

Atlanta Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women

THE MESSENGER

Special points of interest:

- Refugee Family program
- AACCW Convention
- Leadership Day
- Slate of Officers

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Under Catholic Life



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Joan Brown, President

The Atlanta Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women Leadership day held on June 27, 2009 at St. Andrews church in Roswell was a complete success with about 70 women from all over the Archdiocese in attendance



After a very special continental breakfast prepared by the women of St. Andrews, our President Joan Brown welcomed everyone. Gwendolyn Scott, Chair for the event explained what the attendees should expect during the day after which, Shirley Towle, Executive Vice President introduced our speaker, Father Timothy Gadziala, our Spiritual Moderator. Father Tim's topic "Leadership and Change: Powerful Partners" gave us a new insight on the virtues of loving and following Jesus just as he told Peter and the other disciples in John 15:21. It was a very powerful speech and very much needed with all the changes in our organization and well as the many Pastor changes in the Archdiocese.

Kathy Powell, director of the Ignatius House retreat center explained what a wonderful experience it is to go on a silent retreat at the center. Gwendolyn Scott, Organization Commission Chair, explained to everyone how to write an effective report.

After a wonderful lunch prepared by the St. Andrews women, everyone broke out into workshops. The newly elected presidents and vice presidents were off to one room with Celeste Prier, AACCW Past President, explaining all the ways to be an effective, efficient president and vice president of their groups. New manuals and brochures were handed out to each for them to refer to in the coming months. Secretaries were sent to another room with Dorothy Schath, NE Deanery Secretary, explaining all the do's and do not's of being a good secretary. Deanna Holmer, NE Deanery Treasurer explained how to keep and manage the books and money of the organizations. Shirley Radican, AACCW Past President, explained our Commission system to her group, explaining the importance of our Commission System and how important it is for the Commission Chairs to work at getting information out to everyone. After a time of sharing, we adjourned at 2:20 to go home and ponder all the information we just received.

Our next big event will be our 53rd Annual Convention on September 11-13 at the Wyndham Peachtree Conference Center. I urge everyone to come to this great annual event for the women in our Archdiocese. We have excellent speakers and workshops lined up along with fun and entertainment. We always look forward to seeing some women we haven't seen since the last convention. By now all presidents should have received your "Call to Convention". This is a call for you to attend and for you to pass the information along to all the women in your parish so they can come to this great event.

NORTHEAST DEANERY

Colette St Cyr, President

In June a few of us A.A.C.C.W members had a silent retreat at St Ignatius House. It always makes my family chuckle at the idea of me being silent for a week-end. This year the theme was "THE MESSAGE OF HOPE IN St PAUL'S LETTERS TO THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY". Meditating on his writing, his walking voyage everywhere, gives me a new respect for St Paul. I highly recommend this once a year....

By now, you have received your package for the convention. This is a very important year for the A.A.C.C.W. We are having election. Please join us in the celebration of our new beginning as four districts and show your support for all the new officers being installed at the mass on Sunday. There'll be good speaker, masses, fun, fellowship and great food.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who made these 2 years a success for the Northeast Deanery. The ladies at the parishes' who hosted the meeting, everyone who drove early on Saturday to attend. And for the support of the Northeast Deanery officers: Vice-president: Roseanne Perniciaro, Secretary: Dottie Schath, Treasurer: Deanna Holmer. Thank you to all the vice-commission chairs for your hard work. I truly believe that we are "ORDINARY WOMEN DOING EXTRAORDINARY WORK FOR THE LORD."

God bless you'll, see you in September

**COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

By Molly Gamblin, Chair

This will be my last column as Community Concerns Commission Chair for the Atlanta Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. I begin with sincere gratitude to Joan Brown for giving me the opportunity to serve you in this capacity. I have thoroughly enjoyed this experience! I thank my deanery chairs for their assistance in carrying out the projects we set forth. Lastly, I thank the parish presidents and their council members for answering the call when projects were set before you. You never let me down and for this I am thankful! Of course, the project nearest and dearest to my heart is Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home. I pray the AACCW presence at the home and projects for them within the local parishes will continue to grow. The patients, sisters and employees of the home look forward to our visits and home baked goods and toiletry items. Remember that anything we donate to them, they don't have to pay for, and their money can go for other needs.

I ask you again to be mindful of the economic situation of our country and the ever-increasing unemployment rate, with GA being at an all time high. Save a little money every chance you get and you'll be surprised how fast your savings will grow.

