



## *Our Catholic Voice*

January 2025

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

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



Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

*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](http://nccw.org)) and World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations ([wucwo.org](http://wucwo.org)) our International parent organization. This is one of the ways we share information up and down the lines of communication.*

## *President's Message*

*Lois Wesbur , DCCW.president@gmail.com*

Looking back, a song of the Christmas season made me think: "Mary, did you know?" As a mother, I planned and daydreamed as I held my babies. Mary, did you do the same? Did Mary dream about Jesus being a carpenter, a strong spokesperson, or a gentle voice in a home? What mother could have dreamt about her child growing up to teach from the hillsides, to walk on water, or to confront Satan?

As I put away the Christmas decorations, I remembered the joy of setting up the manger. The song "Mary Did You Know" made me stop and think how I would have felt knowing my child would grow up only to die a horrible death. But the joy of the loving God takes all our negative thoughts away.

I am hoping that many of you were able to participate in pro-life activities in your area in January. Remember in your prayers those women facing difficult choices during their pregnancies because their child may face unknown challenges. We pray that God will hold them in His hands, give them strength to bring to completion their pregnancy, and give them hope for the future of their family.

Transitioning from the Christmas season into preparing for the Lenten season brings a more somber feeling to the church. The story of Christ continues with more of His earthly life and His teachings. In His meeting with the common ordinary people, Jesus teaches us how to love and to live in His presence. Join us in our Lenten journey as we prepare for the Passion of Jesus and then celebrate His rising from the dead.

*Lois Wesbur, President*



## 2025 Jubilee Year PILGRIMS of Hope

**Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope  
Millennium Cross gets new life for  
Jubilee Year**

A special Jubilee Cross, crafted specifically for the Diocese of St. Cloud to welcome the new millennium nearly 25 years ago, is being refurbished for Jubilee 2025.

[READ MORE ON THE CENTRAL  
MINNESOTA CATHOLIC MAGAZINE](#)

## THOUGHTS FROM FATHER VIRNIG

Don't put away Christmas,  
Christmas is not over until the Baptism of Jesus.  
Jesus loved us. both as God and as a human.  
What do we do with Christmas? Reach out to others.  
What can we do for others? Give them Hope.  
We are celebrating the Jubilee of Hope



---

### USCCB PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priests.  
Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments.

Help our priests to be strong in their vocation.  
Set their souls on fire with love for your people.

Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need  
to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.  
Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom.

Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel.  
Allow them to experience joy in their ministry.

Help them to become instruments of your divine grace.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest.

Amen.



**Please use this prayer when following the resolution passed by NCCW and DCCW.  
(See page 15)**

## CHURCH COMMISSION

Happy New Year!

2025 has made its entrance with “hope” to be as great or better than 2024.

Hope, in the culture we live in often is referred to as “wishful thinking”. As Christians, the word takes on a different meaning.

In the Old Testament Jeremiah 14:22 reads: “Therefore our hope is in you, for you are the one who does all this” Jeremiah is not fearful. He isn’t wondering if God will come through. Instead, he confidently expects God to fulfill his promises to Israel.

In the New Testament “hope” is no longer a mere part of speech. Hope is focused on *someone-the person of Jesus*. In 1 Timothy 4:10 it states” that is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people.”

So Biblical hope is not fanciful thinking, instead, hope rests in the sure and confident expectation that God, who sent Christ to pay the penalty for our sins, will meet all our needs both now and for all eternity.

I am amazed by God, and the Holy Spirit, to instill in Pope Francis to call 2025 A Jubilee year of Hope!!! How fitting following our Eucharistic Revival years that touched and taught so many hearts of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, now to place our hope in HIM who is the Source and Summit of our Faith, continuing to make this truth dwell deep in our Hearts!

Jubilee 2025: "Pilgrims of Hope" Pope Francis proclaimed 2025 a holy year of hope. The practice of pilgrimage has a special place in the holy year because it represents the journey each person makes in this life.

The Holy Year of Hope began on December 24,2024 when Pope Francis opened the Holy Door at the Vatican, it will close on January 6, 2026, the feast of the Epiphany. The Mass for the opening of the Jubilee Year in our diocese was on December 29, 2024 at Saint Mary’s Cathedral in Saint Cloud. The year will close here on January 6, 2026 also. You can watch Pope Francis opening the Holy Door on EWTN, look for the date and you’ll find it.

The Holy Father also encourages people to perform Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy throughout the year and making a pilgrimage. Pilgrims are especially encouraged to visit each of the parishes in their Area Catholic Community. **Obtain the Jubilee Indulgence** through one of the other means (works of mercy and penance, making a pilgrimage to your cathedral, etc.).

The Saint Cloud Diocese is home to many sacred sites for people to visit. Some are listed below or you are invited to come up with your own.

