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CAROL ROGERS

President of the
Madison Diocesan Council of
Catholic Women

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(608) 391-2564

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MEMBERSHIP

AFFILIATIONS If your parish or pastorate pays dues to NCCW, then ALL parish women are already members!

Contacting NCCW

NCCW
10335 -A Democracy Ln.
Fairfax, VA 22030

Individual Members Any Catholic woman can join the efforts of MDCCW and NCCW by becoming a Individual member!

See: www.mdccw.com
or
www.nccw.org

Connecting Catholic Women!

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

Affiliated with the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW)

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

What a whirlwind... I trust that you had a wonderful Thanksgiving Day and season, and now Advent... four short weeks in which we prepare our hearts and homes for a holy Christmas. Our aim this Advent is to build the Body of Christ ever more deeply in our own hearts, one candle, one week at a time. Each Advent candle represents a virtue, a supernatural habit that will strengthen our souls as we journey toward holiness.

Week 1 purple candle represents **Hope**, which is especially needed this year as we navigate challenges in our families and our troubled world; build Hope by deepening your prayer life.

Week 2 is the purple candle of **Peace**. Continue to pray the daily Rosary as our Blessed Mother has asked us to do, interceding for peace in families, neighborhoods, and nations.

Week 3 candle represents **Joy** as is easily seen by its pink color. Keeping joy in our hearts and spreading it to those who have little reason for joy is a sacrifice of time and effort.

The final purple candle of Week 4 represents **Love**. Through spiritual reflection, in conversation with Jesus, or simply in silence before His Majesty, this tiny baby Jesus will fill our hearts with His Love. The final three days of Advent and the anticipation of Christmas will build in our hearts abundant love for all, especially for those whom God places in our lives to challenge us to love the unlovable, the difficult, the grumpy, the troubled soul. I trust that our Advent time of prayer, penance, sacrifice, and spiritual reflection will have led us to grow in the virtues and to spread our hope, peace, joy, and love among all whom God has placed in our lives.

Remember that **2025** has been designated as a **Jubilee Year**, the **Holy Year of Hope**. We begin this celebration on December 24, 2024, and continue to December 23, 2025. This will be a time of hope, reconciliation, and grace in the Catholic Church and will hopefully spill out into the world at large. Let us all be **'Pilgrims of Hope'**.

Women representing 25 of the 30 parishes in the diocese shared information at the November MDCCW Board meeting about how they are working together to share events and form friendships with women in their parishes. Please participate in women's events to make new friends and form

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

United across the Diocese Box of Joy REPORT



Nearly 1000 Boxes of Joy have been shipped through

the Cross Catholic Outreach project!

THANK YOU to all who helped pack a box, pay for shipping or assisted in any way!

Next year, anticipate the drop-off dates to be the first weekend in November and the drop off location at

St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church,
5959 St. Martin Circle, Martinsville, WI
Plan early to get your official shoeboxes available from Linda Ripp.

Q's? Email Linda linmdccw@gmail.com

United in Voice
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
CATHOLIC WOMEN

From our National Spiritual Advisor

Dear NCCW Family,

In his inauguration speech in 1989, President George H.W. Bush said, *"America is never wholly herself unless she is engaged in high moral principle. We as a people have such a purpose today. It is to make kinder the face of the nation and gentler the face of the world."* That might be one of the loftiest sentiments expressed by a president, and one of the greatest aspirations that we could ever hold as a people.

I think if you were to ask most Americans what kind of country we are, we would name our highest values. We would talk about our love of freedom, we would talk about the opportunities that this country provides

NCCW Spiritual Advisor continued on Page 4!

The Mission of the NCCW is to Support, Empower, and Educate all Catholic women in Spirituality, Leadership and Service
MDCCW is affiliate of the National Council of Catholic Women which acts through its membership to respond with Gospel values to the needs of the church and society in the modern world. Learn more at www.mdccw.com and www.nccw.org

**MDCCW Board of Directors
Representing you
From around the DIOCESE!**

President: Carol Rogers
From Pastorate 4
Now **Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament**

Co-Presidents: Carolyn Zenter
From Pastorate 10
Now **Mater Dei**
And Jane Lepeska Grinde
From Pastorate 22
Now **Our Lady of Guadalupe**

Secretary: Marie Fleisner
From Pastorate 16
Now: **St. Thérèse of Lisieux**

Treasurer: Patty Spragg
From Pastorate 7:
Now: **St. John Paul II**

Immediate Past President:
Linda Ripp
From Pastorate 19
Now **Holy Cross**

COMMISSIONS:

Leadership:
Sue Barker From Pastorate 20
Now: **Divine Mercy**

Spirituality:
Judy Lyons From Pastorate 14
Now: **St. Teresa of Calcutta**

Service: Linda Ripp
From Pastorate 19
Now **Holy Cross**

**VOICE
of the
SAINTS**

Feasts, Memorials and Solemnities

- First Sunday of Advent, 12-1
- St. Francis Xavier, 12-3
- St. John Damascene, 12-4
- St. Nicholas, 12-6
- St. Ambrose, 12-7
- Second Sunday of Advent, 12-8
- The immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 12-9
- Our Lady of Loreto, 12-10
- St. Damasus, 12-11
- Our Lady of Guadalupe, 12-12
- St. Lucy, 12-13
- St. John of the Cross, 12-14
- Third Sunday of Advent, 12-15
- St. Peter Canisius, 12-21
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, 12-22
- St. John of Kanty, 12-23
- Nativity of the Lord, 12-25
- St. Stephen, 12-26
- St. John, Apostle, 12-27
- The Holy Innocents, 12-28
- The Holy Family, 12-29

LEADERSHIP

Leading Your CCW During Advent

December 1 is the first day of the month and the first day of Advent. Advent ends with Christmas Day, December 25th. This is a time of preparation for the greatest event in human history. Do you have your Advent wreath ready; do you have an Advent wreath? Saying a prayer as a family, before a meal, and lighting a candle, is a great way to unite your family and share in the true meaning of this holy season. These 4 weeks are a special time to dwell further into our faith and the reason we have Christmas.

Has your CCW done anything special for this holy season? There are many missalettes, books and studies out there to help you during this time. An Advent Study with Bishop Hying is available at MadisonDiocese.org/Walk With One. The study is focusing on bringing one person back to the faith. It seems everyone knows a person who is not practicing their faith, often a family member. Will you be a part of this or another program? If nothing else, you can pray for this intention or others during this holy season. Remember what Advent is about and encourage others to do the same. By preparing yourself and others, you will be ready to celebrate Christmas as the birth of Jesus, the real "Reason for the Season". Have a Blessed Advent and Holy Christmas Season!

*By Sue Barker
Leadership Commission Chair, MDCCW*



**ELECTRONIC
SPIRITUALITY ?
Faith in Cyber Space**

Jesus transcends space and time. His love for humanity is eternal, timeless, endless. Forever drawing us closer to Him upon our 'Yes' and freewill, we align our heart to His by our unique fingerprint. For some of us isolated in person by distance, health, or lack of transportation, we are left alone to seek Him outside of our Sunday Mass opportunities.

Fortunately, the internet is full of resources to keep us learning and connected! Find a valid Catholic Podcast and grow persistently prayerful! Here are some great ideas to start: Bishop Hying's Walk With One program via MadisonDiocese.org/Walk With One, Ascension, a Catholic multimedia network offers podcasts on The Bible in a Year and Catechism in a Year hosted by Fr. Michael Schmitz and starting January 1st, The Rosary in a Year! Other apps carry these offerings also (ie: YouTube, Apple Podcasts.) Find a perfect virtual partner in prayer for the times you cannot join a group, then share that with others!

LEADERSHIP

Mission Possible - Let the Bell Ring

Uniting women and thus uniting humanity is possible when we understand we are all part of God's family. We are called to feed the hungry, especially those hungry for God's love.



Deep in Northern Wisconsin, on the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation, stands a mission church and school serving as the only Catholic School in Sawyer County. Just south of Hayward, a thriving recreational spot, the St. Francis Solanus Parish exterior needs repair and its bell has gone silent.

School Sisters of St. Francis from Milwaukee have worked at the Mission for over 100 years, relying primarily on donations. Sister Felissa originally from our Diocese has been ministering to the Ojibwe Native Americans for 61 years. Her connection to our Diocese is limited, but includes dedicated supporters. Like so many small parishes, funding is a perpetual need, yet so many souls are at stake. Consider a gift this Christmas from your heart to the heart of the Northwoods.

