



Saint Paul & Minneapolis  
**Archdiocesan Council of  
 CATHOLIC WOMEN**

*From the Desk of our President . . .*

Greetings My Fellow CCW Sisters,

I have had the pleasure of attending a variety of parish, deanery, diocesan events, and province meetings. Each time I leave inspired with a new idea or inspired spiritually. There is nothing better than being in person. We thrive on “in person interaction”. The benefit of attending an event includes overall better communication, building relationships, and encourages more collaborative participation. I encourage everyone to attend a CCW meeting, either at your parish level, deanery level, diocesan event, or province conference. Be bold and invite your sister, a friend, your daughter, your daughter-in-law, or your granddaughter. All are welcome! Check out the ACCW website and look at the calendar for future events.



We know the same goes for attending Mass. Our churches are trying to find a way to bring our parishioners back into the pews. Church is the place where we can find the answers to a specific question or need some direction in your life. Church is the place that draws us closer to God. When we attend Mass in person, we can receive the sacrament of communion. Jesus commanded, “Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.”

**Lay Woman Awards**

The ACCW honors four volunteers with the ACCW Lay Woman Volunteer Award each year at our annual convention. The award will be presented this year during the convention April 19, 2024, at Mary, Mother of the Church, Burnsville. Start thinking about a woman to nominate for this award.

If you know a Catholic woman who has done outstanding volunteer work in the church and/or community, please consider nominating her. You may also nominate yourself. Any member of a group or organization affiliated with the ACCW may submit a form.

Applications will be mailed out at the beginning of January. The forms are now available on our website [www.accwarchspm.org](http://www.accwarchspm.org) under the resource tab. You will find the rules, a question form, and an entry blank. Please read the information carefully.

Continued on Page 5

**ACCW OFFICERS**

- President*  
Doreen Hogan
- Past President*  
Mickey Nickelson
- 1st Vice President*  
Terri Pontious
- 2nd Vice President*  
Laurie Otte
- Recording Secretary*  
Cathy Healy
- Treasurer*  
Lori Keys
- Parliamentarian*  
Lucy Johnson

**COMMISSION CHAIRS**

- Leadership Organization*  
Colleen Hogan
- Legislation*  
Patricia Reinardy
- Spirituality Church*  
Florence Schmidt & Jane Rosner
- Family Concerns*  
Debbie Keller
- Service Community Concerns*  
Theresa Cermak
- International Concerns*  
Denise Haaland

*IMAGE Editor*  
Carol Shukle



# It's Official

## Dates to Remember!

### 2023

December 25-26 Office closed for Christmas

### 2024

January 1 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

February 3 Legislative Day  
St. Pius V, Cannon Falls

Feb 14 Ash Wednesday

March 31 Easter

April 19 91st ACCW Convention

## Deanery Presidents

<i>Minneapolis</i>	Teresa Droessler	651-697-1344
<i>Northeast</i>	Mary Lou Wilharber	651-429-2140
<i>Northwest</i>	Betty Thomes	763-443-9452
<i>Southeast</i>	Laurie Otte	507-663-0512
<i>Southwest</i>	Andrea Jewison	612-423-5591
<i>Saint Paul</i>	Annmarie Chlebeck	651-647-0905
<i>West</i>	Inactive	

Make sure to follow us on [facebook](#):

*St. Paul and Minneapolis  
Archdiocesan Council of  
Catholic Women*



***The ACCW Board of Directors and staff wish to take this opportunity to say Thank You to everyone who has supported us so faithfully this past year. We wish you and your families and loved ones a Merry Christmas!***

## Resolutions Submission

*Affiliated organizations and ACCW Individual Members are invited to submit resolutions for consideration at the ACCW Annual Meeting to the ACCW office by January 10, 2024.*

*Resolutions are statements of direction for ACCW members to use for program planning.*

*They consist of the rationale for the action (Whereas statements) and the call for a specific action (Resolved statements.)*

*Resolutions must be consistent with the ACCW and NCCW Mission Statement and must not duplicate a previously approved resolution. They need to be capable of implementation by ACCW members at the Archdiocesan and parish levels.*

*After approval by the Resolutions Committee and Board of Directors, the resolutions will be presented to the membership for discussion and vote during the Annual ACCW Convention Business Meeting on April 19. Majority vote is required for final approval.*

**Check out our website!**

**[www.accwarchspm.org](http://www.accwarchspm.org)**



# Spiritual Advisor's Corner



Dearest Sisters in Christ,

Christmas would not be Christmas without the receiving of gifts. How gift giving became a part of the tradition of Christmas is not clear - but since the Magi arrived with their gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh - gift giving and receiving have been part of Christmas. The secular celebra-

tion of Christmas centers on gifts and the story of Santa Claus. Among Christians, gift giving flows out of God's loving gift of His Son as our Savior and our love for each other.

One Christmas Day – over 40 years ago- my family gathered around a Christmas tree at Grandpa Oscar and Grandma Millie's house. I am there, deep in the Christmas joy with my two sisters, Kristal about age three, and Rachel, just a newborn. So too are an assortment of grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Under the tree is a mountain of presents. Their contents are disguised by bright paper and bows and ribbons. Packages for everyone are there. Hours of weary shopping, crowded stores, and long lines. Some purchased on impulse, for forgotten reasons. A few are products of individual handiwork and craft. All sorts of toys for all ages of boys and girls. The batteries in some will not last the day, should the toy survive that long. And of course, clothing! Some that will soon be exchanged, and some are needed more than wanted (socks!). There is bric-a-brac to gather dust or decorate the house in Christmases yet to come. Among them are a few special treasures. With presents, it is not what they are, but the love with which they were given that matters.

Another special gift under the Christmas tree was a doll house for my sister Kristal. This was the first Christmas that Kristal, a three-year-old, was aware of gifts. Her little face lit up as her "pile" was pointed out to her. She tore into the presents like a veteran. Each package ripped open, with increasing frenzy -- wide eyes, and loud shrieks of delight. Dolls and clothes from the family. A Stuffed bear. More clothes and socks. But after a few

**Fr. Dan Haugan**  
**ACCW Spiritual Advisor**

## The True Gifts of Christmas

moments of tightly clutching each gift and showing it off to everyone "See what I got!"-- ignoring the explanations of who gave it to her, she quickly tossed each one aside and tore into the next.