In our diocese the pilgrimage sites and religious communities are:

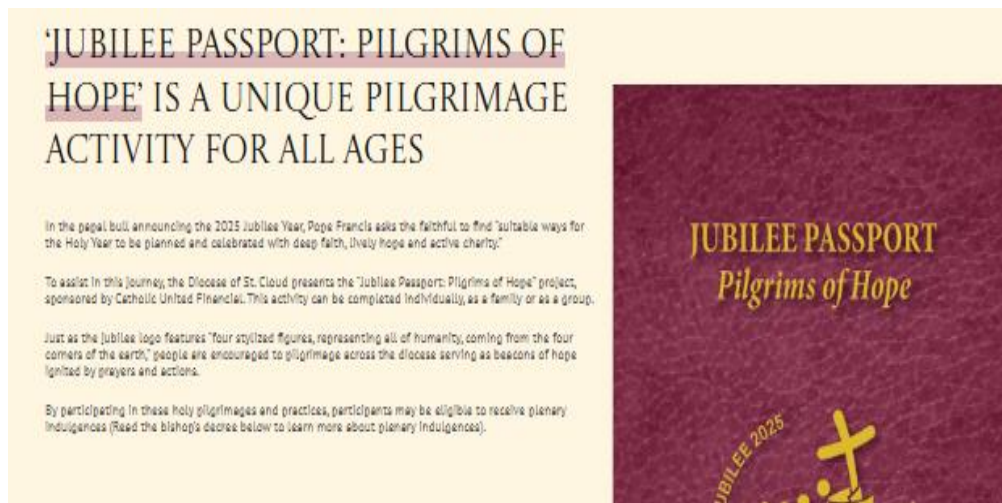
### ***Sacred sites and shrines:***

- Shrine of St. Peregrine, martyr, Saint John's Abbey, Collegeville
- Shrine of St. Odillia Crosier Priory,
- Assumption (Grasshopper) Chapel, Cold Spring
- Divine Mercy Shrine, St. Paul Church, Sauk Centre
- The Shrine of St. Cloud, St. Mary's Cathedral

***Pray with religious communities in the Saint Cloud Diocese:***

- The monks of St. John's Abbey, Collegeville
- The Crosier Fathers and Brothers, Onamia
- The Poor Clare Sisters, Sauk Rapids
- The Sisters of the Order St. Benedict, St. Joseph
- The Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Little Falls

Look in the December issue of The Central Catholic Magazine. There is information on the **passport** you can cross off for your indulgence. Cross off each stamp for every act or pilgrimage you make.



For more information about the Jubilee year visit  
<https://stcdio.org/jubilee-2025-pilgrims-of-hope>

I am planning a pilgrimage to a lot of these sites on August 7, 2025. So please save that date, with more details to come.

God Bless You in this Jubilee Year!!

*Jean Zwilling, Chair*

## COMMUNITY COMMISSION

Hello everyone!

I was visiting with a neighbor and chatting about our day. She declared that she “Put away Christmas” meaning the decorations were taken down and stored for another year. The phrase “Put away Christmas” really struck me.

Do we “Put away Christmas” or do we let the joy & love keep on going?

This is my simple message to everyone as the cold days of winter pass. Keep Christmas in your hearts and spread the love of God to each and every person you meet. Isn't that the true meaning of Christmas? Make each day a gift from God and on this Jubilee Year bring hope and trust to all.

January 22 is the March for Life at the State Capitol sponsored by the MCCL. The website offers a lot of information for Pro Life opportunities throughout the year.

March 8th is the Spring Retreat at St. Michael's in Buckman sponsored by the Eastern Deanery.

Our DCCW offers retreats to empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service.

May this “Ordinary Time” of the Liturgical year be filled with God's peace and love for all.

*Polly Rabideau, Chair*



*(Kind cards available from NCCW.org)*

## LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

### **Kick off 2025 with key legislative priorities**

The 2025 Minnesota legislative session has begun under unprecedented circumstances. While political dynamics may change, the Minnesota Catholic Conference (MCC) remains steadfast in its principles. Regardless of who holds power, our mission to advocate for the common good and promote policies that support life, family and human dignity remains unchanged.

### **Here are some of the key issues we will focus on this session:**

#### **Promoting family economic security**

Last biennium, we helped pass a nation-leading child tax credit that eased financial burdens for low- and middle-income families. This year, we're advocating to expand the credit by raising the income phaseout threshold to \$45,000 for joint filers, ensuring more families benefit. Additionally, we support a sales tax exemption on essential baby items, providing meaningful relief for growing families. These policies prioritize family life and address the rising costs facing parents today.

#### **Opposing online sports gambling**

Minnesota legislators are once again considering legalizing online sports gambling. While 39 other states and the District of Columbia have already done so, we remain deeply concerned about the societal harm it causes. Legalized online gambling would effectively put a bookie in everyone's pocket, fostering addiction, economic hardship and family fragmentation. Young people, especially young men, are particularly vulnerable to these harms. Thus, MCC will work to ensure this dangerous policy does not advance.

#### **Opposing commercial surrogacy**

The push to legalize commercial surrogacy — a practice that commodifies children and exploits women — has been ongoing at the Capitol. Last year, it narrowly passed in the House. This year, we will continue to oppose any efforts to legalize the buying and selling of children. Women are not for rent, and children are not for sale.

#### **Protecting nonpublic pupil aid**

Non-public schools educate the Minnesota public. In fact, private schools serve nearly 100,000 Minnesota students each year. Therefore, the education of these children should be supported by our state's public education dollars. With non-public pupil aid at risk of being cut from the governor's budget, MCC is committed to ensuring that Minnesota kids at non-public schools receive the aid and support they deserve.

#### **Opposing assisted suicide**

Legalizing assisted suicide endangers vulnerable populations, undermines the dignity of life, and shifts focus away from true compassionate care. MCC is committed to opposing any efforts to normalize or legalize this practice and instead advocates for expanding access to palliative care that honors the inherent worth of every person.

Those are just a few of the many topics MCC will address this session. Our advocacy relies on the support of Catholics in the pews, and together, we can make a difference. Visit [mncatholic.org](http://mncatholic.org) to join the Catholic Advocacy Network and to learn more about these issues.

Let us pray for wisdom for our legislators and for God's guidance as we work to advance the common good in Minnesota.

*Minnesota Catholic Conference*  
Published in [The Catholic Spirit](#) January 17, 2025

## INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we ponder about our faith life; what gives us hope for the coming year, challenges we will face, but also all the opportunities we can experience sharing our love for our Lord and Savior. Life and death walk hand-in-hand forcing us to look deep into our souls, and to ask ourselves - are we the image of God to others?

Last fall I had the opportunity to go to a gathering in Alexandria at St. Mary's Parish, where our live speaker was Chris Stefanick, Founder and President of Real Life Catholic, that is a non-profit organization. Chris is an internationally acclaimed author, speaker, and television host. He has devoted his life to sharing his love for Jesus with us. To make him a little more human, he is a husband to his wife Nathalie, father of their six children and a grandfather of four.

Chris's passion with his faith, and the ability to share it openly and honestly with all in attendance is so inspiring. Have you heard his message or read any of his books? "SEARCH", "Living Joy", or "I Am" - here is his web site: <https://reallifecatholic.com/>. His seminars, TV, radio, and video ministry have reached millions.

Listening to his life story and devotion to our God was wonderful, making it a spiritual evening for me. I enjoyed listening to Chris and feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit fill the room with PEACE and WONDER. It is so amazing how much God Loves each of us, no matter who we are. Please let each of us share that Love with one another in 2025 and May God Bless each of you this year.

God's Peace,

*Bonnie Jennen, Chair*





## RURAL-ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Small businesses are the heartbeat of rural communities, driving local economies and creating opportunities. Yet, with the looming "silver tsunami" of retiring Baby Boomers, more than 52,000 businesses in Minnesota are expected to face ownership transitions or risk closure in the next 5–10 years. Only 30% of business sales are successful nationwide, meaning 70% fail on the first attempt.

Succession planning—deciding what happens when a business owner can no longer or no longer wants to run their business or farm—is critical for both rural and urban Minnesota.

Despite its importance, a recent report shows that only **19%** of Minnesota business owners have prepared for this transition. Webinars are available for more information this crucial issue, understand its impact on local economies, and learn actionable strategies for successful business transfers.

[crpd@ruralmn.org](mailto:crpd@ruralmn.org) or see MN Employment and Economic Development Small Business Assistance Office

Each January - The Center for Rural Policy and Development files a report on the current earnings in Minnesota. [The State of Rural highlight – Earnings continue to grow | Center for Rural Policy and Development](#)

“Earnings tend to be higher in urban areas. In our entirely urban counties, earnings are nearly \$80,000 per person, while our town/rural mix counties are the lowest, with \$59,293 per person—about \$20,000 lower. Entirely rural counties are interesting because they tend to match town/rural mix and urban/town/rural mix, but they’re also subject to occasional “blips” due to the volatility of the farm economy—if that’s down, then the total earnings for these counties tend to go down; the opposite is true when the farm economy is doing well.”

Winter on the Farm can be a time of planning and anticipation for the next busy planting season. How much crop insurance is needed? What crops are to be planted and where? Do you stick with the same corn and soybean products that you have for years or is this the year to plant new varieties that a young crop salesman is pestering you to try? How can you read all the farm articles that have piled up during harvest? Then there is the garden. What new vegetables and fruits will you try this year? Do you try to go more organic and use less chemicals this year? So many decisions! Yet our best guide is to trust in the Lord, following his teachings - giving thanks to all he has given to us. We are not true owners of the land, but stewards for only a short period of time.



*Joyce Simones, Chair*



## ORGANIZATION COMMISSION

Let me start by introducing myself. I am Sheri Streasick, elected as the Vice President of the St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women at our 2024 Fall Conference in September. I'll have a very short term as VP since I will be the President-Elect at our 2025 Fall Conference. But I do have six years of experience on the St. Cloud DCCW board (Family Commission chair and Secretary). I have also been the Secretary and the Box of Joy Project Leader for the Northwestern Deanery for three years. My husband Bob, and I, are members of Our Lady of Seven Dolours parish in Millerville.

As your new VP, one of my duties is to chair the Organization Commission. And I will freely admit that at this point I'm not quite sure what that means or what I do as the chair of this commission – it seems I always learn more than what I can contribute. (Holy Spirit, please guide me!) And I would LOVE to have a couple women volunteer to be members of this commission and work with me during the next 9 months. Over the years that I've been involved with the DCCW, I have often been asked – what is it that the DCCW does for us? Yes, I can spout off the mission: *The St. Cloud DCCW acts through its affiliated organizations 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.* But that doesn't explain what it means to the young stay-at-home mom with 3 little kids, or to the working mom with school age children, or to the young woman just entering college, or the newly married woman who is just beginning to think about starting a family, etc. What are we doing for them? How do we let them know how we can help and why should they be involved, active, and contributing to our organization?

