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**CAROL ROGERS**

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# Connecting Catholic Women!

## A Monthly Newsletter of the Madison Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (MDCCW)

Affiliated with the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) and your local parish Council (CCW)

Uniting Catholic Women throughout the Catholic Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin

## THE PEN

*"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain."--Psalm 127:1*

### Building the Body of Christ

Remember each month is dedicated to a particular Catholic devotion, based on the liturgical calendar or historical events. February is the month of the Passion of Our Lord.

During His prayer in Gethsemane, Christ offered Himself to the Eternal Father to satisfy His justice and to rescue humanity from eternal death. Jesus, the Son of God, gave consent that all the torments of His Passion and Death be let loose over that part of His human being that was capable of suffering. From that moment Christ suspended whatever consolation or relief would otherwise overflow from His impassible Divine nature to the passible part of His human nature so that His passion and sufferings might reach the highest degree possible. He did this for us. What can we do to comfort Him? I would suggest the following three devotions.

As a first devotion remember that at the beginning of His Passion, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He asked three Apostles to "watch and pray" with Him for one hour. We who spend an hour in the adoration chapel or before the tabernacle in church are doing exactly what Jesus asked.

See **THE PEN** continued on Page Three!

### United Across the Diocese with MDCCW's Convention!

Unite with women across the Diocese and beyond to ignite your passion and purpose for your life, to grow in your faith and anchor your heart as a Catholic woman!

The MDCCW Convention at St. Francis Xavier Church, (Holy Cross Pastorate) in Cross Plains will feature the honorable Bishop Hying and the guest presenter, musician, writer, inspirational speaker Vallimar Jansen will bring all women into a joyful chorus! Mark your Calendars NOW for Saturday, June 28th and stay tuned for more details!

In the meantime, check out Vallimar's website: [www.vallimar.com](http://www.vallimar.com)

### United in Voice with NCCW

From Fr. Tom Washburn, Spiritual Advisor to the  
National Council of Catholic Women

### A Message of Hope for Catholic Women in the New Year

Dear NCCW Family,

You may have seen the powerful images from Rome on Christmas Eve as Pope Francis opened the Jubilee Door of St. Peter's Basilica to inaugurate this Jubilee Year. This is an ancient tradition first of Judaism and now of the Church to celebrate a special year of grace every 25 years. Jubilees are meant to be moments of renewal and moments to deepen our life of faith. So beautifully, the theme for this Jubilee Year is "Pilgrims of Hope." I hope that we as a Church, and so especially as Catholic women, embrace this call to not just remember hope, but to be pilgrims – actively spreading hope in our dark world.

Continue 'Spiritual Advisor' on Page 4

**MEMBERSHIP**

**AFFILIATIONS:**

If your parish or pastorate pays dues to NCCW, the ALL PARISH women are already council women!

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS:**

Catholic women can join MDCCW and NCCW by becoming individual members and receive full member benefits and resources.

**CONTACT MDCCW:**

www.mdccw.com

**CONTACT NCCW:**

NCCW  
10335A Democracy Ln  
Fairfax, VA 22030

**VOICE of the SAINTS**

Feasts, Memorials and Solemnities

Presentation of the Lord, 2-2

St. Blaise, 2-3

St. Agatha, 2-5

St. Paul Miki, 2-6

St. Scholastica, 2-10

Our Lady of Lourdes, 2-11

Sts Cyril & Methodius, 2-14

St. Valentine's Day, 2-14

Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order, 2-17

St. Peter Damian, 2-21

The Chair of St. Peter, 2-22

St. Gregory, 2-27

**LEADERSHIP**

Inspiration for Local Councils by Sue Barker,  
MDCCW Leadership Commission Chair

February, celebrates a very important event in the Catholic Church; February 11 is the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes! Our Blessed Mother appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in Lourdes, France, 18 times in 1858. Bernadette was a poor peasant girl who was not believed when she told her family that a beautiful woman appeared to her, telling her to dig in the ground until water appeared. This was later turned into the "Grotto of Lourdes" after many people had been cured of physical ailments by bathing in or blessing themselves with that water.

This is just one case of our Blessed Mother appearing to people, many times children, and miracles happening. If you follow her direction, working with her son Jesus, prayers are answered. We do the same thing when we say our "Prayer to Our Lady of Good Counsel" at the beginning of every CCW meeting. Pray and look to Mary's leadership in all things!

**SAINTS: Saint Agatha**

Saints tortured for their belief in God are many and we can hardly grasp the cruelty of their torture. Their witness to Christ in their martyrdom has built the foundation of our Communion of Saints.