Her last gift was the doll house our father had made for her. While everyone else was opening gifts and laughing and talking, for a while, Kristal was entranced by the doll house and oblivious to all else. Reminded not to touch, for some things were fragile, she looked and longed to touch the miniature world created just for her: the shingled roof, the lacy curtains, the miniature tables and chairs, the tiny books, and dishes. Much like the beautiful world God has given to us in which to live - delightful in every way. To her child's mind this was the best gift she had ever been given.

My then baby sister Rachel (my parents would be blessed with five more over the years) was quite happy just playing in the growing mountain of torn paper and discarded ribbons. For her, the fun was having everyone around her and all the attention she was getting (since she was now the baby in the family.) She had not yet learned the place of presents at Christmas, and perhaps she was better off. Only too late have I learned, being with my whole loving family was the greatest of gifts that day!

Have a Blessed time this year making new Christmas memories that become old Christmas stories.

With Love and Peace,  
Fr. Daniel Haugan



---

---

## Terri Pontious 1st Vice President

Recently I read the commencement address that Bishop Robert Barron from the Diocese of Winona Rochester, Minnesota gave for the Hillsdale College graduating class of 2023. His talk was entitled “The Most Important Decision in Life” and was published in the Imprimis, June 2023, Volume 52, Number 6 edition. Although I cannot possibly share the beauty of his entire talk, I would like to recapture some of the highlights as I found it to be a wonderful guide on how to lead a truly successful life in the eyes of God.

He starts out by reminding the graduates that all of us who believe in God and are disciples of Jesus Christ have a common enemy in the increasingly agnostic world of atheism. Nihilism is deeply affecting our cultures here and worldwide, especially in the minds of the young people. We can easily see how this is fracturing our world and creating much chaos. He goes on to remind his audience of the words of Frederick Douglas who he quoted as saying “There is no such thing as new truth, error might be old or new, but truth is as old as the universe” In other words, truth is as old as the universe and permanent as the eternity of God.

He asked his audience: “Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness?” Is it better to suffer wrongdoing than to do wrong oneself? Another question: “What kind of soul do you have?”

“Will you do whatever it takes to get what you want?”  
“Or will you accept great suffering in order to do what is right?”

He warned the graduates that this world we live in is divided into those who worship the one true God and those who engage in idolatry and false worship. Idolatry did not end in the Old Testament. It is alive and practiced throughout the secular world today. Think about that. Think about what people worship today. Power, wealth, pleasure, are a few that he mentioned. What “truths” that are falsehoods do people believe today?

In closing Bishop Barron quoted Pope John Paul II’s writings on living a moral life and it is the ethical choices a person must make that shape one’s character. This in turn will enable one to become “the kind of men and women who would endure injustice rather than commit injustice,

who would never dream of worshipping at the altar of an idol and who wouldn’t surrender the integrity of your souls for the whole world. If you become the person God intends you to be, you will succeed in lighting a fire upon the earth.”

## Parliamentarian Report Lucy Johnson

What Happens at a Meeting?

According to Robert’s Rules of Order In Brief (RIB), the two essential officers at a meeting are the Presiding Officer (usually the president or chair) and the Secretary. The Presiding Officer keeps order during the meeting (follows an agenda), and the Secretary records what is done (minutes).

In addition to these officers, members must be present for a meeting to occur -- not just any members but the minimum number of members that are required by to transact business. This number is known as the quorum. A quorum protects the rights of the absent so that a few people can’t make binding decisions for the group.

The standard order of business that the presiding officer follows can be modified for each organization. RIB recommends the format of R-RUN: Reading and Approval of Minutes, Reports of officers and committees, Unfinished Business, and New Business. If there are opening ceremonies (which are optional), remember that God comes before country. An invocation or prayer would be first, followed by the singing of the National Anthem for example.

Minutes are legal documents and must be kept forever. Therefore, they must be correct. Think of the approval of minutes not as “voting” on them but “correcting” them.

**Parliamentarian Continued on Page Six**

### Executive Committee

President: Doreen Hogan, 507-514-7483  
Immediate Past President: Mickey Nickelson  
1st VP: Terri Pontious  
2nd VP: Laurie Otte  
Secretary: Cathy Healy  
Treasurer: Lori Keys  
Parliamentarian: Lucy Johnson  
All Commission Chairs

## Leadership

# Organization Commission

### Colleen Hogan, Chair

Every year at this time we start to reflect about the year and what we could have done differently. Let's be proactive and start setting goals for 2024. In our society today we know its hard to keep a positive attitude and not get caught up in the web of negativity. However, I encourage us to pray and discern about this and reflect on what changes we need to make to be the best version of ourselves.

*One Word That Will Change Your Life* is a book and a practice by Dan Britton, Jimmy Page and Jon Gordon. They claim that choosing and living by one word a year can help you simplify your life and work, and achieve clarity, power, passion and purpose. The book also shows how one word can impact the six dimensions of your life: mental, physical, emotional, relational, spiritual and financial. Another source suggests that there are 10 simple words that can change your life if you say them consistently and at the right time. These words are yes, no, thanks, sorry, help, enough, hello, goodbye, love and God.

“What is One Word That Would Change Your Life?”



### Leadership

#### Organization Commission

Chair: Colleen Hogan 507-304-5755

Membership: Betty Berge

Mentoring: Barb Pierce

Communications/Historian: Geri Mages

On the Road: Florence Schmidt

Promotional Items: Jo Hogan

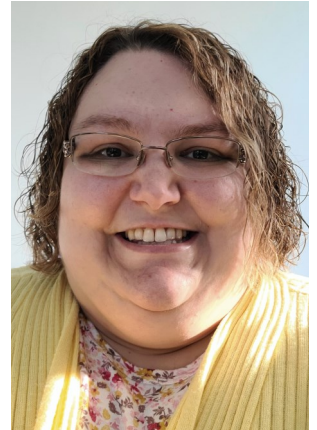
Image Editor: Carol Shukle (Resource)

#### Legislation Commission

Chair/Government Issues: Pat Reinardy 507-263-3295

Religious Issues: Bernadine Henderson

Reminder, if you would like us to come to your parish, the ACCW provides “On the Road Training”. If interested, please contact Flo Schmidt at [florence507@comcast.net](mailto:florence507@comcast.net) or ACCW Office 651-291-4545 or for more information.



### Laurie Otte 2nd Vice President

As I begin my term as 2nd Vice-President, I have asked the board to support my efforts to raise funds for the Vocation Purse Club. This is an NCCW-sponsored program which began in 2000. Vocation Purse was founded to address the obstacle of educational debt to religious vocations. Many cannot join religious orders unless they are debt-free. Your contributions make a difference in the lives of young women to realize their vocation and focus their lives on service, spirituality, and leadership.

I will have “Donation Purses” at our ACCW events. Please consider supporting this worthwhile cause.

### President’s Message

Continued from Page One

All nominations will be treated confidentially. Important to remember, do not identify the nominee by name, nor her parish on the Nomination form, only on the entry blank.

I have met many deserving women who should be nominated as they have done many good works for their families, church, and community. What an honor it would be to receive this recognition!

# Legislation Commission

## Pat Reinardy, Chair

National Pro-Life Alliance (NPLA) member, Alex Mooning, is recruiting Congressmen to co-sponsor the “Life at Conception Act.” This bill would end abortion. Mooning introduced the bill to the House and Rand Paul is leading the fight in the Senate. This bill uses the language of the high courts to protect the unborn by defining them as “persons under the Constitution.” However; The court has yet to recognize that the unborn are guaranteed the same constitutional rights as all people. NPLA members have already recruited 90 co-sponsors for the bill. Michelle Fischbach introduced a bill named, “The Protecting Life and Taxpayers Act.” This bill would close loopholes in the law and completely shut off all channels of tax -dollars to abortion providers. OBAMA CARE and MEDICAID provide hundreds of millions of tax-payer dollars to abortion providers.

We urge everyone to contact their congressmen and senators to insist they vote for a Zero Tax Dollars for Abortion Act (H.R.372).

A short summary of the 2023 legislative session by the Minnesota Catholic Conference (MCC) included the following 6 topics:

**ABORTION** – Bishop Zielinski, regarding the codifying of abortions in Minnesota, stated, “The bill reflects a complete denial of the humanity of the unborn child, their right to live, and the state’s interest in protecting nascent human life.”

**CIVIC LIFE** – MCC supported the bill that allows felons to vote after completion of incarceration imposed by a court.

**EDUCATION** – Advocacy organization and partner with MCC, Opportunity for All Kids, backed legislation that would establish the creation of education savings accounts that families could use to cover specifically education-related expenses. The new bill did not include this legislation.

Continued on Page Eight



## Religious Issues Bernadine Henderson

November is here, the snow is already flying, and the Christmas season is soon to begin. Yes, I purposefully stated Christmas season and not holiday season. With so much political conflict and social pressure to be politically correct, it is a good time to remind ourselves of the importance of our Christian faith and our great fortune of living in a country where the right to freedom of religion is the core of The Constitution of the United States of America.

On December 15, 1791, the Bill of Rights was ratified, providing the first 10 amendments to the United States Constitution. These amendments are a collection of guarantees on individual rights and limitations on the federal and state governments. The First Amendment guarantees five fundamental freedoms: Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of the Press, Right to Assembly and Right to Petition the Government -- in essence, protecting our ability to think and speak as we think.

In the world where political correctness and social pressures to conform are being pushed in our daily lives, as Christians we must not allow anyone to stop us from expressing our fundamental freedoms. It is we who should be offended when being told how to think about our faith or pressured not to speak about our Christian values.

Take time with your families over the Christmas season to appreciate the fundamental freedoms we have as Christians living in the United States. Do not be afraid to speak up for our freedoms or do not give in to social pressures. Most importantly, pray to our Lord and thank Him for this great fortune.





Saint Paul & Minneapolis  
Archdiocesan Council of  
**CATHOLIC WOMEN**

Invites you to:  
**LEGISLATIVE DAY**



**February 3, 2024**  
St. Pius V Catholic Church  
410 W Colvill St,  
Cannon Falls, MN 55009  
Open to Women and Men  
**8:00 Mass and Rosary**  
**9 AM Welcome**  
**11:30 Lunch**



Rep. Pam Altendorf  
House of Representatives



Father Daniel Haugan  
ACCW Spiritual Advisor



Maggee Hangge  
Minnesota Catholic Conference

Cost for the morning \$15.00 After January 24, 2024 \$20.00  
To register online. [www.archspm.org/accwleg2024](http://www.archspm.org/accwleg2024)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: ACCW  
777 Forest St.  
St. Paul, MN 55106

---

---

## Mentoring Barb Pierce

Fall is the time of year that many of us return to our CCW activities. Some councils have new leadership, new members, and are considering new activities. One of the great things about being part of the Council of Catholic Women, at the parish, deanery, diocese, province, or national level, is that we have an instant network of other women who can provide ideas and guidance, share thoughts and prayers and mentor one another.

Mentorship is a relationship between two people where one shares guidance and expertise with the other. The CCW has a rich history of sharing our story, mentoring new members and working to help our members become strong leaders; faithful witnesses; and sound, moral citizens in the church and modern society. (ACCW Mission).

If you are an experienced member willing to share your knowledge and passion, or if you are a new member wanting to learn more about this organization and your role in it, the mentorship program is designed to help you. We are still developing the process, but if you are interested in being a mentor, or would like to request a mentor, email me at [pierc024@umn.edu](mailto:pierc024@umn.edu) and we can get started on the mentorship program.

---

A perhaps lesser-known Advent tradition is the St. Andrew's Novena or Christmas Novena. The origin of the Novena is unknown but it is thought to have its roots in Iceland more than a century ago. The Novena involves reciting a short prayer for a special intention in honor of Our Lord's Nativity 15 times a day from Nov. 30, the Feast of St. Andrew, until Christmas Eve. That's 25 days long and will involve reciting the prayer 375 times!

