

PROVINCE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

November 2018

Joy Continues as NCCW Theme

Congratulations to all the new officers in your councils. Thank you for saying yes! You will find many ways to put your faith into action while sharing joy and love as well as meeting many wonderful ladies along the way. Have courage to reach out beyond your parish boundaries. Join ladies in your vicariates, the diocese, and beyond to grow in faith and friendship.

"NCCW Reflecting God's Joy: Missionary Disciples — Mission Possible!" was the theme of our annual convention. There was joy everywhere. Convention is like being on a renewal retreat. You come away on a spiritual high as well as full of ideas, energy, and enthusiasm for CCW.

The opening ceremony was extra special. Sheila Hopkins, immediate past president, carried in a flag of NCCW, and we heard a new hymn to Our Lady of Good Counsel, patroness of the NCCW, based on our mission statement. NCCW President Maribeth Stewart Blogoslawski designed the flag and composed the hymn.

Each year NCCW and its commissions and committees put together programs and resources and make them available on the nccw.org website for councils to use. To name a few,

- Leadership focuses on human trafficking.
- Spirituality offers a monthly call-in rosary and three mini-retreats.
- Service developed a tracking sheet on human trafficking events and a program to unite our Catholic schools with schools in the Holy Land.

Take advantage of these resources. Be sure to get the new revised Guidance and Resource Manual for your council as it has great information in it.

Two things were different this year for me at the convention.

1. About two weeks before convention, the priest/bishop abuse scandal broke out in Pittsburgh, the convention site. President Maribeth Stewart Blogoslawski sent a memo to say this would not be a topic for discussion, but instead we would be concentrating on our theme of "reflecting God's Joy..." There was still a concern or dread this would be a dark cloud over convention, and this would be the "elephant in the room." However, all of our speakers as well as the bishops and cardinal at Masses did bring this up so it was not ignored and yet joy was everywhere.
2. From my position as Milwaukee Province Director this past year, I have been working with ladies from across the nation and have developed great friendships so I know so many people. All of us on the board had certain responsibilities at convention, giving us more ownership of the event. This was another time to get together and grow closer to sisters in faith.

The overall friendliness, joy, and love expressed by everyone really impressed me this year. Jean Kelly, NCCW president-elect, was the convention chair and did an awesome job of organizing everything. As many of you know, Jean is from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and past Milwaukee province director as well as NCCW past secretary. She has certainly devoted much of her time, energy, and herself to CCW. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her and her family in the recent passing of her husband Jerry.

I will continue to share what I learn from convention and NCCW Board meetings with the diocesan presidents and presidents-elect at our province board meetings as well as through email and this

The theme of joy continues as the theme for this year is "NCCW: Reflecting God's Joy: Caring for His Creation."

Reduce Plastic Use was one of four resolutions passed at convention. All of us can at least use reusable cloth bags for groceries and a reusable drink mug and recycle the plastic that we use.

If your council pays NCCW dues, your president receives the Catholic Woman magazine, monthly newsletter, plus access to much on the website, but these often don't get passed around. You can become an Individual Member for \$50/year to receive and access this same information. That's less than a dollar a week.

NCCW 2019 Convention next year is in Atlanta August 22-24. Have your councils hold some fundraisers so they can send a couple members to convention.

NCCW will celebrate 100 years in 2020. Plan some celebrations.

NCCW is accepting donations for victims of Hurricane Florence. To help victims of flooding in our state, donate to Catholic Charities Madison.

Enjoy this fall. We have had so much rain, and yet there is so much beauty and goodness around us. We need to appreciate it and give thanks. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving, and then Advent will be right around the corner. Time seems to fly by.

Carol Brennan

Milwaukee Province Director