Dear Ladies,

Happy New Year, and especially, I wish you a Happy Year of Mercy! I am sure you are all aware by now that Pope Francis proclaimed this to be a jubilee Year of Mercy. As we head into the season of Lent I want to encourage you all to immerse yourselves deeply into the various initiatives that will be taking place in our parishes and our diocese during the coming year. It is important that we do this for two reasons. First, our reflection on Divine Mercy is so important. Our lives get so busy that we can grow unaware of the deep love and mercy that our God showers upon us. Just think about this. As St. Paul reminds us, nothing can separate us from the love of our God. There is nothing we can do to stop God from loving us. In our world of short term love, this concept seems at times to unimaginable. But that is how our God loves us, and why His mercy and forgiveness is so freely given to us.

The second reason for our reflection on Divine Mercy is the commission that God has given us to share that gift of mercy with our sisters and brothers. This is difficult, but that does not absolve us from making every effort to be merciful and forgiving in our attitude and treatment of others.

As you make your way through Lent and the Year of Mercy, please remember our upcoming Volunteer Luncheon and the Fall Women’s Conference. I am sure that Divine Mercy will be a part of our focus during these events. So mark your calendars. The information is all included in this Council Contact. I’ll see you there!

Sincerely,
Fr. Mark J. Herzog

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

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PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

BY RITA BORGELT, LEADERSHIP

During Lent in this “Year of Mercy”, reflecting on our past errors, and Jesus’ forgiveness of them can open up a whole new awareness of who Jesus is in our lives. The following tells of His unending mercy for us. Let Jesus talk to you!

Prayer of Reconciliation

My Child:
I love you unconditionally.
I love you good or bad with no strings attached.
I love you like this because I know all about you.
I have known you ever since you were a child.
I know what I can do for you and
I know what I want to do for you.
I accept you. I accept you just as you are.
You don’t need to change yourself.
I’ll do the changing when you are ready.
I love you just as you are.
Believe this, for I assure you it is true. I care about you.
I care about every big and little thing which happens to you.
I care enough to do something about it.
Remember this.
I will help you when you need Me. Ask Me.
I love you. I accept you. I care about you.
I forgive you.
I forgive you and My forgiveness is complete.
It is not like that of humans who forgive but cannot forget.
I love you and my arms are open with love that asks.
Please come here! Come here to Me.
I forgive you. Do not carry your guilt another moment.
I carried it all for you on the Cross.
Believe this. It is true.

-Taken from Apostles of the Holy Spirit, Bulletin – Summer 2011

National Catholic Council of Women Convention
September 7-10, 2016
Indianapolis, Indiana
More details will be forthcoming
Go for one day or more!
LOOKING FOR A JOY-FILLED EASTER

BY TAMMY SCHROEDER,
TDCCW VICE PRESIDENT

How can Easter be the most joy-filled celebration possible? From my personal experiences, I have found that if I want to celebrate the full joy of Easter, my 40-day Lenten journey needs to be a personal journey that brings me closer to Our Lord. Just where can I get the guidance I need to make this happen?

The scripture readings from Ash Wednesday are a great place to start. The first reading is from the Book of the Prophet Joel. (2:12-18). The opening lines of this reading states: “Even now says the Lord return to me with your whole heart, with fasting…..” and later it says, “proclaim a fast, gather the people, notify the congregation…..”. Just what the Church is asking of us during Lent—pray, fast and give alms. In the Gospel from Matthew (Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18) that was used on Ash Wednesday, Jesus instructs the apostles on how they are to perform good deeds, pray and fast. He tells them to do these in secret. The readings for Ash Wednesday are the blueprint for our Lenten practices as laid out by our Church leaders. It is not by accident that we hear these readings at the opening of Lent. It is not by accident, that our Church leaders have given us guidelines that mirror these readings.

Besides following the Church’s guidelines, one often needs to make Lenten practices personal and sometimes a change of pace is in order. If you are one of those Catholics that has been doing the same Lenten practices all your life, perhaps a little change of pace just might be in order. It might be time to add a new practice to your Lenten “to-do list”. Adding an hour of Eucharistic Adoration to our schedule, spending time meditating on the scripture passages for the day, doing some spiritual reading, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, praying a daily rosary, adding the Chaplet of Divine Mercy to our prayer time are some ways to enhance one’s prayer life. During this Year of Mercy, Pope Francis is asking us to express mercy by practicing the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and choosing to do one or more of these as a Lenten practice will insure a joy-filled Easter. The list could go on and on.

