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Warm Winter Greetings!

“Be The Informed Voice of Catholic Women through Spirituality, Leadership and Service” was the theme of the 2015 ACCW Convention and it is now history. Eighty-four delegates from every deanery of the archdiocese enjoyed the beautiful fall day and facilities of the Divine Word College (DWC) campus at Epworth. The Holy Innocents cross display on their front lawn facing Highway 20 reminded us of October’s Respect Life Month. We were welcomed by DWC President, Rev.Tim Lenchak, SVD, and hostess Sandy Wilgenbusch, followed by opening prayer by ACCW Spiritual Advisor, Monsignor Dean Walz of Delhi. I was delighted to introduce the ACCW ArchAngels Team (archdiocesan officers, deanery presidents/representatives, commission, committees and past presidents) who were sporting fall mum flowers for the 55th convention recognition of their service.

Iowa’s new Province Director representing the NCCW was MaryAnn Ruether from LeMars was present. Guest speaker and Catholic author Marge Fenelon from Cudahy, WI shared examples of Our Lady’s profound maternal guidance in trust, endurance, strength, hope, faith and joy were shared at the Annunciation, Nativity, Flight to Egypt, the Mother of Jesus, and at the Foot of the Cross. Our sincere appreciation to Mass celebrant Archbishop Jackels, the clergy, readers, cantors, the musicians, the DWC staff and students in filling the beautiful chapel for Mass devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary organized by the ACCW Spirituality Commission.

Congratulations to the 2015 Outstanding Parish Women nominees in recognition for their many hours of service as the Archbishop presented their certificates, see group photo. With appreciation from the ACCW, they received a photo remembrance of our patroness, Our Lady of Good Counsel. The same nomination form will be online in the New Year with an October 1 deadline. Among the many honorees were the mothers of two archdiocesan priests, Elizabeth Schatz of Cresco and Jean Miller of Marshalltown. Archbishop Jackels was presented with $1000 appreciation check from the ACCW for him to designate the use in his honor.

The DWC kitchen personnel served yummy treats when we arrived and departed, and a marvelous salad bar, soup, and chicken breast dinner followed with Annette Simonson’s scrumptious cakes celebrating the NCCW’s 95th year for dessert.


At the closing of the convention, Monsignor Dean Walz, announced his retirement as ACCW Spiritual Advisor. (read his farewell message in this issue). We were all emotional and will miss his eloquent homilies at Mass at Cedar Falls and timely messages in The Link and his spiritual advice for the past 21 years. The ACCW has been looking for a priest replacement as spiritual advisor for the Dubuque ACCW. The NCCW Spiritual Advisor guidelines are included in this newsletter. As of the press time, Archbishop Jackels has announced his appointment of Rev. Daniel J. Knipper of Decorah as the new Dubuque ACCW Spiritual Advisor effective for 2016. We welcome Father Knipper, Mary Rausch and Florine Swanson, from Galt and are grateful for their willingness to serve in new capacities for the ACCW.

At the time of this writing, it is Thanksgiving season and I feel so indebted to the 2015-2016 ACCW Team, that I affectionately dubbed “The Dubuque ACCW ArchAngels”. They were so helpful in
President’s Message, continued from page 1

setting-up the afternoon before convention, filling the convention bags, setting up displays, transporting our guest to & from the airport, submitting annual reports of their activities compiled by Rose Ann Jero for the convention booklets, and to Sheila Rassman for the music and name tags. They all certainly earned their wings of service, leadership and spirituality. My appreciation to Amy Thuente for assisting with the certificates and Our Lady of Good Counsel awards, and to my husband and the Rausch’s for transporting the convention supplies. My sincere appreciation to RoseMary Knox for her photography and collage of photos for this issue, and I can’t thank Sandy Wilgenbusch enough for all that she did so willingly for the ACCW on behalf of Divine Word College.

Thank you to all the convention attendees and participants, leadership, spirituality & service commission displays, silent auction workers, donors and buyers (very successful silent auction of over $850 profit to off-set convention expenses), the exhibitors, and items for the convention packets. Exhibitors: Catholic Charities (Zoe Houlihan), DAVA/Dubuque Area Vocation Association (Sister Rita Cameron), Serra Club of Dubuque (Pat O’Neill), Trappist Nuns of Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey - Monastery candy sample & products, Vocations Office of the Dubuque Archdiocese, New Melleray Abbey Monks display (Abbott Mark Scott, OCSO), Divine Word College for their display, pens & sticky notepads, Northeast Iowa Community College, Peosta & Calmar for the Sharpee markers, Scott Printing & Design of Dubuque publishers of The Link for pens and memo note pads, Helping Services of Northeast Iowa (online domestic abuse prevention training), Magnificat for the complimentary copy of October issues, Mercy Hospital Foundation, Cedar Rapids for the Mercy Book of Prayers, Prevent Human Trafficking resources, ACCW for brochures on Domestic Abuse Prevention, Catholic Relief Services booklet that describes our partnership for the Madonna Plan, Clean Water, Refugee services etc., ACCW 95th Convention photos/NCCW Promotional Displays (Alma/Edna) the Pastoral Center’s new Archdiocese Eucharistic Adoration flyer(Joanne Pohland), Archdiocese of Dubuque for the beautiful 175th Anniversary History books that were used as door prizes, Colleen Pasnik for allowing the use of her Priest Calendar for the convention booklet, the BVM Presentation Sisters & DWC for housing some of the overnight guests. The ACCW tried to involve the Religious community as we culminate the “Year of Consecrated Life.” If I missed naming someone, please let me know and be assured God knows your contribution.

Included in this issue is “One Member-One Chance” an opportunity to win an expense paid trip for the 2016 NCCW Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, September 7-10, 2016.

Please share your convention booklet with others for it has a directory of contacts and wealth of current information. A copy will be mailed to each parish so tell your parish women leaders to ask for it when it arrives in the mail.

This issue contains comments from the NCCW Convention keynote speaker Marybeth Hicks that impressed me with her insightful message to appreciate the demands on our young parish women. Her column “Teachable Moments” is featured in the Catholic Digest magazine. She has authored of four books, and appears on EWTN, and other national and radio programs. Her most recent book in 2014, “Teachable Moments: Using Everyday Encounters with Media and Culture to Instill Conscience, Character and Faith”. Also included in this issue is “One Member-One Chance” an opportunity to win an expense paid trip for the 2016 NCCW Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, September 7-10, by signing up a new NCCW individual member prior to May 15. Other updates, www.nccw.org Reminder that NCCW parish/affiliate dues are due to the NCCW before December 31, 2015. Check the ACCW calendar of events for updates to note on your 2016 calendars.

Finally, I refer to your NCCW New Evangelization document, We Are Called to Witness, for “Year of Mercy” suggestions under topic #4 “Hearts to Love and Hands to Serve” that has corporal works of mercy ideas to do this upcoming year. We have much to pray for in this troubled world of ours. Be the Informed Catholic Voice at our upcoming Iowa Precinct Caucuses.

May you have a reflective Advent inviting others to church, a faith-filled Christmas season with loved ones, and many opportunities to experience the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of God’s Love and Mercy.

Alma Meyer, Dubuque ACCW President 2015-2016

Marge Fenelon and Archbishop Jackels

ACCW Convention Presenters

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Pope Francis has proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy December 8, 2015 to November 20, 2016

The purpose of the Year of Mercy is to remind us of what mercy is, that God is merciful, that Jesus is the embodiment of God’s mercy, and that the followers of Jesus continue his mission of mercy in the ministries of the Church, as well as in their personal lives of faith.

The Holy Father also wants to encourage us to take advantage of opportunities to receive God’s mercy, and to show mercy to others. Pope Francis, in the Year of Mercy document, compares life to the journey we will make to walk through a Door of Mercy. Both take dedication and sacrifice, and both are meant to inspire conversion of life. “The Year of Mercy is a time to return to the basics,” says Pope Francis, “to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters.” In other words, to receive God’s mercy and show it to others. Archbishop Michael Jackels

The logo and the motto together provide a fitting summary of what the Jubilee Year is all

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President Elect’s Message, continued from page 2

The motto *Merciful Like the Father* (taken from the Gospel of Luke, 6:36) serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure (cfr. Lk 6:37-38).

**QUOTES ON MERCY**

- “It is proper to God to exercise mercy, and he manifests his omnipotence particularly in this way” [ST, II-II, q. 30. a. 4.].
  -Saint Thomas Aquinas’ words show that God’s mercy, rather than a sign of weakness, is the mark of his omnipotence. For this reason the liturgy, in one of its most ancient collects, has us pray: “O God, who reveal your power above all in your mercy and forgiveness ...” [Collect, XXVI Sunday in Ordinary Time]. Throughout the history of humanity, God will always be the One who is present, close, provident, holy, and merciful. *Misericordiae vultus*, §6

- The Holy Father entreats the Lord to make the Jubilee of Mercy a year of grace so that the Church, “with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.” *Vatican Radio 06/05/2015*

- I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. *Psalm 13:5*

- I had many friends to help me to fall; but as to rising again, I was so much left to myself, that I wonder now I was not always on the ground. I praise God for His mercy; for it was He only Who stretched out His hand to me. May He be blessed forever! Amen. *Saint Teresa of Avila*

- The confessional is not a torture chamber, but the place in which the mercy motivates us to do better. *Pope Francis*

- And even if the sins of soul are as dark as night, when the sinner turns to My mercy he gives Me the greatest praise and is the glory of My Passion. *St. Faustina*

- Extend your mercy towards others, so that there can be no one in need whom you meet without helping. For what hope is there for us if God should withdraw His Mercy from us? *Saint Vincent de Paul*

- Our prayer and God’s mercy are like two buckets in a well; while the one ascends, the other descends. *Mark Hopkins*

Please check out the Archdiocesan website for great Year of Mercy resources: [https://www.dbqarch.org/YearofMercy/](https://www.dbqarch.org/YearofMercy/). Wishing that the season of Advent and Christmas fill your hearts with peace and happiness forever.

Sheila Rassman, President elect/spirituality

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**JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY**

December 8th, 2015 to November 20th, 2016

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**MEMORIAL PRESENTATION**

Eight ACCW past presidents give the memorial presentation “God Knows Best” for the closing ceremony of the ACCW convention responded with verses the “Our Father” prayer.

*From left to right:*


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**PARLIAMENTARIAN**

Our organization, The National Council of Catholic Women, has the distinction of being founded by the U.S. Bishops as an organization to encompass all Catholic woman’s organizations across the country. We advocate life, the sanctity of marriage, religious freedom and equality for women’s rights for 95 years. At this time we revise and update our Bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures for the new year.

Let’s not forget the documents at our local parishes and keep them updated, also.

One of the greatest graces of faith sharing comes with seeing God’s activity in other people’s lives. Others can often point out God’s activity in your life when you aren’t able to notice it. Faith sharing is not reserved for only priests or members of religious orders. Have you tried it with your family or prayer group? Gather together four or five and begin with a short prayer. Let everyone share for just 10 minutes where they feel they have experienced God over the last few weeks. Encourage them to talk about their daily loves as well as their prayer life. Let each person do so with no interruptions. After a few sessions, when participants have grown more comfortable with one another, people might want to respond, very, very briefly. After a person has shared, being careful never to judge, critique or give “advice”. The goal is to allow each person to share without criticism. All of this is a terrific encouragement in the spiritual life. It reminds you that even if you don’t feel God’s presence God is always at work in you. Try a version of faith sharing at your ACCW meetings. Where else do you find a more faith filled and sharing group?
The deaneries in the Dubuque Archdiocese reported that an outstanding 2701 layettes were made since October 2013. Think of all the little babies that were provided their first clothing! Also the making of 193 quilts was reported. Many parishes were also doing dresses for Haiti, uniforms and backpacks.

There is much under-reported activity going on in our communities on a regular basis. Everyone is so busy with their thread and needles; they take no time to toot their horns. Many layettes are distributed locally to fill community needs. 25 Layettes will be taken to Birthright in Cedar Falls, IA in January 2016 and a quantity were taken to JMJ Pregnancy Center in Orlando, Florida last September. Some layettes go with local people who work in mission areas and such as South Dakota and Appalachia. Others go beyond the United States border such as Mexico, Haiti, Dominican Republic and Guatemala.

**Layette Reminder:**

**Contents:**
- 1 large blanket
- 6 cloth diapers
- 2 shirts, pair of sox
- 2 diaper pins
- 2 sleepers
- 1 plastic pants
- 1 soap

(Note: 6 disposable diapers may be substituted for the cloth diapers and pins.) Please identify the type of diaper in layette.

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**The Perfection of the Religious Soul Depends Not So Much on Doing Extraordinary Actions, as on Doing Extraordinary Well the Ordinary Actions and Exercise of Every Day.**

~ From Mercy Book of Prayer

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**Congratulations 2015 Outstanding Women ACCW Recipients**

NOW THE LORD IS THE SPIRIT, AND WHERE THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS, THERE IS FREEDOM.  
\~ 2 Corinthians 3:17

From time to time, we all need to step back from life and take another look at who we are, where we are, and what we are doing. If we don’t do this we tend to get caught up in our own little world.

As Chairperson of the Nomination committee, we are looking for a few good women to step up and be candidates. We need to fill the officer’s positions for the years of 2017-2018 ACCW board of directors. (President, Vice President, President – Elect, Secretary and Treasurer). Please prayerfully consider stepping forward and support the ACCW organization we all know and Love.

