

NEWS & VIEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE LA CROSSE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

MARCH 2020



Fear Not, For I Am With You

President, Lorraine Riedl

My theme for these past two years of being your president has been Isaiah 41:10 “Fear not, for I am with you.” I have spoken often of trusting in our Lord, and to be mindful that we are not on this journey alone. In these current troubling times, this message is more important now than in any time in recent history.

We are also in Christ’s season of MERCY. Saint Faustina wrote in her diary, “And the Lord said to me, You are the delight of My Heart; from today on, every one of your acts, even the very smallest, will be a delight to My eyes, whatever you do. At that moment I felt transconsecrated (changed in soul). My earthly body was the same, but my soul was different; God was now living in it with the totality of His delight. This is not a feeling, but a conscious reality that nothing can obscure.”



Faith is the answer to fear. Deep down we are all afraid: of suffering, or of dying, or of God’s judgement, or of the unknown, or of weakness, or of our lives slipping out of control. Our faith is based on fact, not feelings. Feelings are fickle and can (and do) change. The devil can influence our feelings, but has no control over our faith. Faith is dependent upon facts. The first chapter of the book “Catholic Christianity” by Peter J. Kreeft goes deeper into explaining how our entire Catholic religion is not about “how we feel,” but based upon the cosmic reality.

But how do we handle these feelings? Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a psychotherapist’s tool that takes a hands-on, practical approach to problem-solving. Its goal is to change patterns of thinking or behavior that are behind people’s difficulties, and so change the way they feel. It has you ask yourself a series of questions such as: Are you fortune telling (seeing a future problem that hasn’t happened)? Are you mind reading (guessing at other people’s thoughts or intentions)? Are you drawing conclusions where evidence is lacking? Are you confusing a low probability with a high probability? Are your judgments based on feelings rather than facts? It makes you pause and take a hard look at the facts surrounding the current situation. Fear really is **False Evidence Appearing Real**.

LDCCW Convention 2020 - Postponed

“Do not be afraid of the journey, for we travel together.”

Although we had planned on meeting on Saturday, April 25, 2020 at St Vincent de Paul parish in Wisconsin Rapids for our biennial La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Convention, the COVID-19 virus has forced us to remain flexible! But our theme for the day is still applicable - We are NOT in this alone!

Please watch our website: LDCCW.org for future information

Speaking of Conventions...

This year is a once-in-a-lifetime event for our National Council of Catholic Women. We will be gathering in Arlington, West Virginia—just outside of Washington, D.C.— to celebrate 100 years of Council! If you have never been an individual member of the NCCW, or never attended a National Council of Catholic Women Convention, **THIS IS THE YEAR!!!** Start planning now for the August 26-29, 2020 Convention, and perhaps even plan extra time before or after to enjoy our nation’s capital and all the awesome history and inspiring memorials. By then we should be out of this virus quarantine.

As part of the Province of Milwaukee, we are privileged to have one of our own members installed as the current President of the National Council of Catholic Women! **Jean Kelly** serves in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. She has now begun her two-year term as President with the theme: **“A Vision for the Future.”** What an honor to have one of our own as president at the Centennial Convention!

The La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women voted to sponsor the **tote bags** that will be distributed to all attendees of the 2020 Convention. (They will have our name on them!) But the greatest contribution to the convention will be YOUR presence and your membership of the National Council of Catholic Women!

Let’s all go!

Special Thank You!

Thank you so much for your continued support of our Televised Masses in the Diocese of La Crosse. So many people rely on them - including us all!

LEARN, EDUCATE NEW THINGS

by Fr. Eugene Wolf

In this time preparing for Easter we might try to take on the entire world. We can do this in small ways.

Learn - We all have prayers and practices for our daily lives and perhaps special ones for Lent. Sometimes I find a familiar prayer, including the Lord's Prayer, takes on a new meaning because of an experience that just happened. Recently I was asked to anoint a man in ICU. His wife was sitting next to the bed. After the anointing we prayed the Lord's Prayer. The wife started to continue.. "for thine in the kingdom" but quickly stopped. The man said "Thank you, Father" as I was leaving. I had to assume that the wife was not Catholic but the prayer that Jesus taught us brought us closer together in spite of the added ending.

Educate - Most of us are not classroom teachers but we can educate others by word and example. When I as a priest hear confessions I do my best to give some advise when needed. It works the other way as well. Not only do I have the opportunity to examine my life as to how I can do better as I hear the temptations and confessions of others but also as I observe others at prayer and doing acts of kindness I can be inspired.

New Things - It takes a little more effort as I get older to branch out on a new adventure, even a small one. However, as I get older new challenges are presented simply because of age. OK, so they are new. All I have to do now is accept and deal with whatever sneaks into my life. At the same time I have the opportunity to understand others a little better. And that is a gift.

