

# NEW ULM DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

## Catholic Women: Instruments of Mercy

MAY, 2017

### MAY - THE MONTH OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

#### *Some Marian Feasts as listed on a "Mary" calendar*

May 1st - Our Lady, Queen of May

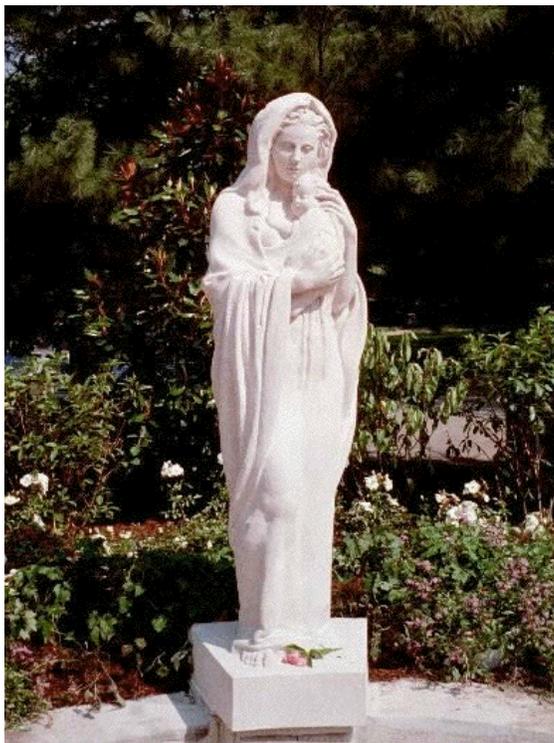
May 3rd - Our Lady of Czestachowa - Patron Saint of Poland

May 13th - Our Lady of Fatima (see story on next page)

May 24th - Our Lady, Help of Christians

May 31st - The Queenship of Mary

Statue of Mary located in Mary's Garden  
at the Basilica in Washington D.C.



#### ***DID YOU KNOW?***

On June 10, 2000 the new Mary's Garden at the Basilica of the U.S. National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington **donated by the National Council of Catholic Women** was dedicated in a Mass and blessing ceremony presided over by The Most Reverend Gabriel Montalvo, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, and attended by an overflowing crowd including a thousand NCCW members on millennial pilgrimage to the Shrine from throughout the U.S.

Located on a three-quarter acre site on the Basilica's northwest grounds, Mary's Garden, designed by Brian Kane, ASLA, and Laura Canfield, ASLA, of the Kane Group, landscape architects in Alexandria, VA, is planted before a focal life-size image of the Virgin and Child, "Mary, Protector of Faith", by Washington sculptor Jon-Joseph Russ. The statue is located, in a flower bed setting with reflecting pool, at the terminus of a circular stone prayer terrace with central "Magnificat Fountain" and four large surrounding beds of flowers, shrubs and flowering trees - in turn bordered by a circular stone walkway, with prayer niches, within an outer enclosure of shrubs and small trees.

During the time I served on the NCCW Board of Directors, there was always a time scheduled for the board to walk to Mary's Garden and pray the Rosary (a couple of blocks from our Retreat House where we met). It is a lovely place - benches to sit on while praying and meditating with the statue of Mary by the reflecting pool and surrounded by flowers and shrubs.

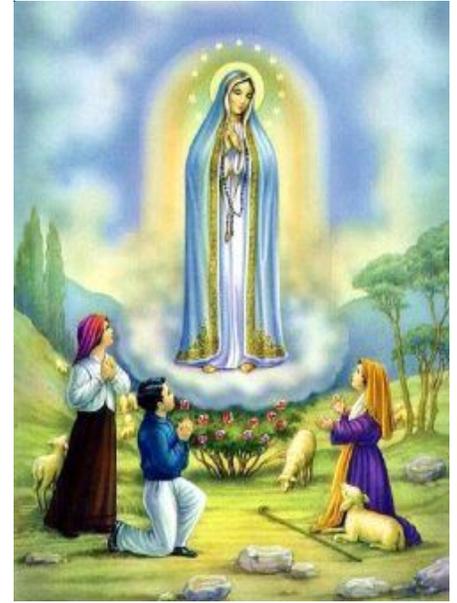
If you are ever in Washington D.C. take the opportunity to visit the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception - it's a beautiful church and visit Mary's Garden in back of the church.

