Greetings to you all!
The 4th Sabbath in August is what we call ‘enditnow Day’ — it’s the day when we talk openly about abuse in our homes, churches and communities. I hope your church was able to promote the end of any and all abuse on that day.

One in every 3 women in Australia, and 1 in every 2 women in many other of our territories are abused. Many women are killed by their spouses each week. Our children are abused as well, and we cannot stay quiet knowing this to be happening. This is a very sad fact and we all need to join hands together to fight this plague and not just on the 4th Sabbath in August, but every day of the year!

Mutual respect and mutual submission which will result in Godly behaviour (Ephesians 5:21-33) which of course means that we treat each other, but with Him as well. The main reason of course is that we are created in His image! On top of that, we were re-created through Jesus Christ so we’re doubly His. We belong to Him, and to one another. You and I never need to feel alone, isn’t that wonderful? It doesn’t matter what’s happening to us or around us, God is right there with us in all circumstances.

We belong to Him! Isaiah 43:1 tells us: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.” How wonderful is that? We belong to God!

I’m always saddened when I give a talk on self-esteem to see and hear how many of our women have a low self-esteem. I was one of those women for many years, but my sisters, no longer! I know who I am, I know whose I am and I know why I am where I am. It is a wonderful thing to realize how important we are to God.

In the pamphlet I told you about, it says “Relationship is the essence of who God is. He created human beings because He desired communion with them. When we recognize that He is the Creator, Owner, Provider and Sustainer, we realize that all we have comes from Him and belongs to Him.” (Job 1:21; Psalm 50)

God has given us people to love, to serve and to have a relationship with. As Christians, it is our pleasure and mission to be there for others. To serve others. Mark 10:45 tells us the “Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.” I pray that you develop this relationship first of all with God, then with one another.

We have much to be thankful for and I praise God for that. Women right across the Division are ministering to other women and girls according to the gifts and talents that God has given them.

In this “Going Places with Women’s Ministries” you will read stories from different directors sharing with us what God is doing through their ministry. I always get so excited hearing what’s happening around the Division and I’m so proud of all of you women! Go and use the gifts and talents that God has given you and share with others what God has done for you. You will be richly blessed, I can guarantee you that!

May the Lord shine upon you and give you His peace.

Erna
‘She Rises’ — Broome

August 1 - 3 was a special time up north of the state. A team from the Adventist Women’s Ministries had the opportunity to conduct a weekend of meetings and programs for our sisters in Broome.

Colleen Wright, a very devoted and committed woman and the pastor’s wife for the Broome Church had it all under control. Women started arriving from Marble Bar, Derby and of course from around Broome.

It brought so much joy to meet these beautiful sisters who travelled long distances to attend the meetings. There were two young wives and mothers who were expecting to give birth within the next three weeks – what dedication. What a good time we had getting to know them and making plans to have programs in their areas next year. The church hall accommodated for the women staying for the weekend.

Lynellda Tippo, WM and ATSIM Director for the North News South Wales Conference, spoke to us on SHE RISES - As a Daughter of God. The wives indicated how the husbands were keen to be a part of the experience!

On Sabbath morning all the women gathered together and travelled a very short distance by bus to Cable Beach for a Prayer Walk. What a special time it was!

There were many prayer requests; this opportunity was priceless as we came together to ask God for His mercy and grace.

We welcomed the whole church on Sabbath morning for a regular Sabbath school and church service with the emphasis on women. For church, we honoured our women in front of the church with a gift bag to show how special they are and as a token of appreciation for who they are in Christ. We had Malvinas Penland speak on SHE RISES – Amid the Storms of Life. An appeal was given at the end of this session. There were tears of joy from the people who responded to the appeal to commit their lives to God and to trust Him amid the storms of life.

An hour before dinner, we gathered again for our next session on SHE RISES – As a Mother. It was heart warming to see the women keen to listen and learn.

Again, Sunday morning we went for our prayer walk at the beach. This time we were much more open and talkative. We shared special moments together and it reflected in the way we communicated. Again we held hands and expressed our burdens and desires in prayer before God.

