

NEW ULM DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

Catholic Women: Instruments of Mercy

February-March, 2018

LENT, 2018



Lent is the time of spiritual preparation prior to the Easter season, just as Advent is for Christmas.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (this year February 14, 2018) and ends on Holy Thursday (this year March 29, 2018). On the evening of Holy Thursday the Sacred Triduum begins. The 40 days of Lent correspond to the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness to fast, pray, and endure the temptations of the devil, all in preparation for his public ministry which would culminate in his death on the cross.

PURPLE is the liturgical color of the Lenten Season! This is to show that it is a special time of penance.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

FAST: Eating less food than normal (does not mean no food).

Fasting is defined as one normal, full-sized meal and two smaller meals which if combined would not exceed one full meal and not eating solid food between meals.

ABSTINENCE: Do not eat meat. You can eat fish and seafood. Meat is defined as coming only from animals such as chickens, cows, sheep or pigs or birds. Indulging in the lavish buffet at your favorite seafood place sort of misses the point of abstaining from meat which is intended to be a penitential practice.

ALMSGIVING: Material generosity to the less fortunate. What you can give can be money, goods or acts of charity



LENTEN OBLIGATORY DUTIES FOR CATHOLICS:

Fasting and Abstinence: Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are obligated to fast and abstain from meat on two days: **Ash Wednesday and Good Friday**. Those excused outside these age limits include the physically or mentally ill including individuals suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes. In all cases, common sense should prevail and ill persons should not further jeopardize their health by fasting.

Abstinence: In addition all Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence which means not eating meat.

Confession: Catholics are obligated to fulfill their Easter Duty by receiving Holy Communion at least once during the Easter Season (from Easter Sunday to Pentecost), therefore the Sacrament of Reconciliation for any mortal sins is required prior to this, and is strongly recommended as a Lenten penitential practice for any venial sins prior to the Easter feast.

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR LENT, 2018

**“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold”
(Mt 24:12)**

Pope Francis in his Lenten message talks about False prophets which we let enter our lives to give us momentary pleasures and believing we are sufficient unto ourselves and references a cold heart. What are the signs that indicate that our love is beginning to cool? More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money. Love can also grow cold in our communities where he describes the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances and thus lessens our missionary zeal.

The Church, our Mother and Teacher, along with the often bitter medicine of the truth, offers us in the Lenten Season the soothing remedy of ***prayer, fasting and almsgiving***. He states:

By devoting more time to ***prayer***, we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and He wants us to live life well.

Almsgiving sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbour as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. When we give alms, we share in God’s providential care for each of his children. If through me God helps someone today, will He not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more generous than God.

Fasting weakens our tendency to violence: it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God. Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbour.

Above all, I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with enthusiasm, sustained by almsgiving, fasting and prayer. If, at times, the flame of charity seems to die in our own hearts, know that this is never the case in the heart of God! He constantly gives us a chance to begin loving anew.

(This is just some of the text from his message - find the link for the complete message on the United States Conference of Catholic bishops website www.usccb.org)

WHAT CAN OUR CCW’S DO DURING LENT?



- Have a short retreat time discussing some of the Sunday Gospel Readings.
- Participate in the “Mission of Love” San Lucas Valentine project.
- Sponsor a collection for your local Food Shelf during the month of March when Food Shelf donations are matched.
- Encourage attendance at Stations of the Cross when offered in your parish.
- Encourage all of your members to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.”

Mother Teresa

2017-18

DIOCESAN CCW SERVICE PROJECT HEARTLAND GIRLS RANCH



DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR DIOCESAN CCW PROJECT. IT'S THE SAME AS LAST YEAR BECAUSE THE NEEDS ARE GREAT.

Heartland Girls Ranch located near Benson, MN is a well-established safe haven for girls who have experienced various types of trauma. It was established in 1992. Last year alone, they served 77 girls mostly between the ages of 14-17. Many come beaten by family members, or battered and abused by pimps and various other types of trauma including trauma from being sex trafficked. All come from somewhere in the state of Minnesota.

The goals of this service project is twofold.

First: To provide monetary assistance to Heartland Girls Ranch to help provide services to help heal and rebuild the girls lives. Many times the girls that they help arrive without much of anything so any monetary assistance they receive can be used to help purchase items for these girls such as personal hygiene items and clothes.