Saint Agatha of Sicily, born around 231 to a rich and noble family, chose for herself a life as a consecrated virgin. However, during Christian persecutions, a suitor had her arrested since she spurned his marriage proposals. Imprisoned in a brothel where she was violated, then tortured and maimed, a miraculous healing followed her vision of St. Peter. The cruelty continued: rolling her in hot coals mixed with sharp shards whose wounds she did not recover at age 20.

Saint Agatha is the Patron Saint of Sicily and Palermo, breast cancer patients, rape victims and wet nurses. She is considered a powerful intercessor for people who suffer from fires. Her Feast Day is February 5th.

**LEADERSHIP**

News from NCCW

**Hospitality** is the HEART of the Gospel! Think of Jesus welcoming us into the family home of God the Father. Your Council of Catholic Women should extend a friendly and warm welcome wherever they find themselves, especially church functions! Building community with the people around you is as easy as a smile!



**Welcome strangers for there you may be entertaining Angels unaware!**

From the NCCW Guidance and Resource Manual to Operate Dynamic Councils available from the National Council of Catholic Women.



See Page 4 for upcoming Leadership Training!

[www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org)

**SPIRITUALITY**

Faith Finds a Home at Home

There's a recent photo that I'm holding close to my heart these days, as it illustrates the beginning of a new stage of parenthood for me: being a mother of an adult child. It was taken on my oldest daughter's 19th birthday, with candles all aglow on her cake, and me smothering her with a giant bear hug. How the love of a parent toward an adult child must mirror Our Lord's love for each of us, His adult children capable of making good or bad decisions. In February, the month of the Holy Family, it's a good time to contemplate the ways our families grow in love together as each of us grows and changes and learns -- from Our Lord and from each other.

**By Julianne Nornberg**

Contributor to the Catholic Herald and member of Holy Cross Pastorate.



# Connecting Catholic Women with Service !

Throughout the Catholic Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin

## THE PEN CONTINUED

A second devotion is to honor the precious drops of blood Jesus lost in His Passion by daily praying for three years two each of the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be. Jesus said to those faithful who do this, He will concede the following five graces:

- A plenary indulgence and remittance of your sins.
  - You will be free from the pains of purgatory.
  - If you should die before completing the three years, for you it will be the same as if you had completed them.
  - It will be upon your death the same as if you had shed all your blood for the holy faith.
  - I will descend from heaven to take your soul and that of your relatives, until the fourth generation.
- Benedetta DA S.S., Pope Leo XIII H, in Roma April 5, 1890.

An easy third way to participate in and honor the Passion of Jesus is to offer any suffering, pain, loss, daily duty, joy, etc., to Him, for love of Him, in reparation for sin, and for the conversion of sinners.

Our next MDCCW Board meeting is March 15 from 9-noon at St. Andrew Church in Verona. In these next weeks, we will be calling on many of you to assist with preparations for the June Convention. ValLimar Jansen, a dynamite keynote speaker, will be with us on June 28, 2025. See Page I for more details. We want the entire day to sparkle with energy and hope!

Continue to develop a plan for giving donations for the Cathedral of St. Bernard of Clairvaux to MDCCW in the name of the women of the diocese. Details, still in process, will allow us to aggregate donations from individual women and women's groups.

Three Board positions remain open. May the Holy Spirit call three of you women to each take one. Please call me at 608-391-2564.

Membership Committee Chair - Encourage CCW membership.

Legislative Committee Chair - Share info that is pertinent to Catholics from two websites.

Historian - Collect articles for a scrapbook of MDCCW events and activities.

Continue to share the joy of being Catholic! Our Lady of Good Counsel, Pray for us.

In His Mercy and Her Love,

**Carol Rogers**

Madison Diocesan Council of Catholic Women President

## AROUND THE DIOCESE



Uncle Phil's mustard is the official fundraiser for MDCCW's operating expenses for the duration of President Carol Rogers' term of office.

Delicious varieties are available for your CCW to sell at bake sales, Catholic school events, pancake breakfasts, etc. Help raise funds for MDCCW with the sale of mustard, please contact me at kochspeech@gmail.com or 920-361-0853, and the Ways and Means committee will get the mustard to you. Thank you in advance! Sue Koch



## SERVICE: Pick-A-THEME

**THEME for a PASTORAL CALENDAR:**

**PRESENTATION OF THE LORD:** Virtually adopt a child through Unbound (formerly CFCA)

**THEME for FEBRUARY:**

**SHELTER THE HOMELESS:** Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity or assist in a homeless shelter.

**THEME Based on 'BE-ATTITUDES':**

**VISIT THE SICK:** Make/send Valentines to your local nursing home or home-bound.

Send a care package to a neighbor in need.