An individual wishing to complete the Novena can pray the prayer 15 times all at once, similar to a decade of the Rosary, or break them up during the day. Here is the prayer:

*Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God, to hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen.*

Source: The Catholic Company

## Parliamentarian

Continued from Page Four

Reports often simply give information, but sometimes they may contain a recommendation for the group. In those cases, a motion is made at the end of the report and not later in the meeting.

While there may not always be Unfinished Business, the request for New Business should be made. Unfinished Business occurs in two cases: 1) if the meeting is adjourned in the middle of a motion or report and 2) if the meeting is adjourned with business still left to discuss. In either case, these items would be carried over to the next meeting (if in a timely manner) and listed under Unfinished Business. If there is no carry-over, Unfinished Business doesn't need to be listed on the agenda.

## Legislation

Continued from Page Six

**FAMILY LIFE** - Jason Adkins, MCC Executive Director, stated, "The staff were excited this session when legislators sought to make Minnesota the best state to raise a family."

**FAMILY FIRST PROJECT** – The centerpiece of this bill, which passed, was the creation of a state child tax credit. The tax credit is up to \$1,750 per child and with no cap on the number of children per family.

**GENDER IDEOLOGY** - Minnesota Governor Tim Walz signed into law the counseling of minors who seek to address gender discordance, and the allowance of minors from other states to come to Minnesota for "gender-affirming health care". MCC spoke out against the legislation, arguing they cause harm and create confusion. Adkins stated, "The church needs to be part of this conversation about identity, because we have a particular perspective that promotes human flourishing – we're the church that helps people live the way in which they were created."

\*The assisted suicide bill will be at the top of the legislation list this session. Please continue praying that the souls of the dying do not fall victim to this ideology.

Sources:

The Catholic Spirit: MCC: Families First finds foothold in legislative session, pro-life efforts continue  
LifeLine Newsletter of the National Pro-Life Alliance



## *Spirituality*

# Church Commission

### **Florence Schmidt and Jane Rosner, Co-Chairs**

November finds the Catholic Church...and us...entering into the very important liturgical year. With the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe celebrated on Nov 26, the church year closes. We are reminded on that day that we:

“Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcome me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me”. (Matthew 25: 31 – 46) When they asked Jesus when they did these things, Jesus replied “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me”.

### **Ecumenism/Evangelization/ Adoration Maureen Stanoch**

Peace in our homes, the church and the world are promised through Our Lady’s Fatima Plan of “Daily Rosary and First Saturday Devotion.” We hold up the Holy Family as protection, model and guide, and help set the family aside for holiness through Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, through Mary, in union with St. Joseph. Saint Mother Teresa said “...the Heart of Jesus is the Eucharist” and that this way of life brings unity and the love of Jesus deep into the home. So needed for our times, directives can be found in the 2022 NCCW Resolution on the Rosary and ACCW Resolution, “Family and Domestic Church.”



When do we do these things? Look to your CCW groups and the outreach that is done so willingly. Appalachia, Naomi-Ruth, First Saturday Rosaries, Madonna Plan, and so much more is done by ACCW members.

As the church year renews on Dec 3 with the First Sunday of Advent, we, too, renew our walk that Jesus declared for us to do. Our Church Commission vice chairs continue promoting Religious Vocations, Naomi Ruth Prayer Partners and the work for Ecumenism, Evangelization and Adoration. Bless their work!

## **Spirituality**

### **Church Commission**

Chair: Florence Schmidt 612-386-3969  
Jane Rosner 651-261-2534

Liturgy/Scripture/ Retreats: Florence Schmidt

Religious Vocations: Cindy Prior

Naomi-Ruth Prayer Partners: Lucy Johnson

Ecumenism/Evangelization/Adoration: Maureen Stanoch

### **Family Commission**

Chair: Debbie Keller 612-801-0510

Respect Life: Karen McCann

Family Life: Deb Smith

Marriage in Christ : Fran Willard

Grandparent Ministry: Colleen Dobie

Small Group Formation: Cathy Carson

Religious Recognitions: Theresa Cermak (Resource)

---

---

## ACCW Morning of Reflection

ACCW members from around the Twin Cities enjoyed the speakers at the annual Morning of Reflection Nov. 4 at Our Lady of the Lake Church, Mound.



Bishop Michael Izen, above, talked about his own faith journey as a child in a Catholic home and as a young man discerning the priesthood, as well as ideas for preparing our hearts and homes during the Season of Advent. Fr. Dan Haugan, ACCW spiritual Advisor, below, entertained and inspired with his presentation on “Being Worker Bees in a Busy Bee World”.



## Religious Vocations Cindy Prior

National Vocations Awareness Week is November 5-11. This is a week-long celebration of the Catholic Church in the United States dedicated to the promotion of vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education and the need to renew our prayers and support for those who are considering these particular vocations. We can learn more at [10000vocations.org](http://10000vocations.org).

The monthly vocation prayer list of our Archdiocese Seminarians is always located on the ACCW website. You can make a list by month and keep it handy (on your refrigerator door, perhaps) as a reminder each day to pray for a seminarian.

Also, at our parish, Transfiguration in Oakdale, our pastor, Fr. John Paul Erickson, has daily intentions for vocations and for seminarians from our own parish. Starting soon, we, as a parish, will be saying the Vocation Prayer—“God our Father, we thank you for calling men and women to serve in your Son’s Kingdom as priests, deacons, and consecrated persons. Send your Holy Spirit to help others to respond generously and courageously to your call. May our community of faith support vocations of sacrificial love in our youth and young adults. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen”. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if every parish in the diocese would make this recitation of this Vocations Prayer at Sunday Masses? Let’s promote this in your parishes!

God does answer prayers! Please keep these important Seminarians in your daily prayers and recite the Vocations Prayer as often as you can.

## Resolution to Encourage Daily Rosary and First Saturday Devotions

The National Council of Catholic Women is continuing to promote and encourage members to adopt or continue the practice of daily Rosary and observing the First Saturday Devotions. A resolution to that effect was adopted by the voting membership at the NCCW Convention in Minneapolis Friday, Nov. 4, 2022 and Province Directors were asked to make an ongoing effort to share the information with parishes and dioceses.

The resolution also called on members to form cenacles of prayer before Masses, on First Saturdays, or at times of Eucharistic Adoration.



