

## Message from Our President

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**Judy Lyons**

My Dear MDCCW Sisters,

Blessings, health, and peace to you in this most holy season.

It is amazing how this year has flown by. You have all done yeoman's duty these past two years against great odds. I commend and thank you all!!

As you are aware, through the Holy Father, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and our own diocese, we are "Called to Witness" as part of the New Evangelization. What does this mean for us as the Council of Catholic Women?

I don't think it is related to standing on street corners preaching the Word, at least not for most of us and not for me. But there is a call for us here. We have something to do.

Think about it, we interact with the women of our parish on a regular basis. We love God and all His children. And we want to share that with other women. It will not happen in a grandiose way, but by our daily interaction with other women. It will happen in our day-to-day contact, in our prayers, and in our reaching out.

Because of our love for God's women, we form our mindsets to be able to share that love by how we act, what we say, and how we serve one another in love, in the name of Jesus, from our hearts. Ladies, we are called, and we are not alone. We have our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel, working on our behalf for the greater good.

To help us in this spiritual growth activity, please discuss and determine with your Vicariate and/or your affiliate what we can do better spread the Love of Jesus to the world

which is sorely in need now. We can do it in person or virtually or both. But we need to start the discussion.

An excellent resource available to members on the NCCW website ([www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org)) is "We are Called to Witness." Developed "to help members and affiliates discover and actively participate in sharing the Good News, the Joy of Jesus," it can be downloaded and printed or use digitally for in-depth or self-study. It includes ideas for group meetings, family activities, and newsletters. It might be a good study for the Lenten season for your board or group.

This NCCW resource is well worth your time and will help us do our part to help Bishop Hying with his work. Please let me know if you have any comments, questions, or suggestions.

I wish each of you a blessed Christmas season. Side note: I am so happy the Church has given us the 12 days of Christmas.

*Our Lady of Good Counsel,  
pray for us.*

## From Our Spiritual Advisor

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**Msgr. Duane Moellenberndt**

Dear Members of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women,

Like you, I am happy to be able to do many things again in-person. Our vicariate meetings this fall as well as MDCCW board meetings are so much better when we are all in the same room.

One of the areas that I am hearing about that needs attention is attendance at our weekend Masses. Many parishes are not at the level of participation at Mass that they were before the pandemic. I thought once Mass was publicly offered again that we would see an increase in

those attending, even at a higher level than when everything shut down because of COVID. It seems that hasn't happened in many places.

I know you are active in your parishes and receive the sacraments on a regular basis. However, I think we could all be a little more upfront in speaking with others about what the Mass and especially the reception of the Eucharist means to us personally.

In our conversations with family and friends, we can slip in a comment about how our lives are better because of our faithfulness to the Mass.

As you talk with other people, look for those opportunities and quietly plant the seed about the importance of your faith. The comment doesn't have to be dramatic or challenging. It can simply be spoken from the heart. In that way we are living the call of the Diocese to "Go Make Disciples."

## From Our Province Director

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### Lu Ann Miller

*Lu Ann Miller is the new province director for Wisconsin from the La Crosse diocese. A convert to the Catholic Faith, she values education and actively participates in her parish, Mary Mother of the Church in La Crosse. Lu Ann and her husband Don have two children and four granddaughters. She is in 42nd year working at the Mayo Clinic. Below is her message.*

The Simple Path continues for me — only in a different direction. As I move about the State of Wisconsin, I keep returning to a piece of encouragement that may be somewhat of a message: **Leadership Knows No Age.**

We have been so blessed to have enthusiastic, creative, and dedicated CCW leaders at all levels, most who have served for many years. The knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of our older members are especially appreciated these days. Thank you to those of you who have served

and are willing to continue, and welcome new leaders of all ages who are willing to lead.

I had been preparing myself to step away from council commitments after having fulfilled one of my last offices and perhaps the most joyous office for me, chair of Leadership Commission for the La Crosse Diocesan CCW. I had, in a way, completed my full circle. The feeling I had was that my life of leadership could not have gotten any better or any more fulfilling than what I had walked through these past years.

I had not planned on disappearing, but rather managing "my plate" with family commitments, parish commitments, and community commitments, continuing with all those individual life joys that helped to make me who I am. But, as I found out, no matter how well thought out plans are, God came looking for me. He found me sitting in the pew, sitting in my office, and sitting on the steps outside my home and began wanting to talk with me again about leadership, knowing there must have been enough room on my plate to accept the position of Milwaukee province director. I am always thankful to God for having such strong faith in me and not allowing me to lose sight of my strengths.