Some of the helpful Leadership skills include:

- **Character** – competent (get the right job done) and Ethical (act with integrity)
- **Leaders must collaborate** – good leaders design and manage a collaborative process of decision making and conflict resolution to which all the members subscribe.
- **Adaptability is the key** in helping organizations **adapt to change** - perhaps the single most important leadership competency.
- **Leaders are self-made** – although leadership theory and principles can be taught, effective leadership behavior must be learned.

We need to answer the church’s call to be engaged in the political process and work to protect human life and human dignity, create a fair economy for families, promote a revamped immigration system that helps newcomers to prosper, and stand in support of our First Amendment freedoms. It, too, will require hard work on our part as well as sacrifice.

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**SPIRITUAL ADVISOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

For the Dubuque Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women

Guidelines provided by the NCCW

The Spiritual Advisor provides an important role within the National Council of Catholic Women on its different levels: local affiliation, Deanery, Archdiocese, Province, and National. At every level, the Spiritual Advisor supports the work of Council and is to give spiritual advice to the Council Officers and the membership he/she serves, as well as other advice that may be requested by the Council Officers. The title of Spiritual Advisor is given to a person appointed by the local bishop.

The Spiritual Advisor fulfills his/her role in the following ways:

- Regular attendance at Council Meetings.
- Attendance at other events that are sponsored or supported by Council.
- Witness to work of Council whether at the local, Archdiocesan Province or National levels.
- Attendance at Archdiocesan and Province Conventions
- Attendance at the National Convention
- Willingness to work with the women of Council to ensure that the women fulfill the mission statement of the National Council of Catholic Women: **The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its members to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs responds with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.**
- The offering of a day of recollection, or some spiritual event for the women each year to engage them in spiritual growth.
- To provide spiritual presence at all gatherings of the women of Council ensuring that all meetings begin and end with prayer, and that the Council never loses sight of the spiritual dimension of the NCCW.
- In form Council of matters of importance and updates on special events concurring in the local archdiocese.
- Represent the archbishop to the women of Council.

Through the fulfilling of his/her role, the Spiritual Advisor becomes an important and necessary asset to the women of Council. His/her presence is instrumental to NCCW so that the work of Council will continue.
Marshalltown Deanery... held its fall meeting at St. Gabriel Catholic Church in Zearing. The day began with Mass celebrated by Rev. Rick Dagit. Jo Burg welcomed everyone and shared some interesting history of St. Gabriel parish. Coffee and rolls and a delicious lunch were served by the women of the parish. The women of the parish proudly shared that parishioner Jessie Beck professed her final vows as a Presentation sister in August.

Co-chair Elaine Upah conducted the business meeting. She said Shirley Delfs, Elaine Hoffman, Rita Svecik, Maxine Boles, Jean Miller, Gloria DeBower, Monica Fulton, Rose Ann Jero and herself attended the ACCW conference/convention at Divine Word College in Epworth. The attendees present shared highlights of the meeting. Commission chairs Svecik, Virginia Edel, and Fulton presented service, leadership, and spirituality reports. The women signed a sheet with their spiritual bouquets for the priests, deacons, religious, seminarians, and men preparing for the deaconate to be placed in their Christmas cards. The guest speaker was Sarah Grover who spoke about her mission trip to Nicaragua. Elaine installed Maxine Boles of St. Patrick Church in Tama as new co-president. The women thanked outgoing co-chair Upah for her service and presented her with an angel key chain and gift certificate.

Cedar Rapids Activities... The Backpacks for students in Haiti continues. Our goal is 4000 backpacks. The ones made up will go with the mission group that will take them to Haiti in January. The next Backpack Sew-in will be at St. Ludmila’s. It will be January 30, in the Church Social Hall. We will start at 9:00, sew until 1:00, with soup in the crockpot. Bring your machine ready to sew. Kits will be available there. For more information contact Sue Martinek, 319-366-1684 or susjmar@aol.com.

A new Catholic Sanctuary of Life group is being formed in Cedar Rapids. The mission is to involve all local Catholic churches. The St. Pius X Church Sanctuary of Life group is leading this effort. Those in attendance have shared what happens currently in their parish for respecting life. A mission statement is being developed now. In the initial phase of formation, meetings are monthly. – Reported by Sue Martinek

Decorah Deanery... The NCCW Convention in Orlando September 9-12, 2015 proved to be a memorable experience. It was a time of celebration, impressive and inspiring. 35 priests and bishops and around 700 dedicated Council women from all over came together to show support for this important organization.

The theme “Be the Voice of Catholic Women: Sowers of Hope” drew us to trust and hope with a spirit of joy. The words of Bishop Johnston reminded us that to sow seeds of hope, we must renew and deepen our faith in Him, Who came to set us free to live a new life in the Spirit. Our meetings, attended by the faithful women of the Decorah Council of Catholic Women, continue to provide them the opportunity to grow in Service, Spirituality and Leadership. In carrying out our mission of educating ourselves, we are learning more about strong women in Bible History.

October 22, 2015 we met at St. Aloysius, Calmar Parish for Mass, a meal, and a presentation of Judith of the Old Testament. Duane Heit, who conducts Bible Studies at Notre Dame, Cresco, was our guest speaker. Our quarterly meeting followed and plans for the next meeting were set.

On December 3, 2015 the Decorah Deanery Council of Catholic Women’s fourth quarterly meeting was held at St. Benedict Parish, Decorah. Mass with Msgr. Cletus Hawes was celebrated at 5:00 p.m. followed by a pot-luck meal, meeting and silent auction. Proceeds were given to the local food banks in our four counties. We look forward to a meaningful 2016 “Year of Mercy” and pray we can share our faith more deeply, be more eager to serve and see opportunities to show mercy to others.

New Hampton... As we come to the end of 2015 and my first year of presidency of the New Hampton Deanery, I would like to thank all the ladies of the parishes for your hard work with in your parish. You are all under the umbrella of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women and we appreciate all that you do. The New Hampton Deanery meetings and luncheons in 2015 were held at Holy Family, New Hampton, Immaculate Conception, Riceville, and St Boniface, Ionia. We appreciated your wonderful hospitality for our group and the great luncheons too. A special “thank you” to Fr. Carl Schmitt and Fr. Steve Garner, who celebrated the Masses for us at these meetings.

I would like to call attention to an organization called the “Wings of Refuge”, whose speaker we had at our last deanery meeting. Joy Fopma gave an enlightening and informative presentation about the horrific problems of trafficking in the US today. I feel the need to share some of her talk and statistics with you. Trafficking is modern day slavery. It has been documented in all 50 states of the US and Iowa is a predominate state because of the I-80, I-35 corridor access. Entry level age of these girls is 11-14 years old. There are 3.5 million buyers of sex in the US every day.

