

Officers and Delegates assembled:

We all come into this job with a distinct idea of what we would like to accomplish. For some it is to make the world see the Lady Hibernians as a force to be reckoned with, for others to make us more financially solvent and to teach us to get our reports done in a timely manner. All of these things are important and necessary to the well-being of the order. I thank my sisters that have preceded me for leaving the Order in better shape than when they assumed the Presidency of the New York LAOH. A very special thanks to the NYS Presidents that have guided me over the years: Denise Sobus- for your soft-spoken wisdom, Carol McTigue- for reminding me that as serious as we take our responsibilities we also need to appreciate and enjoy all of our sisters that we meet on this journey and finally Karen Keane- Karen, you have been an inspiration to me, you have an unrivaled dedication to this order, a focused, intelligent mind and a big heart (that you sometimes try to hide)

I will continue trying to be a good steward of our finances and I will try to stay on top of the reporting requirements of the order but my focus is of a more spiritual nature. I have long watched and wondered why at times we can be so mean to each other. I, to my shame, have been part and parcel of this behavior; I have spoken badly of sisters or not cared about their well-being when I should have. I believe many of us have fallen into these traps at one time or another.

We are a community of women; we share a common Heritage and Religion. We are thick and thin, big and small, plain and multi-faceted. We have many different points of view and no two of us are exactly alike. Our strength comes from the commonalities we all share and our belief in our motto: Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. The best way to live our motto, I think, is through kindness. Saint Teresa of Calcutta told us "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness; Kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, Kindness in your smile, Kindness in your warm greeting". The simple wisdom of her words serve as the path I wish to follow, and I will hope that you, my sisters will choose to walk this path with me. I know how difficult it is to be kind when someone is not kind to you but we can set the example by seeing God in each person. Kindness costs nothing to give except that we open our hearts. These are lofty goals to be sure but I believe that by following this simple tenet we will reap the benefit of a closer relationship with each other, an increase in membership and a better understanding of what being a lady Hibernian is meant to be. So, let us be kind to one another, let us pass on to others this gift and walk proudly as members of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians.