

Message from Our Co-Presidents

ELLEN MARTIN AND SUE KOCH, MDCCW CO-PRESIDENTS

April, 2018

A Final Message from Ellen and Sue

As our two-year term draws to an end with our June 13 convention at the Sinsinawa Mounds, we would like to share with you what we have experienced and learned during this time.

As all incoming officers feel when embarking upon a new job, we too felt apprehensive, nervous, and unsure about what this new title of “MDCCW Co-President” would mean for us. It was a blessing to know there were mentors in place to help guide us through the ins and outs of a maze of questions and uncertainties. We are grateful for all the mentors in our diocese who make sure that those who come after them are taken care of and gently guided during their first year in office.

We learned that all levels (affiliate, vicariate, and diocesan) of women’s Catholic groups, whether Council of Catholic Women, Ladies Sodality, Altar Society, or another group, are struggling to retain and obtain members. We live in an age where all formerly robust organizations (Rotary, Knights of Columbus, Holy Name, Home and Community Education, etc.) have seen significant declines in membership.

Lots of reasons have been identified for the decrease in organization membership, including our mobile society, the need or want to work long hours, and social media and the internet that may give some people the feeling they don’t need to join an organization.

As active women in our church organizations, we must share the importance of keeping our groups strong and vibrant. We have to keep meeting the needs of our church women, our priests and the community we live in.

We experienced kindness and generosity as we made our way into every vicariate (all nine) of the dioceses. We were elated when one Judy Lyons spoke up at last year’s convention and said she could be the President of Jefferson Vicariate, thus allowing one inactive vicariate to be up and running again. There were very active women in the Jefferson Vicariate each in their own affiliates; however, Judy was needed to complete the list of officers at the vicariate level. We praised the active vicariates that are continuing to move along with their agenda , spreading the NCCW mission “to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in Spirituality, Leadership and Service.”

We reached out to our four inactive vicariates in the hopes of finding a way to get them up and running again. All our sisters in Christ need to respond to this mission so that the women in these vicariates can hear the message and receive the support passed on to them from the national and diocesan levels.

In closing, we learned that the relationships and experiences we have with our diocesan sisters are not as important as the relationship we share with our Lord Jesus Christ. As expressed by

Matthew Kelly in a recent “Best Lent Ever” segment—“when what we believe and how we act align, (it) has an enormous effect on how we will live in the next life.”

We thank you for the honor to serve as your diocesan co-presidents. We wish you a life filled with love for, and kindness towards, your fellow sisters and a deep abiding relationship and devotion to our heavenly Father who we will live with for all eternity.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Martin and Sue Koch

MDCCW Co-Presidents