St. Francis Solanus Mission
13891 W. Mission Road Stone Lake, WI 54876-3099
www.stfrancismission.org

SPIRITUALITY

Faith Finds Advent at Home

Every Advent, when we set up our Nativity scene in the living room, the manger stands empty. When the children were young, I explained to them each year that they could put a piece of hay in the manger every time they offered a little sacrifice for someone else. The goal was to have a manger full of soft hay for Baby Jesus on Christmas morning. "Mom, can I put a piece of hay in the manger?" was often an excited exclamation heard in our house all through Advent. Now that the children are older, the manger still fills up, not with excited exclamations, but with silent sacrifices. This is the way it should be in our hearts, throughout Advent, as we prepare a place for Our Lord to rest.



*By Julianne Nornberg
Contributor to the Catholic Herald and member of Holy Cross Pastorate (formerly Pastorate 19)*

"The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic Gods giving, by grace, through faith, and this is not of ourselves." Saint Nicholas

Mark Your Calendars!

December 7

Advent by Candlelight At St. John the Baptist School, Waunakee. See page 4.

MDCCW Convention Saturday June 28th at St. Francis Xavier,

Cross Plains. Bishop Hying along with singer, composer, recording artist and catechetical speaker Vallimar Jansen will be guest speakers at the MDCCW Convention Tentative timing for your 2025 calendar is 9:00am-3:00pm.

NCCW Convention 2025 - Orlando, FL August 19-23, 2025 www.nccw.org

See EVENTS on Page 4.

NCCW MEMBER PERK!

Just announced!

NCCW has secured a logo account for clothing apparel from Lands' End with the NCCW logo! Go to www.nccw.org, click on the 'Members Only' tab and order your choice of clothing apparel with the NCCW logo!



THE PEN CONTINUED

a unity of heart within your own pastorate. The 2nd pastorate, St. Therese of Lisieux, has officially merged into a parish with its installation of Fr. Tim Renz as pastor in the Watertown area. The meeting closed with Mass for women of the diocese who died within the year.

Our next meeting is March 15. Between now and then we will be calling on you to assist with preparations for the June Convention. Vallimar Jansen is the keynote speaker! She will be delivering her message, showcasing her many skills and talents in two sessions as well as providing music for the Mass. Save June 28, 2025, for this event! See the sidebar this month for more details.

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 of the process are being worked out so that donations from individual women and women's groups may be united to produce a greater impact for the Cathedral.

Suzanne Koch has accepted the appointment to chair the MDCCW Ways and Means Committee. She is currently managing the Mustard Fundraiser (see related article).

Three Board places remain vacant. The Holy Spirit is calling three of you to take these positions!

- * Membership Committee Chair - Encourage CCW membership, local and National.
- * Legislative Committee Chair - Share pertinent information concerning government
- * Historian - Collect info and keep a scrapbook of MDCCW events and activities.

Wishing you a Merry and Blessed Christmas! May the Infant Jesus, His Blessed Mother, and good and faithful St. Joseph light all your ways for all your days.

In His Mercy and Her Love,

Carol Rogers

Madison Diocesan Council of Catholic Women President

MDCCW FUNDRAISER!

Just Announced!

A fundraising effort is underway to build the resources of MDCCW for educational and convention funding! Parish CCW's are asked to promote and sell Uncle Phil's Mustard at any/all events.



Made in Wisconsin, Uncle Phil's is a rare item at retail outlets, yet shipped worldwide! Details of how to get the 5 varieties of mustard to your group is organized by Suzanne Koch at (920) 229-4150 orkochspeech@gmail.com

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Following our Cathedral Church

A fundraising campaign entitled: TOGETHER We Will Open The Doors launches the official start to Diocesan-wide effort to finish the Mother-Church of our Diocese. As a beacon of hope in the heart of Madison, it will stand as a testament to the power of faith and prayer for our troubled country and suffering world. Together in Faith, Hope, Love, Worship, Beauty and Mission, the Cathedral of St. Bernard of Clairvaux will help bring us together in Christ. Follow our MDCCW's efforts to join in a special gift from the women of our Diocese!

Madisoncathedral.org/support

SERVICE

THANK YOU to parishes contributing to the Box of Joy project and uniting our Diocese in bringing loving gifts to children in developing countries.



Pick-a-THEME

Pick Your Theme-Based Project for December!

THEME Based on a PASTORAL CALENDAR:

ADVENT

Wait for the Lord with Mary, prayer reflections
Candlelight Reflections on Advent

THEME Based on the MONTH:

NATIVITY of THE LORD

Serve the vulnerable newborns and their mothers through the Walking With Moms in Need program's ideas.

