

## From Our President

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### **Bernadette Schaefer**

MDCCW President

Upon arriving at our national convention in Atlanta last August, I had a strong sense that this would be an exciting, interesting, and informative gathering. That was followed immediately by a wish that I had brought a busload of MDCCW members with me.

As I walked into the atrium of the hotel, I saw the convention emblem with the words "NCCW Caring for God's Creation" on the outside of the elevator and on the floor leading to the meeting rooms. Amazing! We were gathered in a large public building in the city of Atlanta, and our emblem was visible to everyone present! I felt a surge of pride in being a member of MDCCW and NCCW!

### **Mary, Model and Protector**

During his homily at the convention, Bishop Joel M. Konzen, S.M., Auxiliary Bishop of Atlanta, remarked that for 99 years the NCCW has brought abundant joy to many people. He told us that we are entitled to rejoice in the joy of our harvest. On the feast of the Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary, he reminded us that she is the perfect model and protector. Her influence is over the heart; her power is to turn our hearts to the merciful heart of Jesus. Her statement of trust, "Do whatever he tells you," should guide our decisions and actions. We can pray with confidence to Mary because Jesus listens to his mother. We pray that her qualities will increase in us and that she will assist us in our ministry of joyful service.

Let's also ask Mary to help and guide us as we prepare to celebrate 100 years at our MDCCW convention next June. Bishop Hying has agreed to be our keynote speaker and principal celebrant at the Mass. Several meetings of the planning committee from the West Dane Vicariate have taken place. They are looking into many suggestions to make the day interesting, uplifting, fun, and memorable. Plan to bring friends with you to this historic celebration of 100 years of joyful service.

**"He is the vine;  
we are the branches."**

John 15:4-5:

*"Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."*

### **Banner Available**

Our 100-year birthday banner with the beautiful image of Our Lady of Good Counsel and the names of our three commissions can be purchased for \$150. That price includes two dowels, a cord, and shipping. If you prefer, the name of your parish or vicariate CCW can be printed at the bottom instead of Madison Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. An order form is available on the MDCCW website, or you may contact me at <mailto:bschaefer2020@outlook.com>.

As I write this, I am in the midst of attending fall vicariate meetings. I feel blessed to meet you and hear about the joyful service you are doing in your parishes. I think of you as dear friends and remember you in my prayers.

May God's peace and joy be in your hearts and homes during the holy seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas. May the Holy Family bless you and your family.

## Welcome to Our New Bishop!

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Thanks to the accessibility of Bishop Donald Hying, many of you have had a chance to meet him in your home parishes. As noted in the President's message, he has agreed to speak at our 2020 annual gathering.

The youngest of six sons, Bishop Donald Joseph Hying was born in West Allis to Albert and Catherine Hying August 18, 1963. He attended St. Aloysius and Immaculate Heart of Mary grade schools, and Brookfield Central High School. Bishop Hying received his bachelor's degree from Marquette University and his master's degree from St. Francis Seminary.

Bishop Hying was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on May 20, 1989 and was assigned to be parochial vicar for St. Anthony Parish, Menomonee Falls. In 1994, he went to the Dominican Republic as a team member for La Sagrada Familia Parroquia. Upon his return to the United States in 1997, he served in parishes in Milwaukee and Brown Deer, following which he was appointed the rector of St. Francis de Sales Seminary and served in that capacity from 2007 until 2011, when Pope Benedict XVI appointed Fr. Donald Hying the Titular Bishop of *Regiae* and Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. He was consecrated a bishop on July 20, 2011, by Most Reverend Jerome Edward ListECKI, Archbishop of Milwaukee.

On November 24, 2014, Pope Francis appointed Bishop Hying the 4th bishop of Gary, Indiana. Less than five years later, on April 25, Pope Francis appointed him the 5<sup>th</sup> bishop of the Madison Diocese; his installation took place June 25, at St. Maria Goretti.

Bishop Hying serves as the Episcopal Liaison for the National Association of Catholic Chaplains and as Episcopal Advisor to the U.S. Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He is also a member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Subcommittee to Aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe and the

Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and the Committee on Catholic Education.

His ease with people and love of teaching are evident in his daily video messages, "A Moment with the Bishop," on topics ranging from the Catechism to the lives of saints. Posted on the [madisondiocese.org](http://madisondiocese.org) website and available on the diocesan Facebook page, you can also subscribe to it through the website. The Bishop also writes a weekly column for the *Catholic Herald*.

## From Our Spiritual Advisor

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**Msgr. Duane Moellenberndt**  
Spiritual Advisor

Dear Members of the Madison Diocesan Council of Catholic Women,

We are just completing the fall vicariate gatherings around the diocese. That is always a most enjoyable time for me to travel to the various vicariates for the Mass, meetings, and meal. Though I must say this year the travel for several of the vicariates included lots of rain on my journey.

Despite the rain, when I arrived at each meeting, there were always smiling faces and a warm welcome. For that, I am most grateful.

