Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

Our Catholic Voice

May 2026

Find us on Facebook

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 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: stclouddccw@gmail.com

Website: stclouddccw.org

Find us on Facebook Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I don't know how many of you listen to Relevant Radio. I've been following Fr. Rocky's Lenten Lessons on the Mass. On his last podcast he talked about a parish in Germany who had to rebuild their church after WWII - the Sacred Heart church. They rebuilt it brick by brick but could not rebuild the hands on the statue of Jesus. So, to this day there is a plaque that states that Jesus has no hands except ours. We are his hands and feet in this earthly world. I've heard this story before, so it wasn't new to me. But it is always in my mind whenever I question myself about something I should do… or not. I must think about if this is something I am doing for Jesus – if I can be his hands and feet in this earthly world. Yes, sometimes I struggle because the "something" is hard for me. I don't believe I am the only one who struggles with His "ask." Please pray and ask Him what his will is for you. However small, he asks us to make a difference in our earthly pilgrimage.

Our Diocesan Council had our Lenten Retreat (Praying for the Prodigal) in Morris on March 14. I thank all the women who ventured out in the questionable blizzard weather to attend this retreat. And bless all of you who could not attend for safety reasons – we missed you. God protected those of us who traveled and kept the storm at bay until later in the afternoon. We had a little over 80 attendees. Speakers were excellent. And Father Ken Popp brought everything together in his excellent homily. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of our priests! Please pray for them.

Easter season is such a wonderful and joyful time for us. He is Risen, Alleluia! We have such a joyous time ahead of us as we move towards Pentecost. Ask our good Lord to bring his Holy Spirit to each of us.

OK…. Now I need to move on to more earthly items. Please put the following items on your calendars.

- **St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Fun-Food-Fund Day,** (June 18, 2026) at Immaculate Conception in Rice, MN. This is our annual fundraiser for the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. Join us for old-fashioned Bingo and a Silent Auction. Watch for announcements in the Central MN Catholic magazine and your local bulletin.
- The **Council of Catholic Women Province Convention** on (June 26, 2026) at Saint Victoria Church, Victoria, MN (near Chanhassen). Go to accwarchspm.org/province for information and registration. Information can also be found at https://provinceofstpaul-minneapolis.weebly.com/
- The **National Council of Catholic Women Convention** (August 25-29) in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Go to NCCW.org and click on 'Convention' for registration and agenda information.

- **Our St Cloud DCCW Fall Conference** is scheduled for September 19 at Holy Family in Belle Prairie. Our theme is "Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace." Details will follow in our newsletters and webpage.

We are still in need of a couple women to help with the Service Commission (not as chair, but on the committee). The Commission Chair is Barb Piecek, and she is looking for help with Family/Community/Rural-Environmental projects – action items that can be proposed at the ACC and deanery level. (See Barb's contact information in this newsletter.)

God Bless You!! Be the hands and feet of Jesus!

Sheri Streasick, President
St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

To commemorate the 800th anniversary of St. Francis's death, Pope Leo XIV proclaimed The Jubilee year of Saint Francis: January 10, 2026 until January 10, 2027.

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR'S REPORT

The lasting impression is that the Lenten Retreat was appreciated. Jason Prigge and Roxane Salonen both gave interesting presentations. Grandparents especially, struggle when children and grandchildren ignore God in their lives. Read Roxane's book, "What Would Monica Do?"

Use compassion, Mercy and Love in your lives. All of us should be a sign of hope in these troubled times.

We need truth in society; the world seems upside down. People are afraid because of the violence and challenges we face in our own country. These are definitely trying times.

Pope Leo XIV realizes that our government is struggling. He is our spokesman and moral compass, please pray for him each day.

The good news is that since the election of Pope Leo XIV, there is a growing interest in the Catholic church, especially with the youth.

"What Would Mary Want Us To Do?

Father Ken Popp
(given at the April Board meeting).

A year after his election, Pope Leo XIV has shaped a papacy centered on unity and listening, navigating polarization and global conflict through an increasingly direct call for peace, dignity and reconciliation.

More: https://www.usccb.org/news/2026/one-year-pope-leo-navigates-division-through-dialogue-his-push-peace

7 Things To Know About St. Francis of Assisi

1. He was born (Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone) in 1181 and died on October 3, 1226.
2. He was known for his humility, vow of poverty, love of animals, and care for creation.
3. He had a strong devotion to the Holy Eucharist.
4. He received the stigmata.
5. He was a close friend of St. Clare.
6. He was canonized by Pope Gregory IX on July 16, 1228.
7. He established the Franciscan Rule and is the founder of the Franciscan Order.