# **100th Anniversary of the Appearance of OUR LADY OF FATIMA**

## **May 13, 2017**

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared 6 times to 3 shepherd children: Lucia, age 9, Francisco, age 8 and Jacinta, age 6 between May 13 and October 13, 1917. She came to the little village of Fatima which had remained faithful to the Catholic church during the persecutions by the government. Our Lady came with a message from God to every man, woman, and child of our century. Our Lady of Fatima promised that the whole world would be in peace, and that many souls would go to Heaven if Her requests were listened to and obeyed. At each apparition she would request that they recite the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war.

As a great sign of the whole message truly coming from God, a marvelous miracle was worked in the sky above Fatima on October 13, 2017 at the time, date and place that Lucy and the other two children had prophesized in the name of Our Lady of Fatima. The miracle occurred with the sun. All could stare perfectly at the sun without blinking, or even hurting their eyes.



While all were watching the sun, it rotated, got large and small, got close to the people and got far away from them. The sun “danced”. Every single person who was there testified to seeing the sun dance, even non-believers who immediately dropped onto their knees and begged for forgiveness. This was the last apparition of Our Lady of Fatima to the three shepherd children.

Francisco died on April 4, 1919 and Jacinta died on February 20, 1920. Before she dies, little Jacinta revealed little-known but remarkable statements made by Our Lady. Here are just some of them:

More souls go to hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason.

Certain fashions will be introduced that will offend Our Lord very much.

Many marriages are not good; they do not please Our Lord and are not of God.

Priests must be pure, very pure. They should not busy themselves with anything except what concerns the Church and souls. The disobedience of priests to their superiors and to the Holy Father is very displeasing to Our Lord.

The Blessed Mother can no longer restrain the hand of her Divine Son from striking the world with just punishment for its many crimes.

Tell everybody that God gives graces through the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Tell them to ask graces from her, and that the Heart of Jesus wishes to be venerated together with the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The third shepherd child, Lucy, entered the Convent of the Sisters of St. Dorothy to learn to read and write, then she entered the convent of Coimbra. She died at the age of 97 on February 13, 2005 at the Carmelite convent of St. Teresa of Coimbra in central Portugal.

### **CHALLENGE FOR OUR PARISH CCW'S**

Research all of these apparitions by Our Lady of Fatima. There are many websites that tell the story of the appearance of Our Lady of Fatima to these three little children.

Study her requests and try to carry out her requests by praying the Rosary, praying to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

# **Diocesan CCW Convention Highlights**

**April 29, 2017 at St. Mary's in Sleepy Eye**

The convention presented many opportunities for growth ...spiritually, educationally and socially. The keynote speaker was Cari Donaldson. She shared with all of us her remarkable tale of conversion and the peace she has found as a Catholic. Above all, Cari told of the awakening of her love for the Eucharist, the deepening of her love for her husband and her children, and the humility and faith these experiences have nurtured in her.

We were blessed to have our dear Bishop LeVoir with us celebrating the Mass in the beautiful church of St. Mary's in Sleepy Eye. You can see a glimpse of it in some of the pictures. The day included many displays, silent auction with great gifts to bid on, business meeting, prayer and fellowship.

The afternoon speakers were Sr. Anne Walch & Sr. Briana McCarthy, who presented "Breaking the Chains of Human Trafficking" with alarming statistics but really emphasized that education is most important to combat this terrible atrocity in the world today

The day closed with Msgr. Lozinski, our Diocesan Spiritual Advisor, having Benediction and concluded with all praying and singing of the Divine Mercy Chaplet.



Our DCCW President, Ronda Mathiowetz, addressing the convention attendees.