Every gathering is a little different in how the time together is organized and what is included in the event. However, there has been a lot of planning done to be sure the time is meaningful for all who attend. The Mass is always the most important part of the day or evening as it should be.

I am always impressed with the faith, dedication, and commitment of the members in each vicariate. It is obvious to me that the MDCCW is an organization of women deeply connected to the Catholic faith. You are a gift to the Church for your witness in following the Gospel message of Jesus in your daily lives.

God bless you for all you do for our Church in these difficult times.

## From Our Province Director

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**Bernadette Schaefer**  
MDCCW President

My dear Sisters in Christ,

In this season of autumn, there often comes a perfect day with clear, blue skies. The sun is bright; there is a crisp breeze, and the trees are colorful. It can be a day that brightens one's mood. We are reminded of God's hope on a brilliant autumn day.

But, as the leaves continue to fall from the trees and the foliage turns color, the harvest season comes to its conclusion and our thoughts turn to deep inner yearnings as the season turns from fall into winter.

How can we get in touch with the spiritual side of autumn in our contemporary age? By being mindful and being present. Turn off your devices and simply take a walk. Make your pilgrimage of leaves, being mindful of the color of sky and grass and leaves and stones, of the feel of the air, of the scents and textures and sights all around you. As you do so, ask yourself, "What do I need to release? What are my burdens?" Pay attention to what nature is doing around you—after all, everything has a purpose, including the changing of the seasons. They remind us to keep changing, to not allow ourselves to become stagnant.

This past year, NCCW celebrated the theme, "Caring for God's Creation." The season of autumn, with all of its beauty, is a reminder of God's love for His world. The themed year concluded with the 99<sup>th</sup> annual convention at which I was installed as your new province director succeeding Carol Brennan from your diocese.

I am from the Green Bay Diocese and live in Brillion where I work as manager of a school bus company. I proudly wear the honor badges of mother to two earthly daughters and one heavenly daughter, mother-in-law to

three wonderful men, and "Grandma Treats" to two grandchildren.

Throughout my faith life, I have worn many hats as most Catholic women do. I have had the opportunities to wear the hats of treasurer and president-elect, and soon, president of Holy Family Christian Mothers and Ladies Sodality. I have been a commissioner, treasurer, Marian Day chairperson, and president of our Green Bay Diocesan CCW. And, now I have been bestowed the hat of province director. I am truly humbled and honored to have this title.

Our past province directors exhibited leadership qualities which need to be commended. They were women who motivated, inspired, and guided us. I have some big shoes to fill, but they're pointed in the right direction. I will continue striving to make our organization a household name.

We should be thankful as we have been blessed to have leadership at this level and now fortunate to have our very own Jean Kelly as national president. As women at all levels of our women's organizations (local, diocesan, province and national), Jean Kelly writes, "We need to unite in our efforts, voice and presence." Together, we can!

**Paula Freimuth**  
Milwaukee Province Director

## From Our Outgoing Province Director

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**Carol Brennan**  
Immediate Past Province Director

My two-year role as province director came to a close at the national convention when Paula Freimuth of the Green Bay Diocese was installed as our new director. Paula, thank you for saying "yes." I am sure everyone in our province will pray, support, and help you anyway we can.

Once again, the NCCW convention was a time of wonderful Masses, speakers, and workshops that kindled the flame of our faith,

sparked ideas for our councils, and reignited our enthusiasm for CCW.

The highlight for many of us was the installation of Jean Kelly from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee as our NCCW president. It's one thing to hear God calling you to something, but the challenge lies in actually doing what He wants. It is a big commitment of time, energy, and resources. Jean, thank you for answering God's call to be involved in CCW at the local, diocesan, province, and national levels and, especially to lead NCCW these next years. You are great, our prayers go with you, and we love you!

This coming year, try and use some of the ideas and suggestions in your councils from the new NCCW resource "Calling All Catholics" to pass on our faith. Also, emphasize reduce, reuse, and recycle to "Care for God's Creation." NCCW has so many resources and programs for you to use.

These two years have flown by. You are truly faith-filled, inspiring, caring, dedicated, hard-working, energetic, and joyful women. It has been a pleasure and a privilege representing you; and I thank you for all your hard work, help, support, and especially prayers. Even though this position has come to an end, this is not the end of my involvement in this wonderful organization that helps me live my faith. I would like to close with "My Train," which was emailed to me several years ago. The author is unknown.

### **My Train**

*At birth we board a train and meet our parents. We believe they will always travel by our side. However, at some station, our parents will step down from the train, leaving us on this journey alone.*

*As time goes by, other people will board the train, and they will be significant – siblings, friends, the love of your life, children, and many others. Some will step down and leave a permanent vacuum. Others will go so unnoticed that we won't realize they vacated their seats.*

*The train ride will be full of joy, sorrow, fantasy, expectations, hellos, good-byes and farewells. A successful ride requires*

*having a good relationship with all passengers. We must give the best of ourselves.*

*The mystery to everyone is, we do not know at which station we ourselves will step down. So, we must live in the best way, love, forgive, and offer the best of who we are. It is important to do this because when the time comes for us to step down and leave our seat empty, we should leave behind beautiful memories for those who will continue to travel on the train of life.*

*I wish you a joyful journey on the train of life. Reap success and give lots of love. More importantly, thank God for the journey.*

*Lastly, I thank you for being one of the passengers on my train.*

Prayers and blessings to all of you for being with me on my faith journey.

## **Leadership Commission**

### **Sue Barker**

Leadership Commission Chair

Have you had problems getting members of your CCW to fill positions that need to be filled? When you ask a member, do you get these kinds of responses: "I'm too busy." or "I can't take on another thing." or "I can't do that."?

If you are like me, you didn't start out planning to be the president or secretary of your group, or to be on the MDCCW Board. In my case, it happened by default; and as it turns out, I love doing all of it! These jobs are not that hard, and I meet so many wonderful women who are willing to help.

You just need to have an interest in your parish and a desire to help your group grow. Energy and a positive attitude are needed for success as in most everything you do in life! Don't give up! Rather, continually encourage people that they can do it. After all, you manage a family, and are, or may have

worked, in the business world where you learned to promote your company. No reason you can't be successful doing the same for your parish CCW. This is leadership! Give it a try, and I'm pretty sure you'll get more out of it than you put in.

Our annual MDCCW gathering at St. Cecilia in Wisconsin Dells was a big success with two speakers and lots of information at this beautiful new church. An enormous selection of baby items was donated to the Women's Care Center, and the silent auction baskets were fabulous! October 15 was a Day of Reflection at St. Maria Goretti Parish, Madison, cosponsored by MDCCW with the Madison Catholic Women's Club.

Since we will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of NCCW throughout 2020, the MDCCW Board is working to make our annual convention a huge success. Bishop Hying will speak and celebrate the Mass. Plan on being a part of this celebration by volunteering on one of the many committees that are needed to make it a success.

Have you considered starting a mother/daughter event to encourage high school and college young women to become members of our group? This is a wonderful way to spend time with a daughter or granddaughter! So many ideas and so little time. Go out there and lead!! God Love You.

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## Membership

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Leadership Commission Subcommittee

**Sue Koch and Ellen Martin**

Membership Co-Chairs and  
MDCCW Past Co-Presidents

### 12 Ways to Increase Your Membership\*

Membership growth is a constant challenge. One month you pick up new members and the next month you lose a member. Even if your organization is active and successful, some members will leave due to sickness or death, transfers, time restraints, or a variety of other reasons. New memberships bring fresh ideas and different perspectives that will let the organization expand the opportunities to serve the church and community. That is why every organization should be continually on the lookout for new members. It is not always easy to attract new members but here are some ideas to help boost your membership.

1. **Take Turns Inviting Guests.** Members should take turns inviting prospective members to your meetings. This effort could be conducted in alphabetical order based on the member's first or last name. It's a sure bet that some of those guests will want to come back and join. This consistent approach to growth helps your members get in the habit of identifying new members.
2. **Organize Teams.** Organize teams of 3 or 4 members to recruit new members over the summer months. Encourage them to name their teams, make it a game and get everybody involved. Offer a prize for the team that recruits the most new members; for example, lunch at the hot spot in town, gift certificates for a spa or nail salon.
3. **Go Public.** Get one or two members to work on a public relations campaign, sending news releases to the local newspapers, radio and TV stations about the club and the

activities that are coming up. Don't forget to include a contact name, phone number, e-mail address or web site.

4. **Feature Interesting Programs.** Once you succeed in bringing guests to a meeting you want to make sure they like what you have. Organize interesting meetings and speakers that will make them want to come back.
5. **Educate Your Members.** The more your members know about the organization and its history, the better they can educate prospective new members on the organization.
6. **Start a Speakers Committee.** Just as outside speakers promote their causes to your organization, you can visit other organizations and talk about your community programs and projects. While you are speaking, you can distribute club brochures and invite them to your meetings.
7. **Look Up Old Friends.** Pull out some of your organization's old membership rosters and circle the names of those who left the club. Give these members a call, because their situations might have changed, and they may be ready to return to the club. If not, thank them for their past membership and tell them that you will be praying for them.
8. **Make the Most of Your Service Projects.** Every time you do a service project, promote your organization. When you donate to a charity, inform the staff what your organization is about and ask them to join. If you award a scholarship, invite the mother of the winner to join your organization. In fact, encourage not only her but also the grandmothers, sisters, and aunts to join.
9. **Put your Club on Display.** Have a few members attending every Mass or other activities going on at your church with club brochures and other club information. If you have a calendar of events, make sure you print some to give out. Encourage them to stop by a meeting and see what's happening. You never know when you might strike a responsive chord with someone who is just looking to get involved.
10. **Use Business Cards.** Make some business cards for your members with the name of the organization, the website, and the contact person's name, phone number, and e-mail address. You might put on the back the location, time, and dates of your regular meetings with the phrase "All are Welcome." Encourage members to give these cards out along with a personal invitation to your meetings.
11. **Increase Your Circulation.** Do you send out the agenda for meeting in advance of each meeting? Send copies to prospective members, former members, and the local media. Add a personal note on each, inviting them to attend the next meeting.
12. **Plan a Fun Event.** Organize a party or other fun event and invite the membership and new prospective members and their spouses or significant others. While having a good time is the main objective of the get together, you can also work in some information about the organization and even a softsell on joining.

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For MDCCW membership, go to our website at [mdccw.com](http://mdccw.com).

## Service Commission

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### Coreen Marklein

Service Commission Chair

I have been invigorated in service, spirituality, and leadership since attending the NCCW convention. I have reviewed many service projects throughout the past year and have decided upon two specific projects for the Madison Diocese. In order to accomplish these goals, I need each of you and your parishes and vicariates to adopt these projects for 2020.

Cross Catholic Outreach has partnered with NCCW. One of their projects is Boxes of Joy, which provides a Christmas gift to children in third world countries, including Latin American countries. My goal is to have every parish/vicariate participate in this Service Project for the **2020** Christmas Season. That is a lofty goal, but I am hoping as many parishes as can be will participate.

- Step 1.** Select a project coordinator from your parish by October 15, 2020. The project coordinator will be the contact between your parish and Cross Catholic Outreach. Contact [Cross Catholic](http://Cross Catholic (crosscatholic.org)) (crosscatholic.org) and click on Boxes of Joy. You will be able to register your group and request the boxes you believe your group can fill.
- Step 2.** Organize. The project coordinator will receive a kit which includes materials for a successful faith-in-action activity. Kickoff is in October to engage and motivate your Box of Joy group. The boxes are preprinted with information. Individuals select age and sex for whom they will fill a box.
- Step 3.** Shop and Pack! Cross Catholic provides a list of items from which to choose your gifts. Groups shop for children's gifts and pack Boxes of Joy. A \$9 donation (check) is attached to the box to cover the cost of shipping and to support priests and nuns ministering to the children.

- Step 4.** Fill boxes of joy, November 2 to 10. All boxes are packed during this time if not already filled by the participants. Boxes are brought to the group's meeting place.
- Step 5.** Project Coordinator delivers Boxes of Joy to the area's drop-off center between November 2 and 10.
- Step 6.** Blessings are on their way to the children in greatest need around the world.

The next project is Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Recycling is nothing new for many of us. If we each pick an item or a few items that we will work during the rest of 2019 and 2020 to reduce, reuse, or recycle, the environment will be impacted. The City of Baraboo came out recently with guidelines for recycling. They indicated that when the residents put plastic bags in the garbage (like from Wal-Mart or the grocery store) that Baraboo's recycling firm will not accept the entire load of garbage. They suggested we turn in our plastic bags directly to stores that accepts these bags for vendors that recycle these bags. The NCCW Service Commission shared with us 10 ways we can Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

1. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.
2. Volunteer for cleanup.
3. Educate on importance of natural resources
4. Conserve water. Brush your teeth without water. Save rainwater and use to water plants
5. Choose sustainable foods.
6. Shop wisely – use reusable shopping bags.
7. Use long-lasting light bulbs.
8. Plant a tree.
9. Don't send chemicals into the waterways.
10. Bike and walk more; drive less.

Take photos of your Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle efforts. Take photos before and after picking up trash, recycling, etc. Send the photos to NCCW to post on its website and Facebook page. Share your success stories.

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## Spirituality Commission

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**Mona Matijevich**

Spirituality Commission Chair

### Report from the NCCW Convention

Where has the time gone? Fall is upon us and soon we will be experiencing colder weather. I want to thank MDCCW and Columbia North Vicariate for helping me monetarily to go to the 99th NCCW convention in Atlanta. This was my third convention, and I was so proud to represent our Madison Diocese. I have found that by going to the different sessions, that it all comes together spirituality. I learned to be more patient, to watch, and to network.

I attended the first-time attendees' session with my friend, Barbara Mehling. Our fingers were moving so fast as we were taking notes and comparing what we heard and learned. We learned that we are resilient.

Barb and I attended the Virtual Lourdes Pilgrimage and received a Plenary Indulgence also known as "The Get Out of Hell Card."

We are all called to be saints and to do penance. We need to pray for sinners--that includes me! We all have a vocation to become holy. If you don't know what your vocation is, just ask Our Blessed Mother and the Holy Spirit to show you. Prayers do get answered in God's time, not ours.

I learned that Catholic women should be at the forefront of change. We need to support vulnerable women across the nation. We need to plant seeds for our young people and their well-being. Faith is impossible without Jesus for our Eucharistic substance.