Currently, only 1-2% of the girls will find freedom from this life. Wings of Refuge is a home, located in Iowa Falls, that provides a Christ centered atmosphere of healing and restoration for each of these survivors. I would recommend this presentation to any group seeking a cause to support. Commit yourselves to praying for the girls and the volunteers running this home on a 24/7 basis.

The work is so hard for all of them. They have the joy of some success stories and, unfortunately, some of the girls cannot break the pattern and return to the life, sorrowfully for all concerned. There is so much to be done, “so exploitation ends for one more girl”. Visit wingsofrefuge.net for the latest on their work to get to the root and to provide a safe haven for our girls. Everyone can do something individually and together, with God’s help, we can do much. I wish all of you blessed holidays and look forward to working with you in 2016.
The National Council of Catholic Women is pleased to have your continued support as an Affiliate of our mission – to educate, empower and support Catholic Women in spirituality, leadership and service. The enclosed serves as a friendly reminder that your dues of $100.00 are payable by January 1, 2016.

This is a special time in our history as we celebrate 95 years of service to God and the Church. The United States Bishops created us in 1920 with the purpose of responding with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.

Those needs have changed significantly through the years and we have responded with programs such as We Are Called to Witness to evangelize, Women Healing the Wounds to offer hope to the suffering, and A Collection of Prayers for the National Council of Catholic Women to support our prayer life.

Our commissions and committees will continue to develop resources and programs that will help you as you interact with others in your council, parish, family and community. In addition, you will also receive our quarterly magazine, Catholic Woman, as well as the monthly e-newsletter, Connect.

Another benefit of membership are the monthly membership calls on current topics such as new programs to serve the poor and vulnerable or how to attract new members to Council. Finally, check out our website, www.nccw.org, regularly for updates and to access the information and resources for your use. The “One Member-One Chance” membership contest lasts until May 15, 2016. I would appreciate any efforts for your members to join as individuals.

My sincere gratitude for your faithful commitment to serve as a voice for Catholic Women. I am at your service, Please contact me at ssnowhop@gmail.com or call me at 850-224-2585 if you so desire. May the Lord prosper the work of our hands in His name.

In His service,

Sheila S. Hopkins
NCCW President

May God and Our Lady of Good Counsel Give Us This Grace

NCCW Office: 200 N Glebe Road + Suite 725 + Arlington, VA + 22203 + 900-506-9407
President's Contact: 1554 Vernon Court + Tallahassee, FL + 32317 + 850-224-2585 + ssnowhop@gmail.com
“ONE MEMBER - ONE CHANCE”
Paving NCCW’s Future - One Member at a Time

Want to attend next year’s convention for free?

Every member who signs up a new individual NCCW member, gets a chance to win a full registration including banquet and hotel (4 nights) for the 2016 Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana plus up to $400 to cover your expenses for travel. The more new members you sign up, the more chances you have to win! This is your chance to share your love of NCCW with other women and have a chance to win a fully paid registration for the 2016 NCCW Convention. MUST use this form for the contest and be sure to put your name and email as submitted by.

Send payment and form to NCCW by May 15, 2016.

Membership Application ..... Please select your membership category:

☐ Supporting Member ($100) Benefits: Supporting Member pin, Supporting Member ribbon at Annual Convention,
   Plus all individual Membership benefits cited below:

☐ Individual Member ($60) Benefits: 1-yr subscription quarterly Catholic Woman magazine and Connect e-newsletter.
   Opportunity to hold NCCW national leadership positions, Participate in Leadership and Advocacy calls.
   Vote in NCCW elections, Annual Business Meeting

Please complete & mail to NCCW Membership, 200 N Glebe Rd., Suite 725, Arlington, VA 22203

Name ______________________ Telephone _______________ Email ______________________

Address _______________________________ City __________ State __ Zip __________

Parish _____________________ A/Dioce ___________ DuBoque ___________

Circle one: Check made payable to NCCW Credit Card MasterCard Visa Discover

Name on Card ___________________________ Account Number ___________________________

Security Code ___________________ Expiration __________________________

Signature __________________________________________________________

Submitted by ______________________ Email __________________________
2016 NCCW DUES NOTICE

Member Organization ___________________________ AMOUNT DUE: $100.00
Archdiocese Dubuque

Current President or Representative to receive NCCW mailings:

PRESIDENT
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP

IMPORTANT: The individual listed on this form will receive ALL NCCW correspondence (e-Connect newsletter, Catholic Woman magazine, election information, and all other notifications).

Please send payment to: National Council of Catholic Women
200 North Glebe Road, Suite 725
Arlington, VA 22203

President’s Name ________________________________

Parish Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________________________

City/State/ Zip ________________________________

Phone Number ________________________________

Email Address for Main Contact (where the Connect will be sent) ________________________________

How will you be paying? Check Number _______ Credit Card Type: Visa / MasterCard / Discover

Credit Card Number ____________________________ Exp Date _______ Code _______

Billing Address (If different from above) ________________________________________________

City/State/ Zip ________________________________

Cardholder’s Signature: ________________________________________________________________

Please return this form with your payment
### CONTACT INFORMATION

Please complete and return to: NCCW, 200 North Glebe Road, Suite 725, Arlington, VA 22203

**Date**

**From**

(Title)

Full name of affiliate

### NAMES AND ADDRESSES FOR NCCW MAILING LIST

Fill in complete name and address including zip code, phone number and e-mail address for each person.

**President**

address

city, state, zip

phone #

e-mail

**Spiritual Advisor**

address

city, state, zip

phone #

e-mail

**Treasurer**

address

city, state, zip

phone #

e-mail

### COMMISSION CHAIRS:

**Leadership:**

address

city, state, zip

phone #

e-mail

**Service:**

address

city, state, zip

phone #

e-mail

**Spirituality:**

address

city, state, zip

phone #

e-mail

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**Mail additional copy to ACCW**

Dubuque ACCW  
President Alma Meyer  
PO Box 377  
Calmar, IA 52132-0377  
563-380-5607

**Mail one copy to Deanery President:**

**Make a copy for Parish file.**
Thank you, Carolyn, for your kind introduction, and thank you, Sheila and the entire Board, for inviting me to join you here today to kick off the annual convention of the National Council Of Catholic Women.

I’m particularly honored to be with you this year because you’re celebrating an important milestone – the 95th anniversary of the founding of the NCCW. Congratulations!

Your mission – to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service – remains as crucial today as it was in 1920. In fact, your reason for being has never been more important.

Preparing to speak to you today prompted me to carefully consider what it’s like to be a woman in today’s culture so that I could talk to you about making connections to build stronger communities of Catholic women.