Our Keynote Speaker Cari Donaldson



Province Director, Bev McCarvel bringing greetings from NCCW. She is from the Diocese of Winona



The celebration of the Eucharist with Bishop LeVoir as Main Celebrant and the priests in attendance concelebrating.



New DCCW Board Members being installed.  
Betty Thooft - President-Elect  
Beth Boyle - 1st Vice President  
Tracy Meyer - 2nd Vice President  
Amy Weibel - Treasurer



Our New CCW Woman of the Year with her husband and Bishop LeVoir Judy Haag from Eden Valley and member of the Church of Our Lady of Manannah.



## OUR PARISH CCW GROUPS

Spring is here and the school year is coming to a close. Also many of our parish CCW activities are winding down for this year. It is now time to look back at the year and then look forward to the coming year.

**Each Parish CCW should ask some important questions.**

### Is your Parish CCW Organization healthy and alive?

- great participation, lots of activities happening
- along with women willing to serve in leadership positions?

If so, **WOW** and thank God for the wonderful women in your parish and keep up the good work.

### OR is your Parish CCW struggling?

- Are the same women serving in the leadership positions year after year?
- Difficulty in surfacing new faces to serve in leadership positions
- Difficulty in finding women willing to participate in activities
- Are you finding that your group is doing less and less activities with fewer and fewer women doing the work of planning and implementing programs and service projects in your parish and community?

The latter is probably what most of our CCW's are experiencing and this is a tremendous challenge facing the whole church today. Fewer and fewer members want to be involved or make commitments. It is crucial that our Catholic presence be visible in the secular society.

NCCW was brought into existence because of the need to unite Catholic women and provide a strong Catholic Woman's voice in our country and that was 97 years ago. This is definitely needed today more than ever. We cannot let our parish CCW's fold. They are the backbone of the NCCW organization also providing much support in the church.

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### **NOW HERE IS THE TASK I PUT BEFORE EVERYONE THAT READS THIS NEWSLETTER-----**

Take a few minutes either by yourself or with a group of ladies in your parish and brainstorm - this means listing all of the ideas, thoughts, concerns that come forth. (*No comment or idea etc. is stupid.*)

What would suffer in your parish if your CCW was no longer in existence? What are the overall benefits of having your CCW active and alive in your parish?

Is there anything our DCCW Board can do to help the women in your parish to grow - not only in faith but developing their talents: such as resources, personal visit, training session, etc. Everyone's talents are important and needed in any organization and our CCW's are no different than any other organizations.

What structure changes do you visualize that possibly could help our CCW's to grow but still keep our NCCW MISSION STATEMENT in the forefront?

### **NOW TO COMPLETE THE TASK!!!!!!!**

Please send me an email ([donnamaesanders@gmail.com](mailto:donnamaesanders@gmail.com)) with all of your comments, suggestions, concerns, ideas or anything you discussed. **Now if all of you take up this challenge, I can expect to have at least 50 emails in the next few weeks** because I send this newsletter to well over that number.

This information will be shared with our Diocesan CCW Board to see the direction that we need to take so we can be as helpful to our parishes as possible. Hopefully out of all the emails we may come up with some positive actions that can be implemented and help tremendously to revitalize our CCW diocesan-wide.