It is not too late to examine our Lenten practices and see if we are on track and/or what can be done to enhance the days of Lent so that our Easters are joy-filled. The best part of striving for a joyous Easter is that our Lenten practices often turn into life habits and thus our faith life is enhanced way beyond Easter. Wishing you and your loved ones the most joyous Easter!

Corporal Works of Mercy
- To feed the hungry
- To give drink to the thirsty
- To clothe the naked
- To shelter the homeless
- To visit the sick
- To visit the imprisoned
- To bury the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy
- To instruct the ignorant
- To counsel the doubtful
- To admonish the sinner
- To bear wrongs patiently
- To forgive offenses willingly
- To comfort the afflicted
- To pray for the living and the dead

TDCCW Board Officers

Judy Warntz, President
jwarntz9877@att.net
419 867 1227

Debbi Luman, President-elect
deblluman@aol.com

Tammy Schroeder, Vice President
ews@bright.net

Nancy Francis – Secretary

Sue Hopkins - Treasurer

Commissioners

Diane Wasiniak – Service
nurse21853@aol.com

Nancy Morman – Spirituality
nam22@woh.rr.com

Rita Borgelt – Leadership
hborgelt@bright.net

Deanery Reps

Susan Moore – St. John Neumann
Janet Wood – St. Philamena
Wanda Mills – Precious Blood of Jesus
Sue LaPointe – St. Kateri Tekawitha
Judy Ruen – St. George

We are always seeking Deanery Reps!!

SOLIDARITY – A SIGN OF MUTUAL AGREEMENT AND SUPPORT
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
BY JUDY WARNTZ

Dear TDCCW Members,

“Where does the time go” is a rhetorical question that we all express. It becomes increasingly poignant as one year concludes, and we post our new year calendar on the wall, perhaps flipping through the months wondering what the new year will bring.

The TDCCW Board is also looking ahead and planning our activities for this year. The Volunteer Luncheon we are renaming to “Volunteer Recognition Day,” and it will be held at Camden Falls in Tiffin on Wednesday, April 13. Letters to the Presidents have been sent. We are also including the Parish Awards at this luncheon so that all awardees will be honored at the same venue. Please support this program as we come together to honor those who carry out the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Our theme is “Performing the Works of Mercy.”

In May, we will gather at the Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey. Join your sisters in Christ on this annual pilgrimage during this Year of Mercy. “Mercy requires dedication and sacrifice” according to Pope Francis; it requires that we reject sin, selfishness and destructive desires (Misericordia Vultus, No 14)

Sister Shannon Schrein, OSF, will lead us through the Scriptures as we discover anew the women of the Bible who have encountered Jesus. How do we encounter Jesus through prayer, through the Divine Liturgy, through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, through Holy Eucharist, through others … do others encounter Jesus in us?

Our fall conference is set for September 23-24 at Peru St. Alphonsus (Norwalk). Our theme is “Be Merciful as Your Father is Merciful, Luke 6:36.” Father Ben Cameron, Vocation Director of the Fathers of Mercy, and Pat Oedy Murray, Annunciation Radio Host and Theology Instructor, will be our presenters. Please share this date now with your group. More details will be forthcoming.

As we plan programs and activities, it is easy to get caught up in the details such as table decorations, favors, menu, and so forth. And while these details are necessary, the mission of our event may get lost in all of the externals. What is the mission or goals we want to accomplish by sponsoring an activity? Is it an event that will allow us to “check it off” as participants go home spiritually enriched or educated ..even if it was a social event? Did we offer hospitality and extend a welcoming attitude to all, especially any newcomers? Did we listen to the needs of others and show compassion? Did we pray for the needs of the Church, for Bishop Thomas, for our priests and seminarians, for the needs of our members? At the end of the year, as we review the calendar of months past, hopefully we can say that our programs helped someone to grow in the Lord ..to grow in their faith…to know of our support .. to help them realize they are loved with an everlasting love by our Father. Jesus calls all of us to be His disciples by virtue of our Baptism. Let us pray that we can respond to that call.

Blessings for an enlightened Lenten journey and a Glorious Easter!