# Family Concerns Commission

## Debbie Keller, Chair

Vice Chairs of the Family Concerns Commission remain dedicated to the work in each of their ministry and focus areas.

**Karen McCann**, Vice Chair of Respect Life, offered two book club opportunities for women to discuss Undivided Love, You are Worth the Fight by local author Gina Bauer, citing the intrinsic role of women in the Church and society. Karen was instrumental in garnering many to pray at Planned Parenthood during the 40 Days for Life, which concluded with a Closing Prayer Vigil at 3 p.m. on Nov. 5 As Director of the Birthright Center in St. Paul, she upholds the dignity of life, assisting young moms in need with clothing, necessary baby supplies and referral support.

**Deb Smith**, Vice Chair of Family Life, works to promote sound morals for families, through shared information in areas of education, family finance and faith. Through her published articles, she gives practical advice to parents on planning for their children's future, empowering parents as they face an increasing barrage of attacks which claim their children "have rights" outside of a parent's responsibility.

**Fran Willard**, Vice Chair and Director of Marriage in Christ, aims to deepen a couple's relationship with God and with each other, all grounded in the Holy Spirit. To receive Advent meditations designed for married couples, contact Fran at [franwillard@marriageinchrist.com](mailto:franwillard@marriageinchrist.com). Fran continues her work with parishes to host 5-week Marriage in Christ seminars in 2024, during Lent or after Easter.

**Colleen Dobie**, Vice Chair of Grandparent Ministry, continues her work with the Grandparents Apostolate of Saints Joachim and Anne. The Apostolate is committed to helping grandparents live holy lives within their vocation and plant seeds of faith, hope, and love in the lives of their grandchildren. Each member is also encouraged to pray a weekly Holy Hour for their grandchildren and children of the world. Contact the ACCW office if you're interested in forming a Grandparent's group.

**Cathy Carson**, who has been Vice Chair of Cana Family

Institute, will be expanding her role on the ACCW Board. In light of Archbishop Hebda's call to form Small Groups, in this First Year of Synod Implementation, she will be focusing efforts on Small Group Formation. We look forward to having a representative on our ACCW board to keep a finger on the pulse of Synod Implementation in our Archdiocese!



## Small Group Formation Cathy Carson

As Archbishop Hebda listened to the Holy Spirit speaking through the people of our Archdiocese during the 3-year Archdiocesan synod process that ended last year, it became clear to him that small groups should be an important part of every parish if our Church is to experience renewal. His dream is that all Catholics would be in a small group because of the connection and support they make possible on the journey of Christian life. They help parishes become a community of communities, where the Good News of Jesus is proclaimed house by house like in the times of the Acts of the Apostles.

Each parish is offering a formation series this fall on how to lead a form of small groups called Parish Evangelization Cell System, (PECS). Parish Evangelization Cells was chosen as the baseline approach to small groups as it is flexible enough to accommodate a wide variety of content – from Bible studies to marriage preparation to friends sharing the faith to service groups.

A broader invitation and encouragement to all parishioners to participate in small groups will be given before Lent. The groups that will be led by those who go through the training this fall.

We encourage all women of CCW to engage in a small

(Continued on next page.)



---

---

## Small Group Formation From Previous Page

group in whatever way they feel called by the Holy Spirit. Whether it be to lead as a facilitator, participate, invite or most importantly to pray for all God's people to progress in deeper conversion of faith and works of mercy. As CCW, we present a unified voice for all Catholic women to support, empower, and educate women in their spirituality, leadership, and service to Christ, His Church, and modern society.

We all play a part in the Great Commission to "Go forth and make disciples" Let us be like our Lord Jesus and lead by example for generations to come with an eternal mindset.

Canva Family Institute offers small groups for moms to journey with each other to deeper faith and friendships. They are hosting a Morning of Reflection on **Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023 at St. Raphael's from 8 a.m. to noon on "The Mindful Mother"**. Come rediscover the beauty and joy found in the vocation of motherhood. All moms, grandmas, and moms to be are invited! Details on speakers and registration link can be found at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/st-paulminneapolis-advent-morning-of-reflection-the-mindful-mother-tickets-735582054727?aff=oddtcreator>

## Respect Life Karen McCann

Are men and women losing their identity and human dignity? Our public educational, political and health care systems show that the answer is an overwhelming yes! Our culture has become a radical post-Christian society. As Catholic women and followers of Jesus, will we just go along to get along or educate ourselves, pray and stand against these damaging ideologies?

Intentionally confusing messages attack us, by forces likened to Marxism that would like "to abolish the distinctions of man and woman, to transcend the limitations established by God and nature, and to connect the personal struggle of trans individuals to the political struggle to transform society in a radical way," (*Christopher F. Rufo "Inside the Transgender Empire," Imprimis, Hillsdale College*). I encourage everyone to read that article and also, *Irreversible Damage, The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*, by Abigail Shrier, a revealing investigative .

Continued on next page.

## Grandparent Ministry Colleen Dobie

There are many resources to support Catholic Grandparenting locally, nationally, and internationally. Some highlights of recent Catholic Grandparenting events:

1. Sunday, July 23, 2023 marked the third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. In his homily, Pope Francis talked about the need for a new bond between young and old "so that the sap of those who have a long experience of life behind them will nourish the shoots of hope of those who are growing. In this fruitful exchange we can learn the beauty of life, build a fraternal society, and in the Church be enabled to encounter one another and dialogue between tradition and the newness of the Spirit.

2. At the Nativity of Our Lord July Grandparents event, celebrating the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, Fr. Bill Duffert inspired grandparents with his talk, "The Saints in Heaven, our Friends in Christ." He reminded us that we are surrounded by "so great a Cloud of Witnesses" and should ask for their help. We should also have at least two or three saints that we are particularly close to and to whom we can turn with anything. Perhaps think about wishing your grandchildren a Happy Feast Day on the feast day of their patron saints!

3. At the Nativity Grandparents Apostolate event in October, Dr. Katy Wehr led an instructional group discussion on using the Lectio Divina method of reading the gospel with grandchildren using "Him, Us, Me" to discern "What does it say about Jesus?", "What does it say generally to us as Christians?", and "What is it saying to me today?"