I am excited to be able to meet you through your MDCCW president, at a gathering, at a convention, or wherever our paths shall cross. Please know that I love knowing what you are doing. If it is something you want to share with me, I invite you to send it my way as it will help me get to know the special ladies of faith throughout Wisconsin ([luannmiller55@yahoo.com](mailto:luannmiller55@yahoo.com)). It is my absolute privilege and honor to become a part of your council lives the next two years. Until we meet — **Lu**

## Leadership Commission

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### **Sue Barker**

*Leadership Commission Chair*

Now that we can gather in person, we want active CCW groups. Have you planned your current and possibly future projects, and have you started working on them? Don't be afraid to take the lead and be sure to listen. You may be surprised by the response you get.

Leadership means mentoring, guiding a member of your group on how to do something that needs to be done without you doing all the work! Often, it's hard to let go, but remember you are part of a group, and everyone should be willing to lend a hand.

From the Leadership Team at the NCCW convention, I heard several suggestions that can work in our diocese. Your pastor's support of your CCW is very important. Talk to him individually and invite him to a meeting or even to lunch. Make him aware of what you have done for your parish both socially and monetarily!

Make sure your pastoral council knows of the contributions you have made. When given a printed list of all my parish CCW had done and purchased for the parish in the last few years, members of my parish council were amazed.

Cater your activities to the age group you want to recruit. Invite young moms to a meeting and arrange for childcare. Invite a speaker who will be interesting to them and you. Ask them to join your group. Most people who don't belong to a group say they were never asked! It may take two, three, or more times before someone is ready to say yes.

Confirmation students are often in need of service hours; invite them to participate in events like bake/craft sales or your yearly bazaar. Being part of your group at a young age may encourage them to join when they are able. This ties in with the NCCW program to get our college women involved in CCW. Again, doing things that interests them will encourage young women to become a part of one of the most active groups in the Catholic Church and carry on this fine tradition.

Don't be afraid to try something new — you may be surprised at the results!

## Service Commission

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### **Coreen Marklein**

*Service Commission Chair*

As we continue with our 2021-2022 MDCCW year, I hope that you include one or more service projects in your parish and vicariate CCW. If you have not already done so, plan your meetings throughout the year around a particular theme and then plan your service projects as well.

### **Boxes of Joy**

Boxes of Joy continues to be an MDCCW Service Project for 2021. This year we sent a total of 896 boxes to be distributed to children in Latin American countries, an increase of 146 boxes from last year. Thank you again to St. Peter's in Ashton for being our drop-off site. You are the greatest examples of evangelization by your actions.

### **Walking with Moms in Need**

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) selected WWMiN to help pregnant and parenting women in need, and MDCCW has adopted it as a service project and encourages councils to participate in the program.

Everyone should know how to help moms in difficult circumstances. While not trying to turn Catholic parishes into pregnancy centers, we can support local pregnancy centers where they exist, and we can also find and share other resources with pregnant and parenting women.

Watch for Service Commission updates on the MDCCW website about this and other projects.

### **A Brighter Future for Moms in Need**

Representatives from 17 Madison diocesan parishes attended the first Walking with Moms in Need (WWMiN) training session October 23 at Holy Name Heights. Bishop Donald J. Hying joined the session to share his support and offer a Mass for participants.

WWMiN is a nation-wide effort to encourage Catholic parishes to walk alongside vulnerable pregnant and parenting women in need. Participating parishes are asked to attend a training session and to complete a survey about parish services that will be part of a diocesan-wide resource website to be created this spring by the diocesan core work group.

Members of the core group are Susanna Herro, Blessed Sacrament, Madison; Vicky Franchino, Queen of Peace, Madison; Julie Bennett, Christ the King, McFarland; Barbara Sella, Good Shepherd, Madison; and Katherine Higgins, St. Paul's University Catholic Center.

They would like to see a representative from every parish attend a training program. "If no effort is currently underway in your parish, volunteer to get one started," said Franchino who added that the core group welcomes suggestions and help as the program is implemented in the diocese.

"The ultimate goal of Walking with Moms is for Catholic parishes to be seen as a place where a pregnant or parenting woman could turn for help," said Herro, who has played a key role in bringing the program to the Diocese of Madison.

More than one-third of U.S. dioceses are part of this critical effort and more than 15 percent of parishes in the Diocese of Madison have already signed on to bring WWMiN to their communities.

For more information on WWMiN or to sign up for our next training expected to be held in December or January, email [wwminmadison@gmail.com](mailto:wwminmadison@gmail.com).

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### **Spirituality Commission**

#### **Mona Matijevich**

Spirituality Commission Chair

Let there Be Peace on Earth!

Happy Advent, Ladies of faith. Every year Advent arrives, and we set out to prepare the way for Jesus, but then the hustle and bustle of worldly things get in our way. We must clean the house, get the tree, decorate, buy gifts, and smile, smile, smile. The reality is that we are busy. My priest, Fr. Savio, says busy stands for Being Under Satan's Yoke! Makes one think.

Bishop Hying has been writing about Go Make Disciples, and it hit me. We are all called, yes, you and me, to go bear fruit, fruit that will last. Each one of us has been given a talent from God and now, more than ever, we need to step up to the plate and do what God has prepared us to do. We are women who can multi-task. Many of us can't run the race anymore, but we can walk, and "getter" done! So, this Advent, let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

## 2021 MDCCW CONVENTION

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Did you miss the 2021 MDCCW convention hosted virtually by the West Dane Vicariate? You can still view the convention, thanks to Coreen Marklein and Angie Sailing and Angie's son Christopher. Videos of the sessions are available. By clicking on the links below, you can watch the Bishop's presentation and the session on the saints presented by young ladies from the West Dane Vicariate. Other videos will be posted on the MDCCW website ([mdccw.com](http://mdccw.com)).

**Bishop Hying Keynote Address:**

<https://youtu.be/NdR8csqWdpo>

**Bishop Hying Q/A:**

<https://youtu.be/po7wqKChKIk>

**Saints:** <https://youtu.be/0otJdOWAaUw>

### Hosted by West Dane Vicariate

Rosa Ropers, St. John the Baptist, Waunakee, and Joan Pregler, St. Peter, Ashton, co-chaired the 2021 MDCCW convention with help from women of the parishes of the West Dane Vicariate.

Nearly 150 women registered for the convention, which was aired via YouTube the morning of June 12. Groups of women gathered at sites in Ashton, Fennimore, Baraboo, Lancaster, Madison, and New Berlin. MDCCW spiritual advisor, Msgr. Duane Moellenberndt, watched the convention with a small group at St. Peter Church in Ashton. He credits the CCW leaders for their "dedication and ingenuity to make this possible... despite the chaos and uncertainty of the past year."

Cancelled last year because of the pandemic, this year's convention coincided with the 75th anniversary of the diocese while celebrating the 101st anniversary of

the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW).

### Women Pillars of the Church

With the theme, "Reflecting on the Past and Celebrating the Future," Msgr. Moellenberndt, who has served as MDCCW spiritual director since 1994, told the women, "You have much to be proud of as we reflect on the past. In many ways you are the pillars of our parish communities. So many of you give your time and talent to accomplish what the church needs to have done. You are sharing in the ministry of Jesus because you are doing His work in your local community and in the Diocese of Madison."

Not knowing what the future is, Msgr. Moellenberndt said, neither did the early disciples. "What those disciples knew so, too, do we. When we are doing God's work, we cannot help but be successful. For it is the Lord who is working through us. How privileged and blessed we are that God has invited us to share in his very ministry."

### Music, Prayer, Speeches, Meditation

The virtual convention started with the music of "How Great Thou Art" in the background as Becky Frederick, standing at the entrance of St. Martin of Tours Church, Martinsville, welcomed viewers. She served as emcee for the three-and one-half hour session, which included presentations by Bishop Donald J. Hying and spiritual writer Jeannie Ewing; the Divine Mercy Chaplet by Anna Nuzzo; prayer and meditation led by four young women on four women saints; and a prayer service. Breaks with music were interspersed throughout the convention.



The program ended with a “trip down memory lane,” a slide show of pictures from the start of the NCCW to current MDCCW activities followed by a video about NCCW featuring resident Jean Kelly, who lives in suburban Milwaukee. The closing song was Hail Mary.

Next year’s convention will be hosted by Columbia North Vicariate CCW in Berlin on June 21.

### MDCCW Rejuvenation Effort

Bishop Donald J. Hying of Madison pledged his prayers and support to the Council of Catholic Women in a video presentation during the MDCCW convention. “My prayer and hope is as we spend more time together, that we can grow the Council of Catholic Women... the stronger the council is, the stronger the parish is, and the stronger the church is.”

Aware that getting members is a challenge for the CCW at all levels, Bishop Hying offered his support to the CCW mission which is to “respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.”

Earlier this year, MDCCW President Judy Lyons appointed a rejuvenation committee. One of its first tasks was to survey Catholic women in the diocese, asking them “to help us become a stronger voice in fulfilling our mission ‘to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service’.”

The survey could be completed on-line or on paper and included four multiple-choice questions:

- What would attract you to a parish women’s group?
- What activities would you attend if offered (check all that apply)?
- Are you currently an active member of a council?

- If no, what prevents you from being an active member?

Over 550 surveys were returned, with about 75 percent saying they didn’t belong to a CCW or didn’t know about much about CCW. In reviewing the results, the committee wanted “to make sure that they reached out” to those who gave contact information and asked vicariate CCW presidents to help with that.

### Why I joined CCW

The Rejuvenation is continuing to brainstorm ideas to increase membership. At the last meeting, members talked about the value of CCW to them personally. Following the meeting, Judy asked MDCCW board members to tell why they belong to CCW. Below is a sampling of the responses.

**Coreen Marklein, service commission chair and past president.** I joined CCW to get to know the ladies of my parish of St. Joseph in Baraboo. CCW is a way to connect with women of like faith and share it with others. They are an extension of family. The programs provide opportunities to help those in need. Being active in MDCCW and NCCW adds another dimension of sharing my faith with others. Faith—Family—Friends

**Sue Barker, leadership commission chair and West Dane Vicariate CCW president.** I became an active member of our CCW after I retired. Before that I was unable to attend monthly meetings, but always donated or tried to be a part of the events they held. The women at our church are my “community,” and I know I can depend on them when needed. What started as becoming active has turned into leadership beyond what I could have imagined. Taking a position at the vicariate level led to a position of president. Attending two NCCW

conventions has opened my eyes to the many women who are devoted to the wonderful organization.

When you think you are too busy, these women will put you to shame. Too old to be a part of CCW? One member is 100 and still going strong. Our activities keep us busy, and we always find a way to have fun!! Along with all these wonderful benefits, my faith has grown by leaps and bounds, something I never expected. Our events focus on giving back to our parish, and we always gain more than we give. I love the Council of Catholic Women!

**Carol Brennan, past president and past province director.** I joined CCW mainly to connect with sisters of faith and to grow spiritually. Whether we are a Martha or a Mary, CCW has prayers, programs, and projects available for all of us, no matter where we are in our faith journey.

CCW makes us more aware of current issues and sensitive to the needs of others, locally, nationally, and internationally. We inspire, encourage, and motivate each other. We bring out the best in each other as we focus on how we can help those in need. Our faith is about using our talents and putting our faith into action.

After being active in CCW for 21 years living in Berlin, we moved to Kimberly to be closer to our daughters. Our Holy Spirit Parish has about 60 ministries, but no CCW. One saving grace is NCCW started a Virtual Affiliate Meeting the first Monday of every Monday offered to Individual Members of NCCW who have no affiliations in their area. I, of course, joined.

I treasure all my years with you, sisters of faith in the Madison Diocese, for giving me the opportunity to serve and helping me to grow in faith and love. I will keep you in my prayers — please keep me in yours.

**Carol Rogers, secretary.** I belong to CCW (in our parish St. Anne's Sodality) because it provides the backbone on which service in our parish is founded and leads beyond that to service in the vicariate and the diocese. As women together, we model lives of prayer and active involvement in parish activities. As my mother was a model for me, my hope is that other young mothers will bring their daughters into the sisterhood of CCW in each new generation.

**Rosa Ropers, past president.** I belong to the council to enable me to meet like-minded women who, though very busy, will take the time to help others in our church and the greater community. There is much that needs to be done; and working together, we can make a greater impact in the lives of many. The council gives me a platform that enables me to talk about my faith and pray with others who willingly want to share their beliefs as it relates to today's happenings. I enjoy socializing with members and their families, helping them to feel welcomed and included in our parish family.

**Ellen Dargel, Sauk Vicariate president.** I joined CCW many years ago as a means of growing in my faith and connecting with other women of faith at my church. The meetings, speakers, and service projects have helped me grow as a Christian woman. CCW has many avenues to connect to almost any interest that you may have. CCW is a great opportunity for increasing faith, confidence, and friendship.

**Jean Kelly, NCCW immediate past president.** I belong because I met a group of women who share my beliefs and are helping me get to heaven. My faith life has taken a giant leap by learning and using all the resources and programs made available to me. Everything is produced for women and by women. I can't think of another organization that provides awareness of so

many issues like human trafficking and domestic violence where we can make a difference.

**Jane Grinde, newsletter editor.** I am a member because of my mother Dorothy Lepeska who was active at the parish, deanery, and diocesan levels, serving in leadership roles for all three. For more than 20 years, she was newsletter editor, a job I gradually took over from her as she entered her 90s. I stay a member because I like the mission of NCCW, and I like the women of the faith I have come to know.

**Linda Ripp, president-elect.** I belong to CCW for fellowship; to be part of a united Voice of Catholic women with common goals and mission; and to work on projects that improve life for people.



## NCCW CONVENTION

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### **National Council of Catholic Women Celebrates 101 Years of Ministry and Service at 2020ne Convention**

Five of our “Council Sisters” represented our diocese at the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) convention in August in Arlington, VA. They joined more than 500 Catholic women from across the U.S. to celebrate NCCW’s 100th birthday, delayed by one year due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Attending from MDCCW were Judy Lyons, president; Linda Ripp, president-elect; Coreen Marklein, service commission chair and past president; Sue Barker, West Dane Vicariate president; and Kathy Loy, past treasurer. Below they share their reflections of the convention.

Wisconsinite Jean Kelly presided over the convention in one of her final acts as NCCW president. From the Milwaukee Archdiocese, Jean is the former province director for Wisconsin and is a familiar face in our diocese, having attended our MDCCW conventions and vicariate meetings.

Speakers for the 2020ne National Convention included Ana Lisa Piñon, Gloria Purvis, Most Reverend William Wack, CSC, and Elizabeth Tomlin. Presentations on spirituality, leadership, and service provided information and resources for women to take to their home parishes and dioceses.

Liturgical celebrants were His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory, The Most

Reverend Michael Burbidge, The Most Reverend Oscar Solis, The Most Reverend William Wack, and The Very Reverend Miguel Gonzalez. Along with over 35 ordained Spiritual Advisors in attendance, the liturgy was additionally enhanced with music provided by Elias Charles Benn, cantor, and Mark Jason Abel, accompanist.

Following the call of the 2018 pastoral letter of the United States Catholic Bishops, *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love — A Pastoral Letter Against Racism*, NCCW members approved a resolution to heal our country and communities from the negative effects of racism, prejudices, and all types of discrimination. The resolution is reprinted on the next page.

NCCW was presented with a proclamation from the Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary, recognizing the continued partnership and shared mission to empower Catholic Women in serving God, to firmly support social justice and inclusivity, to prevent human trafficking, and to support victims of domestic violence.

Next year’s convention will be at the Marriott Minneapolis City Center November 2 to 5, 2022. Gertrude Hill Gavin, the first president of NCCW, was born in St. Paul, MN.

### **New NCCW President**

Patricia Voorhes is the new NCCW president. Born and reared in California, she moved to Salt Lake City in 1980. She has served at every level of council. Married 51 years, she and her husband Wayne have two grown daughters, two sons-in-law, five living granddaughters, and one deceased grandson who died by suicide in January

2017. Pat is a retired licensed clinical social worker who enjoys sewing, quilting, cross-stitching, and other crafts.

In her first column for *Catholic Woman* (Vol. 47, No. 4, 2021), the new president wrote about the theme of her presidency: Wide Open Hearts Abiding in Faith, Hope, and Love. She based the theme on *Fratelli Tutti*, the Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis and the pastoral letter of the U.S. Conference of Bishops.

“Throughout *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis calls us to unity, to approaching others with love, calling us to a society where differences co-exist but don’t divide and disagreements are not meant to be a contraction but instead a contraposition.”