We said a Rosary to stop bullying. We prayed for people less fortunate than ourselves. We all know or have been a bully sometime in our life. Being the eldest of 11, I realized I was a bully so many times with my siblings, and that hit me right between my eyes. I am not proud of that; but when we know better, we do better.

We learned how to spot abuse and watched a suicide video. What can we do? We can say something, speak up, and get involved. A little kindness goes along way. Be kind, be there. No one has the power to ruin your day, unless you give them the power to do so.

Jesus is a gift. He is real, not counterfeit. Pray, pray, pray for the women in our church, diocese, and the world. Alone we can do small things, but together we can do great things. Holy Mother of God, pray for us.

Blessings,



## 2019 National Council of Catholic Women Convention Review and Highlights

NCCW President Jean A Kelly

### Convention Recap

*The following is excerpted from President Jean Kelly's report posted on the NCCW website*

The 99<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the National Council of Catholic Women was held at the Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center August 21-24. Six hundred women and priests gathered together to celebrate the theme, "NCCW Caring for God's Creation."

A welcome liturgy was held, followed by a meeting of the NCCW board. The welcome luncheon featured Mother Dolores Hart, O.S.B., who was awarded the first NCCW Honorary Lifetime Membership Award, given to a distinguished American Catholic woman. As a young woman, she made her film debut with Elvis Presley in Paramount's 1957 film, "Loving You." After starring in several Hollywood feature films and Broadway productions, she stunned the world with her decision to enter cloistered religious life at the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut, where she is now prioress.

An orientation helped first-time attendees get the most out of the convention and to navigate where to go and what to do.

Wednesday evening, we had a free pre-release screening of the movie, "Love and Mercy," courtesy of Carmel Communications, a Silver Sponsor of convention. The evening ended with the Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience. Guests were able to write petitions to be taken to Lourdes, touched the grotto rocks and received Lourdes water. It was a moving experience.

Thursday morning, we officially opened our convention. Our keynote speaker, The Most Reverend Peter A. Rosazza D.D., Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus, of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, spoke on "Women

Respond to Pope Francis's Plea to Save Mother Earth."

We also heard from Kim Polote who sang and gave her presentation, "The Divine Shopping Spree...Being a Kept Woman in His Word." Dan Misleh tied into the theme and spoke on Practical "Approaches to Sharing *Laudato Si* in Your Community." Matt Holzmamm gave an informative presentation on mental health.

We learned a great deal from our commission presentations. Leadership focused on promoting NCCW with its version of Family Feud and previewed the 3-1/2 minute video "We Are NCCW," produced by Linda Clark.

Spirituality took on the difficult topics of bullying, suicide, and loss of a child through personal testimonies and provided each attendee the Peace and Healing Rosary Reflection, "Kind" cards, and suicide fact sheets. Service called for us to go "green for good" and provided many ideas including little mesh bags to be used and re-used for produce.

Our nationally acclaimed Leadership Training Development Team (LTDT) provided an informative and entertaining summary of what they can present to help councils grow. The education committee talked about the Rose Program that can be used in your councils.

We were able to catch another movie premiere of "Pray" from our Silver Sponsor Carmel Communications on Friday evening. This was followed by our fundraiser featuring the wonderful singing of a select ensemble of Harmony: Atlanta's International Youth Choir.

We prayed the Rosary and participated in beautiful daily Masses at which we prayed for our deceased members and for many other intentions. The Most Reverend Jerome E. Listeki, Archbishop of Milwaukee, presided at our closing Mass.

At our annual business meeting, we adopted three resolutions: Suicide Awareness, Opioid Crisis Affecting Our Nation, and Reuse Products and Reduce Consumption.

At the closing session, we heard from

- the executive director of the National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations who thanked us for our Vocation Purse Club;
- our representative to the Religious Alliance Against Pornography;
- our representative to the United Nations detailing all the work undertaken on our behalf at the U.N.; and
- our representative to the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

We witnessed the ceremony to install our new province directors, as one-half rotate off each year, and participated in our "Recommitment to the NCCW Service." We applauded the work the province directors do to ensure that ideas, comments, and resources pass from national to all levels of council and back to national. This important communication guarantees that we are all united in our efforts, voice, and presence.

We were invited to our Centennial Celebration that will be held from August 26-29, 2020. in Arlington, Virginia.

Saturday evening, we met for the last time at this convention and enjoyed a wonderful banquet highlighted by an amazing musical performance by Sam Hagan and Pianist.

This convention provided a wonderful opportunity for our council sisters to gather from across the nation to learn, pray, and have fun together. We look forward to implementation of our resolutions and to maintaining the friendships made at this convention. May you continue to "Care for God's Creation."

## New National President from Wisconsin

Jean Kelly is the first NCCW president from Wisconsin. Fittingly, Milwaukee Archbishop Jerome Listeck installed her at the closing service.