And so, I am on a search – I want to hear from women, especially young women, what we can do differently, what they are looking for in their spiritual or evangelical leadership growth, what would draw them in for contributing their talents in doing service for others, how can we help them help their children, etc. I also would like to find ways to make our presence and organization more visible – how do we do that? We should NOT be the wallflower waiting to be discovered, we should be engaged in the community and visible to all Catholic women. I would love to see our organization as the “go-to” for women seeking growth in their spirituality, leadership and service. So, I am looking for information to help the DCCW create an active community outreach program – we are God's hands and feet; how can we help others?

If you have thoughts or ideas, or if you know someone who would like to chat with me, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached on my cell phone at 320-805-0010 (please leave a message) or by email at [SLStreasick@gmail.com](mailto:SLStreasick@gmail.com).

***Sheri Streasick***  
*Vice President & Organization Chair*

## ST. CLOUD DIOCESAN TREASURER (SCDCCW)

### MESSAGE

I was elected to become your Diocesan Treasurer at our Annual Fall Conference in September. If my name looks familiar it is because I previously held this position. I am excited to be back. I have been a member of the Council of Catholic Women all of my married life and that is because I keep seeing the benefits it brings to my life and to the life of the Churches to which I belong. So, thank you, for giving me the opportunity to serve you again.

In December I mailed out our Annual Dues Statement to each parish in our diocese. They are usually sent out in August, but were late this year. Already, over 60% of the parishes have sent in their dues. THANK YOU for responding so quickly. December is a very busy time of the year, so I am sure I will receive more payments after we all get back into our routines.

Your dues are used by the Diocesan Board to bring information of a Diocesan and National level to you. We are a sponsor of the **Diocesan Festival of Families on February 2, 2025 at St. Francis Xavier in Sartell; also, our SCDCCW Lenten Retreat on March 8, 2025 at St. Michael's Church in Buckman.** These are 2 of the many events we encourage you to seek out. If you have more suggestions for the Diocesan Board to explore, please share with a Board member. We are always open to all suggestions.

When you see me at one of our events, please introduce yourself; I would love to meet you.

*Carol Brunn, Treasurer*

### PUBLICITY REPORT

President Lois Wesbur; Past President, Linda Borgerding and I met with several members of The Central Minnesota Catholic publication staff on Thursday, November 21, 2024. This was a lively exchange of helpful hints and ideas on how to prepare eye catching flyers, as well as how to better reach our audience, through increased social media. Thanks, ladies for your time and input. It was great meeting all of you as well.

DCCW's next event is the Lenten Retreat "The Secret of the Holy Face" coming up on Saturday, March 8, 2025, at St. Michael's Parish in Buckman. The day includes speakers Cathy Maloney-Hills, OSF and Fr. Robert Altier, The Chaplet of the Holy Face, Mass and of course, lunch.

See you in Buckman!

*Pat Kasella, Chair*

## EASTERN DEANERY

In December '24, the Eastern Deanery celebrated Christmas with a birthday party for Jesus. The event was held at St. Mary's in Milaca on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. The day began with attending Mass and participation in the First Saturday prayers. We decorated for Christmas, a pianist played Christmas music, we had a gift exchange, and enjoyed a great meal together.

Members volunteered for their parish women's group roles in hosting of the upcoming SCDDCW Spring Retreat at St. Michael's Church, in Buckman, MN. The Spring event will be held on the first Saturday of Lent, March 8<sup>th</sup>. The two speakers from the Diocese of St. Paul will present on the League of St. Martin and on The Secret of the Holy Face.

The Arch-confraternity of the Holy Face, proposed by Fr. Lawrence Carney III, was authorized in 2017 by Pope Francis. The time is now, to learn more of this revival and Catholic following.

In 2025, as we begin the year of the Holy Pilgrims, I encourage you to register and join us in our excitement to hear about this new arch-confraternity from speakers: Fr. Robert Altier and Cathy Miloney-Hills, SOF. The Passion of Christ, the Veil of Veronica and the Shroud of Tourns hold a powerful sense of awe by many. In attending the event, each person will receive a chaplet rosary and prayer card, as together we pray "The Chaplet of His Holy Face". You will not be disappointed!

*Nita Hayes, President*

<https://www.catholiccompany.com/content/how-to-pray-chaplet-holy-face-jesus>

+ "O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me"

"My Jesus, Mercy"

+ "Arise O Lord, and let Thy enemies be scattered,  
and let all that hate Thee flee from before Thy Face"

+ "God, our Protector, look on us, and cast Thine eyes upon the Face of Thy Christ"

## NORTHWEST DEANERY

All things new: Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future

This is Bishop Neary's planning process. What is your ACC doing to get ready for this? I have talked to several people in different ACC, 2 persons, I talked to had no idea what was happening, the other one said that their ACC will be holding a meeting in February. Well, last fall, I was given the book "From Christendom to Apostolic Mission" from University of Mary. Subtitle is Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age. In December, we started having a weekly study about the book to be able to understand it better and are able to watch video about each chapter at home.