Learn, Educate, New Things and that spells LENT

Spirituality Commission

Pray Fast Give is always our Lenten theme in the Catholic Church, but this year, it might have an additional clause, "and follow all sanitary procedures to protect yourself and the people around you.

However we are still celebrating Lent. The Diocesan calendar is filled with fish fries, St. Joseph Table occasions, Retreats at parishes, not to mention spring assemblies and Mornings of Reflection.

Wow, what a Lent season!

While we can overcome the lack of sacramental by having Holy Water in our home, and greeting our friends with a handshake, I worry about our lonely people who come to church just for people contact.

It may be the one personal touch they receive all week. There are a number of PCCW members at our church, who do reach out to their elderly neighbors weekly or daily just to check on them. I am sure your PCCW does the same.

Our church readings get right to the point during Lent. My favorite Old Testament reading is Queen Esther's prayer, it comes up on the Thursday of the first week of Lent. She may be Queen, but one of the nobles has taken a great dislike to her Jewish Uncle, and plots to not only kill both of them, but all the Jews in the nation.

EST C: 12, 14-16: Queen Esther seized with mortal anguish, had recourse to the Lord. She lay prostrate upon the ground, together with her handmaids, from morning until evening, and said:

God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, blessed are you. Help me, who am alone and have no help but you for I am taking my life in my hand. As a child I used to hear from the books of my forefathers that you, O Lord, always free those who are pleasing to you. Now, help me, who am alone and have no one but you, O Lord, My God.

We are so fortunate that we have so many ways to petition the Lord and ask for his help. The rosary, the Divine Mercy Chaplet, a plethora of Catholic books, and our own personal prayers. Esther was able to save her people, after they all fasted and prayed for 3 days straight .

There are many times when we feel all alone in this world even among our family, when it feels like the secular world has taken over their sense of values. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, all the angels and saints, emboldened us to ask our Lord for what we need.

Embracing Your Call to Holiness

Embracing your Call to Holiness was one of the most hope-filled presentations seen this year.

The artist/presenter, Laura Boronski , told the audience ,” we are managers of chaos” and proceeded to entertain us with true stories of her life, her songs, and what she has learned along her life's journey.

Laura is a Catholic homeschooling mother of 8, with lots of energy. She is also a recording artist, who writes her own songs, and music.

Plenty of Catholic hard knock school advice was handed out during Laura's presentation:

Satan is using technology to get to people

Don't get so comfortable you hit cruise control

Scarring only makes us stronger.

Be ready for battle: Say the Morning Offering; the Rosary; Know we are Catholic Women; and stop using

the word, "I Can't".

One of her most impressive stories was about the abuse she suffered as a child, and how she finally cured the obsessive hold the abusers had on her, by forgiving them.

Some of the audience, with 3-4 generations of women present, would have preferred more singing from Laura, while others wanted her to have a powerpoint kind of presentation. She offered something for everyone.

Her conclusion was powerful. She distributed the Litany of Humility, which everyone had a chance to recite it and take a copy home with them. And then the best part came: She sang her original compositions for each of the Stations of the Cross, with the audience responding.

Clare Ruff, director of Events and Outreach for Hosea initiative, also addressed the audience. She described her organization's goal to Educate, Restore and Unify America around a Culture of Life Ethic.

The all-day presentation was well attended with great grandmas, grandmas, mothers and infants. And almost everyone left energized with thoughts of "What can I do to evangelize my Catholic faith?" along with calls to their table mates, "See you here next year!" (March 6, 2021)

Saturday, March 7th, was a wonderful way to start Lent by "Embracing Your Call to Holiness."

Helping Human Trafficking Victims

by

Candace V. McGrath, Service Commission

When Coleen Stratton was 19 years old, she was an alcoholic and addicted to drugs. Her parents put her on an airplane and sent her to Florida so she could go to a highly recommended rehab center. When Coleen got off the plane, she took the money and got a hotel room where she drank and used until the money ran out.

She was homeless. One day, Coleen was leaning against a brick wall, drinking out of a bottle of whiskey, when a nice-looking man came up to her and asked her, "Are you alright?" Obviously, she wasn't alright. He took her to his home, fed her, gave her all the alcohol and drugs she wanted and gave her a safe place to sleep.

After about a week he went to Coleen and told her it was payback time because he had given her so much. Three of his friends came over and they all raped her. They told her either she had to have sex with the men they told her to, or they would kick her out and she'd have to find someone else to buy her drugs. They cut her arms and told her they were to mark her so people would know she was one of their girls. Coleen was a sex slave.