I like to think I’m uniquely qualified to address this issue because I’ve spent the better part of the past eleven years as a culture commentator, writing weekly, and now monthly, columns on the issues that impact families and communities. Suffice to say, my topics have changed with the times. When I started writing for the Washington Times newspaper, I tackled cutting-edge issues like, what’s the right age to let a child get facebook?

Now, among teenagers, facebook is like the 8 track tape of the digital world.

This summer, my column for Catholic Digest offered advice to parents when kids inevitably ask about the headlines, like, what’s so courageous about “Caitlyn” Jenner wearing a ball gown to the ESPY awards?

I’ve also written three books on parenting, all aimed at helping today’s moms and dads better understand the environment in which their kids are growing up, and giving parents the reasons, tools and encouragement to focus on what’s truly important – the character, values and faith of their children.

In addition to my work as a columnist and author, I’m the director of marketing at Faith Catholic, the fastest growing Catholic publishing company in the nation. If you don’t know us, we produce magazines for nearly 40 dioceses and Catholic organizations across America. In fact, one in five Americans who receives a diocesan publication is getting a magazine from Faith Catholic. My job is to help bring our proven format to more dioceses so that our bishops can do more than just convey news and information, but instead, can use their communication budgets to truly evangelize.

I tell you these things about myself to reassure you that I have the insight and experience to deliver the message I’m about to give to you. But really, the thing that makes me credible is that, as of August 16, my husband Jim and I joined the ranks of empty nesters, having moved the fourth of our four children into her college dorm room.

Now, I don’t want to brag here, but Amy’s roommate is an only child and her parents were literally in awe of our ability to create a complete, comfortable and cozy living space for our daughter in under an hour. These poor folks were still trying to figure out where to store the trail mix and how to fit 27 pairs of shoes into a milk crate while we were headed to the pub for a burger and a beer.

I confess that I was sorry our move-in day was so efficient and that we were ready to leave our baby behind at precisely 6 pm, when she headed to her first sorority rush meeting. It meant I was faced with the undeniable fact that my vocation of motherhood had taken an irreversible turn into the world of young adults. As usual when leaving a college freshman behind, I cried for the first hour of our drive. But this time, rather than reassure me that the thanksgiving break would be here before we know it, as he had done the three previous times, Jim just held my hand and let me grieve the end of an era that gave my life so much meaning and purpose and fun.

After a while, he pulled his hand away because we’re not really hand-holders, and also because the tissue I had crumpled between my fingers was drenched in snot, but when we stopped for the night he bought a bottle of wine. Twenty-eight years of marriage will get you a guy who knows what to do in a crisis.

That evening, we sipped Chardonnay and talked about how cool our kids are – at least, we think they’re cool – and because the tissue I had crumpled between my fingers was drenched in snot, but when we stopped for the night he bought a bottle of wine. Twenty-eight years of marriage will get you a guy who knows what to do in a crisis.

I’m painting a lovely image for you here, but we all know it wasn’t sunshine and puppy dogs and rainbows. It was work. Hard work. Unrelenting, exhausting, expensive, dirty, loud, stressful work, made all the more challenging by a culture that seemed to want to undermine our efforts at every turn. (And we didn’t even have to deal with snapchat or twitter.)

And that’s where I want to begin today – with five cultural realities that define today’s Catholic woman, and then I’m going to talk about the cultural reality that faces the NCCW. Before I’m done, I’m going to suggest some strategies you might consider so that you can be more effective in attracting new members, especially younger women, to join your ranks. I know this is a major concern for the national board and also for your leaders at every level, all the way to the parish councils, and so I want to help you with this issue if I can. But before I’m done, I’m going to pose a fundamental question about your mission and about the future of the council of Catholic women; one I hope you’ll think about, and talk about, and pray about while you’re together this week.

In the marketing world, the first thing you have to do when you’re trying to reach your audience is know them, inside and out.

Do you know today’s Catholic woman? You have to understand the environment in which she lives, the challenges she faces, the pressures she’s dealing with, her goals, her dreams, her habits – all the things that facebook apparently has figured out in order to put ads for cellulite cream on the right side of my newsfeed, as opposed to the ads for clay pigeons that my husband’s facebook feed offers.

The first thing we need to understand about today’s Catholic woman – the first cultural reality – is that she is forced to operate in two places
at one time – the real world and the digital world – and she must keep
up with both 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
As a wife, a mother, an employee, a volunteer, a daughter, a sister, a
neighbor and friend, this woman has come to rely on technology to
maintain a level of performance that only 20 years ago – back when
phones were connected to walls with these things called “cords” – was inconceivable. To do this, she’s become glued to her smartphone, which now has become her lifeline, her girlfriend, her confidant, her secretary, her most trusted resource, her savior.
She’s answering email from teachers, arranging a birthday party,
finding a readycare near her son’s college campus, sending her
husband an encouraging text before a big client meeting, wishing her
neighbor a happy birthday on Facebook, posting a picture from the
soccer game on Instagram so grandma can see it, scheduling a vet
appointment using an online scheduling system, calling into her part-
time job with instructions for setting up a meeting later in the week,
and shopping for the shoes her daughter sent her in a link.
And this is just what she’s accomplishing in while waiting in the pick
up line at school.
Once her kids pile in the car, the real world version of her life takes
over. She’s driving, feeding, listening, advising, cheering, correcting,
advocating, providing, consoling... in short, she’s doing all of the
things moms have been doing since the dawn of time. Since before
there were minivans. Before putting a kid on a soccer team meant
there were minivans. Before putting a kid on a soccer team.
But that’s not all. Her smartphone tells her when to get to the gym for
a spinning class, when to track her calories on her MyFitnessPal app,
when to make a reservation for next year’s spring break, and when
the new Lilly Pulitzer collection will arrive at target. (I just made that
up for the sake of the speech. Don’t worry. You didn’t miss it.)
Thanks to her digital life, today’s Catholic woman can have a real life
that is even busier, more complicated, more stressful and less fulfilling
than ever before. Oh joy.

Here’s the second cultural reality you have to know
about today’s Catholic woman: she’s working outside the
home, at least part-time, not by choice but by economic
necessity.

Let me see a quick show of hands – how many of you have been
NCCW members for 20 years or more? How about 30 years? How
about 40 years? Give yourselves a hand, ladies! That’s an awesome
commitment. That level of commitment is the reason why this
organization has done such good work for almost a century!
Now, just curious, for those of you who are mothers, when you
joined NCCW, how many of you were at home full-time with your
children? How many worked part-time? How many held full-time jobs
throughout all the years you raised your kids?
As of 2013, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, of the 123
million working age women in the nation, just about 60 percent are
labor force participants, meaning they have or are looking for work.
For our modern Catholic woman, holding down a job while raising her
family is not just a matter of achieving her personal or professional
goals; it’s a financial imperative. Yet, despite taking on the
responsibility of contributing financially to her household, according
to Pew’s research on social trends, this hardworking gal continues to
maintain the traditional roles of homemaker and caregiver, even if her
husband does help nominally with the laundry and grocery shopping.
No wonder she’s tethered to her smartphone, am I right?

