



La Crosse Diocesan Council of  
Catholic Women

Leadership Commission

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“Free your mind and the rest will follow” declared a hit song in the 80’s. Truth is it works the other way as well. Eating well frees your body’s potential, which leads to the freedom of thinking well, which means we can lead well.

As a nurse and health coach, I am passionate to help people improve their personal wellbeing. Working as an RN for over 30 years, including 5 years as a Diabetes Educator, I have seen the pervasive devastation poor health does to the body and mind of our communities. When our bodies are sick, we are by necessity fixed on our needs and less able to advance God’s work. We all know someone who struggles with health problems such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease and obesity. And the cost of health care is skyrocketing. Many cannot afford to go to the doctor so add financial worry as well. Much

of this is preventable with a healthy lifestyle, with healthy eating at the foundation.

This is not about being Hollywood fit and toned. Proper care for our bodies is not vanity, but a Biblical imperative. “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price”-I Corinthians 6:19-20. How’s your temple doing; Time for a little refurbishing?

We as leaders are in a unique position to promote the cause of healthy eating to our CCWs and our fellow parishioners since we sponsor or serve for many of the social events.

When we have those popular “Donut Sunday’s”, can we offer fruit with yogurt dip or vegies with avocado or hummus dip along with pastries and cookies? Then people will have a healthier choice with a lot less sugar. Our children may not be as hyperactive Sunday afternoon and it makes a small statement about offering nourishing and healthy foods.

What would we need to do to tweak the menu at our church gatherings, meals and social events? Perhaps alternative meals, like a Taco bar or a Salad bar where everyone brings some item to share? Could there be nutritious offerings alongside the yummy but not always healthy hot dishes and desserts.



Another suggestion, which is not directly food related, is to organize short walking activities during the breaks at our events. How about a strolling meeting to soak in some vitamin D from the sun? Most people have been shown to be deficient of vitamin D a key vitamin for healthy body functions. We also will not be “grazing” during the breaks. Good on three fitness fronts.

There are a number of pre-packaged video series available if your church or CCW would like to sponsor a program of physical improvement and beneficial diet. A group at my parish has been meeting weekly since just before Lent using a scripturally based plan. In just six weeks, many were reporting weight loss, energy gain, and better cholesterol levels. While the formal part of the plan is complete, we have decided to continue meeting as a support group to keep those gains coming.

Taking care of our bodies incorporates more than food. It includes daily exercise, spirituality, loving and healthy relationships/friendships, supportive social gatherings, work and life purpose, creativity, healthy environment, service, pleasure, daily gratitude, time to nurture ourselves and that’s not the complete list. It is a lifelong lifestyle. Nonetheless, it starts with food.

See the effects of health on your members and then go and do God’s work with clarity of mind and health of body!