The first chapter gave an history of the church, so now I understand why Father Ben wrote about each ACC church beginning in our bulletins. Also have brought the office staff from the 6 churches together so we can become one.

As more young adults leave the church, steps need to be taken to keep them with our churches. We do have a Net Team here this year, that involve the teens in activities. They have a room at JP11 where they can meet for fun time. They are allowed into the public-school during lunch time to talked to the students and they also attends their games.

The last e-mail I got from the Diocese, each ACC is asked to form a planning committee and have it in place by March or April. By July, according to the November issue of "the Central Minnesota Catholic, each ACC will develop a plan, based on common parameters set by the bishop. This part scared me, knowing that it will cause many unhappy people.

Our deanery met on October 29 for our fall meeting in Fergus Falls. We discussed "Food, Fun and Fund Day." Theme is "Hope Plants the Garden; Faith Makes it Grow." Each ACC was assigned a part to do. We are looking into doing another Brats Sale in Little Falls again. Our next get together will be in April.

*Linda Scepurek President*

### *NET Ministries*

NET TEAM: A Catholic youth missionary organization that recruits and trains young adults to minister in schools and parishes. NET teams share their faith stories and present the Gospel message to young people. **Let's form the next Saint.**

NET has been on the front lines of youth ministry for decades, and we're ready to be your partner. From help leading a retreat for one day to ongoing mentorship in leading small groups, or anything in between, we've got your back.

<https://www.netusa.org/>

## WEST CENTRAL DEANERY

Our Spring Board and General meeting dates have been scheduled with the 2 ACC's next in line to do the hosting. The Board meeting is set for April 8<sup>th</sup> at St. Benedict Church in Avon, Harvest of Hope ACC Hosting; the General meeting is set for May 1<sup>st</sup>, Holy Saints ACC, not sure which parish.

Our deanery is scheduled to host the Annual Fall Conference in September. I have received the manual for the conference and have reviewed it to re-acquaint myself with the hosting duties, as I have already done it when I was deanery president in 2010. I wish my memory was better than it is, so it might be easier to remember what we did the last time. But it's a good thing we have records of these events to help us prepare well and hopefully things will run smoothly. I also recently have been the deanery president when our deanery hosted the Spring Retreat in March of 2024. With fewer deaneries in place now, the hosting of these events comes around sooner than they did in the past. Also, there are the diocesan council board members to handle their responsibilities and work hand-in-hand to cover all the bases.

I am pleased to report that our "Meeting Site Rotation Schedule" has been working out, so far. As of now we have enlisted the help of members to be liaisons in 5 of the 7 ACCs, and will contact the other ACC's when the need arises.

I have been promoting the submission of "Parish Activity Reports" to the presidents of the parishes in the deanery and have received several, so will continue with this project. This is one of the projects that fell by the wayside during the diocesan realignment of deaneries and Covid. It seems that during that time the meetings were not held routinely and some of these projects just got lost in the shuffle. I feel it is interesting to see how the parishes fulfill their missions of serving the needs of their fellow parishioners.

As stated in my report previously, our deanery still has not been able to fill the office of President-elect, but we now have 3 Commission Chairs – Church, Community and Rural/Environmental, which leaves Family, International and Legislative Commissions still open.

I have held the legislative positions in the past and found it to be very educational and enlightening. So, we are still looking to contact other women in the deanery to see if God has moved them spiritually to consent to filling any of those positions. These reports will be included in the Newsletter, whenever sufficient reports are received to restart that again.

Praying and trusting in the Lord that He will guide us in finding the right women to come forward to accept the positions if asked.

Respectfully submitted;

*Jean Hopper, President*

## SOUTHWEST DEANERY

Welcome to 2025 and the Jubilee Year!

All Women are encouraged to be “Pilgrims of Hope” and to take part in the activities as explained in the December issue of the Central Minnesota Catholic magazine.

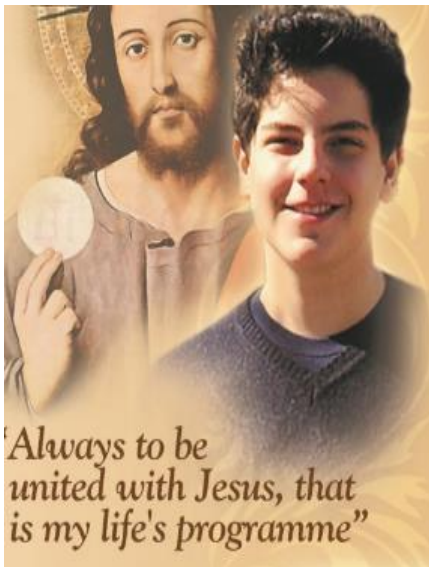
The Southwest Deanery is in need of a Spiritual Advisor. Consider asking a priest or deacon from your parish or ACC whom you think might be willing to attend our spring and fall meetings. Our general meeting for spring 2025 is being planned. As of this printing, items on the agenda are: short business meeting, speaker, Mass and a meal by the host parish.

