

DOLORES GARVIS: PRESIDENT

The National Council of Catholic Women's 2011 Annual convention November 9-12 in Chicago was a most spiritual and up lifting event. *Campaign for Human Dignity –Love in Action* was permeated throughout the workshops, and celebrations. Attended by 675, a most impressive sight were the many priests in attendance. All of the Florida Diocesan Moderators were there. By the way, at the Moderator's meetings they decided to change their titles. They will be known as Spiritual Advisors. We were introduced to the new Episcopal Liaison, the Most Reverend James V. Johnston. He will represent us at the United States Bishops Conference.

There was time to learn, time to network, and time to have fun all within the framework of *Love in Action*. Educational sessions such as Techniques for Successful Councils, Womanhood, Domestic Violence, Immigration Issues, Changes in the Roman Missal, discussion on ending the Death Penalty among many others.

At the business meeting reports indicated the organization is in a turn around. After a number of financially stressed years the overall picture is looking much better. However there is the need to be vigilant with our resources prior to becoming financially stable. We were introduced to so many hard working people like Patty Johnson, president, our amazing Judy Powers, president-elect, was installed at this convention, the many Province Directors, including our own Marianne Torgler, and the NCCW staff, such as Joanne Dunn who all contributed in some way to make this "turn around."

Three major resolutions for our members to act upon were adopted.

****The promotion of Catholic Social Teachings***

**** Education and Support for the Implementation of the Revised Roman Missal.***

****A Call to End the Use of the Death Penalty-Building a Campaign for Human Dignity.***

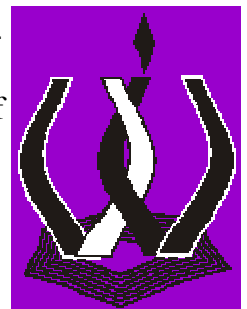
As your Diocesan President I'm asking you to support and learn more about these resolutions. Let me know if you need a detailed copy of them. I will be happy to send it to you.

There were numerous awards presented to deserving members of the Council, be it NCCW, the Associates of NCCW, or the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations.

The finale was a huge banquet where our nine delegates from the Diocese of Venice, Fr. Joe Connolly, Iris Gomez, Mary Poker, Marge Tousignant, Helen Korotko, Ellen Bachman, Marianne Torgler, Eleanor Kozwoski and myself, enjoyed fine food and entertainment. Vito Zatto provided a great interactive show of song, dance and comedy. Ellie got some good close up pictures.

Keep this Christmas alive with remembrances of others, particularly those less fortunate than ourselves. Cherish those moments with friends and family. Remember only God knows how long they will be with us. Look forward to a bright future in 2012 by starting off with our annual *Retreat January 14, 2012 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Retreat Center in Venice, FL*

"You do not know when the lord of the house is coming." Mark 13:35



IRIS GOMEZ-PRESIDENT-ELECT

What an inspiring and uplifting gathering! I am thankful to the Diocesan Council for being able to participate in this National Convention in which Catholic women from around the Nation gather to celebrate a common faith under one theme: *Love in Action*.

Spirituality was everywhere from liturgies, meditation room, recitation of the rosary, prayers, books and workshops, that not only informed, but inspired the desire to be in close contact with God.

Have you ever asked yourself, why should I go to Church? The Rev. John Cusick, Director of the Young Adults Ministry in Chicago, answered in a very clear and simple sentence: "that we don't forgot who we are." We are the daughters and sons of the Most High. Attending mass regularly will give us a reason and motivation to continue being part of the family of God. He explained each part of the mass from the point of view of the outsider or non-catholic visitor. Fantastic!

Leadership was at its' best. Each one of our National leaders was awesome at their presentations as well as the workshops. Techniques for Successful Councils was an eye opening one to use the problem-solving strategies in a positive way and learn from the challenges, turning them into opportunities for your Council.