So we get that she’s super busy and she’s likely to hold at least a
part-time job to add to the family coffers. This good woman is also
confronted with a culture that quite literally is trying to steal her
children out from under her.

The third cultural reality facing our friend the Catholic
woman is today’s ubiquitous media, presenting her family
with core values and beliefs that are in direct opposition to everything
she was taught. And each day, in myriad ways both obvious and
insidious, the popular culture chips away at the foundations of
faith she is trying to instill in her children, such that even the very
basic lessons in morality and truth she espouses in her home are
contradicted by the content she unwittingly pays to put into the hands
and hearts of her own family.
It’s called “the family plan.” Verizon has one. T-mobile and AT&T
Sprint all have them. They’re the shared data plans that make it
affordable for this mom to use a speedy, accessible smartphone and
also to provide one to every member of her family – even down to
her third grader. As if it weren’t dangerous enough to put televisions
into every child’s bedroom, laptops into every backpack and gaming
systems in every family room, we live in a culture in which children
will have no memory of life before the handheld, portable, fully
functional computer, enabling them to interact with every sort of idea
and experience at any moment. Make that every moment.
Our favorite wife and mom worries about the impact of so much
media on her family but she doesn’t know what to do about it.
One day, waiting for her double-half-caff-skim-almond-sony-latte at
Starbucks on the way home from Zumba class, she googled “how
much media is too much for kids?” And she found the Kaiser Family
Foundation study that shows teens spend more than 7.5 hours per
day engaged with some form of media – a number that rises to more
than 10 hours if you add in time spent texting – and that scared her
and made her feel guilty and inadequate and insecure about her
parenting.
So when she got to the car she texted all her kids and said, “tonight
after dinner we are unplugging for a family game night.” But the kids
all texted back about their plans to watch Netflix with friends and the
homework they had requiring internet searches and she remembered
she has bookclub on Thursday and she needs her iPad to finish
reading the book. And her kids seem fine anyway so she decided to
let it go.

Because the media thing is too hard to fix. It’s too big. It’s too
ingrained in our American ethos. It’s not going anywhere and so the
doing thing to do is get accustomed to living with it, since no one is going to
live without it. She makes a mental note to check her teenage son’s
laptop for evidence he’s using porn, and she hopes for the best.

In fact, hoping for the best is about all she feels she can
do about anything, and this is the fourth cultural reality:
this typical Catholic woman feels powerless to change
anything.
She tries to keep up on the headlines by turning the news on while
she makes dinner. From the presidential election to the plight of
Syrian refugees, to the heinous Planned Parenthood scandal, to
racial unrest and urban violence, the news of the day seems to be
on repeat, with no solutions in sight. No hope for a better way or a
brighter day.
And sometimes it’s just weird. She reads a story of a trans-gendered
student trying to force his school board to let him use the girl’s locker
room, rather than a private, gender neutral bathroom, on the grounds
he identifies as a girl and his sex does not establish his gender, and our good-hearted Catholic woman feel she’s living in a modern day version of “the emperor has no clothes.” It’s clear to her that the world is turned upside down. Right is wrong, good is bad, tolerance means accepting things that were unheard of only a decade ago, and no one seems to think it’s strange.

Some days it seems to her that the evil one is winning the culture war.

Has won the culture war.

And now she’s not always sure what’s right or good or true anyway. Her best friend’s son is gay and he’s an absolutely wonderful young man – one of the best kids she knows. He’s smart and kind and accomplished. She’s met his friends, and they’re all gems. He’s a faithful person, professing a love of the Lord that she believes is real and deep and reverent. She can no longer state with certainty that this young man should be denied the right to marry.

In fact, she’s not sure about a lot of things. She professes her Catholic faith, but not without a missal since they changed the wording. And the reality is, though she would always define herself as a Catholic, she’s drifted a bit.

Which brings me to the most crucial, fifth cultural reality you must understand about our dear, overworked, preoccupied, media-fixated, overwhelmed, spiritually wobbly friend...

She will never join your ranks unless you first evangelize her.

Here’s the hard truth... in a report about the research that was revealed in the 2013 book “Catholics in Transition,” we learn that Catholic women’s adherence has declined significantly over the 24 years of data that were studied in two important measures:

- Attendance at Mass went from 52 percent to 31 percent
- And, saying the church is important in their lives went from 58 percent to 38 percent.

Women were also far more likely than men to say that they, exercising conscience, should have the final say on issues like contraception and same-sex relationships. And when it comes to abortion, 60 percent of Catholic women surveyed said you could be a good Catholic without obeying church teaching on abortion. All of these numbers became more pronounced among women in their twenties and thirties. And interestingly, Hispanic Catholic women showed almost no differences from Caucasians on these issues and trends.

Ladies of the NCCW, this is the reason you struggle to gain younger members. You don’t have a marketing problem so much as a mission problem. Here’s what I mean...

When the NCCW was founded 95 years ago, adherence among women was not only assumed but demanded. Catholic women were the heart of the domestic church and their faith fueled the fires that warmed and nurtured their parishes. They didn’t have to be told to bring their children to Mass after first holy communion Sunday! They didn’t need instruction on how to pray for vocations – for heaven sake, they went to bed each night praying and wishing and hoping that a son would go to the seminary! They joined service leagues in such high numbers that parishes had to do the Litany of Saints just to announce the weekly meetings of the St. Anthony Guild and the St. Lawrence Guild and the St. Cecilia Guild and on and on and on.

This organization was founded and continued to thrive at a time when the power of Catholic women was a force to be harnessed and directed toward the goals of our bishops – and if you think those guys didn’t understand the real potential of the NCCW, you’ve never been to a cocktail party of bishops. I have! Believe me, back in 1920, the USCCB knew that women, joined together as sisters in faith with a common purpose, could be encouraged, educated and trained to lead the lay hierarchy and provide the coherent response of the church’s army of “Marthas” and “Marys.”

Today, your potential new member doesn’t know that she has the power to join with other women and provide a Catholic response to the issues facing our culture. She can’t imagine that she could help win back the culture for God, because she struggles herself to really know the Lord. She can’t help fight the culture because she’s one of its victims! And while you need her to help with the good and worthy projects you’re undertaking in your CCW chapters and as a national and international organization, I assert to you today that she needs you more, to help her find her way back to the church and into a real relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Now, I know I promised you some marketing advice, and I’m a woman of my word, so my first brilliant marketing strategy is this:

Press the pause button on organizing, and instead make it your focus to evangelize all women. Take everything you know about our good Catholic lady – that she’s crazy busy and media saturated and fearful of the culture and overwhelmed by current events and out of touch with her faith – and for heaven sake don’t ask her to join something she doesn’t understand. Instead, help her to understand something she hasn’t truly joined – this powerful, life-changing faith and the church that Jesus established for her.

