

## *Our Catholic Voice*

May 2021

*We are the Voice of Catholic Women everywhere: from the Women in the Pews of the local parishes to the Deanery Councils, Diocesan Council, the Province of Saint Paul/Minneapolis, the National Council (nccw.org) and WUCWO (World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations wucwo.org) our International parent organization. This is one of the ways we share information up and down the lines of communication.*

### *MISSION STATEMENT*

*The St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women acts through its affiliate organizations to support empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. DCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.*

Contact us: [stclouddiocesancw@gmail.com](mailto:stclouddiocesancw@gmail.com)

Website: [stcloudccw.org](http://stcloudccw.org)



Find us on  
Facebook

Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Linda Scepurek**

[lindascepurek@hotmail.com](mailto:lindascepurek@hotmail.com)



Did you know that “Be not be afraid” appears in the Bible 26 times? Each time God called someone in the Bible He says. “Do not be afraid.” Be it the Blessed Mary at the Annunciation, when the angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and said “Do not be afraid to take Mary to your home as your wife.”

Matthew’s gospel alone mentions “Do not be afraid” 9 times. The last 2 times at the tomb when the angel said to the women “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.” And Jesus said to the women, “Do not be afraid, go tell my brothers to go to Galilee, there they will see me.”

God tells people not to be afraid because He thinks we are capable of doing more than we think we can.

This covid-19 pandemic has many living in fear of death, with so many that have lost loved ones. Death came into the world as a result of sin. There are 2 problems that the world cannot fix - that is sin and death. By dying on the Cross, Jesus conquered sin. By his death and resurrection, death has lost its power over us. This gives us the courage to be able to face evil and responds to God’s calling in our life. It is normal to be afraid, however, faith changes this; with faith, we will get through all of our events and will continue to grow. The more we grow in faith, the less we are ruled by fear. We need to be courageous in making our lives a gift to God in whatever way He is asking.

**Be not afraid!**

**Announcement:** Most of you have seen the *Central MN Catholic* magazine and have seen that the Deaneries have been realigned. Your CCW has formed a committee and have started meeting. We are taking into consideration: deanery officers (adding to existing ones), funds (how to share), bylaws (are new ones needed), rotation schedules (for events) and communications (how to better reach everyone, especially younger women).

In the meantime, we will continue to function in the present deanery alignment. Please be patient. Maybe you would like to volunteer to become a part of the new!

Any questions, contact the committee chairs:

**Sheri Streasick, DCCW Board Secretary, 320-805-0010, [slstreasick@gmail.com](mailto:slstreasick@gmail.com)**

**Linda Borgerding DCCW Vice President, 320-293-1839, [lborger77@gmail.com](mailto:lborger77@gmail.com)**

## CHURCH COMMISSION



ST. MARIA FAUSTINA KOWALSKA of the Blessed Sacrament was born Helena Kowalska in a small village in Poland on August 25th, 1905. When she was almost 20, the third eldest of ten children entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, whose members devoted themselves to the care and education of troubled young women. Helena Kowalska received her religious habit in 1926 and was given the name Sister Maria Faustina. As permitted by her congregation's custom, she added "of the Blessed Sacrament" to her newly received name. Sister Faustina only had a few years of formal education and so, was assigned to humble tasks, usually in the kitchen or garden. She performed all of her tasks with a smile that radiated joy. She received many extraordinary spiritual gifts during the 13 years she lived in her congregation, such as: revelations, visions, hidden stigmata, participation in the Lord's Passion, visions of purgatory, Heaven, and hell, the gift of bilocation, the reading of human souls, the gift of prophecy, and the rare gift of mystical engagement and marriage. Sr. Faustina was directed by Jesus to write down the messages she received, which are now compiled into a work that is known as Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul. She was specially chosen by Our Lord to be the Apostle of His Mercy and at His specific request, made a sacrifice of her own life for cooperation with God's Mercy in the task of saving lost souls. She had a burning love for the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation and a deep devotion to the Mother of Mercy who, in visions to Sr. Faustina, strengthened her in fulfilling her mission. On February 22nd, 1931, Our Lord Jesus appeared to Sr. Faustina and brought a wonderful message of Mercy for her to share with all mankind. She wrote in her diary under the same date, "In the evening, when I was in my cell, I became aware of the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand was raised in blessing, the other was touching the garment at the breast. From the opening of the garment at the breast there came forth two large rays, one red and the other pale. In silence I gazed intently at the Lord; my soul was overwhelmed with fear, but also with great joy. After a while Jesus said to me, 'paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the inscription: Jesus, I trust in You.'" A short time later Jesus again spoke, "The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous; the red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls. These two rays issued forth from the depths of My most tender Mercy at that time when My agonizing Heart was opened by a lance on the Cross.... Fortunate is the one who will dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him." After bearing innumerable sufferings for the conversion of sinners, Sr. Faustina was finally consumed by tuberculosis and entered the Kingdom of Heaven on October 5th, 1938 at the age of 33. The process of her beatification began in the 1960's. She was finally beatified on the first Sunday after Easter, April 18th, 1993, by Pope St. John Paul II. Seven years later he canonized Saint Faustina on April 30th, 2000 and proclaimed the first Sunday after Easter as the Feast of Divine Mercy. On September 1st 2015, the Marian Fathers in Stockbridge launched a petition drive requesting the Holy See to name St. Faustina a Doctor of the Church. You can sign the petition here if you like:

[https:// secure.marianweb.net/thedivinemercy.org/doctor/index.php?page=marian-home](https://secure.marianweb.net/thedivinemercy.org/doctor/index.php?page=marian-home)

Devotion to God's Divine Mercy bears some resemblance to devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Our Lord Jesus wants us to know that His Mercy is greater than our sins and wants us to have complete trust in Him and His Mercy and trust that we are forgiven when we repent.

*Report taken from Winona-Rochester Connecting Catholic Women, April 2021 Spirituality Commission, Church, Valerie Ehlenfeldt*

## **INTERNATIONAL REPORT – (Information taken from www.CRS.org)**

**March 10, 2021** – As a result of the global pandemic, 14 countries are at substantial risk of slipping deeper into food insecurity, a new analysis by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) finds. According to the report, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Venezuela, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe are among the 14 countries experiencing the world’s worst food crises. East and West Africa are the regions with the greatest number of “countries of concern.” According to the World Bank, the pandemic threatens to push 150 million people into extreme poverty by 2021, with restrictions on movement, curfews and the closure of nonessential businesses taking its toll on economies. In many of the countries listed in CRS’ report, a combination of conflict, climate change, and economic upheaval have together created a worsening food security outlook. “Exponential growth of food insecurity is of particular concern given reduced incomes, slow food chains or agricultural production; increasing food prices; limited protection of vulnerable groups; increasing political instability; and conflict,” the analysis states.

CRS urges the new administration and Congress to continue addressing the indirect impacts of the pandemic, especially hunger, while meeting public health needs.

**March 11, 2021** - Congress included \$10.8 billion in the America Rescue Plan Act to address this crisis.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS:**

**April 7, 2021** – A coalition of 28 U.S. Catholic organizations is marking World Health Day by announcing unified support to encourage constituents and faith communities to accept vaccination as an act of charity and solidarity with others that will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and build immunity against the virus. The coalition is promoting vaccine equity in the U.S. and around the world, drawing on Catholic social teaching, for people who are underserved or marginalized. This includes communities of color, rural areas and others with limited vaccine availability in the U.S., as well as access for developing countries and among refugees and other displaced people who may not be citizens in their current home.

### **CRISIS IN CENTRAL AMERICA**



Extremely vulnerable families in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala are facing the compounding impact of multiple crises. COVID-19 has devastated lives and livelihoods. Hurricanes Eta and Iota in November left many families not only without livelihoods but also without homes and belongings. Drought has led to crop failure and hunger. And gang violence and drug cartels has left many young people and their parents living in constant fear. Your prayers and support are urgently needed.

### **POPE FRANCIS’ PRAYER INTENTIONS – APRIL 2021**

#### **Fundamental Rights**

We pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis.