The Service Commission was well represented by the Domestic Violence workshop. All three commissions were under the Catholic social teachings, Human dignity and Love in action premises. The Convention ratified the dignity of the human person as in the family, the unborn, young people and considered ways to put love into action from conception to natural death. From the tour of the old Chicago churches to the viewing of the Brothers Keeper movie, all seems so fitting for a spiritual journey in today's society.

As your Dean of Directors and Commissions, and Resolutions Chair I will recommend the implementation of the Resolutions adopted at this Convention. They are:

The promotion of Catholic social teachings.

Education and support for implementing the Revised Roman missal.

A call to end the use of Death Penalty.

I will be sending a copy of them to each Deanery Director and Commission Chair.

Please prepare yourself for the awaiting of Our Lord, with the Advent Season. Remember to act according to our Catholic principles in feeding and providing for the less fortunate to turn their lives in a more pleasant way and get a smile in their faces as they also wait for Baby Jesus as the Promise of the World. Joy and Peace for your soul and Love in action for your body!

FR JOSEPH CONNELLY-SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

Sitting here at the NCCW Convention in Chicago in November, I am made aware of the impending seasons of Advent and Christmas that are just around the corner. This reflection didn't come from the calendar, but the cool weather and the threat of snow flurries this afternoon. These are not images that are frequent to us Floridians, as snow is something we see on our Christmas cards or on TV shows. But the moment calls us to reflect on the changes that the seasons call us to. Again we must think about how uniquely God calls us to renewal and changes in our lives. These changes are sometimes different than the ones we plan for – because our God is a God of surprises. The Mass readings during Advent challenge us to see a God who comes to us at the end of time – our personal time and eventually the world time – and then a God who is to come into the world as a child: son of a woman, in a poor environment, endangered, on the run, crossing borders for his safety and life, and growing up in a quiet nondescript environment. Advent and Christmas challenge us to see in the work of the CCW a chance to make a change in our own lives, to be reflective, quiet, discerning and aware of our place in history, and then to see in our own world the modern Christ who needs our help: a pregnant girl misunderstood, the mother away from home, the family on the run from the dangers in their own homeland, the quiet stranger in our midst – all of these are the concerns of the women of the CCW. All of our ministries look for the coming of the Lord as a challenge for us to see in the unexpected the face and challenge of God. And then to see in the needy and the helpless our ministry to the Christ who appears in our midst: the hungry, the naked, the thirsty, the fearful, the alone, the sick and all those whom we are committed to serve as CCW members. To miss this reason for our existence is to waste a wonderful seasons that the church puts before us in its liturgical life. I pray for a holy and happy Advent and Christmas for you and your families.

ANA M. ROMILLO, LEADERSHIP COMMISSION CHAIR

What can we do and how can we help our affiliates attain our objectives during the next two years:

To support, empower and educate our members in leadership programs.

- Take advantage of scholarships offered by VDCCW to attend Leadership Training facilitated by Orlando DCCW and other training seminars sponsored by NCCW.
- Encourage members to attend regional and diocesan training days, workshops, conventions, etc. Budget training costs and allot part of fundraising proceeds to pay for training and attending conventions.
- Sponsor members to attend relevant seminars and workshops offered in your local area by community foundations, chamber of commerce, medical associations, and other local organizations.

• **To increase memberships. As CCW members, we should all know by heart: NCCW Mission – to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service; Who we are; What we do; Why You Should Join; Who May Join.**

- Promote activities to increase membership.

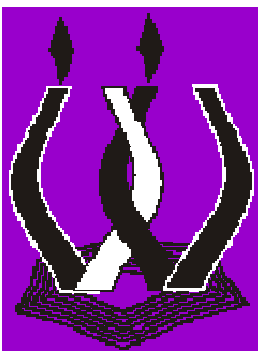
VDCCW Leadership Commission is currently working on a membership drive for implementation early in 2012 to increase affiliate membership and individual memberships to NCCW. We are designing a brochure that any VDCCW affiliate can use.

