

# Province Director Report

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November 2019

## **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