

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT IDEAS

Judy Conner, LDCCW President Elect

As I travel around to deanery meetings, the one question that always comes up is: How do we get women to join our PCCW? At the NCCW convention in Washington D.C. in November we had a chance to find out.

MEMBERSHIP FLOURISHES THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS.

Membership takes effort, planning and enthusiasm.

Look at your relationships. Look at the women you know individually.

Ask if they could pray for your organization. We are working on this project, can you pray for us? Have someone buddy up with that new woman in the parish, call her. And then call her in another month. Have coffee with her. Find out who she is and what she is interested in. Ask her to come 10 minutes early to the next meeting and help get the coffee out? Empower, but don't push them out the door

MAKE HER FEEL WANTED AND NEEDED. Look at every woman coming to your meeting as the Blessed Mother. Make women feel welcome or they won't come back.

All Catholic women are looking for spirituality. Always pray for each other. Is she lonely? Does she need socialization? Have a prayer partner. There is power in prayer! Plant a seed that is spiritual.

Start and end your meetings on time. People have busy lives and if they know the time frame of a meeting, they may try to fit it in, but if you go over they probably won't come next time.

Let them know why you're happy to be a member of the council. Have a "elevator" statement about your organization. Smile! Enjoy what you're doing. Attitude always counts.

Are we inclusive? Are we willing to let all ages and nationalities in? Appreciate and respect our differences. All have different levels of council experience, different talents, skill levels, availability, different places on their faith journey, different circumstances of life, styles of learning, ways to serve.

LEARN AND RESPECT THESE DIFFERENCES. THEY ARE GIFTS FROM GOD.

Ask the younger women to do the electronic stuff that some of us older ladies are not so good at. They love to do this and you are making them feel important. Have someone from all generations working together at the same time. Each generation has something to share.

Do you vary your meeting times? (Give it a year if you change meeting times before you decide if it was successful or not.) At every meeting have spirituality, education, fun and friendship. Learn about each other, create commonalities.

Get them to join after you've gotten them involved. Catholic woman magazine is a great resource to plug them into. Give a leader the Organizational Commission manual.

ADVERTISE YOUR COUNCIL AND THE GOOD IT IS DOING. Every fundraiser is another recruiting opportunity. Post a **BIG SIGN** at the bake sale or pancake breakfast listing all the charities your group supports. You never know which will invite someone to help! Look at what you do have, the projects, what you are doing in your parishes for each other. At church functions, wear your CCW pin and tell people what you do and **BE EXCITED!** Attend an event at your parish or another parish that doesn't have a council and make contacts. Every person you meet is a new opportunity! In the end, **YOU** are the answer to retention of members. How brightly will you shine to light the path for others?

FAITH AND FRIENDSHIP IS THE GLUE THAT HOLD THE ORGANIZATION TOGETHER.

And Remember: IF YOU ALWAYS DO WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS DONE, YOU'LL ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS GOTTEN.