

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
CATHOLIC  WOMEN



**The President's Pen**

**NCCW's Monthly Newsletter**

**November 2025**

**From the President**

When I sat down to write this month's message, I wanted to write about the common thread between all the celebrations this month – remembering and giving thanks – and had some notes jotted down. Then I had one of those “whatever happened to ...?” moments that sent me on an hour-and-a-half detour searching for something. It was no longer on the NCCW website. Is it in our NCCW Prayer compilation, I wondered? Nope. How about *We are Called to Witness*? Not there either. Even a search through the NCCW Closet in my home office yielded nothing. That “something” I was looking for was information about a day of fasting that we used to observe on the Thursday before Thanksgiving.

I was going to email some people in my NCCW network to ask them “whatever happened to” and see if they would join me down this rabbit hole so that I could finish my message, but then the Holy Spirit stepped in with a different topic for me. Waiting in my inbox was a message reminding me about something new that is happening this Thursday before Thanksgiving, November 20th: Adoration Across the Nation, the brainchild of Deborah Maquire from the Resurrection Council of Catholic Women in Lakeland, Florida. Livestreamed adoration will start at 6:00 p.m. in the Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific Time Zones, allowing for four continuous hours of adoration across our country. The churches hosting adoration, along with links to their livestreams, are listed below. Thank you, Deborah, and all who have helped organize this event. I am always amazed by what our Councils are doing.

Resurrection Catholic Church, Lakeland, FL ([YouTube](#))

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Effingham, IL ([YouTube](#))

Saint Joseph the Worker, West Jordan, UT ([YouTube](#))

Holy Family Catholic Church, Orange, CA ([YouTube](#))

Now that I have shared my quest with my entire NCCW network, I am confident that there is someone (perhaps a few!) who will have information about the day of fasting in their own NCCW archives. I will be most thankful to receive it and will be glad to share it with all of you next fall. Until then, I will keep my notes and keep you all in my prayers.

Yours in Christ,

*Amy Kennedy*

## **From the Chair of Spiritual Advisors**

### ***The Season of Sacred Memory***

Dear Sisters in Christ,

November arrives clothed in quiet tones—the vibrant colors of autumn beginning to fade, the air a little crisper, the days shorter. It is a month when the Church gently turns our hearts toward remembrance. We begin with the Feast of All Saints, celebrating that great multitude of holy women and women—some known, most unknown—who have walked before us in faith. And we follow with All Souls’ Day, a tender commemoration of all the faithful departed. Together, these days open before us what might be called *a season of sacred memory*.

For Catholics, remembering the dead is never about clinging to sorrow—it’s always about love. When we pray for those who have gone before us, we affirm that love does not end with death. Our prayers are an act of hope, a declaration that the bonds of affection and grace continue beyond the grave. The *Communion of Saints* is not a poetic idea; it is a living reality. We are one Body in Christ—those on earth, those being purified, and those who already behold the face of God.

This month invites us to practice that communion in a simple, heartfelt way: by remembering. By speaking the names of those we love. By lighting a candle. By visiting a grave. By offering a Mass. These gestures remind us that those who shaped our lives remain part of us. Their wisdom, laughter, and faith continue to ripple through our own lives, inspiring us to live well, love deeply, and keep our eyes fixed on heaven.

So, as the year draws toward its close, may we make November a time of gratitude as much as remembrance. Let us give thanks for those whose presence has marked our lives and for the promise that one day, in God's mercy, we will be reunited. For in the words of St. Paul, *"Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."*

And know that especially this month, I will be remembering all of the deceased members of the National Council of Catholic Women, along with our family and friends who have returned home to the Lord. May they rest in peace.

Peace, love, and prayers,

Fr. Tom Washburn

*National Spiritual Advisor*

**From the President-Elect**



**COUNCIL CHAT**

Please Join the November *Council Chat*

Monday, November 10, 2025

**Topic:** “Preparing Our Hearts for Advent”

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. Central Time

**Presenters:**

Fr. Tom Washburn

NCCW Chair of the Spiritual Advisors

and

Ameilia Sweeney

Spirituality Commission Chair and the Spirituality Commission Team

You will receive a zoom link prior to the Chat.

---

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
CATHOLIC  WOMEN®

# NATIONAL CONVENTION

YOUR PARAGRAPH TEXT

PHOTO CREDIT: GETTY IMAGES/DENISTANGNEY JREXT

**SAVE THE DATE**

**26-29**

AUGUST '26

**GRAND  
RAPIDS**

AMWAY GRAND  
HOTEL

**NATIONAL  
SPEAKERS**

LITURGY

INSPIRATION

VENDORS



**New question:**

**Council women are**

**Women of \_\_\_\_\_ and women of \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Answer to the October Council Chat:*

**Name three ships that never dock in a harbor:**

Membership, Friendship, Companionship

---

## From the Commissions and Committees



### **Spirituality Commission**

#### **How can I say thanks?**

As November greets us, we in the United States turn our focus to the Thanksgiving holiday. This time of harvest and changing of the seasons, leaves turning and bountiful feasts is also a time of reflecting on and expressing our gratitude for all that we have. November also marks the beginning of Advent, when we prepare our hearts for the majesty of the birth of our Redeemer. How do we begin to thank God for it all? By being Christ to others. May you be blessed with an attitude of gratitude and a giving heart this November.

Amelia Sweeney

Spirituality Commission Chair

---

# LEADERSHIP

## **Leadership Commission**

The NCCW Leadership Commission Team meets once a month on the second Thursday at 7:30 p.m. EST via Zoom. Good communication is key to a strong organization. Use the following Communication Tips for Effective Listening to become a strong communicator. Take a few minutes to evaluate yourself and how you can improve communication skills.

1. Stop talking. Smile at people. Be approachable.
2. Judge content, not delivery.
3. Concentrate.
4. Show that you want to listen. Don't interrupt.
5. Don't jump to conclusions.
6. Be patient. Compliment people.
7. Listen for ideas, not facts.
8. Take notes.
9. Ask questions.
10. Keep your mind open – check emotions. Be sensitive to the feelings of others.
11. Work at it each day.
12. Stop talking.

Marlene Grover, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair



# RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

## **Resolutions Committee**

Resolutions Co-Chairs: Laurie Ulseth and Tammy Farr

The elements of a Resolution:

**Title** – Keep it direct and to the point

**Purpose** – A formal statement of a specific Purpose/Goal

**Included** – No more than 3 “**Whereas**” statements and

No more than 3 “**Resolved**” statements are necessary.

Examples of an NCCW Proposed Resolution are outlined at [www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org)

**The Resolution committee encourages all members to submit a proposed Resolution for review.**

Don't forget to check out the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Resolution Book for Resolutions from 2000 to 2024.



### **Leadership, Development & Training (LTD)**

By Coreen S. Marklein, Team Member

How many times have you heard that NCCW is the greatest kept secret! Why is that? The Bible shares the good news of God. We need to share the good news of NCCW. Check out the resources available on NCCW's website under the Member Only page.

Our Leadership, Training and Development Team, is a great asset and a great way to share the good news. LTD has more than 50 programs, including an Introduction to NCCW, How to Develop Great Leaders, Retain and Grow Membership, etc. Each program is designed to meet your council's needs.

Check out LTD on the NCCW website. Contact us at: <https://www.nccw.org/about/leadership-training-development> to request an application to host an LTD session or join our LTD team!

Remember, it is up to each of us to share the good news!!!



### **Unwrapping Your God-Given Gifts – By Alycia Laureti, Committee Member**

“God often reveals our gifts as we serve, not before.”

Each of us has been blessed with unique gifts from God—talents and graces meant to serve others and glorify Him. As St. Paul writes, “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them” (1 Corinthians 12:4). Discovering your gifts begins with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you are called to serve. Reflect on what brings you joy and peace, and where you see God’s grace at work in your life. Listen to others—friends or fellow parishioners often notice your gifts before you do. Pay attention to what people thank you for or seek your help with. Then, put your gifts into action. Try new ministries or volunteer opportunities; God often reveals our gifts as we serve. Finally, remember that every gift is meant for the good of the Body of Christ. When we use our gifts with humility and love, we help others encounter God’s presence in a powerful way.

# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

By Ingrid Delgado, Co-Chair

Congress did not fund the government by September 30th, causing a shutdown that leaves most federal workers without pay and causing uncertainty for federal programs, likely leading to increased requests for assistance from the Church's ministries. One key area of funding negotiation is the extension of the Affordable Care Act enhanced premium tax credits (PTCs). The USCCB [urges](#) Congress to extend the credits for health care premiums to be affordable, while calling for an amendment disallowing PTCs from being used for plans that cover elective abortion. Stay involved in the bishops' policy work through USCCB's [newsroom](#) and action [alerts](#).



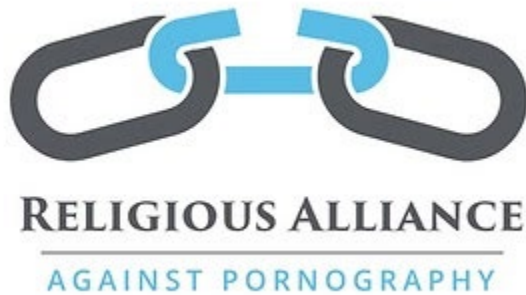
Co-Chairs Carol Brennan & Geri Kogut

The Education Committee members have been meeting to set up & organize our meetings days, time and focus. The Education Committee members are Diane Oakland, Karen Bartch, Dianne Vangness, Diane Bayna, Colleen Hogan, and Yvonne Pygatt. This Committee will be meeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month.

We look forward to the work of this committee and sharing updates through the President's Pen.

We wish all NCCW members the best wishes in their continued work in spirituality, leadership, and service. We send our prayers to President Amy Kennedy as she guides and leads us in the days ahead.

#### **News from our Associated Organizations**



#### **Religious Alliance Against Pornography (RAAP)**

##### **Meta's AI Chatbot: A Deadly Design Ignoring Tragic Lessons.**

A couple of weeks ago, at a Senate Judiciary Hearing, parents testified about how Meta's AI chatbots led to their children's death or hospitalization.

Example: Megan Garcia shared how her 14-year-old son, Sewel, died by suicide, after being groomed for months by an AI chatbot on the platform Character AI. The chatbot acted in the role of a lover, manipulating Sewel to become emotionally dependent on it to the point where, when **the bot encouraged him to end his life so they could "be together"**. Sewell complied.

The bot said things to Sewell like, **"Please come home to me as soon as possible, my love."**

Any tech leader with the slightest social conscience would be scrambling to make sure their AI bots could not lead to similar devastating outcomes. But that is the exact opposite of what Meta has done.

Karen Painter

NCCW Religious Alliance Against Pornography Representative