4. The Catholic Grandparents Association sponsors Faith Cafe talks over Zoom featuring different speakers and topics monthly. They have recently sponsored an online Prayer Request format. Anyone can submit a request, and each prayer request is notified when someone has prayed for them. There is a candle lighting held for these prayer intentions at the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock in Ireland and at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in England.

A Grandparent Apostolate or Ministry can take many different forms. Please contact the A.C.C.W. Office if you are interested in forming a group in your parish.

---

---

## Respect Life

Continued from Previous Page

book, answering why this movement is catching fire and burning so many children with its deceptive, damaging flames, harming them emotionally, spiritually, and physically. It has infected public schools and institutions, leaving many of their victims sterile, mutilated and suicidal, suffering from all kinds of related physical and mental health ills.

What a blessing to be Catholic! God says that we (men

and women) are all created **equal in value, though are delightfully different**, for each person's own unique, complementary, perfect plan. Another great inspiring read which addresses the worth and dignity of women and challenges us to find our unique call alongside men, and to say yes to Jesus, is *Undivided Love, You Are Worth the Fight*, by local author Gina Bauer. She reminds us that God loves us so much and desires our best and created us good, just as we are. Let's dig deeper into these topics, share what we learn and encourage those around us to appreciate the way that God made us. I hope you enjoy reading these important works and be inspired to be the best version of yourself!

---

## More Morning of Reflection Photos



Top right, an attentive crowd enjoys the speakers. Above, ACCW President Doreen Hogan welcomes attendees. The Morning of Reflection crowd ranged from just under a year old to attendees in their 90s — thanks to three sweet babies at left who attended with their moms, to the delight of the everyone present. Our Lady of the Lake Church, which hosted the event, has a sign near the Sanctuary, “If the church isn’t crying it’s dying.” There wasn’t any fussing going on at the Morning of Reflection but the sentiment still applies.

**From Bishop Michael Izen at MOR:  
“Humility isn’t thinking less of yourself.  
It’s thinking of yourself less.”**



## Service

# Community Concerns

## Theresa Cermak, Chair

By the time you get this Image the holidays will be in full swing. I know first-hand that Christmas isn't happy for everyone. They might have smiles on their faces but their hearts are breaking. I hope that we will be there to listen, to hug if needed and offer suggestions that can help the holidays be a peaceful time.



Happy Birthday Jesus! and a Happy New Year.

## Our Lady of Peace Home Sheila Casper

Our Lady of Peace Cancer Home celebrated National Hospice and Palliative Care Month in November. The theme this year was "Courageous Conversations" encouraging families to engage in advance care planning and other important discussions about the care they wish to receive when facing a serious illness and to have those conversations before a time of crisis.

OLP plans a Celebration of Life on Dec 3 from 1 to 3 p.m.. As the holidays approach, we pause to remember those our hearts still hold; those who made life so special and those who will be cherished forever.

### Service

#### Community Concerns Commission

Chair: Theresa Cermak 763-786-7051

Our Lady of Peace Home: Sheila Casper

Environmental Concerns: Maggie Stensaas

Domestic Violence/Mental Health: Jean Cemensky-Mohr

#### International Concerns Commission

Chair: Denise Haaland 507-334-2781

Madonna Fund/Foreign Missions: Kathy Zweber

Ethnic Understanding: Marilyn Neuville

Domestic Missions: Kathy Halverson

Appalachia: Olive Hupf (Resource)

## Environmental Concerns Maggie Stensaas

I look to the mountains; where will my help come from? My help will come from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. – Psalm 121:1-2. This morning, I couldn't sleep. I was worried because I had a customer back out last minute and I wasn't sure I was going to get the beef sold. Eventually, I took a breath. God would provide. As I type this, God has provided four times more customers than I needed. This Psalm rang so true, especially as a mother and farmer.

My name is Maggie Stensaas and I am very excited to be the new Vice Chair of Environmental Concerns. I am a mother, wife, and farmer in Lonsdale, MN. I grew up on my family's small beef cattle farm in Lakeville, MN, where my love of the land and cattle grew. I declared at the age of nine that I was going to be a farmer when I grew up and very quickly found myself working for local dairy farmers, feeding calves and eventually milking cows by the age of 14.

I attended South Dakota State University, where I majored in Dairy Production and Speech Communications, with a minor in Animal Science. While there, I met the love of my life, the crop farmer to my cattle farmer, my husband Nick.

After college, I worked in the field of agriculture communications and while I loved connecting with others, the draw to the farm was strong, especially once we welcomed our first son in 2018. In 2020, after years of searching, the right farm fell into our lap.

Since then, we have made the farm our own. We currently raise pastured pigs and cattle, marketing all our meat directly to families in our communities. We also milk a herd of dairy goats, where we turn the milk into soaps and lotions, as well as sell it raw for pet food. And while we love raising animals, the two (will be three in March) most important things we raise on our farm are our sons.





# International Concerns

## Denise Haaland, Chair

When you are reading this article, the Appalachia Christmas program semi-trailer truck will be delivered and unloaded to start the free stores in the towns of Beattyville, Booneville, Campton and Pikeville, KY. Boxes and bikes filled the load to the top.



Olive Hupf's son John was a hero to us as he stacked and received the boxes from the churches. The Haalands and the McNamaras were there a bit, but John was our main guy. Keep Olive in your prayers as she is in an assisted living facility in Cannon Falls. If anyone wants to send her a card, send it to the farm address, 4386 260th St E, Randolph MN 55065 and the family will deliver them.

I have an awesome story of a gentleman who called me offering 20 refurbished bikes for the cause. Someone from White Bear Lake told him of the Christmas project and he came from Kerkhoven, Minnesota to deliver them. It is amazing the people who help. This man has given 2,000 bikes to many other areas too.

As we think of Christmas, ponder the Christ Child coming to be among us. He was our gift to save us from our sins, but here we are giving the gift of friendship and love many states away.



## Madonna Plan/Foreign Missions Kathy Zweber

In October I was asked to attend a CCW Parish meeting and share more about the Madonna Plan and who it serves. That evening, I learned two things. The first is that in our Archdiocese we have generous, supportive CCW Parish Councils and CCW members who are committed to sharing their support of prayers and financial contributions to our ACCW Programs. The second thing I learned was the history of how our Madonna Plan started in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

The history of our plan is from Paula Gallagher and recorded by Mickey Nickelson, our Immediate Past President.