SPIRITUALITY REPORT

We, as Catholic women, have our stories to tell. Some women have stories that cover their entire lifetime while others end in childhood. Women who have been designated as 'Servants of God' have fascinating stories that span foreign countries or mystical visions.

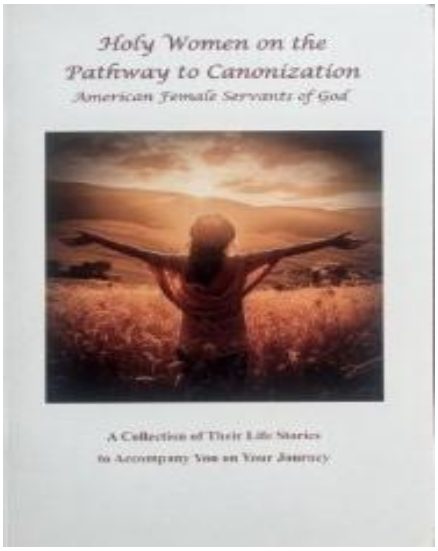
The 2023-2025 NCCW Spirituality Commission team composed a booklet titled "Holy Women on the Pathway to Canonization". In the booklet are short, two-page descriptions of 18 American Female Servants of God. The 'Servant of God' is the first step and initial title given to a worthy individual, either by an Archbishop or Bishop of a(n) Arch/ Diocese where that individual lived, served, or died.

The stories of these women are varied, given their age, life experiences, travels, vocations, and so on. It was interesting to read how these women prayed to know the will of God and follow His will in their lives.

Sister Annella Zervas is the only individual in Minnesota with the title of Servant of God. She entered the convent of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Joseph, MN. She lived a life of hardship and suffering. In October 15, 2023, Bishop Andrew Cozzens of the Diocese of Crookston, MN, began the preliminary investigation into the holiness of Sr. Annella, declaring her a Servant of God. The cause for her canonization was formally opened by Bishop Cozzens on Aug 20, 2025. Read more: https://sisterannella.org/

A second women is Michelle Christine Duppong. She was born in 1984 and grew up in North Dakota. After high school and college training, she took part in Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) and felt called to work for the Diocese of Bismarck. She was unexpectedly diagnosed with cancer and died at the age of 31. She brought joy to staff and was a treasured mentor to other students. In June 2022,Bishop David Kagan of the Diocese of Bismarck announced plans to designate her as a Servant of God. Read more: michelleduppongcause.org

A wonderful opportunity to learn more about Servants of God will be at the Province Conference on June 26, in Victoria, MN. Michelle's parents are scheduled to speak in the afternoon session. The booklet "Holy Women on the Pathway to Canonization, American Female Servants of God" is also available on the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) website store for purchase. (NCCW.org)



Cheryl Weller, Chair

ORGANIZATION REPORT

Barbara Pierce: Zoom presentation of Mentoring Catholic Women

A request had been made by JoAnn Schlosser for a possible zoom presentation of the Mentoring class for working women. I asked those who were interested what day of the week and the best time. After their input and then discussions with Linda B and Sheri S, I consulted with Barbara and she came back with her days available for the class.

The zoom presentation was held on March 7, 2026 from 10-12am. There were seven women participating. We were to print out the program and it was easy to follow along with the format. For me, it was an excellent presentation and I got so much more out of it than the in-person presentation in September. I was still so overwhelmed as I had just been installed as the Vice President.

Throughout the meeting, Barbara suggested web connections to help with discernment and mentoring materials available through DCCW and after the meeting sent links to several resources. I have those available and if you would like me to forward this information, send me an email.

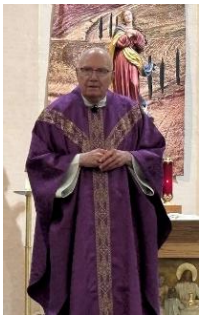
A special thank you to Mary Griffith for writing the invitation to be sent out, and to Arleen Roelike for forwarding it to all the St. Cloud DCCW deaneries. Thank you, as you calmed my nerves.

The **Lenten Retreat** on "Praying for the Prodigal" was held March 14, 2026, hosted at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Morris, MN. The speakers, Jason Prigge and Roxann Salonen gave excellent presentations.