**THEME Based on NCCW Projects:**

**LOVE THY NEIGHBOR:** Fundraise or raise awareness of the financial need for our Living Stones (Christians) in the Holy Land, torn by war.



### Prayer Intentions

Pope Francis' monthly prayer intention this February is:

**For vocations to the priesthood and religious life:** Let us pray that the ecclesial community might

welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life.

and

**for the terminally ill and their families.**

Let us pray that the terminally ill and their families always receive the necessary medical and human care and assistance.

"And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it."

Matthew 16:17-19



Mark Your Calendars!

Sat. March 15

MDCCW Board Meeting: 9am-12pm St. Andrew Church, Verona

Sat. June 28th



MDCCW Convention at St. Francis Xavier Church, Cross Plains with Bishop Hying and Vallimar Jansen!

www.vallimar.com

Aug 19-23, NCCW

Convention 2025 BELIEVE IN THE EUCHARIST-Orlando,

Sat. July 19th

NCCW's Leadership Training Workshop at St. Bronislava Parish, Plover, WI. Sponsored by the Province of Milwaukee to enhance leadership skills for all Council women! Coreen Marklein & Jody Watermann will lead this LTD Program.

Have an EVENT or ACTIVITY that you wish to see in The Pen?

Forward request 3 weeks before the first of the month you wish to see your listing to:

Carol Rogers carrogmdccw@gmail.com

with subject line: 'Newsletter Event'.

EVENTS AROUND THE DIOCESE

Act Fast!

Saturday, February 8: CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL DAY,

Temperment: Using God's gifts to love those around you. Anne DeSantis, ThD, Catholic Speaker and Author will share a story of living faith to enrich your God-

Given gifts and enhance hope in your life. Program includes Holy Rosary at 7:45am followed by mass, 9am light breakfast, presentation and discussion. A Holy Hour begins at noon followed by lunch at 1pm. Held at Immaculate Conception Church (Corpus Christi Parish). 407 E. LeGrand Street, Boscobel, WI. The event fee is \$25 payable to Corpus Christi Parish.

Contact Julie Biba at (608) 375-2589

Friday, February 28: COME & BE LOVED, a high school ladies discernment evening.

All high school ladies in the Diocese are invited to an evening with religious sisters and consecrated women for vespers, talks, discussion, pizza and adoration! Held at St. Peter's historic church in Ashton 6-9pm, 7121 County Road K, Middleton. Contact Theresa at theresa.klinkhammer@gmail.com. Next dates are March 21 and April 25.

Madonna Rosary Makers of St. Bernard Church, 2015 Parmenter Street, Middleton part of Holy Cross Pastorate is offering to teach small groups how to make mission rosaries. Making 1000's a year, the group would love to share their knowledge! Contact Barbara at 608-516-7808 or Jeanette at 608-576-4037 to set up a time!

'NCCW's Spiritual Advisor's Message' Continued from Page 1

As we step into this new year, rejoice in the gift of hope that illuminates your journey as daughters of God. Pope Francis, in preparation for the Jubilee of Hope, reminds us of the profound truth found in the words of St. Paul: "Hope does not disappoint" (Romans 5:5). This hope is not a fleeting emotion but a firm trust in God's enduring presence and promises. The Holy Father calls us to live this hope fully, saying: "Hope is alive and it embraces our lives forever." As Catholic women, you are called to embody this hope in every aspect of your lives —nurturing your families, supporting your communities, and bringing light to those in need. January is a time when we traditionally think of the year ahead and perhaps even make some resolutions in our lives for the things we hope to do better, and the things we hope to leave behind. What a beautiful opportunity to resolve to leave behind the division and negativity that defined so much of 2024 and replace that with words of hope. May our hope, renewed through our living faith, be the balm that heals our world.

And let us, as always, draw inspiration from the Blessed Virgin Mary, who held onto hope even in the most challenging moments. Like her, may we embrace the new year with hearts full of trust and faith, knowing that God's plans for us are always for good.

As we open our hearts to engage this Jubilee, let us take this year to deepen our relationship with Christ, to grow in prayer, and to share the joy of the Gospel with those around us. Together, let us live as beacons of hope, confident that God's love never fails. May this year bring abundant blessings, peace, and a renewed spirit of hope to you and your loved ones.

Peace, love, and prayers,

Fr. Tom Washburn National Spiritual Advisor to NCCW



Fr. Tom writes a reflection for the President's Pen in the monthly noteworthy communication from the National Council of Catholic Women. As an Independent Member, you also can receive this vital national news. See Page 2 for membership opportunities!

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight."

Proverbs 3:5