



President's Pen - September 2025

Where I grew up in the San Francisco Bay area, the first day of school was always the first Wednesday after Labor Day. I have always loved the back-to-school season and all it brings: the wonder and excitement of learning new things, the anxiety of facing challenges and doing things you never thought you could, and the joy of friendships growing and blossoming. How fitting that my first *President's Pen* message to you will arrive in your inboxes on the same day. As I begin my term as your NCCW President, I have many of the same feelings I had as a young student.

I knew I wanted the theme of my first message to you to have a back-to-school theme. As the busyness of the 2025 NCCW Convention in Orlando was winding down last week, the horrible news broke of the tragedy at the Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis, Minnesota, at a back-to-school Mass. Sadly, that first message came in the form of an e-blast to unite our membership in prayer and support of the Annunciation Community.

As distressing as news of the "latest" school shooting can seem, hope shines through, and after all, we are in a jubilee year of hope. Some of you may be familiar with the advice Fred Rogers (of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood fame) gave when asked how to respond to what seems like ever-increasing chaos in our world: "Always look for the helpers. There will always be helpers." We saw

those helpers in Minnesota last week in abundance through prayer, acts of service, and continuing advocacy. We call those helpers servant leaders.

Servant Leadership: We Are Women of Faith and Action is the theme I have chosen for my term. I am delighted to share that these three talented women and examples of servant leadership will be your 2025-27 Commission Chairs:

- Spirituality Commission: Amelia Sweeney
- Service Commission: Sharon O'Brien
- Leadership Commission: Marlene Grover

Yours in Christ,

Amy Kennedy

NCCW President

National Spiritual Advisor

Sts. Carlo and Pier Giorgio, pray for us!

Dear Sisters in Christ,

On September 7th, the Church celebrates a remarkable moment as two young people – Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frascati – will be canonized saints. Pope Leo XIV will preside at St. Peter's Square in the Vatican, marking the first canonization of his pontificate.

Why These Young Saints Matter for Us in the NCCW. St. Carlo Acutis (1991–2006) is a saint for our times. A teenager who loved the Eucharist and used technology to evangelize, he reminds us that holiness isn't just for the past—it's alive and possible for every generation. His devotion earned him the nickname "God's Influencer" and shows how faith can flourish even in the digital age.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati (1901–1925) lived a short but joy-filled life, marked by deep faith, fearless charity, and contagious joy. Known as the "Man of the Beatitudes," he combined mountain-climbing, friendships, and laughter with serious devotion and service to the poor.

A Bridge to Younger Women. These two holy young people embody the vibrant faith, joy, and energy that our world longs for. Their witness speaks directly to today's younger generations—those searching for meaning, belonging, and a way to live their faith with authenticity. What better invitation could we offer to young

Catholic women than to say: Come walk with the NCCW, where faith, service, and friendship come alive—just like they did for Carlo and Pier Giorgio.

Let us be bold in sharing their stories, especially with younger women in our parishes and communities. In a culture often skeptical of faith, these saints show that holiness is possible—and joyful—at any age. They can inspire new generations of women to join us in living out our NCCW mission with renewed vitality.

May we continue to look to these young saints as a source of inspiration—and may their example help us draw new, young voices into our circle of Catholic women who pray, serve, and lead.

St. Carlo Acutis, pray for us!

St. Pier Giorgio Frassati, pray for us!

Peace, love, and prayers,

Fr. Tom Washburn

National Spiritual Advisor

NOTE: Many of you present at Convention asked for copies of the two homilies I delivered. Please click the link below.

Click [HERE](#) - Fr. Tom Washburn - Welcome Mass Homily (Wednesday)

Click [HERE](#) - Fr. Tom Washburn - Welcome Mass Homily (Thursday)

President-elect

The beginning of fall is a great time to kick off the new schedule of NCCW Member Calls. To create renewed interest and more participation in these calls, the title is being changed to ***Council Chat***! Kudos to Jane Carter for suggesting the new title.

The name change sets the tone for discussion and networking to share ideas to help newly installed officers or members at any level of Council, plan Council activities, enhance member participation, and increase the awareness of NCCW resources. *Council Chat* will provide opportunities for members to learn the basics of beginning new or enhancing current programs: the celebration of Council Sunday or the Golden Rose. The goal of sharing Council experiences and information helps build and strengthen our Councils.

Please join the September 2025 Council Chat

Monday, September 8, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. CST

You will be notified of a Zoom link

The link is also available on the Members Only Resource page on the NCCW Website.

Topics: Ideas to Celebrate *Council Sunday*

The 2025 NCCW Convention is over – how can Councils share the resources?

Jane Schiszik

NCCW President-elect