Ok, you say, you’re making a strong point, MaryBeth. But now what? How do we do that?

Alright, here’s where we borrow strategies from the secular world. We start with the low hanging fruit – the women who are coming to church, albeit not regularly, whose faith you might strengthen by your example and knowledge. And here, we’re talking not only about the typical Catholic wife and mother I’ve described, but also about the single women in their twenties and thirties, and single and divorced mothers – every woman from every walk of life who needs to feel the care and compassion of her sisters in the faith.

There are tactics you can use to reach these women that will show them you care about them, and that’s the first crucial step.

For example, suppose you ask for time to make an announcement at the end of Mass, just two or three times per year, and (get ready to be shocked), during that announcement, you ask every woman in the church to pull out her smartphone, open her facebook app, and follow your facebook page. She’ll do it. She hates to miss out on a good follow. Now you’re in a relationship in which you’re able to appear regularly in her facebook feed. Seventy-seven percent of women who are online use facebook, so your odds of capturing women’s attention there are good.

Sort of. My second piece of advice is to look at your facebook feeds first and foremost as tools for evangelization, not as news outlets about the CCW or as promotional tools to get people to your events. If you can get non-members to click your “like” button, you must give them something that relates to their spiritual journeys. And to be blunt, the woman I described to you today isn’t saying a novena while sitting at a stoplight. She is, however, reading her facebook feed, so be sure yours is updated daily with relevant reflections, bible verses, great, inspiring photos, quotes and memes that ladies will want to
copy to pinterest, and suggestions for podcasts, books, videos and articles to spark her spiritual life.

At the parish level, focus on how to provide support to women, rather than asking them to support you. Right now, while our prototypical Catholic woman is still spiritually adrift, she’s not going to come to a meeting of the CCW. Not yet, anyway. But she might go to an event sponsored by the CCW where a Catholic parenting author is scheduled to speak about fighting the culture and keeping kids safe (obviously I’m not above shameless self promotion).

She doesn’t know you well enough to join your fight against pornography, but she might come to a seminar you host on talking to teens about the dangers of porn, and while she’s there, she’ll learn about your important work in this area. She doesn’t know that she could help support marriage and family life through the NCCW’s initiatives, but she might read a CCW bulletin insert about how to be fully Catholic on the issue of marriage while keeping and loving her gay friends.

And though she’s not ready to click the membership link on your web site, she’d be grateful if your chapter offered to work side-by-side with her committee for a school fundraiser, or a parish picnic, or a mother-daughter brunch.

Of course, there are many, many women sitting in the pews beside you who are on fire for the Lord but who have no idea that the Council of Catholic Women is an avenue for them to live out their faith. True confession: I’m not yet a CCW member, though I’m looking into joining in my new hometown of Savannah, Georgia, where my husband and I recently relocated. I would feel guilty about this (I’m an ardent practitioner of Catholic guilt), but for this one fact: in all of my adult life as a devout Catholic, I have never been asked to join the CCW. I’ve never received a mailing, never seen ladies from the parish make a presentation at Mass, never been stopped at the doors after Mass and invited to a coffee break or wine night, never been called on the phone by a member and told about a new member meeting, never heard that the CCW in my parish was holding a membership.

This is how you will build stronger communities of Catholic women, and through them, a stronger, more vibrant church.

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**DUBUQUE ARCHDIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN**

**-ACCW-**

**2015-16 CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINE SHEET FOR PARISH AND/OR DEANERY**

Submit this form to ACCW Treasurer Mary Rausch
P.O. Box 37
Fort Atkinson, Iowa 52144
563-534-7593

Please submit contributions by Dec. 31st

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Please submit any Parish officer changes to:
ACCW President Alma Meyer | PO Box 377 | Calmar, Iowa 52132

Please make copies for your files

14
This invitation is extended to all men and women who care about life from conception to natural death. January is the month when special emphasis is placed on the value of the life of the unborn. Consider one of the many opportunities available to show your support for life. If you are not able to participate in one of the activities listed below, join the army of those praying for life and for those who actively represent us. Prayer is the most powerful tool that we have at our disposal. Check out the invitations listed below and join one of the activities or choose one to especially join in prayer.

**Des Moines**

Every January, for decades, there has been the March for Life in Washington D.C. The March commemorates the dreadful Roe v. Wade decision, which paved the way for abortion on demand. In recent years, the West Coast began their own January March for Life. Now it’s OUR turn! Stand with us – March with us – for the 4th Annual Midwest March for Life. Send the message throughout Iowa and the Midwest: We have not been silent! We will not be silent! We are the voice for the voiceless—the unborn, the infirm and the elderly. We will not rest until every life, born and unborn, is safe from the pervasive culture of death.

Co-Leader of the 2016 Midwest March for Life will be our luncheon keynote, Melissa Ohden! Melissa is the Founder of Abortion Survivors Network; learn more about her and our other speakers under the Speakers tab. We encourage you to post positive Facebook comments and tweets about attending the Midwest March for Life using the hashtag #midwestmarch. See you there!

**Dubuque**

Dubuque County Right to Life, every year since 1994, has led pilgrimages to the National March for Life in Washington D.C. Approximately 300 people from the Dubuque area will be participating this year. A few seats may be available. Call DCRTL at 563-566-5960. The buses leave on January 20 and return January 24. They need prayer all along the way.

**Cedar Rapids**

Coalition For Life of Iowa are sponsoring the following:

A chartered bus roundtrip for those who would like to go to the Midwest March for Life in Des Moines on January 16. We will arrive in time for the 9 AM Mass at St. Ambrose Cathedral. The march begins at 11:00 at the State Capital followed at 12:30 with Melissa Ohden, keynote speaker at the Iowa Event Center. $25. per person reserves your spot on the bus, send your name and $ to Coalition For Life of Iowa, PO Box 864, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52406. Only after the 40 person minimum is reached will your check be cashed. All are welcome, including children. Questions can be directed to coalitionforlife@gmail.com or 319-366-1684, http://lifeiowa.org

Cedar Rapids March For Life will be Sunday, January 17. We will depart from St. Matthew’s Church parking lot, 2310 First Ave. NE. At 2:00 PM we will begin our march to Planned Parenthood, 3425 First Ave. SE. Join us as we pray and witness. At 3:00 we will return to St. Matthew’s for fellowship and some hot chili. If you prefer to drive instead of walk, join us at Planned Parenthood and back at St. Matthew’s for chili. Questions can be directed to coalitionforlife@gmail.com or 319-366-1684, http://lifeiowa.org

Spring 2015 Conference on Life, Marriage and Family - “Going Natural - A Healthy Choice” Conference to be in Cedar Rapids. This conference will present a scientific analysis of sex, fertility, and relationships. Speakers include Vicki Thorn, M.S., Jamie Rathjen, M.A., Fr. Ray Atwood, and more. Everyone is welcome! CEUs offered for medical professionals. $50 for conference, materials, lunch and CEU credits. For more information contact Sue Martinek, 319-366-1684 or susjmar@aol.com
FAREWELL REMARKS

As I was thinking about what to say to you today, my mind went back to another fall day in 1994 - the day when Archbishop Kucera asked me to be your Spiritual Moderator. That was 21 years ago! Now I don't know who keeps track of the length of priests' assignments, but if this isn't a record, it should be.