**Instead of Saints this month, this page is dedicated to some of the feasts of Mary that I listed on the front page.**

## **Our Lady of Czestachowa also known as the “Black Madonna”**



In the monastery of Jasna Gora, in Czestochowa, Poland is venerated an ancient icon of Holy Mary and the Infant God, with a fascinating history. Tradition has it that it was painted by St. Luke the Evangelist on a table built by Our Lord Jesus in st. Joseph’s workshop. Empress St. Helena who found Our Lord’s cross, also discovered this icon in Jerusalem, and took it to Constantinople where her son, Constantine, build a church to enshrine it. It remained there for 500 years until, through dowries, it was taken to Russia to a region that later became Poland. While still in Constantinople, placed on the wall of the city, the icon so frightened an army of besieging Muslims that they took flight. In the 15th century, the Polish King St. Ladislaus installed it in his castle. Tartar invaders besieged the castle and an arrow pierced the image in the region of the throat, leaving a scar. Interestingly, repeated attempts to repair the damaged painting failed. The scar always reappears. St. Ladislaus, wishing to protect the icon from further attacks, was going to take it to his hometown but on the way stopped at the city of Czestochowa to rest. He placed the icon in a wooden church in the nearby place of Jasna Gora. In the morning, the horses pulling the carriage containing the icon refused to move so it was reinstalled in the church there. Later history the Hussites, tried to harm the holy icon and stole the image. They placed it in a wagon and were carrying it away when the vehicle stopped and could not be moved. They hurled it to the ground and one man pulled his sword and struck the image twice on the cheek leaving two deep scars. On attempting to slash it again, the man went into convulsions and died. The two scars on the holy image as well as the one on the throat have always reappeared after attempts to repair them. There is much more to its history but today, free from the Nazi occupation, free from Communism, Czestochowa continues to be the religious heartbeat of Poland. To the miraculous, fearless Lady of Jasna Gora, the Polish go with their needs and petitions, their sorrows and their joys. Indeed she is their embattled, victorious, miraculous queen.



## **Mary, Help of Christians**

Mary, Help of Christians is a Marian devotion with a feast day celebrated on May 24th. St. John Chrysostom was the first person to use this Marian Title in year 345 as a devotion to the Virgin Mary.

The title of Mary, Help of Christians is associated with the defense of Christian Europe, the north of Africa and the Middle East from non-Christian peoples during the Middle Age. In 1572, the Islamic Ottoman Empire intended to invade Christian Europe. Pope Pius V called Christian armies from all over Europe to defend the continent and asked the believers to pray to Mary. The defeat of the Muslim Turks was attributed to the intercession of Mary under this title.

The veneration to Mary became popular under this title in Rome especially, where the feast was especially promulgated by St. John Bosco and St. Vincent Pallotti. St. John Bosco was an ardent promoter of devotion to “Mary, Help of Christians”. He even built a huge Basilica in her honour in 1868 in Turin and founded a religious Congregation for women, under the title of, “The Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians.”

## REMEMBERING THIS MONTH



**Sunday, May 14th**

Mother's Day in the United States is annually held on the second Sunday of May. It is neither a religious or federal holiday but a day when we celebrate motherhood and a time to appreciate mothers and mother figures. It is a time to remember all mothers in prayer, especially your own mother.

**Monday, May 29th**

Memorial Day is always observed on the last Monday in May. It is more than just a long weekend. It is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the USA. It was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead both in the South and the North and today all those who have died in wars since the Civil War. Please remember all these courageous men and women in your prayers and in thanksgiving for our freedom that we enjoy today.

*Remembering those  
who paid for our  
freedom.*



## MAY PRAYER INTENTIONS



### POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MAY

**Evangelization: Christians in Africa.** that Christians in Africa, in imitation of the Merciful Jesus, may give prophetic witness to reconciliation, justice and peace.

### BISHOP'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MAY

**General Intention:** Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, may we be protected from all harm and be more closely united to her son, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world.



### FROM YOUR EDITOR



### Dear Sisters in Christ---

It's Spring! A time for all of us to be filled with renewed energy and enthusiasm to carry out the work that God has designed for us. Our CCW programs, both in the parish and community, are ways in which we can serve the people of God. God has plans for all of us and knows each of us by name as our pastor in last week's homily so eloquently put it.

I do hope to hear from each of you in the near future as I requested in this newsletter.

Hopefully with all of our minds working, we can come up with ideas to motivate and instill renewed energy and a willingness to participate by all Catholic women throughout our diocese.

During the years of serving on the National CCW Board, I was always proud to say I was from the Diocese of New Ulm because we had such an active and energetic Council of Catholic Women throughout our diocese. I pray that we can continue this reputation with all of our good works and programs and continue to try to increase our endeavors.

May God Bless all of you!

Donna Sanders

DCCW Newsletter Editor

& DCCW Leadership Team Member