Implement ways to communicate with members and non-members: publish weekly a brief article re CCW in the church bulletin, include contact info of the CCW president and links to the website of VDCCW, the deanery, and the affiliate if you have one; place CCW brochures at information areas in church and parish office entrances; CCW members should wear their name badge when attending Mass and any church activity;

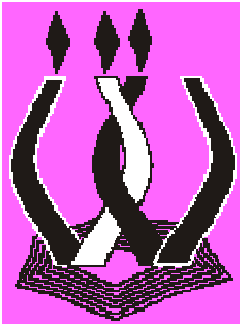
- Welcome new parishioners. Advice from our VDCCW Moderator Rev. Fr. Joseph Connolly during the VDCCW Fall Board Meeting on October 27, 2011 in LaBelle: talk to parishioners; invite them to our meetings, and deanery and diocesan events; befriend, excite and mentor them; include them immediately in CCW activities; get them involved in a specific project or program.
- Encourage current and past officers, and long-standing members to become NCCW Individual Members, highlighting the following benefits: (1) Annual subscription to Catholic Woman magazine, (2) Annual subscription to the monthly NCCW Connect e-newsletter, (3) Member registration rate at the annual convention, webinars and other educational programs, (4) Eligibility to vote in NCCW elections and at the Annual Business Meeting, (5) Access to NCCW website, (6) Purchase NCCW publications and products at the member rate, (7) Participate in all NCCW affinity programs, (8) Serve in NCCW national volunteer and leadership positions, and (9) Join in NCCW grassroots advocacy network.

Every VDCCW affiliate should be encouraged to develop its own Leadership plan of activities to support the above objectives, and at the same time, meet the needs of its parish and membership .

“Comfort, give comfort to my people,
says your God.” Isaiah 40:1



Special sponsor table for the VDCCW Board in the middle listening to speaker Abby Johnson



The Lord had anointed me to bring glad tidings" Isaiah 61:1



NORTHERN DEANERY.....CORNELIA ZANETTI, DIRECTOR

We wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving!!!

Northern Deanery Day was held on November 3rd at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs. Sixty-nine Council of Catholic Women attended. Julia Marsh, President of the host affiliation welcomed one and all. We were especially honored to have Ellen Bachman, Past NCCW Pres., Council sisters from Central Deanery, Dolores Garvis, VDCCW Pres. And Wendy Dawson, Immediate Past Pres. of Northern Deanery.

Mary Poker gave us an overview of the combined commissions and answered questions after the presentation. The commissions are broad based and apply to many ministries.

We are fortunate to add Pat Ligotte from Holy Cross Parish as the Historian/Publicity Chairperson, and Fran Frederick of Epiphany Cathedral as the Service Commission Chairperson. We thank them for volunteering their time and talent.

A quilt made by Director-Elect Joyce Aubrey will be raffled at our Spring meeting on March 15th at Our Lady of Lourdes. Proceeds will benefit the Seminarian Fund. Affiliations desiring tickets should contact me. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6/\$5.00.

Mass, which was preceded by the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, was concelebrated by Msgr, Gerry Finnegan and our moderator, Fr. Joe Connolly. The theme for our Deanery is "Spreading God's Love One Person at a Time." The practice of this includes: giving to the poor, praying for the sick or bereaved, reaching out to those who are estranged, and practicing ecumenism. Let us join together as we celebrate the birth of our Lord, to love one another in every way.

MAY YOU ALL HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND A VERY HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.



“Mary said to the Angel, ‘How can this be...?’”

BARBARA CHAMBERLAIN- CENTRAL DEANERY

Few women realize that by joining their Affiliations, they automatically belong to the Diocesan CCW, the Florida CCW, the National CCW and WUCWO, the World Union of Catholic Women! Wow! Beyond measure, how powerful is the web we have woven, ladies?

In a recent letter by the Secretariat, "the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations reaffirms *the aim of WUCWO is to promote the presence, participation and co-responsibility of Catholic women in society and the Church, in order to enable them to fulfil their mission of evangelization and to work for human development in unity -- particularly for increasing educational opportunities, poverty reduction, and the advancement of human rights beginning with the fundamental right to life...*"

Today, thanks to a group of over 30 international experts in law, medicine, and public policy, we have a tool to help us refute these claims and to assert the rights of the unborn child in international law. These are the 'San Jose Articles'. The San Jose Articles provide expert testimony that no such right exists. To the contrary, the Articles also demonstrate that the unborn child is protected in human rights instruments and that governments should begin protecting the unborn child by using international law. These Articles will support and assist those around the world who are coming under pressure from UN personnel and others who say, falsely, that governments are required by international law to repeal domestic laws protecting human beings in the embryonic and fetal stages of development against the violence of abortion. You can find these articles attached to this message and, for further information, on the following web site: <http://www.sanjosearticles.com/> ... As members of WUCWO, let us make a universal and united stand for the protection of every human person, beginning with unborn children."

It is a powerful letter and one that needs to be woven within you! One can never tire of the value of life! As we enter the Christmas season, let's pray and reflect upon the message that Christmas also brings, "mankind should take better care of life!" The Central Deanery is proud to be a part of the counted five million committed WUCWO women who are truly united in faith, prayer and action -- taking a stand and making a difference!

Merry Christmas to all and to all -- an extra good breath of life!



CCW members Kathy Yaglenski (Lourdes) and Marge Rafferty (St. Catherine/Sebring) joining others in circling the block in prayer around Planned Parenthood in Sarasota during the conference Prayer Walk

JEANNE BERDEAUX--RESPECT LIFE

This fall the Diocese of Venice Respect Life Office had the awesome privilege and responsibility of hosting the 25th Anniversary Florida Respect Life Conference in Sarasota. An outstanding lineup of speakers shared their personal stories of “Respect Life” in action in their lives. CDs of most of the presentations are available for purchase or loan. Contact me for details (Berdeaux@dioceseofvenice.org).

CCW provided strong financial support for the conference, with the VDCCW Board taking a Bronze Sponsorship and all 4 deaneries and many affiliations taking ads in the program booklet. A HUGE thank you to all for making it all possible!

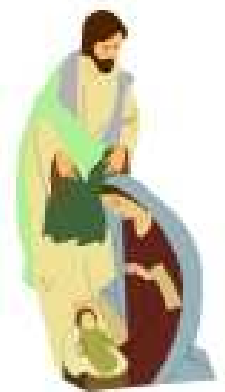
I am very proud of our VDCCW’s commitment to Respect Life, not only through support of the state conference, but also on the affiliation level. My challenge to each affiliation board is to make sure you do at least one activity each year on a Respect Life issue. If you already do that, then consider doing something new and different. Challenge your members to learn about issues on beginning of life, end of life, death penalty or legislative advocacy. Start by reviewing the wonderful resources at www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program. Share them with your members.

Every year, my affiliation, San Antonio, puts in the budget funds for several members to participate in *Catholic Days at the Capitol*. So far 5 women have had the experience of seeing their government in action through this fun-filled 3-day bus trip to Tallahassee. The next trip is scheduled for February 7-9, 2012 with the registration deadline on January 9. It’s a wonderful eye-opening experience for all CCW leaders. Mark your calendar and plan to attend. Call me for details (941-441-1101).

God bless! Have a wonderful year!
Photos from Respect Life Conference from Jeanne Berdeaux



Keynote Speaker
Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann
Kansas City Kansas
with Bishop Dewane



SO LONG, FAREWELL, CIAO– VOICE EDITOR



Photo Janet Mitchell

This is my last edition of the VOICE as its’ editor.

For three years I have worked to make the VOICE exciting and new. I hope you have enjoyed the work that has been put into it.

Anyone who has ever done this type of thing knows that it is a lot more work than simply cut and paste.

It is the hope of this editor that you have learned about Council from the articles that have appeared here.

I appreciate the thanks and the feed back I have received from many of you and I hope you continue to support the new editor.

Peace to all of you. Have a safe and blessed Christmas season.

Janet