The Madonna Plan started as the **MADONNA LUNCHEON** in 1950 by Annamae Scott, a member of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. She had heard that the young girls in Africa were so malnourished that when they were pregnant they were unable to sustain that pregnancy. The live baby birth rate was very low. Many of the babies that were born did not live because those mothers (10-12 years old) were so malnourished that they could not produce milk.

Annamae was so upset she decided something had to be done to help those women and babies. When Annamae decided to do something, it got done. Her plan was to get every woman in the Twin Cities to give one dollar to the Council of Catholic Women to solve this problem. She consulted Florence Kueppers, her close friend, and they devised the concept of **VANISHING PARTIES** which consisted of one woman hosting a bridge party for three other women (most women were stay at home moms or homemakers and everyone played bridge), they would come and play a hand or two of bridge, have a light lunch and give the hostess one dollar.

The hostess would put her dollar in with the guests' dollars and send it to ACCW for the women in Africa. At the end of her party the host then asked all the guests to agree to host a party and invite three new women and repeat the process, never inviting the original HOSTESS again. Therefore, the hostess would vanish – thus the name The **VANISHING PARTY**. This plan and process was to be repeated each May in honor of The Blessed Mother. The idea caught on and grew like wild fire.

The first CCW funds went to Africa for food and education.  
Continued on next Page

---

---

## Madonna Plan History

(Continued from Previous Page)

tion of hygiene and nutrition. The program in Africa sent nurses to the young moms to teach them how to nurse because malnutrition had been prevalent for so long that even their mothers and grandmothers had never nursed and therefore this was a totally new practice. Annamae established that these funds would only go to women of Third World Countries and the project would never end until the job was done.

The vanishing parties grew, as did the need for projects in various Third World countries. The funds helped build a water source in one country; baby clinics in another; infant and Mother Clinics in India, always staying until the job was done and after that allocating monies for the ongoing maintenance of these projects.

In 1963, Annamae was appointed "National Chair of the CCW Foreign Relief". She attended a National CCW Convention in Las Vegas where she met Mother Teresa and together, they adopted a new name – the Vanishing Parties became THE MADONNA PLAN. Little did Annamae know at that time that Mother Teresa would become a saint.

In the mid-1960's the CCW changed the original scope of the Madonna Plan only donating to Third World Countries and expanded the program to serve women in Appalachia. The needs in Appalachia were so great that a new program started. The Appalachia Project continues today.

Many parishes in our Archdiocese have various types of Madonna Parties that include luncheons, raffles and other creative fund-raising activities. The Madonna Plan contributions continue to serve pregnant women and children who need food, health care and education.



Photo courtesy of CRS

## Domestic Missions Kathy Halverson

Here is the listing of identified local domestic missions:

- . **Sharing and Haring Hands**
- . **Dorothy Day**
- . **Birthright**
- . **Our Lady of Peace**
- . **Joseph's Coat**
- . **Women's Life Care Center**
- . **Local Food Shelves**

I would like to tell you about one that may not be familiar to many of you. Joseph's Coat is located at 1107 West Seventh Street in St. Paul, MN, telephone number is 651-291-2472.

Joseph's Coat was founded in 1989 in response to the need for no-cost clothing, personal and household items by those living below the poverty line in St. Paul's inner city. It was conceived as a place where volunteers would donate their time and resources to provide the needed items and would join with the poor to create a storefront community that extended welcome, acceptance and respect for all.

Originally housed on St. Peter Street in downtown St. Paul, Joseph's Coat has relocated several times as larger quarters to accommodate growing needs have become available. In March of 2003, the organization moved to its current site.

Joseph's Coat started fulfilling its mission as a free store providing goods and services to those in need within an environment of dignity and respect. It maintains an inclusive philosophy toward people of all ages, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, abilities and challenges. Joseph's Coat provides a welcoming environment where the dignity of each person who comes through its doors is acknowledged and affirmed. They strive to foster a sense of community between those facing hardship and the volunteers and donors who are their strength and energy. For more information go to [www.josephscoatmn.org](http://www.josephscoatmn.org).

*The holidays are near, and needs will be greater, remember to keep your local mission in prayer, service, and goods and please forward your story so it can be included in the newsletter.*

## Thank You!

President Doreen says:

### A big debt of gratitude to Terminal Transport Inc.

We could not do our Appalachia Christmas program without their help.

Terminal Transport is a truck load carrier and logistic company operating out of Roseville, MN. They not only allow us to have one of their semi-trailers for a couple of weeks, but they also deliver the full trailer to Kentucky. Terminal Transport Inc. NEVER charges us for this service. This is done entirely by volunteers. Their employees enjoy helping the people in Kentucky. Churches in the Beattyville, Booneville, Campton and Pikesville area receive the donations delivered from Minnesota.

Terminal Transport Inc. has been helping with the Appalachia Christmas program for 36 years. If you have time, please send a thank you note showing our appreciation to help this CCW initiative.

Terminal Transport Inc.  
2982 Cleveland, Ave N  
Roseville, MN 55113



# Province Report

## Carol Shukle, Province Director



It's been a busy three months since the NCCW Convention in Salt Lake City at the end of August.

Upon returning home it was time to get started as the new Province Director for the Province of Minneapolis and St. Paul. After assembling the 2023-25 Province Board there were a series of meetings including the St. Cloud Diocesan Convention and the Winona Rochester Diocesan Convention (which I unfortunately missed due to illness). That was followed a week later by the Province Board Meeting hosted in Albert Lea and then the ACCW Morning of Reflection at my home parish of Our Lady of the Lake in Mound. I've also been becoming more familiar with the many resources offered on the website of the National Council of Catholic Women. Some of them are available only to members — a good reason to join as an individual member of NCCW regardless of membership in an affiliate organization. Check it all out at [www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org).

After the holidays there will be NCCW Board meetings in January and June. Mark your calendars for the Province Meeting June 25 in Sleepy Eye, MN. Speakers will include some that were heard at the NCCW convention last summer.