But as we say, all good things come to an end, and I've finally decided that it's time for a younger man to take my place. Although the doctors say that I am still in fairly good health (but they always add “for a man your age”), at 86 years of age I no longer have the energy or stamina I had in years past; and you deserve someone younger who can be more active in supporting the work of your Council. And so, after much thought and prayer, I've asked Archbishop Jackels to accept my resignation, and he has done so. Although I have been officially relieved of my position, I have told Alma that I will stay on until my successor is appointed, and that I will help out in any ways you need me.

I would be less than honest if I did not say that this has been a painful decision for me because I believe in your Council and the work you are doing, and the need for it to continue. If there is a better way to bring women together and unite them in facing the challenges that confront us in today’s world, I can’t imagine what it would be. I have seen your prayerfulness, your faithfulness to your calling, and your many ways of showing your love and caring for others; and this has been a constant source of inspiration for me. I admire you so much, and I will miss our times together.

So, I simply want to thank you with all my heart for all that you have done for me these past 21 years, for I have received much more than I have given. You have been a blessing to me in so many ways, and I will always be grateful.

God bless you all!
Msgr. Dean Walz
I have many “favorite” saints, those who inspire me, who are role-models for living fully in Christ, those whose intercession I beg in prayer. One of those favorite saints is Teresa of Jesus. She was born 500 years ago, became a Carmelite nun, and was declared the first woman Doctor of the Church. We can learn so much from her writings about prayer, contemplation, and living in unity with God. I have found that many times in reading St. Teresa I need to have her writings in one hand and a good commentary on her works in my other hand. Either she was extremely intelligent or I am just not too bright. I think both of those statements are true. However there is one thing St. Teresa wrote that I find so simple, yet so profound, and it has provided me much food for thought over the years. She said, “We cannot know whether we love God, although there may be strong reason for thinking so; but there can be no doubt about whether we love our neighbor or not.”

We say we love God, but where is the proof of it, how do we show Him that we love Him? As St. Teresa said, there may be good reasons for us to believe we love God, but how can we know for sure if we love the God we cannot see? But, as St. Teresa said, there isn’t much doubt about whether we love another person or not. The way we respond to their needs or not, talk about them and to them, think good thoughts about them or not, certainly shows our love or lack thereof for the people we can see. And Jesus tells us that there is an intimate connection here. How we love others shows our love for God. Jesus gave us the two Great Commandments, love God, love our neighbor. Jesus also tells us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for Him. So when St. Teresa says that there may be strong reason for us to believe we love God, that reason is rooted in our love for others. To the degree we love those people we can see is the degree to which we love the God we cannot see.

As members of the ACCW, you are all about loving God by loving your neighbor. You make Jesus better known and loved by your works of mercy and charity. In the words of St. Teresa, there can be no doubt that the women of the ACCW love their neighbor. And because of that, there can be no doubt that the women of the ACCW love God.

Fr. Dagit
Sister Rita Cameron, Presentation Sister of BVM - “Year of Consecrated Life” representative.

Trappistine Lay Representatives from Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey.

Archbishop presenting ACCW outstanding certificate to Edna Brunkhorst.

Iowa NCCW Province Director Mary Ann Ruether from LeMars, Iowa.
Welcome by Rev. Timothy Lenchak, SVD
Divine Word College, Epworth

Musicians Carrie & Sheila Rassman, and DWC Cantor

Archbishop and Sandy Wilgenbush
DWC contact and hostess

11:00 am Mass with Archbishop

Annette Simonson
with cake she baked

ACCW Convention Attendees
Upcoming Dates

December 8........ Jubilee Year of Mercy begins
December 27...... Call in reservations to AMRH, Cedar Falls
December 31...... NCCW affiliation dues due ($100 parish/deanery)
January 5-6....... ACCW Quarterly Meetings at AMRH, Cedar Fall
January 16........ Midwest March for Life, Des Moines
January 17........ Cedar Rapids March For Life
Jan. 31-Feb. 6..... National Catholic Schools Week
February 10....... Ash Wednesday
February 13....... Iowa Catholic Radio Women’s Conference
                 St. Francis of Assisi in West Des Moines
February 14....... World Marriage Day
February 17....... Iowa Catholic Conference, Iowa Bishops
                 Legislation Breakfast Des Moines
March 5............ Sioux City Womens Conference
                 Holy Spirit Church, Caroll, Iowa
March............... World Day of Prayer
March 27......... Easter
April 2-6......... NCCW Pilgrimage to France
April 3............. Divine Mercy Sunday
April 30............ Des Moines Diocese Conference
                 Queen of the Apostles Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa
April 9............. Sioux City Diocese Convention, Ida Grove, Iowa
April 19-20....... ACCW Quarterly Mtgr@AMRH, Cedar Falls. Review
                 Governing documents and Volunteer Appreciation
April 26 .......... Feast of CCW patroness, Our Lady of Good
                 Counsel (ACCW contribution weekend nearest
                 the feast day)

May you have Blessed New Year
from the ACCW Executive Board

~ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS ~
Mass at 3:00 pm; Tuesday meeting begins - 4:00 pm

~ ACCW BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING~
Registration begins at 8:30 am;
Wednesday meeting begins - 9:00 am

Please contact AMRH to make meal reservations, 319-266-3543
E-mail: DBQAMRHsec@dbqarch.org and ampmeyer@gmail.com
CALL IN RESERVATIONS A WEEK BEFORE

~ ACCW OFFICE ~
Dubuque ACCW  I  1229 Mt. Loretta I Dubuque, IA 52004
For immediate ACCW response, call 563-380-5607

ATTEND ARCHDIOCESEAN HOLY HOURS
FOR PRIESTHOOD VOCATIONS
2016 DATES & LOCATIONS:

January 20, Nativity, Dubuque
February 17, St Joseph, Bellevue
March 11, St. Patrick, Clear Lake

NOTICE: When ordering The Link
make checks payable to ACCW.