*Joyce Simoes, Chair*

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Now more than ever we must get informed on issues, stand up and contact our elected officials, both at the state and national levels. In MN the MN Department of Human Services released new data that MN taxpayers bankrolled 4,463 abortions at a cost of \$1.1 million for a new all-time high. A bill now in the MN Legislature HF 1099 and SF1045 would ban taxpayer funding of abortions in MN. The Biden Administration has threatened to remove the Hyde Amendment which would remove protection federally on paying for abortions. A federal judge has ordered the US Department of Health and Human Services to release information on the purchasing of organs from aborted human fetuses. The FDA had 8 contracts for \$96,370.00 and NIH had 175 projects for \$109 million using fresh never frozen fetal tissues from first and second trimester abortions. They partnered with Advanced Biosciences Resources and Planned Parenthood to get body parts for parts of their research. The Trump Administration had discontinued federal funded programs that use aborted fetal body parts by government scientists.

The Child Protection League is tracking 5 important bills making their way through the MN legislature in 2021 that will affect women and children.

The bills that the Child Protection League supports are:

1. Obscenity Exemption HF232, HF 467 that Require School Databases Services block access to Porn;
2. HJF 229 and HF 226 for Stricter penalties for Trafficking in Child Sexual Abuse Imagery.

The Child Protection League opposes:

3. HF358 and SF 632 on Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE);
4. as well as HF726, and HF 727 and
5. SF 342 Equal Rights Amendment.

Schools have been implementing Critical Race Theory into all aspects of curriculum. Children can access porn through their chrome books if the school is using the search engine database EDSCO to access through the MN ELibrary ELM. Social Emotional Learning sounds non-threatening but data is collected on your child with its use. The MN Department of Human Rights sent a letter to 43 school districts informing them they have a "racial disciplinary disparity" in violation of MN Human Rights Act and unless they enter into a "settlement agreement" with the state they could be investigated and charged with civil rights violations.

There is a new book that the MN Department of Education is recommending to instruct elementary aged children in public schools in MN, called " Something Happened in Our Town". It demonizes police and suggests children should be afraid of police officers. Please contact Gov. Walz and urge him to stop the implementation of this book for the education of our children. The previous administration developed the 1776 Commission producing the 1776 report to use the study of history and principles of the founding nation and our Constitution in our nation's schools. On day one the Biden Administration rescinded this commission replacing it with the 1619 Project Critical Race Theory which teaches the evils of white privilege.

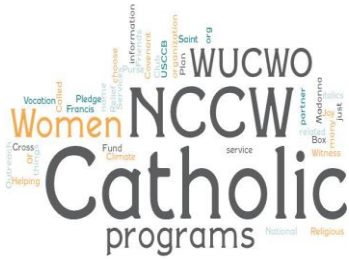


We are at a critical time in our nation with what is called "encroaching control". Nikita Khrushchev said September 29, 1959 at the UN Assembly, " We can't expect the American people to go from capitalism to communism, but we can assist their elected leaders in giving them small doses of socialism until they awaken one day to find they have communism".

Keep asking Our Blessed Mother for her intercession for our country.

*Geri Klimmek, Chair*

## ORGANIZATION COMMISSION



We as members of the CCW (Council of Catholic Women) need to find ways to encourage our women to build our membership. It's important that we find a way to encourage more women to become involved in CCW.

The first part of our mission statement states that our organization is to **support, empower and educate** all Catholic women in **spirituality, leadership, and service**. Now we as members need to determine how we move forward with this mission.

1. **Support** – What can we do to support other women? Each of us have our own ideas of what support means. If we can put these ideas together, we can see if we can have a breakout session at a meeting to encourage and support others. What are your ideas and suggestions?

2. **Empower** – What does empower mean to you. How can we empower others? Webster's definition of empower is: "**make (someone) stronger and more confident, especially in controlling their life and claiming their rights.**"

3. **Educate** – We can have speakers that will help to educate women, we did this with our Lenten retreat. We educated others on saints. We could do a retreat on prayer, how to pray. This was a suggestion from Sheri Streasick. I think this would be an excellent subject for a retreat! What are some other topics we could explore?