As the former province director from our state, she is well known and liked by MDCCW board members. MDCCW President Bernadette Schaefer said, "Having Jean as president makes the work and concerns of the national council seem much closer to us in Wisconsin. She knows us, and we know her."

Past MDCCW President Carol Brennan served on the NCCW board with Kelly when she was province director for the state. She said, her presidency "is like having a good friend in charge whom we know that if we have concerns, we can take them to the top and she will listen."

Kelly served as president-elect the previous two years and chaired the 2019 national convention. From the archdiocese of Milwaukee, she was active in her parish council and served as president of the Archdiocesan CCW. Her service on the national board started when she represented Wisconsin as province director for two years and then in 2015 was elected NCCW secretary.

In an article in the Milwaukee Archdiocese *Catholic Herald* prior to the convention, Kelly said that her installation as president will be a bittersweet occasion. The article told that when her husband got sick, she wanted to step away from her involvement to take care of him, but he "wouldn't hear of it." She told how he had been involved with the NCCW as long as she had, driving her to conventions and meetings and praying with her and working with her through every cause.

Last year, her husband of 31 years passed away. The mother of two adult sons, she realizes now that her husband wanted her to stay busy. "He knew that with this work I would always have purpose, and with these people I would never be alone."

## Six from MDCCW Attend Convention

Madison Diocesan CCW president Bernadette Schaefer, Lancaster, led the diocesan delegation that included two past MDCCW presidents: Carol Brennan, New Berlin, and Coreen Marklein, Baraboo. Also attending were MDCCW President-Elect Judy Lyons, Fort Atkinson; and Barbara Mehling and Mona Matijevich, Montello.

Thirty-five women from other Wisconsin arch/dioceses attended as well as two priests and Milwaukee Archdiocese Bishop Jerome Listecki. They celebrated the installation of Jean Kelly as the first person from Wisconsin to head the national organization. Kelly is from St. Mary Visitation Parish, Elm Grove.

For first-time convention attendee Barbara Mehling, it was “a great opportunity to learn from so many talented and blessed women who share their knowledge. I was told to slow down with the ideas I came back with. We can’t do them all at once, but I so want to share everything I learned.” She is grateful to the MDCCW and her local CCW for helping her with expenses. She hopes to go next year as well.

Mehling’s roommates, Mona Matijevich and Coreen Marklein, had attended previous conventions which made her first-time attendance “even better.”

It was Matijevich’s third convention. “To me, it just keeps getting better and better. We prayed the Rosary, went to Mass together, laughed, and ate together. The camaraderie was contagious, and I want more! I felt privileged to be there and represent MDCCW and Columbia North.”

Matijevich, who chairs the MDCCW Spirituality Commission, said she is proud that “NCCW is at the cutting edge of what our current issues are, whether it is sex trafficking, bullying, body shaming, or air quality.”

For Marklein, a veteran convention goer, it was hard to pick what she enjoyed the most but found the Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience a “moving experience. Guests wrote petitions to be taken to Lourdes,

touched the grotto rocks, and received Lourdes water.”

Carol Brennan, former province director, has been to several conventions but continues to “love the excitement, enthusiasm, and joy of everyone as well as reconnecting with sisters in faith and making new friends.

By attending convention and being a part of CCW, Brennan said she has learned that “God has made us all differently, giving us unique gifts and talents. God wants to use us just as we are, and he wants us to use our gifts. We need everyone’s talents to help others and our organization. CCW is an organization that can help us put this all together through its programs and resources.”

### Masses with Homilies

The MDCCW delegates agreed that the Masses with their homilies were among the highlights of the convention. MDCCW President Schaefer said, “For me the most inspiring event at every convention is the Mass celebrated every day. During silent prayer after communion, there is a strong feeling of connection with everyone in the room and gratitude for the faith that unites us. I leave the Mass feeling uplifted and grateful for my Catholic Faith and the Council of Catholic Women.”

Also appreciating the music and homilies, MDCCW President-Elect Judy Lyons described the liturgies as “uplifting. It is an amazing thing to celebrate Mass with more than 500 like-minded women.”

Lyons was impressed by a presentation on climate change by Dan Misleh, founding executive director of Catholic Climate Covenant. She said, “He put into perspective for me the chain reaction of climate change and his call to awareness and what we can do to help, understand, advocate, and practice good resource management in our own homes and churches.

“Even the hotel where they stayed was green with a commitment to conservation and healing of the earth,” said Lyons.

Also impressed by the environmental theme, Schaefer said, “I came away with a new attitude of gratitude for the beautiful world God

has given us to live in and enjoy. I also realize that we need to be thoughtful about the way we use our resources. We need to think of the many generations yet to come who will live and thrive on our planet if we treat it with respect.”

## **Keynote Speaker: Bishop Rosazza**

Reflecting on Pope Francis’ “plea to save mother earth and her poor,” The Most Reverend Peter A. Rosazza D.D., Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus, of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut, called on Catholic women to be in solidarity with women throughout the world.