Working alongside the board of directors, Pat’s goal is to “take to heart the exhortation in the Gospel of Matthew to be like God ‘who makes his sun to shine on good and bad alike and make his rain to fall on saints and sinners alike’ (Matthew 5:45-48); and to renew our dedication to bring faith, hope, and love to ALL our brothers and sisters, for we are ALL made in the image and likeness of God.”

### **NCCW Resolution on Racism**

**Healing Racism Purpose:** At the 2022 NCCW annual convention, each Province will be able to name at least one action their councils have taken to begin reducing racism in their personal lives, in their councils, and/or in their communities.

**Whereas** Racism is a sinful, learned, negative behavior of prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism against others of a particular race or ethnicity ([www.lexico.com/en/definition/racism](http://www.lexico.com/en/definition/racism)),

**Whereas** Racism disrespects human life and dignity and brings injustice and illness to our national and individual souls; and

**Whereas** Racism can cause great emotional, mental, and spiritual harm to both the person expressing this belief and those experiencing the effects of this belief.

**Resolved**, That all NCCW members will pray and promote the NCCW Prayer to Love: Healing Racism ([www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org) → Explore NCCW Prayer) to assist in eradicating racism and empowering council members, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, to become missionary disciples.

**Resolved**, That NCCW members educate ourselves and others by studying Open Wide Our Hearts, The Enduring Call to Love, a Pastoral Letter found on our website, [www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org) → NCCW News. The Letter, an accompanying study guide, and other resources from the US Council of Catholic Bishops can also be found at: [https://www.usccb.org/resources/study-guide/open-hearts-2019-09\\_0.pdf](https://www.usccb.org/resources/study-guide/open-hearts-2019-09_0.pdf) and

**Resolved**, That we encourage all members to invite women of all races and ethnicities to join, become involved in our councils and to share equally in the benefits and responsibilities for the direction and development of our councils and our communities.

### **Convention Reflections**

*Editor’s note. I asked the women who attended NCCW convention from MDCCW to email me their comments on the convention. Below are the reflections from Judy Lyons, Fort Atkinson, president; Linda Ripp, Martinsville, president-elect; Sue Barker, Verona, leadership commission chair and president of the West Dane Vicariate CCW; Coreen Marklein, Baraboo, service commission chair and past MDCCW president; and Kathy Loy, Fennimore, past MDCCW treasurer.*

### **Judy Lyons**

Probably the best thing about conventions is meeting other women who are doing the same things we are doing but in different ways. We are all working for the mission of NCCW which is “to act through its members to support, empower, and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service.” It is the sharing of these different ways that is one of the gifts of attending a convention.

The convention always has excellent speakers on a variety of subjects. What spoke most to me were the reports of the NCCW commission chairs, especially the Leadership Commission regarding mentoring new officers, new members, and new priests. Communication is the key. Some say that the Council of Catholic Women is one of the best kept secrets. Suggestions for growing CCW included

- Create a CCW Welcome Packet for women new to the parish. Share with the pastor, especially if he is new.
- Keep meetings short.
- Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things. Try some purely social events to bring potential members together with current members, perhaps a wine and cheese tasting event.
- Think outside the box and remember it is a different world than when most of us joined CCW.
- Reach out to women one-on-one to invite them to join council.
- Have fun.

### **Linda Ripp**

I am thankful that I had the opportunity to attend the 100-101 Anniversary NCCW convention. All the speakers and liturgies were great. My two favorite speakers were Gloria Purvis, “Women Persevere in Faith,” and Chloe Springer, “Watching the Seeds Planted Grow.”

Gloria wasn’t raised Catholic, but her parents saw the value of a Catholic education and sent her and her sisters to Catholic schools. When Gloria was 12, she decided to become a Catholic. When she told her mother, her mother said, “You know you can’t eat meat on Fridays.” Gloria’s family took her to Sunday Mass after dropping her grandmother at the Baptist church before they continued to the Methodist church. Eventually, her sisters converted and finally her parents.

One of her statements that really hit me was “we never know what fruit will come from our perseverance and prayers.” (example of St. Monica praying for her son Augustine) She followed that with the story of when her mother was in a coma following surgery and she couldn’t bear to visit her, but a little voice told her “That’s what Love does”—Gods’ love endures forever, and we need to persevere in our Faith even in difficulties.