Our Southwest Deanery is on the rotation schedule for the Annual Spring Retreat for the Diocese in March 2026. Ideas for the speakers/theme and help with organizing this event are welcome. Please think about being an officer, such as president or vice president, to offer your time and energy towards this event.

*Cheryl Weller, Secretary*

---

### What did his mother know?



#### Carlo Acutis: The First Millennial Saint

The Italian computer-coding teenager who died of cancer in 2006 is known for his great devotion to the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

When we attended the 2022 NCCW National Convention in St Paul, MN, we learned about Blessed Carlo Acutis. We saw banners representing the Eucharistic Miracles and were able to venerate his relic. He was a regular kid most of the time, but he had a great devotion to the Eucharist. In this age of the internet, he spent much of his time documenting the Eucharistic Miracles. He did this in his short 15 years of life when he lost his life to leukemia. The good news is that he will be canonized in April 27, 2025!

Please refer to his website: <https://carloacutis-en.org>. For more information, there is a list of the miracles he compiled at: <http://miracolieucaristici.org/en/list.html>.

To see a window, there is one at the Chapel of Saint Ann in Foreston, MN. It is believed to be the first window of its kind in the US. To see a video of the dedication of the window in the Chapel it can be found on You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGsxclcsIXg>.

**Wouldn't it be wonderful if our youth would choose him as the patron saint for themselves or for their youth group?**

## DCCW PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2024-2025

### Supporting and Praying for Priests

#### **Purpose:**

To support, encourage and pray for priests.

*Whereas*, As stated by Pope John Paul II, "No priest, no Eucharist... no Eucharist, no priest" (*Gift and Mystery - On the Fiftieth Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination*), and priests are essential for maintaining the Church and the world's access to the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist; and

*Whereas*, Priests are called to heroic generosity, serving as "vicars of God's love" according to St. Ambrose (*The Complete Works of St. Ambrose*). Belonging to the world, not themselves, our prayers support them in this radical way of living and giving. As stated by Fulton Sheen (*The Priest is Not His Own*), "There is no 'on duty' for a priest...he is 'on love' everywhere..."; and

*Whereas*, The Church encourages us to pray for those in authority -- and priests and bishops hold places of authority in the Church, as "*Alter Christus*" (another Christ). In obedience to God's Word, our prayers encourage them in walking and living according to this supreme dignity; and be it

*Resolved*, That DCCW foster a culture of respect for the priesthood. That members be mindful of the challenges faced by priests and bishops and offer them understanding and compassion, encouragement, and prayers of support and strength; and

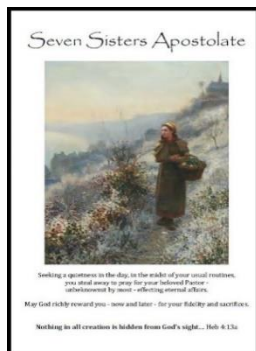
*Resolved*, That DCCW members regularly pray for priests and bishops, individually and as a community, offering support for their various needs and roles as outlined above, utilizing programs such as Seven Sisters Apostolate ([sevensistersapostolate.org](http://sevensistersapostolate.org)).

*(Note this resolution was submitted to NCCW by Barb Vezino, Detroit Province CCW Director and adopted by the NCCW. It was also submitted and adopted by Saint Cloud DCCW September 21, 2024.)*



## SEVEN SISTERS' APOSTOLATE

Seven Sisters Apostolate emphasizes power of prayer for priests Its mission is described as “one Holy Hour/one priest/each week/one heart of prayer.”



In 2010, Janette Howe sensed a nudge to pray more frequently and intentionally for her pastor, Fr. Joseph R Johnson, rector of the Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul, Minnesota. Father’s ability to attend to numerous needs in the parish while still caring for her family and friends was edifying. In addition, Janette’s son was studying for the priesthood, and Fr. Johnson was very generous in his guidance and support of him.

During a walk one day, it occurred to Janette that the very least she might do in gratitude for Father’s ever-generous pastoral care would be to offer a Holy Hour once a week for him. Janette began to offer this additional hour in the summer of 2010, not mentioning it to Father, but delighting in simply offering the hour and trusting he was benefiting from the graces. She chose to make the chapel visit on Thursdays, the day celebrating the institution of both the Holy Eucharist and Holy Orders, during the power-packed Hour of Divine Mercy, 3 PM.

Almost from the beginning, Janette recalls that there were distractions. Someone in desperate need of prayer would email right before she left for the Holy Hour, or on the way into the chapel someone would call with a prayer request, or she felt that a friend or family member could use the graces of “Father’s Holy Hour”. Nonetheless, she knew that this hour was set aside for a specific purpose and she knew the graces were sufficient to accomplish it. She would offer prayers on the way to the chapel, or would linger in the chapel after the hour, to cover these urgent prayer requests. After several weeks, a steady rhythm of prayer had undeniably developed, and these became happily anticipated hours of the week.

On March 24th, 2011, while in prayer for Fr. Johnson, Janette ‘heard’ the words *Seven Sisters* in her heart. Thinking that she ‘misheard’, she reached into her purse for the Chaplet of the Seven Sorrows. When she leaned over to retrieve the Chaplet beads, she more clearly heard “*Seven Sisters*”. There was no mistake. She sat in silence, eyes closed, before the Blessed Sacrament and waited.