Basing his talk on the principles of Catholic Social Justice Teaching and Pope Francis’ “Encyclical on Climate Change and Inequality,” the bishop said taking care of the environment is a matter of “dignity of the human person” and the right of people to potable water, food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, and a job.

He said, “Society ensures social justice when it provides the conditions that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due according to their nature and their vocation.”

Bishop Rosazza said Pope Francis is not the first pope to address global warming and climate. Both of his two predecessors, Saint John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI wrote and talked about it.

He quoted St. John Paul II in his 1990 World Day of Peace message: “Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith. When man turns his back on the Creator’s plan, he provokes a disorder which has inevitable repercussions on the rest of created order.

“The most profound and serious indication of the moral implications underlying the ecological problem is the lack of respect for life evident in many of the patterns of environmental pollution.”

In his encyclical on the environment, Pope Francis takes up the points raised by St. John Paul II.

## **God’s Presence in All People**

Bishop Rosazza said, “Pope Francis’ ability to see God’s presence in all people and in all aspects of nature and his acute sense of compassion for those who suffer and for nature” itself explains why he states at the beginning of the encyclical: “This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life.”

Acknowledging that Pope Francis has received criticism for speaking out on the environment, Bishop Rosazza said attention to science is not new for the church. What is now known as the “Big Bang Theory” was discovered by Fr. George LeMaitre (1884-1966, Belgium). He entitled it the “Theory of the Primeval Atom” which an atheist, Sir Fred Hoyle “belittled and insulted it by calling it the Big Bang Theory.” Hoyle later abandoned his atheism.

## **Church and Science**

Pope Pius XI renewed and reconstituted the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1936. Over the years, 80 Nobel Laureates have served. Pope Francis and his advisors listened for a year to the scientific community “before bringing an ethical light to bear on this important matter.”

Another well-known Catholic scientist, studied by school students, is Benedictine Abbot Gregor Mendel, the Father of Genetics.

Bishop Rosazza said the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis and elsewhere in the old Testament speak of creation through stories written around the year 550 BCE and teach us “The dignity of man and woman as equal before God, the universal destination of the goods of the earth, that one God created all things and not several (as the Babylonians

believed), and that Adam and Eve's sin consisted of making themselves the center of their lives rather than God."

As long ago as the 1600s, St. Robert Bellarmine, S.J., said, "The Bible doesn't tell us how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven."

Referring to the encyclical again, Bishop Rosazza said, "A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production, and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it."

Noting that much of the burden of climate change is born by women and children and the poor, Bishop Rosazza gave examples of women leaders in the struggle against the effects of climate change, including Patricia Cochran who helps communities across Alaska and the Arctic, and Mary Robinson, the former president of Ireland and currently the UN's Special Envoy on Climate Change.

"God willing, out of this will emerge a new universal solidarity including intergenerational solidarity," said Bishop Rosazza, asking, "What kind of a world and atmosphere do you want to leave your grandchildren?"

He suggested "things all of us can do, of which we are already aware such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, recycling refuse, using public transportation or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, including turning off our computers when we have finished our work."

The bishop spoke of the importance of prayer as outlined in the encyclical. Pope Francis "suggests returning to the practice of grace before meals so that we might open ourselves to God as the ultimate giver of the food we eat, fruit of the earth, and work of human hands."

### **Importance of Eucharist**

Near the end of the document, Pope Francis focuses on the Eucharist "through which the

whole of creation gives thanks to God because every Eucharist is celebrated on the 'altar of the world'... We know that the bread and wine are 'fruit of the earth and work of human hands' that are transformed into the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Rosazza cited the work of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and its principles for protecting the environment, based on Biblical and Catholic Social Justice Teaching. The last of its 10 principles is

*"A spiritual response must be given to environmental questions, inspired by the conviction that creation is a gift that God has placed in the hands of mankind, to be used responsibly and with loving care. People's fundamental orientation toward the created world should be one of gratitude and thankfulness."*

To read the text of Bishop Rosazza's keynote address at the NCCW convention, go to [nccw.org](http://nccw.org) and click on the convention at the top of page, then scroll to the bottom of the page to click on 2019 convention.

## **Luncheon Speaker: Mother Dolores Hart**

**By Carol Brennan**

Mother Dolores Hart, O.S.B., spoke at the welcome luncheon and was awarded the first NCCW Honorary Lifetime Membership Award given to a distinguished American Catholic woman.

Now prioress of *Regina Laudis* Abbey in Bethlehem, Connecticut, Dolores Hart was a bright, attractive college student when she made her film debut with Elvis Presley in Paramount's 1957 *Loving You*. She was the first person to kiss Elvis on screen. Whenever she gives talks, people always want to know what Elvis was like. She says he was very sweet, vulnerable, and spiritual.