4. **Spirituality** – Most women I talk to and ask what they feel is most needed in their life, it is increased spirituality. More chances to meditate on life and faith. I do this daily on my morning walk.

5. **Leadership** – Maybe if we could work on the first 4 aspects) above it would help encourage others to take on leadership roles. They would be more confident in themselves and their abilities. Leadership isn't something we're born with; it comes from our everyday experiences, participation in new activities and learning from others.

6. **Service** – As an organization we do many things that are service related. We partner with Catholic Relief Services (*Madonna Plan, Women Helping Women, USCCB (We Are Called to Witness)*), Cross Catholic Outreach (*Box of Joy*), Catholic Climate Covenant (*Saint Francis Pledge*), National Fund for Catholic Religious (*Vocation Purse Club*), and WUCWO (*Friends Of NCCW for WUCWO*), just to name a few. [NCCW.org](http://NCCW.org) has more information and more programs for you to choose from. (*Italics are NCCW programs.*)

Maybe we can take one or two of these areas to work on in this next year. Can we focus on lighting the fire of the Holy Spirit in others? We can start by inviting someone to come to our local meetings, to come with us to Fun, Food, and Fund Day (FFF) or maybe the Annual Fall Conference, or the Province Conference in June.

We need to have something at all our meetings that will catch women's attention, something that will make them want to come back. I don't know what this is, but if we put our heads together maybe we can come up with something. Let's make them feel welcome. We should be friends in faith. Every friendship needs a strong base. Can that base be us sharing our faith?

*Linda Borgerding, Chair*



## RURAL LIFE COMMISSION

Wasn't it nice to go to Mass, in church, this Easter? God gives new life to all! Spring is a time of rebirth, new life, and new beginnings.

There are signs of spring all around the farm. The hay fields and pastures are turning green. The rye and spelt fields, which were seeded last fall, are also turning green. Spelt is an ancient grain that is being rediscovered.

The much-appreciated rain that we have been receiving the last few days will warm up the soil and remove any frost that might be left in the ground. Thankfully we received rain and not snow. Farmers are getting spring fever. They are making sure their machinery is ready to go. Everyone is hoping for a good year.



Kernza is another crop that is already growing on our farm is. We seeded it, for the first time, last fall. Kernza is a perennial wheatgrass. It can be used for pasture, hay, or grain. MN is a leader in research and developing this experimental new crop. Being a perennial with deep roots, Kernza should prevent soil erosion and it is drought resistant. It will be interesting to watch it grow.

Another fairly new crop in MN, that a few of our neighbors are going to be growing this year, is industrial hemp. The 2018 Farm Bill removed hemp as a controlled substance. You need a license to grow hemp. There were 43 licensed growers in 2018. By 2020 there were more than 700 license applications to the MN Dept of Ag. Hemp is not planted until June. Before hemp can be harvested, once the plants have started to flower, it needs to be tested for THC. Legally it cannot be over 0.3% THC. In an article in [Agri News](#) from 2020, one farmer needed to destroy his entire crop because it tested .99%, way over the limit. He did not know what caused it to have so much THC. The flowers from hemp are processed into CBD oil. The stalks are processed into fiber. The 0.3% THC in hemp will not get you high.

In the [MN Agriculture](#), a publication of MN Farmers Union, Fritz Ebinger, from U of MN, said, "Farmers are innovative folks." He is talking about another new farming enterprise. Farmers in some states, including MN, are grazing sheep under solar farms. This avoids landscaping costs and avoids the need for lawnmowers. Under some solar panels, there is a new seed mix, called "Fuzz and Buzz", which suits not only sheep grazing, but honey making.



On the fun & philosophy page in [The Furrow](#) magazine, I found this quote: "Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset." ---Saint Francis de Sales (1567-1622)

A quote from a calendar, "Nature gives to every season, a beauty all its own." ---Charles Dickens.

*Toni Borgerding, Chair*



## LITTLE FALLS DEANERY

January and February were cold months for a lot of people that were still shut in their homes due to the COVID. Sending cards and making phone calls was one way of communicating with them.