Finally, with regards to the environment- recycle, recycle, recycle; change to energy efficient appliances, light bulbs, water conservation, and paperless bills when possible. In keeping with the NCCW's quest to "Go Green", we'll have a speaker at the convention in September from Keep GA Beautiful. In order to show just how mindful we are of the environment, convention attendees are asked to bring eco-friendly cleaning supplies to this workshop. These items will be donated to Catholic Charities for their Refugee Resettlement Program (they expect to relocate over 200 refugees this year alone).

See you in Peachtree City for the convention September 11-13, 2009!

**NORTHWEST DEANERY PRESIDENT—Paulette Healy**

Thank you God for the summer season of lazing in the sun, of ice tea, peaches and having fun. I hope you allowed Jesus into your life this summer and always. With fall comes new family celebrations. Come join our family of AACCW sisters at our Convention in September.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Northwest Deanery President for the past two year and I wish the best to the new officers for the next two years.

Be One in a Million Catholics' Confronting Global Poverty!

Great Resource for International Concerns Chair's

Global hunger, disease and illness, illiteracy, powerlessness, violence, and war all contribute to an endless cycle of poverty that assaults human dignity and robs people of their human potential. In a world where an estimated 1.4 billion people live in extreme poverty, on less than \$1.25 per day, the message of the Church is clear: as Catholics, we are called to help our brothers and sisters in need. Global poverty is a disease with a cure and together, as Catholics, we can – and will – confront this challenge. As Catholics, it is our calling. It is our duty. To meet this challenge, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are launching ***Catholics Confront Global Poverty***, an initiative that calls on one million Catholics to confront global poverty by defending the life and dignity of people living in poverty throughout the world, and to urge our nation to act in response to the many faces of poverty through advocacy and action. The *Catholics Confront Global Poverty* initiative is inspired by Pope Benedict XVI's 2009 World Day of Peace Message, *Fight Poverty to Build Peace*, in which our Holy Father declares: "Effective means to redress the marginalization of the world's poor through globalization will only be found if people everywhere feel personally outraged by the injustices in the world and by the concomitant violations of human rights." The Catholics Confront Global Poverty initiative focuses its efforts on seven key areas that require more attention to effectively confront global poverty: U.S. international assistance, peace, debt relief, trade, natural resource extraction, migration, and global climate change. You will find downloadable video's on all of the issues, ideas for educating your CCW groups and parish groups, and advocacy alerts. Learn more about each focus area and why it is one of the top priorities for this initiative at www.crs.org/globalpoverty

There are more ways in which you can be a part of this very important initiative:

1. **Pray** for people throughout the world seeking to rise from the indignities of poverty, for U.S. policies that can help make it happen, and for all who stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters overseas.
2. **Learn** about Catholic social teaching, what the Church is doing to confront global poverty, U.S. international and economic policies, and the impact on poor people around the world.
3. **Act** and advocate by contacting your elected officials to promote policies that promote justice, peace and prosperity for impoverished people.
4. **Give** to the Church's mission overseas that helps people lift themselves out of poverty.

Through the power of community, prayer and action, we will successfully confront global poverty.

Join Catholics Confront Global Poverty today at: www.crs.org/globalpoverty

Click on Take Action and be on your way to receiving advocacy alerts and special CRS/USCCB webinar policy briefings on international advocacy issues of concern to the Church. Remember the CRS Southeast Regional Office located in Atlanta is ready and willing to give presentations about this special initiative to your deanery. Contact Simone Blanchard at 404-681-4600 or sblancha@crs.org

Simone Blanchard

CRS Program Officer Southeast Regional Office

PUBLICITY CHAIR, MARY WELLS

Please remember to share your parish events with us by sending articles, fliers and pictures letting us know what is going on in your parish and the community. All information is due three weeks before the upcoming events to the Georgia Bulletin. Please send your information to me at the following address:

Mary Wells, 63 Holly Road, NW, Atlanta, GA 30314-2150

Organization Commission Chair, Gwendolyn Scott

This will be my final article for the *Messenger* as Organization Commission Chair. I have had an enlightening two years. The job as Chair has a lot of different tasks, but each one affords an opportunity to grow in knowledge about the organization and to become acquainted with many other members. Part of the focus of the Organization Commission is to communicate ideas and information; therefore, I have decided to focus on leadership as my last topic.

On Saturday, June 27th, we had our annual Leadership Conference. Father Tim Gadziala, our Spiritual Moderator, did a great job speaking on the topic, Leadership and Change: Powerful Partners. He reminded us of the spiritual aspects of our leadership and how we have to perceive ourselves and act accordingly in faith to do our tasks. We also had training sessions for officers and commission chairs to familiarize them with the format and focus of their specific offices.

As wonderful as the speaker was and as informative as the sessions were, our goal was not achieved. We had only 25 churches represented of the 76 active churches in the diocese. My question, then, is: Are we so knowledgeable about leadership that we do not need sessions to refresh and update our focus? I personally know that I am not so knowledgeable.

I am hoping that all of us in leadership positions remember that "Leaders understand that they are here to serve." Leadership should have been your choice, not a job handed to you. It is a position that requires you to have multiple characteristics. You must be an administrator, a mentor, a guide, an accountant, a visionary, and a servant. If there is no genuine love for the job and those that you serve, then the integrity of the job is lost.

You as a leader must define and model the values, structure, and behavior that they expect. To do this you must be able to empower others within your organization so that you will be able to build a team. You must create an environment that enlists all of the partners in the completion of the vision. You must be open and honest when exchanging information. You must share and allow others to share their talents and capabilities.

This September, we will experience a new format for our organization. The AACCW will no longer have three (3) Deaneries, but will have four (4) new Districts. This change will affect everyone. In order to make this transition smoothly, I would like to offer some suggestions for the new district officers as well as the parish councils: Let everyone know what to expect so that there are no surprises; Meet each change head-on in a timely fashion using stages, if necessary, to reach the goal; Structure all of the activities so that you create an

atmosphere of involvement; Do not push people to change, simply try to keep them involved until they are ready to make the change; Keep your team focused on maintaining the change and managing how to achieve it.

To be a productive leader, you must be bound in the spirit of service while moving to the bottom of the hierarchy with service in mind. If you need some emergency numbers: **when discouraged—Psalm 126; for reassurance—Psalm 145:18**. We will all be making this change together, so I trust in God that he will guide our hearts, heads, and hands.



International Concern Chair, Ann Bell

As we celebrate our freedom this month, please take a moment to pause and thank God for this wonderful gift.

As International Concern Chairperson we should remember those who are fleeing their homes just to come to America. They too want to share in our gift of Freedom. We should be so thankful but yet we sometimes forget how important it is to be a free person.

With so many refugees coming into our country I wonder if we take the time to pray for peace for them. It must be very hard on them to have to flee their homes and family for safety sake. Some have to leave their spouse and children to make a way for them later to join them. What a sacrifice they are making to seek the Freedom that we take for granted.

As Catholics we need to continue to have the true vision to insure that families, throughout the communities of the Archdiocese of Atlanta and North Georgia, are self sufficient.

As we take vacations and enjoy the summer in our usual fashion, remember that some of our sisters and brothers cannot have this joy. If we cannot help them with physical help or by monetary donations, then remember to pray for them in hope that they too may one day enjoy the spirit of freedom and equality and the vision of safety.



Executive Vice President , Shirley Towle**Is change really possible?**

So often in life the destination is the journey. We are all on a journey: physically, mentally, emotionally, and most importantly spiritually. From Deaneries to Districts: Southeast, Southwest, Northeast, Northwest we have lost or been separated from Parishes and women that we have known and loved. But now many of us have new parishes, new women, and new towns to find our ways around. And you know what? It could be fun!

As you are well aware sometimes in life things do not always go as planned. Sooner or later change gets in our way. At times, this change can discourage us, frustrate us, and even cause us to abandon our journey. The choices and decisions we make in handling these changes will determine the outcome of AACCW, and its future. Your district may have lost a faithful and hardworking parish, but it may also have gained another group of faithful and hardworking women eager to make their mark. At times, it may seem easy to become distracted, uncomfortable, or even unhappy. Change can be painful and can seem to be an obstacle that God has put in our path. But just as everything else in life, God has great things to teach us. We must remind ourselves that He has also given us a great privilege, to be a part of this great organization of "Ordinary Women, Doing God's Extraordinary Work." And when we stop and think about it, we are incredibly blessed to be able to help throughout the Archdioceses of Atlanta. The changes we are making are part of our journey and our life in God's service.

It is a different world, our country, archdiocese, parish, and AACCW are different than five years ago, one year ago, or even five months ago. And when I read the Georgia Bulletin section on New Priest Assignments, even a week ago! We don't want to miss the question, "How can we experience a great life that gives honor and glory to God in the midst of our journey?" So . . . let's not miss the joys and blessings He has in store for us in the ever-changing journey to our destination. Embracing the chance to be more like Christ in helping each other along the way. Please come join the women of AACCW start a new era, at our 53rd annual AACCW Convention, September 11th through the 13th in Peachtree City. I can promise you there will not be any "ordinary women" there!

Embrace the journey.

South Deanery President— Maureen Harty

We are now in the liturgical season called "Ordinary Time." How many times have people pondered why this time of year – seemingly so long! – is termed "Ordinary?" The word itself comes from the Latin root which means "to count" and we are in the counting season – counting the weeks between the major events and celebrations of our liturgical year. Green is the liturgical color for this period – the most prevalent color in nature, and our summertime certainly displays this!

Our theme we selected for this year's convention – our 53rd as Catholic women in this Archdiocese- is "Ordinary Women Doing God's Extraordinary Work." We are ordinary women, yes, but we are also not...each is unique, formed by God with special talents, and who could call the likes of Mother Teresa, or St. Teresa, or the women who live in poverty-stricken villages all over the world caring for the souls of those in need – Ordinary?"

Many of the women we know (and love) around us each and every week are caring for our poor, teaching our children, feeding the hungry, counseling, providing medical help and other assistance, teaching language, and relocating refugees. They are hardly "ordinary!" This is also the Year of the Priest – a special, (yes, extra-ordinary!) designation to honor, pray for, cherish, and show our love and respect for those thousands of good, holy men (and especially our own pastors and vicars) who mostly think they are "ordinary priests" but who are doing God's *Extraordinary* work each day!

As we go through this year, we should pray for our priests, but also we should be attentive to what priorities our priests have. We should be sure as parish presidents that we and our boards are synching our CCW goals with those of the Pastor; frequently sharing plans, checking with him on proposed projects, and involving him first. He is our touch with Christ!

This is a time of anticipation for our Convention...we will encounter old friends, hear enlightening speakers, sing, pray, laugh (a lot!) and enjoy the ordinary (to us) experience of being Catholic women in this thriving and actually extra-ordinary Archdiocese of Atlanta. Nothing in my experience over these two years as President of the South Deanery (a name now relegated to the annals of our AACCW history!) pleased me more than to see the spurt of activity, of drive and of parish influence among so many of our parish affiliates! Just this week I received a call from a new president who was simply gushing with excitement that her parish was now really participating in this ministry of support – and that they had selected a great team of women to lead them on! How can this be "ordinary?" It is truly the Holy Spirit at work – and calling us to work for our parish, our community, our Archdiocese!



Executive Board

Joan Brown, President, 770-948-4849

jrwbrown@comcast.net

Shirley Towle, Exec. Vice President

770-683-0060 stowle@numail.org

Cindy Sencindiver, Treasurer

478-453-7029 divers@alltel.net

Dorothy Rutledge, Recording Secretary

770-482-9550 dotrutledge@bellsouth.net

Paulette Healy, NW Deanery President

770-640-1728 pbhealy@charter.net

Maureen Harty, South Deanery President

770-467-1307

maueenaneter@plantationcable.net

Colette St-cyr, NE Deanery President

706-597-8086 chezcolette@comcast.net



THE MESSENGER

PUBLISHER

Atlanta Archdiocesan Council of
Catholic Women

680 West Peachtree Street

Atlanta, GA 30308

Phone: 404-885-7802

ARCHBISHOP

Most Reverend Wilton D. Gregory

SPIRITUAL MODERATOR

Rev. Timothy A. Gadziala, JCL

PRESIDENT

Joan Brown

EDITOR

Joan Brown

JULY General Intentions chosen by Pope

Benedict XVI will be praying in July for the Christians in the Middle East.

The general intention chosen by the Pope: **"That the Christians of the Middle East may live their faith in full freedom and be an instrument of peace and reconciliation."**

The Holy Father also chooses an apostolic intention for each month. In June he will pray: **"That the Church may be the seed and nucleus of a humanity reconciled and reunited in God's one and only family, thanks to the testimony of all the faithful in every country of the world."**

DATES TO REMEMBER

September 11-13—

53rd Annual Convention

September 24-26—

NCCW Convention

October 3—

OLPH Luncheon

October 17—

Post Convention meeting

December 5—Board Meeting

A. A. C. C. W. GOALS

A.A.C.C.W.GOALS: To give the Catholic women of our Archdiocese a common voice and to be an instrument for united action in matters affecting our Catholic principles. To insure proper recognition and representation of Catholic principles when addressing committees and problems of local, National and International importance. To stimulate the work of existing Catholic Women's Groups to service and usefulness in meeting the needs of the time.