After breakfast I took the young teen girls for a special time just for them. I was so happy to learn that some of the girls cancelled their work so that they could attend the seminar-workshop. I spoke with them on REAL BEAUTY, a seminar just for teen girls. We had 8 beautiful young girls who participated. They enjoyed themselves with all the little gifts and interaction we had. It was a very special moment for me to have this time with the girls. In the mean time the ladies had two workshops on health and lifestyle with Julie Knopper and Colleen Wright. It was very informative and the ladies enjoyed this practical session.

We said our goodbyes, but not for long. We look forward to seeing them again next year to continue where we left off. God has been so good to give us this precious time with our sisters in Broome.

Jasmin Stankovic, Director, WA Conference.
Women & The Word

On July 26, we had approximately 100 women of all ages attend a ‘Women and the Word’ Conference.

We had two guest speakers — Mrs Yvonne Hypolite and Dr Drene Somasundrum as presenters. Yvonne’s sermon was entitled ‘Someone’s got to be Martha’ giving us a different perspective on the character of Martha. There was opportunity for round table discussion after Yvonne’s presentation and women were able to deconstruct and debrief the sermon. Drene wrapped up the afternoon with her presentation ‘Choosing the better part’, sharing with us what it looks like to ‘choose the better part’ as Jesus suggests in the Martha and Mary story. A panel of 6 women shared their journey with the Word of God and offered tips and tools they use to get the most out of their study of the Word.

At the end of afternoon each woman at the Conference received a copy of Herb Larsen’s book ‘Falling in Love with Jesus’.

The ‘Women and the Word’ Conference was well received with lots of positive and affirming comments. I received an sms just this morning (3 weeks later) saying “Forgot to tell you that I am loving the Herb Larsen book. What an eye opener. Thanks for this great resource”.

We are so excited about re-introducing the Women and the Word Conference. It is a great platform for women to be motivated to experience the Word of God and ignite a passion for the study of the Bible.

Beryl Landers, Director, Greater Sydney Conference

We Are Beautiful

As I present my workshop on self-esteem, it always amazes me how few of us believe we are beautiful! I think that is because we look at beauty as something only professional models or beauty queens have, but what we don’t realize is that what we see isn’t reality. These women have been photo-shopped on all their photos! As Christians, daughters of Christ, you and I have God’s character in us, therefore, our ‘inside beauty’ shines on the outside. I’d like to share with you something I read recently in a tiny little brochure called ‘A cup of solitude, it’s time for me and a cup of tea!’ It will give you a great start to your day and will be an excellent thought provoking message.

“What do you imagine when you hear the word beauty? The colours of a midsummer sunset? The fragrance of a rose? The roar of ocean waves crashing on a cliff?

Often we apply the term only in describing physical attractiveness. But there’s so much more to genuine beauty than that. Mothers have told daughters for multiple generations, ‘beauty is only skin deep’, and ‘pretty is as pretty does’. Nearly 1,000 years before Jesus was born, Scripture taught all who would listen, “favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised” (Proverbs 31:30).

The cosmetic and clothing industries spend billions of dollars each year in the futile attempt to disprove it. Still, those of us whose photograph will never grace the cover of a glamour magazine can find joy in knowing that true beauty doesn’t come from a jar. It can’t be painted on, powdered up, nipped, or tucked. Mama’s wise words to me were. “It’s what’s on the inside that really counts.”

Beauty that exalts the mind and spirit comes from God. We are made beautiful by Christ’s perfect love for us, love made visible in the beauty of his cross. As we consider that love, the Holy Spirit shapes and transforms our hearts so that, little by little, we become more like Jesus in love and service.

How do you visualize the beauty of Christ? That beauty derives from his infinite love. His tender voice is soft and gentle. His name is above all names. The psalmist prayed, “one thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple” (Psalm 27:4).

“Let it be the hidden ‘woman’ of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” 1 Peter 3:4

Erna Johnson, Director, SPD
NEW—Little Miss GIGI

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