Lent came upon me quickly this year. It gave me time to read scripture and pray the rosary with a new meaning. I gave up eating sweets this year but the Holy Spirit strengthened me thru the 6 weeks.

On March 7th the Sacrament of Confirmation was celebrated at Holy Trinity Church in Royalton for 26 young men and women from the Cross Rock Catholic Community.

On Saturday, March 13th, I watched a webinar for the DCCW Spring Lenten Retreat entitled "The Saints Within Us". The speaker was Ginny Duschner who spoke on "What Would St. Teresa Do". It was a wonderful retreat. If you'd like to see the video, it's on YouTube:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJRLfo7JQJo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJRLfo7JQJo)



[www.stclouddccw.org](http://www.stclouddccw.org)

Sponsored by the St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

Hope we all can be vaccinated soon so we can go back to living normally again.

As Bishop Kettler says "Hope is at the core of the Easter season."

*Darlene Nix, President*

### **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT**

Little Falls Deanery was anxious to host Fun, Food, and Fund Day celebrating 100 years of CCW. Unfortunately, it was cancelled last year.

It is sad to tell you that executive board has decided to cancel

(Fun, Food and Fund Day). that was to be held June 24<sup>th</sup> at Holy Family Church in Belle Prairie. Because of Covid restrictions, we must cancel again this year.

Please inform others who may be wondering.

Thank you for being so understanding, hopefully we will be able to hold it next year.

*Linda Scepurek, President*

## NCCW NEWS

Please join me in congratulating the following members for being elected for the 2021-23 term.

### Board



Beth Mahoney - President-elect



Amy Kennedy - Secretary

### Nominating Committee:

Alma Meyer  
Bev McCarvel  
Cynthia Simien  
Joyce Brown-Thomas  
Mary Rowley  
Rose Schuhmacher  
Veronica Way

A special thank you to Chris Heiderscheidt for all her work as chair of the Nominating Committee.

*Jean Kelly*  
*NCCW President*



**We are very hopeful that we will be able to gather for our annual convention August 25 - 28, 2021.**

**Registration is expected to open June 1, 2021.**

**See [NCCW.org](http://NCCW.org) for information.**

ST. CLOUD DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN  
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS for **VICE PRESIDENT-PRESIDENT/ELECT**

The St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is accepting nominations to fill the office of vice president/ president elect.

A nomination can be made by any member of the Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (St. Cloud Diocesan CCW). All baptized Catholic women in our diocese 19 years and older are members by promulgation of Bishop Peter W. Bartholome.

Vice president candidates must be a member of CCW, have a basic knowledge of parliamentary procedure and of technology. She shall also be familiar with the CCW organization. The candidate shall have served in some capacity on the deanery level, unless approved by the Diocesan Spiritual Advisor.

A statement of qualifications shall accompany the name of each nominee, as well as the approval of the Ecclesiastical authority (her pastor, spiritual advisor, or bishop).

Names of all nominees shall be forwarded to the nominating committee chair before July 1, 2021. There shall be no nominations from the floor at the Annual Fall Conference since there would be no time for approval of qualifications.

Cheryl Weller  
45557 County Road 27  
Belgrade, MN 56312  
320-346-2710

ST. CLOUD DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN  
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS for **SECRETARY**

The St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is accepting nominations to fill the office of secretary.

A nomination can be made by any member of the Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (St. Cloud Diocesan CCW). All baptized Catholic women in our diocese 19 years and older are members by promulgation of Bishop Peter W Bartholome.

Secretary candidates must be a member of CCW, have basic knowledge of record keeping and use of technology. She shall also be familiar with CCW. The candidate shall have served in some capacity on the deanery level, unless approved by the Diocesan Spiritual Advisor.

A statement of qualifications shall accompany the name of each nominee, as well as the approval of the Ecclesiastical authority (her pastor, spiritual advisor, or the bishop).

Names of all the nominees shall be forwarded to the nominating committee chair before July 1, 2021. There shall be no nominations from the floor at the Annual Fall Conference, since there would be no time to have approval of qualifications.

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