Second : As we get donations from parish members to help with this monetary assistance, it is important that we also try to educate and help people to become better informed about human trafficking. The dangers exist even in our small rural communities. This is over a \$9 billion industry - the second largest criminal industry in the world.

QUESTION: Has your parish CCW group held some kind of event or activity to help the members of your parish become better informed about human trafficking and have you had some kind of fundraiser so your CCW group can give a donation towards this project?

40 DAYS FOR LIFE

FEBRUARY 14 to MARCH 25, 2018
7AM-7PM MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

We need all of you to join in praying for the end to legalized abortion and there is a need for people to join us for vigil hours to pray peacefully in front of the Planned Parenthood Abortion facility in St. Cloud.

The Opening Rally will be held on Saturday, February 17th from noon-2pm & the Closing Rally will be Saturday, March 24th from noon-2pm. Please plan to join us as you have in the past. Or if you have not joined us, please consider doing so. You can e-mail me at judy4life@meltel.net or call at 320-453-7592 with any questions or concerns or to sign up for some time at our vigil during this coming campaign.

WE DO NEED NEW VIGILERS----our numbers have been decreasing & it is crucial to bring in new people.

*Information submitted by Judy Haag.
judy4life@meltel.net or call 320-453-7592*

DCCW DUES NOTICES



Notices have been sent out to all parish CCW groups to pay your DCCW dues for 2018. These dues were to be paid by January 1, 2018.. At our last Diocesan Board meeting there were a number of parishes that had not paid the dues. It's easy to set notices aside and then forget about them. So if your one of the parishes that haven't paid your dues, please consider doing so in the near future. We would like to see every parish have membership in our Diocesan CCW because much good is done by the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.



CAN YOU BE COUNTED as a NCCW individual member?

Membership is only \$50 a year - less than \$5 a month. Join and be counted as an individual member. The membership form is on the NCCW website - www.nccw.org. You are needed and it is an additional way to support our national organization which represents us as Catholic Women in so many different ways. Also check out the NCCW website to see resources that are available for your local CCW.

REGION CCW SPRING GATHERINGS



Your attendance is wanted along with many women from your parish. Note when your Region CCW Spring Gathering is scheduled and start organizing a carpool. What a great way to spend some spiritually uplifting time during Lent!

Region One	Thursday, March 15, 2018	Holy Rosary, Mankato**
Region Two	Tuesday, March 13, 2018	Japanese Martyrs, Leavenworth
Region Three	Tuesday, March 6, 2018	St. Edward's, Minneota
Region Four	TBD	
Region Five	Saturday, March 17, 2018	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Region Six	Monday, March 19, 2018	St. John's, Darwin

**Please note this is a location change from what was listed in the Winter newsletter. That location was not accurate. This is the correct location for Region One's Spring Gathering.

DCCW SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE

Parish CCW Donations to Scholarship Fund are due **March 1, 2018**

Completed Applications are also due **March 1, 2018**

It's not too late to consider applying. Maybe it's the year for you to attend the NCCW Convention in Pittsburgh or the Province Conference in June. A scholarship will cover the registration costs.

REMEMBER: Your parish CCW has to donate some monies to the scholarship fund for any individual, school or your CCW group to qualify for a scholarship.

OTHER UPCOMING DIOCESAN EVENTS

Bishop Lucker Lecture on Tuesday, March 20 at St. Catherine's in Redwood Falls

Chrism Mass on Thursday, March 22 at Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Ulm



St. Peter Damian

Feast Day: February 21st

Peter was born in Italy in 1007. When his parents died, he went to live with one of his older brothers, who treated him cruelly. Another brother helped by giving Peter money so that he could afford to go away to school. Peter did so well in school that he became a professor when he was only 25. Peter became a priest and then a Benedictine monk. After a short time he was elected abbot of the community and was an excellent leader. Peter was ordained the bishop of Ostia, a diocese near Rome. He worked hard to solve problems in his diocese and often reminded his priests of their mission.



Pope Stephen X recognized Peter's gifts and asked him to represent the Church in settling disputes and helping to stop practices that were preventing the Church from doing Christ's work in the world. During his lifetime he advised seven popes and traveled many places representing the Holy Father.