After some time, Janette sensed clearly that the Lord wanted to invite six others— seven in total—to offer one Holy Hour once a day for Fr. Johnson just as she was doing. It was exhilarating to consider the benefit of these multiplied graces for her pastor and also the interior benefit for his intercessors. Janette strongly sensed that in these weeks she had been a student in the school of intercession, and now others were being called to that same school of prayer and sacrifice—and joy!

That weekend, before the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Spirit impressed upon Janette two specific directives regarding the intercessor’s Holy Hour: (1) It should be only for the pastor, and (2) it should ask for the priest’s deepening devotion to our Blessed Mother.

Janette unfolded these aspects of her prayer to Fr. Johnson, who directed her to **start the Apostolate with seven churches—49 women in total**. By June of 2011, the first Seven Sisters groups made their one-year commitments under Janette’s oversight. The Apostolate continued to grow organically, and it is seeking church approval in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Today, the Apostolate continues to grow and mature, and, God-willing, produce eternal fruit in the hearts of both the intercessors and priests for whom they pray. All glory be to God!

<https://sevensistersapostolate.org/praying-the-holy-hour/>

## INFORMATION TECHNICIAN

I thought for the new year, I would provide some information about useful websites.

- Saint Cloud DCCW, information about local events, newsletters and more; [stcloudccw.org](http://stcloudccw.org)
- Saint Paul, Minneapolis Province, the link between us and the National Council of Catholic Women; [Saintpaul=Minneapolisprovince.weebly.org](http://Saintpaul=Minneapolisprovince.weebly.org)
- National Council of Catholic Women, information on Spirituality, Service and leadership; [nccw.org](http://nccw.org)
- World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, Catholic women around the world; [WUCWO.org](http://WUCWO.org)
- United States Council of Catholic Bishops formed the CCW in 1920 to unite all the women's groups and give us one place to combine our similar projects: [usccb.org](http://usccb.org).
- Diocese of Saint Cloud, everything local; [studio.org](http://studio.org)
- Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life: (<https://www.mccl.org/>)
- Minnesota Catholic Conference: <https://www.mncatholic.org/>
- To pray the Holy Face Chaplet: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/content/how-to-pray-chaplet-holy-face-jesus>
- To learn more about Carlo Acutis: <https://carloacutis-en.org>.
- Dedicate window in Foreston <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGsxclcsIXg>.  
More about Seven Sisters: <https://sevensistersapostolate.org/praying-the-holy-hour/>
- For more websites: see [stcloudccw.org](http://stcloudccw.org)

*Arleen Roelike, Information Technician*

## SEVEN SISTERS' APOSTOLATE STARTED BY JANETTE HOWE

Do you ever keep running into the same person and wonder why?

That is the way I feel about Janette Howe. I have heard of this mission at our Deanery meeting. But then I first met her at the Women's Retreat in St Cloud in March, 2023. Then in May, we had an information meeting at my local church, Our Lady of Lourdes. Janette was at the New Ulm Deanery meeting, and now at the Province of St. Paul & Minneapolis's Conference.

Jeanette's mission is the Seven Sisters Apostolate. The mission is to committed prayerful support to your local pastor. It is getting seven women to commit to offering a Holy Hour specially for your local pastor.

Each lady takes a distinct day of the week, it does not have to be at a certain hour, just in the 24 hours period. It is ideally prayed in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament, either in an Adoration Chapel or in front of a Tabernacle. But one lady reported that her church is locked so she parks in the parking lot of the church to do hers. You can do it at any church, it does not have to be at your local church, so if you are traveling, you still can do it.

Since May I have started doing 1 hour extra in our adoration chapel for this commitment.

*Linda Scepurek*

## Dates to Remember

### 2025

March 8, Spring Lenten Retreat, St. Michael's Church, Buckman  
"Secret Of the Holy Face"

April 8, West Central Board Meeting, St. Benedict Church in Avon, Harvest of Hope  
ACC Hosting;

April 27, Carlo Acutis Canonization

May 6, West Central General meeting, Holy Saints ACC,

June 26, Fun, Food and Fund Day, Saint James Parish, Randall, MN  
"Hope Plants the Garden; Faith Makes it Grow"

2025 August 7, 2025, Source & Summit Pilgrimage TBD

September 20, Annual 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Fall Conference, West Central Deanery Hosting

### 2026

January 6, Closing of Jubilee Year, Saint Mary's Cathedral



### Prayer

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.

May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

God Bless you in the remaining months of 2024. Stay close to Jesus through the Eucharist!