These young women were allowed to leave the home to go to the gas station to buy cigarettes. Coleen met a woman from a mission who told her Jesus Christ loved her and there was a way out for her if she wanted it. The Christians were very nice to her. After a while, she asked them for help, and they

rescued her.

Coleen is now sober. She's happily married with two small boys. Her story of survival has been published in her book and she speaks about her experience. With the organization Heart World, she goes to jails and talks to young women who are arrested for prostitution and offers them a way out.

The La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, with the inspiration of the NCCW, wants to assist organizations and groups who are helping with human trafficking victims, like Colleen, and create awareness.

The Human Trafficking Service Support Grant offers a total of \$2,000. \$1,500 is for groups who help Human Trafficking Survivors. \$500 is for organizations who create awareness about this global crisis. Information about the grant and the application can be found on our Diocesan website, www.ldccw.org.

Human Trafficking is a local problem. Fairly recently a young man of about 17 years old was found dead in a hotel room in Madison. He had died of a heroin overdose and was a victim of Human Trafficking. Jeffery's mother Lisa McCormick still lives in Tomah and tells his story.

Apply by April 1, 2020 Go to LDCCW.org for [application](#).

Council Sunday Collection

The La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women has once again been granted permission from our bishop to hold a collection in all of our parishes on the weekend of April 18-19, 2020, **or what ever date works best for your parish.** The letter from Bishop Callahan extending his appreciation and his permission can be found here.

Bulletin Announcement

The La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, in partnership with the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW), is celebrating our 100th anniversary this year. Our mission to *"to support, empower, and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service. Our programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world."*

The Councils of Catholic Women was established by the USCCB in 1920 because they recognized the significant role of women during and after "The Great War" and deemed it good that every parish, deanery, diocese, province and our nation have a Council of Catholic Women. Our Diocesan council has co-sponsored the diocesan efforts to combat pornography by helping to make our homes "Safe Havens", we offer grants to aid victims of human trafficking, and scholarships to help kids go to Catholic summer camps, for faith education and provide books for kids in Catholic Schools. At the National level we hold an advisory seat at the USCCB as well as an advisory

La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Annual Collection April 18-19, 2020

Thank you for supporting the La Crosse Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (LDCCW; www.ldccw.org)! The LDCCW is dedicated to supporting the women of the La Crosse Diocese and providing direct service to the Church. While the LDCCW is not part of the Bishop's budget, as an CCW of other Dioceses, we do contribute to the needs of our Bishop and Diocese through your generosity. Bishop Callahan grants permission for the LDCCW Collective each year. In the past year, your generosity contributed to the following:

Category	Impact
Spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Prayer•Embracing Your Call to Holiness Catholic Women's Retreat•Evangelical Pastoral Care to help students learn for those pursuing religious life and the priesthood•Girls Religious Awards•Miss retreats on Dignity of Women, Our Spirituality through Sacraments, and Gifts of the Visitation•Ministry to build the Domestic Church in our homes
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Leadership Development•Connecting the Diocese (Relevant Radio) and Televised Masses•Mentorship and Resource Team•National Family Planning Education•Scholarships for women<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Camp Scholarships for youth•Faith Education for Adults•Lay Formation Institute•Books for kids in Catholic Schools•Magisterial Education and Advocacy•Building the Domestic Church•Anti-Pornography Programs
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Grant to Aid Victims of Human Trafficking•Project Milk and Rural Life•Supporting Fair Ethical Trade•Case Worker in Linn, Perry•Ministry for People with Special Needs•Gifts of Love providing cribs for babies who die in utero or shortly thereafter•Reasonable Books for parents in jail or prison so they can read to their children•Domestic Violence Support•Fighting against Human Trafficking•Partnerships with Catholic Relief Services•Water for Life•Midwifery Plan bringing pregnancy and early childhood healthcare•Substance Abuse Emergency Relief

seat at the United Nations. We are part of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations and have an advisory seat at the Vatican. Our many efforts and initiatives are not only relevant in our world today, but are important in the Church. It is important that women come together in friendship and have a purpose bigger than themselves. Opportunities to grow in areas of spirituality, leadership and service. We greatly appreciate your support.

A handout that can be used for this collection can be downloaded here: [2020 Council Sunday Collection Handout](#)

Be a Part of Something Bigger Than Yourself

We are women who:

Love the Lord

Live our faith

Learn together

Support each other

Pray with and for others

Help others in our communities

Help women around the world

Promote Pro-Life and just laws

Act on Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy

Join us! Contact us to find out how you can get involved. Check out our brochure:

www.ldccw.org

JOIN ONLINE AT WWW.NCCW.ORG

Scholarships and Grants

Are you wishing to pursue or enhance your faith by enrolling in a program that will nurture your spiritual growth? Apply for one of our Scholarships!