THEME Based on 'BE-ATTITUDES'

Shelter the Homeless

Jesus was born away from home, was exiled in Egypt as a youth and during his ministry, was even driven away from Nazareth! Every homeless face you see, has a story that begs for understanding. 'Seek and You Shall Find' how you can help this dire need.

THEME Based on NCCW-Endorsed Projects:

MADONNA PLAN Madonna Plan

Embrace one new initiative to assist women and children in need of life's basic necessities.

EVENTS and HAPPENINGS



December 7 - ADVENT by CANDLELIGHT 1:00pm- 3:30pm

At Saint John the Baptist School Cafeteria, 114 East Third Street, Waunakee, Wisconsin

(St. John the Baptist Catholic Church is part of St. Maximilian Kolbe Pastorate-formerly Pastorate 18)

Join us for an afternoon of prayer, fellowship, music and light refreshments. Our speaker, Kate Gallimore will speak on **Living the Magnificat**. Make this your Advent for prayer! (St. Maximilian Kolbe Pastorate) Contact Kathy Roelke at roelke@tds.net or (608) 469-8698 or Dixie Lyght at lyghthouses5@gmail.com or (608) 220-3439. Deadline to Register is Wednesday, December 4th.

December 7 - Advent Morning of Reflection 7:30am- 11:00am

Schoenstatt Heights, 5901 Cottage Grove Road, Madison, Wisconsin

Prepare your hearts for Christmas with our Blessed Mother through gifted speakers and reflections. Optional Confessions begin at 7:30am followed by Mass at 8am. Program reflections begin at 9am. Register through tinyurl.com/adventreflections24 or by contacting Michelle at (608) 333-2782, A \$20 donation is suggested.

December 14 - CCW Holiday Cookie Walk & Vendor Sale 8:30am- 12:30pm

St. Patrick Church (Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish), 521 Fair Street, Lodi, Wisconsin



NCCW Spiritual Advisor Continued from Page 1:

just about anyone to make their lives better. We would talk about the melting pot that brings together so many different people from different places and yet we all become one as Americans. We would name all of the virtues and blessings that result from life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. But, if we are being honest with ourselves, we would also have to say that there are far too many times when we do not live up to the lofty ideals of our nation. Certainly, in the final days of a presidential election, this is true. Lies, and vitriol take the place of discourse and mutual concern, sadly. Who we can better villainize seems to be more important than the truth, working together, and a hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Now, for Americans who aspire to those loftiest of ideals, and most certainly for people of faith, we can do much better. If we truly believe that God is our Father – and certainly, we do – then that makes us of necessity sisters and brothers. This remains true no matter what side of the political spectrum we are on, no matter what our immigration status is, no matter the color of our skin, the size of our bank account, the challenges we face. We are, all of us, sisters and brothers to each other as daughters and sons of God. Remember, Jesus said to us, *“For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them”* (Luke 6:32).

I think we can all be proud of our Catholic faith and the great community that exists, as members of NCCW. As our nation goes through this recurring negative pattern, we remember that only you and I can break this cycle of ever-increasing vitriol. We are called to do more. We are called to be more, be better. Let us lead that charge to change our world into the Kingdom that Jesus came to inaugurate.

And most importantly, let us remember who we are, as Americans, as Christians, as Catholic women. Let us live up to the noble words of the poem by Emma Lazarus which are etched upon the base of the Statue of Liberty,

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”

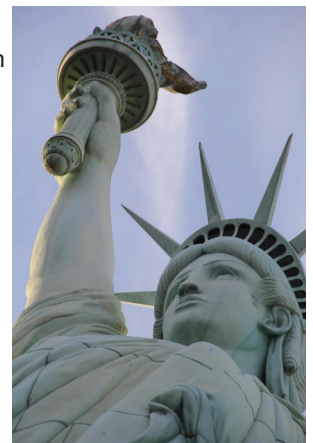
Let us make kinder the face of our nation, and gentler the face of our world.

Peace, love, and prayers,

Fr. Tom Washburn

National Council of Catholic Women Spiritual Advisor Fr. Tom Washburn

as printed in the November 2024 CatholicWoman Magazine - Part of the benefits available exclusively to NCCW members!



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

Forward request by the 3rd week of the month for the following month you wish to see your event to:

Carol Rogers
carrog-mdccw@gmail.com

With Subject line: **‘Newsletter Event’**