



Hello October!



The President's Pen

NCCW's Monthly Newsletter

October 2025

From the President

"Oh, Marilla," she exclaimed one Saturday morning, coming dancing in with her arms full of gorgeous boughs, "I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers. It would be terrible if we just skipped from September to November, wouldn't it?".

This is one of my favorite passages from the classic novel *Anne of Green Gables*, as I, too, have always loved the month of October. This month brings with it crisp weather, pumpkin spice everything, and begins with the feast day of one of my favorite saints. It would indeed be terrible if we skipped October, as it is a month with many important observances not only in the Church but in the NCCW.

- In October, the Church in the United States observes Respect Life Month, with the first Sunday of the month designated as Respect Life Sunday. Let us reflect on the many ways we promote and support the dignity of every human life from conception to natural death through our Council work.
- As our Spirituality Commission Chair shares, we also honor the Rosary this month.
- Many of our affiliates choose to hold their Council Sunday celebrations in October. Our inaugural *Council Chat* in September was a lively discussion on Council Sunday celebrations, complete with sharing tips on how to make them a success or getting the tradition started in your area. Don't worry if you missed the live event; the recording is available on the Members Only Resources page of our website.
- October is also Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Women of the NCCW have not been shy about addressing this issue, and we have developed excellent resources to educate our members to be advocates and support victims of violence. Available for download on our Members Only Resource pages are the Domestic Violence flyer, the Women Healing the Wounds resource manual, and the brochure.

May your October be blessed and abundant.

Yours in Christ,

Amy Kennedy

From the Chair of Spiritual Advisors

Signs of the Times

Dear Sisters in Christ,

The Second Vatican Council reminded us that *“the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel”* (*Gaudium et Spes*, 4).

The *“signs of our times”* today are troubling indeed. The recent violent murder of Charlie Kirk, along with other acts of political violence in our country, weigh heavily on our hearts. Add to this the continuing scourge of school shootings, mass killings, and the bitter polarization that divides our communities and even families—it is clear we are living through deeply difficult and unsettling days. Each of these events shakes our sense of peace and stability.

Yet, precisely in such moments, we are called as Christians not to retreat into despair, but to interpret these events through the Gospel lens of hope, compassion, and peace.

Now, sadly, most of our political leaders have seized this moment for their own partisan purposes.

Rather than looking at this as an inflection point that should lead us to unity, they continue to stoke

the flames of division. However, I have been very moved by the words of one leader, who is calling us to the *“better angels of our nature.”* Utah Governor Spencer Cox recently put it starkly, yet wisely:

“We just need every single person in this country to think about where we are and where we want to be. To ask ourselves, is this it? Is this what 250 years has brought on us? I pray that that’s not the case. And that all of us — all of us — will try to find a way to stop hating our fellow Americans.”

His words echo Jesus’ command to love our enemies and to see the dignity of every person as a child of God. Hatred, contempt, and violence can never be the way of Christ’s disciples.

Governor Cox also warned of the destructive role of social media:

“Social media is a cancer on our society right now... I believe that social media has played a direct role in every single assassination and assassination attempt we’ve seen over the last five, six years.”

As people of faith, we must take this seriously. Scripture teaches us, *“the tongue is a fire”* (James 3:6). Today, our “tongue” often takes the form of our posts and comments. We can either allow those words to spread destruction, or we can use them to speak truth, peace, and encouragement.

What, then, is the way forward? Again, Governor Cox offers a simple, human reminder:

“Log off, turn off, touch grass, hug a family member, go out and do good in your community. We have to get back to community, caring about our neighbors, the things that make America great.”

For us as Christians, this resonates with the heart of the Gospel. Jesus calls us not into endless cycles of outrage, but into communion—with God, with one another, and with our neighbors in need. Every small act of love, every gesture of reconciliation, every choice to serve rather than to condemn is a sign that the Gospel is alive.

We often hear that we have not been this divided since the Civil War. Well, that phrase, *“the better angels of our nature”*, comes from President Abraham Lincoln during that time, in his first inaugural address. The full quote is:

“We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory... will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”

My friends, if the *“signs of the times”* are troubling, the light of Christ is stronger still. He is the Prince of Peace, the One who prayed that we *“may all be one”* (John 17:21). Let us recommit ourselves to this path, allowing the Gospel to shape our response to violence and division. May our parish be a community where unity in Christ shines brighter than political divisions, and where love triumphs over hatred.

This nation is only this way because we have made it so. Let us all pledge to choose a path of civility in our disagreement, a course of reconciliation in our challenges, and an ability to see each other as brothers and sisters, not as enemies.

With prayer for peace in our nation and in our hearts,

Fr. Tom Washburn

National Spiritual Advisor

From the President-Elect

Council Chat!