With Cheryl W. at the helm, it all came together and every Southwestern deanery church that was able to help came through. It went well. The weather was a major concern. Cheryl, Sheri and I did make a decision to eliminate the time for the rosary from the agenda. We asked those who participated to say the rosary on their drive to their homes. This allowed for the mass and lunch and the afternoon speaker to start 20 minutes earlier. The retreat did end at 1 pm and the Lord postponed the storm hitting us for about two hours. This allowed participants to be on the road one hour earlier.

I received a Thank You from Options for Women for the generous donation.

Cindy Riedner, VP, Organization Chair



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
FOR THE OFFICE OF DIOCESAN TREASURER

The Saint Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is seeking nominations for the office of Treasurer for the 2026-2028 term.

The nominee should have previously served in some capacity on the Deanery level with approval of a Spiritual Advisor. The Diocesan Spiritual Advisor can give approval to a candidate who may not have served as such.

The **deadline** for nominations is **July 1, 2026.**

Voting will take place at the business meeting during the Annual Fall Conference on September 19, 2026. The new Treasurer will be installed at Mass during the Annual Fall Conference.

There will be no nominations taken from the floor, since prior approval is needed for the nominee.

Please forward the name and short biography to Evelyn Budde at evbudde@gmail.com or contact Evelyn at 320-248-5902 with questions.

Evelyn Budde, Nomination Committee Chair

JOIN THE TEAM

It's a need throughout the Diocese. All Levels of Catholic women's organizations and groups are in need of participation; Parish, Deaney and Diocesan Councils.

The Council of Catholic Women was founded by the US Council of Catholic Bishops in 1920. The purpose was to unite women's groups because there was and still is common causes. CCW provides resources for all women to draw upon. (support, empower, and educate all Catholic women). Affiliates for college women and high school girls are now available NCCW.org.

Please help by giving some of your time. You won't regret it.

PUBLICITY REPORT

Our next DCCW event is our annual Fun-Food-Fund Day which is coming up on Thursday, June 18, 2026 at Immaculate Conception Church in Rice, Minnesota. This is our main fundraiser, with proceeds being used to support, empower and educate the members of our board.

Although I am the "chair" of this committee and do my best to publicize and promote our events, all of you can assist us by spreading the word and sharing flyers with your family and friends through word of mouth, social media, etc. It takes all of us to work together to make these events great.

Pat Kasella, Publicity Chair

Please register with Linda B, as we need a head count for lunch!

Journey with St. Francis

Franciscan Sisters Campus
116 8th Avenue SE
Little Falls, MN 56345

Thursday, August 13, 2026

No fee, but pre-registration is required by no later than July 27, 2026

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9 – 10:30 Tour & History of Franciscans
- 11:00 MASS
- Noon Lunch with Sisters

To Register:

Call Linda Borgerding
(320) 293-1839

Transportation not provided, carpooling encouraged

Sponsored by:

St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

stclouddccw.org

EASTERN DEANERY

The Eastern Deanery held a Lenten event at St. John's Catholic Church in Foley, on Saturday afternoon, March 7, 2026. The program was the Deanery's second Rosary presentation at St. John's, on a book by Patrice Fagnant-MacArthur, *The Fruits of the Mysteries of the Rosary*. At this year's event, the focus was the Sorrowful Mysteries. The twenty-seven women attending shared what brought them to the event, and many formed a common bond in this fellowship. A questionnaire completed at the meeting, helped assess what the upcoming programs may entail and women continue to ask for more Rosary and Chaplet agendas. Our next event in the Fall will be a presentation of ***The Spiritual Rosary,*** with scripture immersed within the prayers (as introduced by the National DCCW, recently). Watch local Bulletins for registration details.

At the meeting, we discussed hosting the Fall Conference at Holy Family in Belle Prairie, on Saturday, September 19th, with a theme of the Year of St. Francis. The Four Pillars ACC volunteered to coordinate and serve the luncheon and the Foley ACC volunteered to assist with registration. Other assignments will be allocated to Eastern Deanery ACCs.

The Eastern Deanery is seeking nominations for 2027 Officers, with elections at the Fall Deanery meeting. Thank you to those considering positions. Contact Nita (320) 630-0388, regarding interest in any of the following roles: 3 Commission Chairs (Spirituality, Service and Leadership), President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Note that leadership training and mentorship is available through the Deanery and DCCW Boards. *"Be not afraid"* as you are never alone in these ventures! A special thank you goes out to Sheri Streasick, the St. Cloud DCCW President, for attending our Spring Deanery Meeting.

I meet so many wonderful women through these events and cherish these connections.

"Renew in me a clean spirit… and take not your presence from me!"