Chloe Springer is a home-schooled teen from Florida. She received the “Golden Rose” award from her local CCW, recognizing her as a young woman for leadership/service in her parish. She spoke at the convention about the need to have a relationship with God because we can’t defend our faith without that relationship. She told a story about her brother giving her a gallon water bottle because she drinks so much water. Sometimes, she said, our Catholic faith can get a little dry. We need God to keep us quenched so we don’t get dehydrated. Because we aren’t gallon water bottles, we need to be refilled by God. We are the servants of God. God will equip us with what we need.

### **Sue Barker**

Imagine over 400 women and more than two dozen priests, Wilton Cardinal Gregory, several wonderful speakers, and a purse auction that raised over \$3,000 for women

entering the religious life. This was the National Council of Catholic Women 2020ne Convention held in Washington, DC! We learned that after no convention in 2020, little contact with our CCW groups, no masses or church functions, and constant masking and social distancing, our groups have remained strong.

We learned we need to continue to invite women to join our CCWs, especially moms and women as young as 18.

We learned we need to form friendships with our priests, so we have the parish support needed to continue. We learned two of the projects we can be part of nationally are “Boxes of Joy” and “Walking with Moms in Need.” We learned NCCW sponsors a rosary every 13th of the month that all members can join by phone, and we learned the website is an invaluable source of information for all women.

### **Coreen Marklein**

I have been going to conventions the past 10-plus years, but this year I got to go with my twin sister Kathy Loy.

Of all the events at prior conventions, this year’s Birthday Celebration was the biggest and best celebration of all. From former presidents dressing up in their favorite decade to the congo line with music, the birthday party was a site to behold. The energy in the room was electric. Whether you were in your 80s or 50s or younger, all seemed to have a great time.

As different decades were announced, members who had dressed up in fashion from their favorite decade were asked to stand. Music complemented the decade. Kathy and I dressed up as ladies of the 1950s, and we each wore a hat that was worn by our grandmother Helene Moran and some jewelry reminiscent of that time, including screw-on earrings.

I enjoy learning about the activities of the commissions and committees. Of special interest to me this year was the report of the Spiritual Commission. During the past few years, it has offered many “new items” virtually, including rosary meditations, prayer services, advent calendar, the rosary, Divine Mercy chaplet, and Stations of the Cross.

The Spirituality Commission introduced new Centennial prayer cards as well as a Centennial Prayer Service and the Prayer to Love - Healing Racism. Prayer cards are available for purchase through the NCCW Store online.

In addition to the prayer for healing racism, NCCW adopted a Resolution on Healing Racism. Included in the resolution is that be it resolved “that all NCCW members will pray and promote the NCCW Prayer to Love: Healing Racism to assist in eradicating racism and empowering council members, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, to become missionary disciples.”

### **Kathy Loy**

I was lucky enough to travel to the 2020ne NCCW Convention with my sister Coreen Marklein, who has attended many national conventions. I had planned to attend the 2020 Convention last year, but it was canceled due to COVID. I wanted to be able to attend the convention and see our own Jean Kelly from Elm Grove at the helm of the NCCW. Jean Kelly has attended many of our Madison Diocesan conventions and vicariate meetings. Jean was installed as NCCW president in September of 2019 in and relinquished that title at this convention.

I enjoyed the liturgies and the speakers. His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory told the NCCW assembly that we are all colleagues in the Church, working side by side to be people of faith. The Most Reverend William A. Wack told the NCCW to be witnesses of

the faith by sharing our faith in little ways and by prayer. "We are more powerful than the devil with prayer." Bishop Wack of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, FL, is our new NCCW Episcopal Liaison to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

I learned more about the programs of the NCCW. As a past diocesan treasurer, I sent the checks to the NCCW which were forwarded onto Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Cross Catholic Outreach, and the Vocation Purse Club. Our checks to CRS supported the Water for Life Project and the Madonna Plan.

The NCCW partners with the National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocation through the Vocation Purse Club. This organization has a very thorough criteria application process in deciding who will receive the funds toward paying off individual personal debt so that they can realize their vocation for religious life. If the person receiving the money changes her mind to enter the religious life, the amount given to them must be paid back in full.

I enjoyed meeting people from all over the country. One night our dining companions were from Florida, New York, and Connecticut. It was a great experience, and it would be nice to see more people from Wisconsin at the convention next year.