PRAYER OVERCOMES OBSTACLES
BY: DIANE WASINIAT, SERVICES COMMISSIONER

During this Year of Mercy it is important to be aware of what is going on in the world. We need to watch out for the devils snare as he is working hard to paralyze everyone through “FEAR”. We can get so anxious about the world situation related to ISIS, the markets, the lack of morals and the culture of death that we can feel defeated. We sometimes find it hard to stay positive especially in this materialistic selfish world which does not understand the meaning of suffering and offering the pain up to our Lord.

When this happens we may become lazy, depressed, and think “why do anything as nothing will change.” The best way to prevent this is to believe in the power of prayer. I would guess that most of you have heard of the “Jesus Prayer”. It is the recitation of “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner.” It is a wellspring of grace. Repeating this prayer over and over brings peace and contentment. Jesus loves to hear us call on His name and admit that we have sinned and ask for His forgiveness. To find out more about the joys of this prayer, I suggest that you read The Way of A Pilgrim by Helen Bacovcin. I cannot begin to tell you how wonderful this book is and how it has introduced me to another form of prayer.

As a pilgrim to Medjugorje for the last six years I found that praying the Rosary daily provides one with grace as Mary covers us with her mantle, consoles, and comforts us when we ask. Mary is the life of our souls because she gives us Jesus; the Author of all life. Her goal is to get us to Him. Our fears come when we miss the opportunities to pray for and to help others through kind random acts of mercy. While they may be small acts of kindness, they are not small in the eyes of our Lord. Review the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy and try everyday to follow one or more of them and Pray, Pray, Pray! Turn your “FEARS” into action and love for your neighbors through Mary to Jesus through prayer.

“We too need to guard the faith; guard it from darkness. Many times, however, it is a darkness under the guise of light. This is because the devil, as St. Paul says, disguises himself at times as an angel of light.” Pope Francis
As we trudge and shiver through the snowfall and into Lent, we urge our Catholic sisters to not only become members of our TDCCW but also members of the NCCW (National Council of Catholic Women). In doing so, you open yourselves up to enormous amounts of information for support, empowerment and education on the issues that do and should matter to all Catholic women around the world. On their website (NCCW) there are action points for all of us to work towards, but the one that I wish to focus on is the prayerful issue of ending the persecution of Christians in the Middle East. There are 5 points to work towards.

- Publish the Angelus Prayer in parish bulletins & diocesan papers & explain the purpose.
- Invite guest speakers to increase the awareness of Council members on the persecution issue.
- Pray the Angelus Prayer at local, diocesan, & other meetings.
- Collect donations for relief organizations that help displaced & persecuted Christians.
- Read publications/books that describe the lives of our fellow Christians in the Middle East so you can discuss the topic.

And I am adding my own point here: don’t be afraid to talk with your friends and neighbors, people at church about this atrocity. The fruit of the second joyful mystery of the rosary is ‘love of neighbor’.

If you even just begin by praying the Angelus Prayer with this issue in mind, that’s a start. Whether it is in the morning, mid-day, or evening. Sisters in Christ may this Lenten season find you prayerful and well. My prayers for you,

The Angelus Prayer

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary. . .

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done to me according to your word.

Hail Mary. . .

V. And the Word was made flesh.
R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary. . .

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.
SHOW MERCY TO ALL (FAMILY TOO!)  
BY NANCY MORMAN,  
SPIRITUALITY COMMISSIONER

Spring is in the air and it is a great time for love to spring into action. I recently had the opportunity to attend a seminar for “A Joy Filled Marriage.” We are blessed to have such great presenters in our Diocese; Monica Martinez and Pat Odey-Murray led a great training session. If your Parish is wondering what to present to engaged couples, this is the way to go! My husband and I both attended and by the time the training was finished, we felt renewed in our own love for each other and ready to share that with younger couples. We have so many great couples in the Diocese preparing to be presenters of this program. I highly recommend it! If you’re interested in learning more, check out the Toledo Diocesan web site for programs in your area and contact them about attending one of the weekend sessions. The program is divided into two main parts, the virtue based life skills and marriage preparation. Virtue subjects include: Your Marriage Mission, Communicating Love, Resolving Conflict, Building Happiness, and Managing Time-Money-and Energy. The subjects for the Marriage Preparation which are covered are The Catholic Faith & Your Marriage and Sacramental Sexuality.