Do you have kids interested in Summer camp? Catholic Camp Scholarships are available for Adventure Camp and Camp Gray for youth.

Apply for one of our scholarships now. We are currently accepting applications for 2020. Forms are due 04/01/2020

ACT NOW!

Casa Hogar Optical Mission Eyeglass Cases Needed!

We NEED your help! The Casa Hogar Optical Mission's next trip is January 2021 and we never have enough cases so the ones you make are wonderful. We do need to ask the ladies to only use rectangle pot holders as the curved ones are difficult to slide the glasses into and may times too small. You can send the cases to the mission office with any priest going into the diocesan center and they will get them from there to pack in the boxes going down with the mission. They pack things as they come in so bring them in any time! They also collect used glasses, reading glasses and sunglasses both prescription and non-prescription. All cases new and used and anything else pertaining to eyewear, always in need of lens wipes and lens cloths.

Thank you so much for you help and know that it is very much appreciated.



CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership Commission Chair, Lu

It is this time within our council season that calls are going out for new officers to serve; the landscape that many of us have been a part of will change from those who have led to those who will take over leading. It will look differently, but the landscape will be just as captivating as ever.

When doing the approaching (recruiting) for new officers, you will always help your councils by approaching those who have had contact and a strong familiarity with what council life is about, "that passion;" if you are the one being approached to step up to serve, you will always have a window to think over your decision; giving you time to weigh out the pros and cons; and to pray for guidance in your decision whatever it may be. Again, if you are the one being approached - never hesitate to ask questions; if you the one approaching, have available for those you are working with - bylaws, an organizational structure and another helpful resource tool is the newly revised Guidance and Resource Manual released by the National Council of Catholic Women. This is a wonderful guide to direct and teach you on many of the key elements of our organization. And always remember; keep the door open to new opportunities to lead. A door never has to close completely and whether it is looking at a different landscape or opening up a different door, each or both may have something exciting waiting for you.



"Be an opener of doors"

LDCCW ANNUAL COLLECTION

I have started at my own parish gathering together 24 ladies to assist with this collection scheduled for the weekend of April 18-19. Last year I was approached by 3 younger ladies expressing a desire to be

a part of this. This year they are on the top of the list and ready to go. Let us pray that this year joins all the other years and that across the entire diocese we have more ladies coming forward to be a part of this very important and special weekend. It is a wonderful acknowledgement of the work “all” our parish councils of Catholic Women do in every parish Deanery-wide and beyond. Please refer to the flyer out on our web page (ldccw.org) which helps to break down the importance of this collection. A very special thank you to Bishop Callahan for his strong and ever-present support of the work that our ladies do.

Conventions are in the “air” all around us. At the local/deanery level, our sister deanery – Wisconsin Rapids, excitedly, accepted the call to host and have been busy in their preparation from welcoming everyone in to closing out what is anticipated to be, again, a very successful convention. Every convention is different; every convention is unique and every convention continues to embrace what the Council of Catholic Women is all about. It is simply a beautiful day for many to enjoy; and a day, as importantly, to recognize, support and appreciate the works of the specific “hosting” deanery – a special thank-you to the Wisconsin Rapids Deanery Council of Catholic Women.

At the National level, in observance of its landmark 100th anniversary, Washington D.C. was selected as the site to host the 2020 National Council of Catholic Women convention August 26-29. Please keep an eye on any developing updates in regard to the convention as we go through these upcoming days and months.



When attending convention, one is attending as a member; something highly recognized by the NCCW and an important reason for renewing one’s membership at that level – it is vital to know what others are doing around the entire country and it helps to keep that communication strong. The monthly membership call and Rosary call are two avenues that are in place to help councils at every level remain connected to the NCCW and to remain in touch with one another. Belonging to something; i.e., an organization, helps in adding so much to one’s life.

You may not be actively serving in an office or position but the National Council of Catholic Women is serving you and your service/spiritual and leadership needs – they always have for these past 100 years. With so many topics that are the heart of our councils – sex trafficking, pornography, the importance of prison ministry, the Vocations Purse Club, etc., being discussed locally out in our communities, when an opportunity takes place, please take hold and try to attend what you are able to - whether it is a talk in your community, a retreat at the parish/deanery or diocesan level or a beautiful convention at the diocesan and/or National level.

From the Leadership Commission, may you and your family have a Blessed-filled Easter season and may 2020 and all the changes ahead leave you with abundant rewards. May God bless each and every one of you.

Lu’s Leadership Tip: If you are doing a newsletter at any level and you would like a guest writer, approach a past President. It would be very interesting to read their thoughts today with regard to leadership, the councils, etc. and would be very touched to be asked.