As a monk, a bishop and a saint, Peter Damian lived one of the Benedictine Rules completely: "Do not prefer anything to the love of Christ." He died in 1072 and is considered to be a Doctor of the Church. He helps us to remember that if we put Jesus first in our lives, the Lord will always guide us in living as his faithful disciples.

St. Katharine Drexell

Feast Day: March 3rd

Katharine Drexel was born to a well-known Philadelphia family in 1858. Her mother died just a few weeks after her birth, but her father remarried, and she and her sisters were raised in a family of deep faith. Katharine was taught from a young age to share what they had with others in need. As she grew, so did her love for God and others. She focused her energy on the material and spiritual well-being of blacks and Native Americans, whose plight she became aware of on a trip out West. She began donating money, but she could see that more needed to be done.



During an audience with Pope Leo XIII in Rome, Katharine asked him to send missionary priests to the United States to minister to Native Americans. The pope asked her why she did not become a missionary herself.

So Katharine founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in 1891 and they worked to improve the lives of Indians and Colored People they served. From age 33 until her death in 1955, Katharine dedicated her life and a fortune of twenty million dollars to this work.

In 1894, she opened the first mission school for Indians in Santa Fe, New Mexico. More schools soon followed. Schools to train teachers were also created, and she founded Xavier University in New Orleans, the first black Catholic college in the United States. By the time of her death, more than 500 Sisters were teaching in 63 schools throughout the country.

St. Perpetua & Felicity

Feast Day: March 7th



In the opening prayer on March 7th, we pray, "Father, your love gave the saints Perpetua and Felicity courage to suffer a cruel martyrdom. By their prayers, help us to grow in love of you" (Sacramentary).

Perpetua and Felicity lived in Carthage, Africa, during a time of the persecution of Christians. Both were preparing for their initiation into the Christian Community but were arrested and sentenced to death. While they were in prison, they were baptized. Perpetua kept a diary while in prison that tells us about her life and death.

Perpetua came from a wealthy family and her father, a pagan, begged her to give up her faith. Perpetua told him that she would not lie about her belief in Jesus. Her father came and collected her infant son from the prison before she was put to death. Felicity was a slave who worked in Perpetua's house. She gave birth to a daughter shortly before she was killed and the child was adopted by a Christian.

The women were executed in the year 203, mauled by wild animals and then killed by a gladiator. Their faith was such an example that one of their guards became a Christian because of them.

The Church honors Perpetua and Felicity as saints. Their example reminds us to thank God for making us His children in the sacrament of Baptism. We pray for the grace and faith to live our faith each day.

JANUARY - FEBRUARY PRAYER INTENTIONS



Pope's Prayer Intention for February

Say "No" to Corruption - That those who have material, political or spiritual power may resist any lure of corruption.

Pope's Prayer Intention for March

Formation in Spiritual Discernment - That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels.

Bishop's Prayer Intention for February

General Intention - That our Blessed Mother, the Immaculate Conception and Patroness of the United States, would watch over our country and guide it.

Bishop's Prayer Intention for March

General Intention - That during the season of Lent, we would become selfless instead of selfish, through the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.



FROM YOUR EDITOR

Dear Sisters in Christ ---



My apologies for not creating any e-newsletters for the last 4-5 months but because of health issues I couldn't find the energy to do a newsletter. I'm sure many of you can relate to not having enough energy to do some of the things you would like to do. BUT I'm back to trying to do an e-newsletter. There may not be as many but we'll see or maybe we can find someone to help with doing these newsletters. I do think that it is important to try to keep this communication link going to our parish CCW's because it is a way that we connect.

Lent starts next week - it seems like we were just celebrating Christmas but time flies. During this Lent try to find time to spend a few minutes in prayer everyday and also maybe attempt to read a good spiritual book that you have put off doing.

Please share the information in this newsletter to all those around you - our challenge is always to help each other on our life's journey and to keep God in the center of all that we do. Lent is a time that our CCW's can really put forth efforts to help those in need and spreading God's love to those around us.

Our continued thanks to all of you for serving and carrying out the work of Council in your parishes.

Blessings,
Donna Sanders
NUDCCW Newsletter Editor