Nita Hayes, President

NORTHWESTERN DEANERY

With the Holy of the Holy Week of the Church over, we will soon be seeing the little girls all dressed in white with a veil on their heads and the boys in little suits as they receive their first Communion. The ladies in all of the parishes are getting ready by getting gifts of prayer books, rosaries and holy cards for them.

Then it will be time for the older students to receive Confirmation. Over the years, we have tried different gifts to get them, (Bible and other religion books), now we give each one a St. Christopher medal visor for their car.

The Churches have already started to get ready for their bazaar or fund raisers for the summer. You can count on the ladies being on these committees.

Our spring meeting was April 18th at St. Michael in Motley, with the theme of "Teaching Your Children the Faith".

Being we had trouble getting the notice into all the ACC bulletins, this time Joy and I checked the bulletins on-line to make sure it was included.

We are still looking for vice-president and commission leaders for spiritual, family and legislative.

Linda Scepurek, President

Catholic Books & Resources for Children and Families. Presented by the 2025-2027 NCCW Service Commission of the National Council of Catholic Women (www.nccw. org)

We have gathered this information which are favorite resources for your consideration. We invite you to use this when looking for gifts to family, friends or your parish. Share it with your faith community. Council groups may want to consider donating books to their parish if they have a lending library. Several of these organizations also publish catalogs you can order from. Some authors are known for the Catholic books they publish and can be found on more than one website. If a book is sold out on one site, it may be available on another. https://www.nccw.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/CatholicResources-Books-Children-FamiliesNCCW-ServComm

SOUTHWESTERN DEANERY REPORT
LENTEN RETREAT

The Southwestern Deanery hosted the Lenten Retreat sponsored by the St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. It was held at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Morris on March 14, 2026. The theme was "Praying for the Prodigal" with approximately 90 women attending. Attendance was affected by the pending snowstorm. Sheri Streasick, President of SCDCCW, was the MC for the day.

Morning speaker Jason Prigge walked us through the gospel story of the Prodigal son with focus on each character in the parable. Using sense of humor and short stories about family members, Jason connected with women in the pews by bringing us into the parable. At the end he challenged us to reflect on the characters as we go forward in Lent.

Mass was celebrated by our newly appointed Spiritual Advisor Fr. Ken Popp. His homily touched on the human weakness to judge others before we know the whole story of their lives. He encouraged us to be joyful Catholics, spreading our joy to others.

Lunch was served in the basement by the women of the Morris parish. Women in attendance were able to make new friends and connect with long-time friends during meals and breaks.

Our afternoon speaker was Roxane B. Salonen from the Fargo Diocese. Her slides complimented her talk that gave us information about St. Monica and son St. Augustine. She also gave us examples of what not to do to bring family members back to the Catholic Church. Some advice: talk more to God about our children and talk less to our children about God. Remember it's the job of the Holy Spirit, not ours, to bring our family members back to the Catholic Church. Roxane shared that now-a-days children are not taking the typical path of following their parents in the same religion. We are to be living witnesses of the faith after our children are grown and moved away.

Books, including "What Would Monica Do" co-authored by Roxane B. Salonen were at the back table for purchase. Lenten themed table centerpieces and other items were given away as door prizes.

Thank you to women of the parishes for volunteering for the retreat: Sauk Centre for greeters and ushers at Mass, Herman with registration, Glenwood and Kensington for morning refreshments, Alexandria and Belgrade for table center pieces/ door prizes, Wheaton and Chokio for pans of bars, Browns Valley for bars and door prizes, Morris for hosting church, noon meal, Elbow Lake for cash donation, and Elrosa for take home snacks. Thank you to all the women in the parishes in the SW deanery who prayed for the success of this Lenten retreat.

Closing prayer, the **Chaplet of St. Monica** was led by Patty Commerford, whose group also provided everyone with a Chaplet to keep.

Cheryl Weller, Secretary

WEST CENTRAL DEANERY

The West Central Deanery held their Spring Board Meeting on March 17, 2026 at Assumption Church in Eden Valley, of the Christ our Hope ACC, which they graciously agreed to host.

Roz Hensrud, of Sts. Peter & Paul parish in Richmond, has graciously agreed continue as the liaison for site selection for meetings for their ACCs, following Karen Rausch.

As stated in my last report, we are still looking for officers for our council. We still need a vice president and we would like to get all of the Commission Chair offices filled – we have 3, but ideally should have 7 in all.

