had to turn to the young women of the congregation to take over, organize, serve as hostesses to our time-honored Advent Brunch. There just were not enough of us left to make it happen! I was saddened. And then it happened!! Briefly said, the young women of our church set tables for 26. And nearly 50 came! What Christmas week joy I experienced. I came away from the most spirit-filled morning, women of ages 22-94, blessed by the meal, the mingling, a tear-jerking Bible presentation "in the voice of Mary," followed by hugs, giggles, joy in just being with one another.....and I realized that God needs the "gray wave," the mentoring of those of us who have gone before, encouraging young Christian sisters to step out and be bold in their leadership skills. Meet to study the Word, on their times and fierce schedules, call themselves whatever they wish, dispense with protocols & business, take up an offering for our mighty Mites...and be frequently advised in handouts of the progress and success of what we do around the Districts and "swirling world currents" with our Mission Goals. That well may be what we look like this new year ~ 2015.

How do we love and lead? We keep on hugging and encouraging these young mothers, students & professionals, we laugh, we invite, we call, we share meals, we visit, we write cards, we travel to a coffee shop and share...in addition, we search the numbers and begin to see the women with health issues, abandoned by divorce or struggling in marriages, the many widows in our ranks, struggling with "aloneness." And we need to realize He has called us to minister, if only in companionship, to all of them. Letting our sisters in Christ know "it's OK to be angry, it's OK to weep."

Fisherwomen put on their boots daily when they rise and greet the Lord in prayer. Then they go out and immerse themselves in the Living Waters, a spring of water welling up to eternal life. (Jn. 4:14)

Respectfully & Prayerfully Yours in this Blessed New Year ~ ~ 2015

Feedback so welcome! Patricia A. Reck pbmsreck@bendnet.com