Dear Council Sisters, Thank you so much for adding to the success of the first *Council Chat!*

Please Attend and Invite a Friend to the

October 13th Council Chat

The time is changed to 5:00 p.m. Central Time!

Topic: NCCW Resolutions

What Is A Resolution? and How to Use Them!

The Presenters will be the 2025 – 2027 NCCW Resolution Committee, Chair Immediate Past President Beth Mahoney and committee members Tammy Farr, and Laurie Ulseth.

AND

The NCCW Ad Hoc Resolutions Committee of NCCW Immediate Past President Beth Mahoney, Marlene Grover, Kathleen Penno, and several NCCW Past Presidents.

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*** You will receive a zoom link prior to the scheduled date.**

Mark your calendar

“Speak Lord Your Servant is Listening”

The theme for the 2026 NCCW CONVENTION

August 26 – 29, 2026

Join us in Grand Rapids, Michigan



Welcome to the MEMBERSHIP Section!

This section is designed for some member fun!

It might be trivia, a fact to check, or a word or two needed to complete a sentence!

The answers for the question(s) – will be listed in the next month's President's Pen!

The question for October: name 3 ships that never dock in a harbor!

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

From the Commissions and Committees

Spirituality Commission

October is traditionally the Month of the Holy Rosary. On October 7th, the Church celebrates the feast day of Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary. The feast day was established by Pope Saint Pius V on the anniversary of the victory at Lepanto on October 7, 1571. The naval victory was attributed to the Virgin Mary, whose intercession was entreated through the recitation of the Holy Rosary. To

commemorate this feast day and to honor our Blessed Mother by praying the Rosary together, I invite you to participate in this month's NCCW Rosary Call on Monday, October 13, at 7:30 pm Eastern time.

Amelia Sweeney, Spirituality Commission Chair



Leadership Commission

It is a privilege and honor to serve as the NCCW Leadership Commission Chair for 2025-2027. Effective leadership does not require extraordinary talents; rather, it is rooted in having faith and utilizing the gifts God has given us to be an effective Spiritual Leader. With the support of the Leadership Commission, our goal will be to empower women to reach their full potential. Together, we possess incredible strength. As an organization, we can change the world!

Let us continue to be Spiritual Leaders by praying, listening, mentoring, being open to one another, and listening again. I'm thrilled about the upcoming year and working with the NCCW women!

Marlene Grover, Leadership Commission Chair

LEADERSHIP

Resolutions Committee

The Resolutions will be presented at the NCCW Convention 2026 for your vote.

Please consider submitting a new resolution to our committee. The guidelines for submitting a resolution are in the 25th Anniversary Resolution Book handed out at the 2025 Convention, or log into nccw.org – sign in and under Members Only Resources – scroll down to Resources, and the booklet is there. See pages 61/62.

Laurie Ulseth, Co-Chair

Resolutions Committee



Leadership, Development & Training (LTD)

At the convention in Orlando, we opened the door of hope. Listening to the knocks and whispers of Jesus, encouraging us to share ideas of how to educate women who will be true leaders and have made a personal effort to build their faith through Spirituality, Leadership, and Service.

By weaving together, the Church's teaching on the dignity and vocation of women, the call to servant leadership, and the spiritual urgency of Advent, this vision will equip Council Members to nurture a new generation of women leaders who live out their faith through Spirituality, Leadership, and Service—the very “door of hope” that the season opens for us all. We have hope because we know the Lord is coming; let us become instruments of that hope.

Join the LTD team and schedule your next gathering to inspire the new generation of CCW members.

Susie Harting, LTD Team Member

News from our Associated Organizations

Religious Alliance Against Pornography (RAAP)

In Kansas, a 13-year-old girl was kidnapped from her home by a 33-year-old man she had met while playing Roblox. In another case, a 17-year-old Floridian was arrested after tricking many children on Roblox to send him sexually explicit pictures of themselves.

A Chicago-based law firm, Stinar Gould Grieco & Hensley, is currently representing over 400 alleged victims of abuse on platforms like Roblox and Discord. These are not isolated incidents; the National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE) describes Roblox as a “mainstream contributor to sexual exploitation.”

Hindenburg Research conducted an analysis of the platform, claiming that it “easily found 38 Roblox groups, one with 103,000 members, openly soliciting sexual favors and trading child pornography.” Bloomberg published an article last year entitled “Roblox’s Pedophile Problem.”

These game cards can be bought at your local Walmart and Walgreens stores and many others. This is not a safe game for your children.

Karen Painter,

NCCW’s RAAP Representative



World Union of Catholic Women’s Organisations (WUCWO)

Caritas has informed WUCWO of their small financial grant program titled 'Weavers of Hope.' These grants are awarded to religious organizations to promote women and girls to gain leadership and skills to sustain change in their community. Google 'Weavers of Hope' in early 2026 to see application requirements.

WUCWO has recently redesigned its website. Take some time to visit at www.wucwo.org.