Our Spring Deanery General Meeting is scheduled for April 20th at St. Boniface Church in Cold Spring, the Centered-on Christ ACC. The evening will start with Mass @ 6:00 pm, followed by a light supper and the meeting. Several members volunteered to serve some of the ministries for the Mass, with some of the ministries being taken care of by the hosting parish. We are looking forward to meeting more of our deanery ladies from the eastern section of our deanery.

On the agenda was information regarding promotion of CCW Sunday, hopefully the 2nd Sunday in October each year. We have enlisted a speaker who has been a member of the "All Things New" Committee to answer questions and give us insight into the necessity of the changes, some of which have already taken place. We must all pray for acceptance of the situation and take it upon ourselves to do all we can to help ease the sadness and feelings of despondence during this transitional time; and remember that God is still in charge.

Our fall board and general meetings dates and sites are still pending.

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

Jean Hopfer, President

DCCW Sunday Plan 2026 Second Weekend in October (11-12, 2026)

Ideas for parishes

- Reserve Mass time-intention for all women
- Check Bulletin announcement (1 early June -September-October
- Educate pastors and clergy about DCCW. Involve pastor in plans
- If parish Mass intentions are already set, ask for a petition to be read. The prayer to Our Lady of Good Council could be said before or after Mass
- Have fellowship after Mass
- Honor a woman who has been special to parish activities
- Honorable mention to long time members 25, 50, years etc.
- Distribute packets of info from board, especially the DCCW history/explanation brochure
- Invite speakers who are knowledgeable about CCW-Diocesan or Deanery board members
- Remember: in 1957, Bishop Bartholome proclaimed, "All baptized Catholic Women aged 19 and older are members of CCW.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

PROVINCE CONFERENCE 2026

FRIDAY, JUNE 26 ST. VICTORIA CHURCH

8228 VICTORIA DR., VICTORIA MN

Join the Province of St. Paul and Minneapolis for a faith-filled conference featuring Mass with Archbishop Bernard Hebda and inspiring speakers. Morning refreshments and lunch are included. There will be time to visit the Silent Auction and information tables, and pray in St. Victoria's historic church. We will celebrate our nation's 250th birthday with a cupcake drawing for our Province Fundraiser. An optional social event the evening before at nearby Sovereign Estates Winery will include a Rosary in the beautiful Mary Garden there. Consider staying the weekend for all the area has to offer!

- 8:00 a.m. Registration and morning refreshments
- 8:45 a.m. Welcome
- 9:00 a.m. Melanie Frei
- 10:00 a.m. Bishop Daniel Felton
- 11:00 Mass with Archbishop Hebda and Bishop Felton
- Noon Lunch, activity, and free time
- 1:30 p.m. Duppong Family/Servants of God
- 2:15 p.m. Ministry briefs (CRS, Seven Sisters Apostolate, and more)
- 3:00 p.m. Closing Prayer

The Conference Fundraiser is Catholic Relief Services (CRS). For details see: stpaulprovince.com/events/1159 Help provide a tricycle ambulance or a community water station or fish pond.

Melanie Frei

Bishop Daniel Felton

Duppong Family

Registration form on back. For more information visit https://provinceofstpaul-minneapolis.weebly.com/ or email carolshukle@frontiernet.net

St. Cloud Diocesan Council of Catholic Women

FUN-FOOD-FUND DAY

Turn Back Thyme

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Immaculate Conception Church
145 NE 2nd Ave
Rice MN 56367

REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS:
9:00 AM

Bingo
9:30 - 10:30

MASS: 11 A.M.
followed by lunch & social

Silent Auction Open:
9 am - 12:30 pm

Registration fee: $25 by 6/8;
$30 after 6/8 or at the door

Make checks payable to:
St. Cloud DCCW

Mail to: Carol Brunn
14267 Fairway Ln SE
Becker MN 55308

Questions: 320-248-5976

HOSTED BY: METRO DEANERY
WWW.STCLOUDDCCW.ORG

For a registration form, please click here:
///C:/Users/stclo/OneDrive/Documents/00%20NEWSLETTER/2026%20April/FFF.26%20Registration%20Form.pdf

DATES TO REMEMBER

2026

June 18	Fun, Food, Fund Day, Immaculate Conception Rice MN
June 26	Province Conference, Saint Victoria's in Victoria, MN
July 15	July Board Meeting, July 15, Speltz House
August	DCCW Pilgrimage, Franciscan Convent, Little Falls, MN
August 26-29	NCCW Convention, Grand Rapids, Michigan
September 19	Annual Fall Conference, "Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace." Holy Family Church, Belle Prairie
October 21	October Board Meeting TBD

REGISTRATION IS OPEN: https://www.nccw.org/convention