She acted in nine more movies, appeared in television shows and gave a Tony-nominated performance in the Broadway play, *The Pleasure of his Company*. An important

chapter in her life occurred while playing St. Clare in the movie *Francis of Assisi*, which was filmed on location in Italy where she felt a nudge from God.

Born Dolores Hicks to a “complicated and colorful” Chicago family, Mother Dolores travelled a charmed yet challenging road in her journey toward love, serenity, and yes, God.

In 1963, at the peak of her career, she entered the Abbey of *Regina Laudis* in Bethlehem, Connecticut, not in order to leave the glamorous world of acting she had dreamed of since childhood, but in order to answer a mysterious call she heard with the “ear of the heart.” At the time she was contracted for another film as well as was engaged to be married. She abandoned everything to enter a contemplative monastery. People in the movie world thought this was a publicity stunt.

While working in New York on a play, which was very tiring, a friend told her she needed to come away for a few days to this monastery to rest. The monastery was *Regina Laudis*. Here she experienced the power of God’s force in her life. After several visits and several years later, she entered as a postulant – and the rest is history. She has recorded this journey in her book, *The Ear of the Heart*, which is her “Journey from Hollywood to Holy Vows.”

This petite, fragile, slightly bent nun walked to the podium with help, and one hoped she would be able to make it through her talk. However, when she started to speak, her voice was strong, her face lit up, and she spoke with humor, love, and joy.

Mother Dolores said she was impressed by the letter from our president, Maribeth Blogoslovsky, stating the mission of NCCW and the work of our commissions. She was especially impressed with our five-part program to fight human trafficking and wanted to come to this convention in person to thank NCCW on behalf of survivors and for the whole nation. She was impressed that we care so much for others.

Mother Dolores said she is very grateful to us and wanted us to know how much our

sacrifice, our gift that is the mystery of love – putting others before ourselves – is appreciated.

If there is anything we need the sisters to pray for, we just need to let them know.

In closing, Mother Dolores said, “Believe in the power of our God, who made all things, who will love us in this life and the next.”

## NCCW 2019 Resolutions

### Suicide Awareness

Purpose: To increase awareness of the factors surrounding suicide and how to address the issue.

**Whereas**, Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States and affects all people, regardless of age, gender socioeconomic status, nationality (National Institute for Mental Health, n.d. *Suicide in America, Frequently asked questions:* <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/suicide-faq/index.shtml>); and

**Whereas**, Suicide awareness aims to help people find treatment that encourages them to discover healthier ways to cope.

**Resolved**, That NCCW members expand their knowledge of the risk factors, warning signs, and treatments available.

**Resolved**, That NCCW members publish the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number of 1-800-273- TALK (8255); and

**Resolved**, That members of NCCW unite in prayer to include our NCCW rosary for *Peace and Healing*, for those who have thoughts of suicide, for those who die by suicide, and for their survivors.

### Opioid Crisis Affecting Our Nation

Purpose: To increase awareness of the opioid misuse crisis affecting our nation, and to encourage prayer and action by the members of the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) that will bring hope and healing to the Nation.

**Whereas**, Opioid misuse is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare.

**Whereas**, Our NCCW mission is to support, empower and educate all Catholic women, especially on issues affecting women and their families; and

**Whereas**, Our Catholic faith compels us to choose hope and action in the face of a crisis.

**Resolved**, That NCCW members and affiliates organize Masses and/or prayer services, and pray our NCCW prayers for those addicted and for the companions and caregivers of those addicted, with the intention of hope and healing for all affected by the opioid crises; and

**Resolved**, That NCCW members support co-operative government agencies, social services and nonprofit organizations that are already engaged in the struggle against opioid addiction.

## Reuse Products and Reduce Consumption

**Purpose:** Reuse products and reduce consumption to care for God's Creation.

**Whereas**, Pope Benedict XVI said, "We are all responsible for the protection and care of the environment. This responsibility knows no boundaries," (Celebration of World Day of Peace, January 1, 2010).

**Whereas**, Haley Stewart in *The Grace of Enough* wrote, "We are designed to love truth, beauty, and goodness, which are attributes of God. Throwaway culture fights against this natural desire"; and **Whereas**, In *Laudato Si* Pope Francis tells us, "When people become self-centered and self-enclosed, their greed increases. The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume." (204).

**Resolved**, That members of NCCW pray that everyone becomes more aware and informed of the beauty of nature, advocates for a healthy planet to leave for future generations, and prays our NCCW *Prayer for Care of Creation*.

**Resolved**, That members of NCCW reuse items as much as possible, and invest in and use reusable items; and

**Resolved**, That members of NCCW be more aware of what is really necessary and reduce consumption of unnecessary items in their lives and focus on those items that bring joy to their lives, sharing with others in need.

## 2020 Convention

The 100th anniversary of the NCCW will be celebrated at the 2020 NCCW Convention to be held Aug. 26-29 in Arlington, VA. Founded at the direction of the U.S. Catholic bishops in 1920, NCCW's mission is to act through its members to support, empower, and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.