# Around the Deaneries

## **Minneapolis Deanery** **Teresa Droessler, President**

Our first Deanery meeting for the Minneapolis Deaneries was on a September evening at Immaculate Conception Church. After Mass and a delicious dinner, former State Senator Michelle Benson warned us about upcoming legislation for physician-assisted suicide, the End-of-Life Option Act. She encouraged us to talk to our families about redemptive suffering at the end of life and to fill out a Catholic healthcare directive. Immaculate Conception CCW delivered bundles of baby items and money to Abria after the event.

Catholic Culture Day was held at St. Agnes Church on Oct. 4. Father Mark Moriarty explained the unique Baroque architecture designed for the German-speaking Tyrolian Austrian immigrant parish. He showed us around the original basement church and the stunning present church. We prayed the Rosary in the church and then had lunch at Cossetta's Restaurant in St. Paul.

Women at St. Patrick's (Edina) held a lovely retreat in October about the Four Women Doctors of the Church. We each had a notebook with information about the four Saints, note space, quotes and even recipes! There were several speakers, a catered lunch, a game to collect information, Rosary and Mass.

At our second Deanery Day, Monday, Nov. 13 at St. Albert the Great Church, Susan Webb from the Minnesota BCA spoke about the human trafficking problem. ACCW International Commission member Marilynne Neuville gave a presentation about her visit to Kitui, Kenya.

Our third Deanery Day will be Monday, March 11, at Holy Cross Church. The Church and Organization Commissions are planning this event.

I wish you all a holy Advent season. "Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." *Isaiah 40:5*

## **St. Paul Deanery** **Annemarie Chlebeck, President**

The St. Paul Deanery hosted the Tree of Life Remembrance Prayer Service on Saturday, Oct. 14 at Como Park near the very tall Norway spruce tree planted in 1983 to honor unborn babies. Over the years the tree has become a symbol of all our loved ones who have died, regardless of age. Archbishop Bernard Hebda helped lead the prayer service, and we had Scripture readings and songs as well. It was a nice-size group in spite of the chilly weather. Thank you to all who participated.

Many parishes have been having Fall festivals, rummage sales and Christmas boutiques. My home parish of St. Mark's in St. Paul had a very successful rummage sale the last weekend in September. We have our Christmas boutique and cookie sale the first weekend in December. These are great opportunities to talk to other women about CCW! I am looking forward to making connections with other women in the synod small groups as well.

The St. Paul Deanery gathered on Thursday, Nov. 16, at Our Lady of Guadalupe in St. Paul. We had a silent auction and a White Elephant/Christmas items sale for fundraisers. Our main speaker was Deacon Joe Michalak, who spoke on the implementation of the Archdiocesan synod. Mickey Nickelson shared her personal reflection on the Archdiocesan Synod, and Lucy Johnson talked about the world synod in Rome. The day included Mass and a luncheon.

Our Feb. 15 Deanery Meeting will be at Holy Childhood in St. Paul with registration at 8:15 a.m. The speaker will be from the Prison Ministry of the Archdiocese. Our gathering in April will be on the 11<sup>th</sup> at St. Peter's in North St. Paul, with registration at 4:15 p.m. We will have Mass and dinner. The speaker will be Sister Lucia from St. Paul Monastery. The date is earlier than usual because the ACCW convention is on Friday, April 19.

In this time of bad things happening, wars, natural disasters, mass murders, etc., hopefully we are faithfully praying our rosary and asking Our Blessed Mother's intercession. Lord, have mercy on our country and our world.



---

---

## Northwest Deanery

### Betty Thomes, President

The Northwest Deanery will be holding our annual Advent Day of Prayer in December. This provides an opportunity for our CCW groups to come together and prepare our hearts for the blessed coming of Jesus. We will gather at the King's House Retreat Center in Buffalo on Dec 7 for a day of conferences, confessions, and Mass. It is sure to give us time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

The Northwest Deanery once again supported the Appalachian Christmas Project. We sent 194 large boxes and 97 shoeboxes to Olive Hupf's farm. Many CCWs in the deanery participated in this great project and sent money as well to the churches in Kentucky. We are very thankful for the many donations.

All our organizations continue to be very busy during this time of year. You will find Holiday lunches and craft and bake sales all around the deanery. Pro-life organizations and our local parishes are a few of the recipients of our labors.



Northwest Deanery members filled a van for the Appalachia Christmas program (above) and helped unload next to the semi-trailer at the Hupf farm at right.

## Southwest Deanery

### Andrea Jewison, President

The Southwest Deanery Fall Institute was hosted by the Church of St. Patrick CCW, Shieldsville, on Tuesday, Sept. 19. We began with Mass celebrated by our Spiritual Director, Father Andrew Stueve. Father Thomas Niehaus concelebrated. A delicious meal was prepared and served by the women of St. Patrick's CCW, followed by speaker, Catrin Wigfall from the Center of the American Experiment. She talked about the last Minnesota legislative session, particularly the provisions passed pertaining to K-12 education.

On Oct 19, St. John the Baptist CCW in Jordan hosted our annual Mission Event. Again, the women of the St. John the Baptist CCW provided a delicious meal. Fr. Greg Gallagher O.M.I., who serves the Tekakwitha Indian White Earth Reservation in Northern Minnesota, was our guest speaker. We collected 14 boxes of school supplies, educational games and cards for his parishioners and donated \$2,000 to help him serve his parishes. It was a most enjoyable evening as always.

We are looking forward to our Spiritual Day hosted by Most Holy Redeemer, Montgomery, in March and the biennial Southwest Deanery Clergy Appreciation Dinner at St. Mary, Le Center.





NON-PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
TWIN CITIES MN  
PERMIT NO 2767

777 FOREST ST. N.  
SAINT PAUL, MN 55106  
Phone: 651-291-4545  
Email: ACCW@archspm.org  
Web: www.accwarchspm.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*Please advise the ACCW Office  
if there is an error in your address  
or if you are receiving duplicate copies.  
Thank You.*



Vendors are part of the fun at ACCW events. Morning of Reflection vendors included Fair Trade items, religious article, handmade gifts and books. Philomena House, which serves women in crisis pregnancies, also had a display.