# **THE SECRET OF THE HOLY FACE a Lenten Retreat**

Sponsored by the St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

**SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2025**



**St. Michael Parish  
9251 Hwy. 25  
Buckman, MN**

Speakers:  
Cathy Maloney-Hills OSF  
and  
Father Robert Altier

## **REGISTRATION**

\$20 by February 28, 2025  
\$25 after Feb. 28, or at the door  
Payable to: St. Cloud DCCW  
Mail to: 14267 Fairway Lane  
Becker, MN 55308

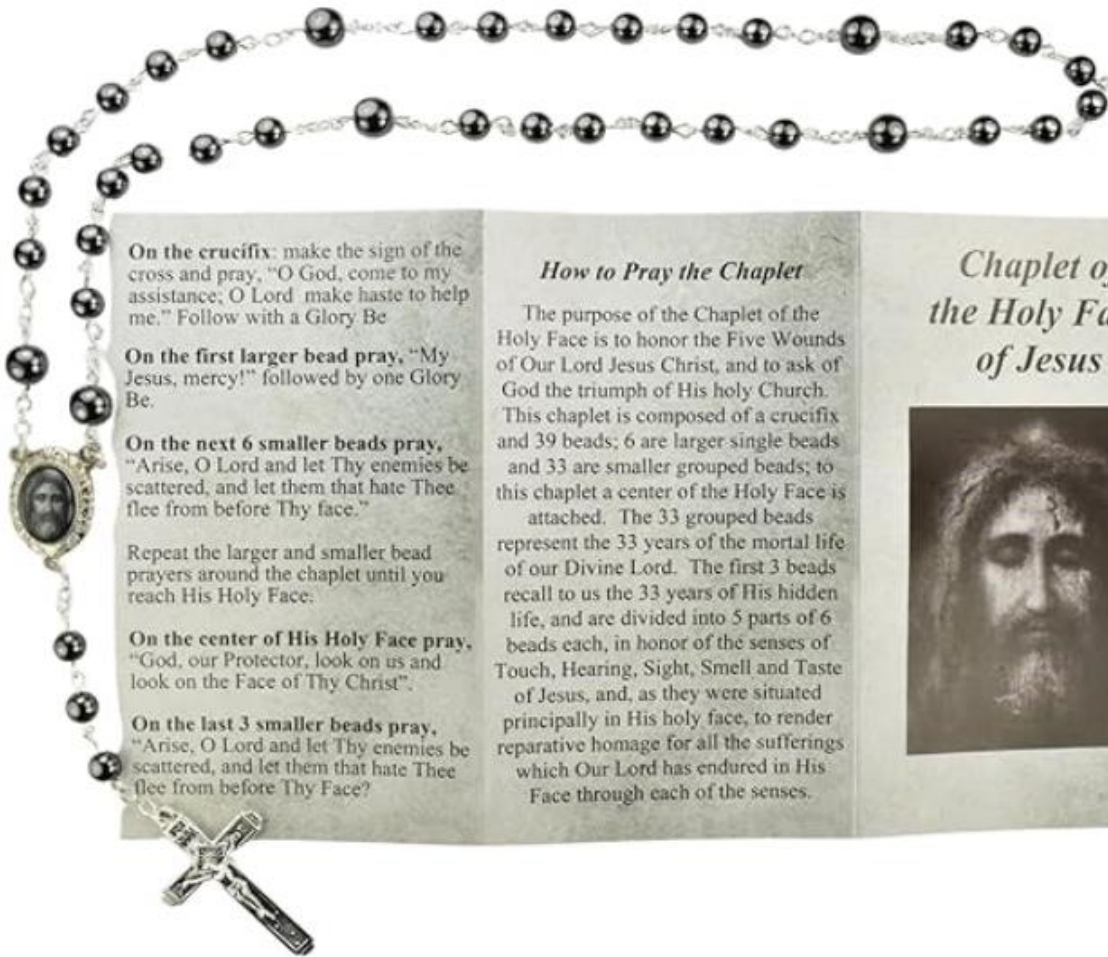
Questions: Contact  
Linda Borgerding (320) 293-1839

**"ILLUMINA DOMINE VULTUM TUUM SUPER NOS"**  
(MAY THE LIGHT OF THY FACE, O LORD, SHINE UPON US)

**"MANE NOBISCUM DOMINE"**  
(STAY WITH US, O LORD)

**Hosted by: Eastern Deanery**

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



**On the crucifix:** make the sign of the cross and pray, "O God, come to my assistance; O Lord make haste to help me." Follow with a Glory Be

**On the first larger bead pray,** "My Jesus, mercy!" followed by one Glory Be.

**On the next 6 smaller beads pray,** "Arise, O Lord and let Thy enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Thee flee from before Thy face."

Repeat the larger and smaller bead prayers around the chaplet until you reach His Holy Face:

**On the center of His Holy Face pray,** "God, our Protector, look on us and look on the Face of Thy Christ".

**On the last 3 smaller beads pray,** "Arise, O Lord and let Thy enemies be scattered, and let them that hate Thee flee from before Thy Face?"

### *How to Pray the Chaplet*

The purpose of the Chaplet of the Holy Face is to honor the Five Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to ask of God the triumph of His holy Church. This chaplet is composed of a crucifix and 39 beads; 6 are larger single beads and 33 are smaller grouped beads; to this chaplet a center of the Holy Face is attached. The 33 grouped beads represent the 33 years of the mortal life of our Divine Lord. The first 3 beads recall to us the 33 years of His hidden life, and are divided into 5 parts of 6 beads each, in honor of the senses of Touch, Hearing, Sight, Smell and Taste of Jesus, and, as they were situated principally in His holy face, to render reparative homage for all the sufferings which Our Lord has endured in His Face through each of the senses.

### *Chaplet of the Holy Face of Jesus*