The thought of love and marriage leads to the thought of families…in this year of Mercy, I would like everyone to look at mercy in a different light. How many are more merciful to strangers than to their own family and loved ones? People are so polite when standing in a grocery line or saying kindly “peace be with you” at mass but then are quick to say angry words to a loved one over a glass of spilled milk or a forgotten task that did not get done. Please show the same mercy to your families who share your home as you do to the strangers on the street. Let us continue to spread the Lord’s mercy and make the world a better place to live!

A Family Prayer
God made us a family.  
We need one another.  
We love one another.  
We forgive one another.  
We work together.  
We play together.  
We worship together.  
Together we use God’s word.  
Together we grow in Christ.  
Together we love all people.  
Together we serve our God.  
Together we hope for Heaven.  
These are our hopes and ideals.  
Help us to attain them,  
O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

DEANERY REPORTS

St. John Neumann
By Susan Moore, Deanery Rep

Peru St. Alphonsus – The A/R Ladies planned and assisted an All Souls Day Memorial Liturgy and provided prayer cards and wooden crosses to the families of deceased. A bereavement program with a soup supper and memory wreaths were provided. The group also made soap for an area non-food bank. Purchased Advent banners and provided Christmas stockings for shut-ins. The women also decorated the church for Christmas. The women served 120 dinners at a Huron County Trustee dinner, and monies collected went into the A/R Treasury.

Precious Blood of Jesus – Wanda Mills, Deanery Rep

As the Lenten Season begins, each of us reflects on how our lives as Catholic women have fulfilled our mission in life – we are our "brothers' keepers." I wish more parishes in our deanery were an official member of TDCCW. Perhaps in the new year with God’s help, this will become a reality.

All Saints New Riegel – The A/R group prepared and distributed 50 Christmas baskets to the homebound and nursing homes. There were 60 in attendance at the Women's and Girls' Breakfast. The Mother-Daughter event will be open to all women regardless of marital status. Hats off to the ladies of All Saints who are willing and open to change. Water for Life is in progress. The April Rummage sale is being planned, and it is hoped that last year's total of $600 will be repeated to help defray cost of altar bread and wine. Rejoined NCCW.

St. Mary's Tiffin – We hosted a Church Women United Meeting in November with seven different denominations present. A skit was performed depicting the needy Christians in Mexico. Our November meeting was held at the Sisters of St. Francis. Our December meeting was dinner out, and our Baby Bottle Project takes place in January. Our International Concerns donations for hungry children totaled $2600. Our Lenten soup and sandwich supper is planned.

St. George Deanery
By Judy Ruen, Deanery Rep

The annual deanery-wide Rally for Life hosted by Putnam County Right to Life was held on January
17. Pro-life prayers and inspiration were shared at the American Legion in Ottawa. St. Mary’s Leipsic and Ottawa Sts. Peter and Paul Schools traveled to St. Anthony Columbus Grove to celebrate Mass and enjoy lunch together observing Catholic Schools Week.

St. Michael’s Kalida – The A/R Society is presenting Lent by Candlelight on February 13. The speaker is Pat Oedy-Murray, and Jan Kahle, Sorrowful Mother Shrine, will have Lenten and Easter items for sale. The Society is sponsoring a Year of Mercy spring bus pilgrimage to Alabama from April 11-15. Rita Borgelt is coordinating the reservations and trip.

Sts. Peter and Paul Ottawa – The A/R Society sponsored the distribution of blessed chalk along with a prayer to bless homes at the weekend Masses on Epiphany Sunday. They are also planning Lent by Candlelight for the evening of February 21. Fr. Rick Nieberding, CPPS, will be the speaker. The group will also offer breakfast and fellowship on Palm Sunday.

Immaculate Conception – Ottoville – Bishop Daniel Thomas has appointed Rita Schnipke as a representative for the St. George Deanery Diocese of Toledo Pastoral Council.

St. Philomena Deanery
By Janet Wood, Deanery Rep

Epiphany of the Lord – Sacred Heart – Toledo – The A/R has adopted a seminarian, Zach Brown, and they will be sending him a care package. A quilt was raffled at Our Lady of Toledo Shrine. The A/R sponsored its annual Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, February 6. The speaker in March will be Melanie White, a representative from NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness).

St. Kateri Tekakwitha Deanery
By Sue LaPointe, Deanery Rep

Thank you to St. Ignatius Women
A huge thank you to Vicki Steck and Patti Warren, President, A/R St. Ignatius, for hosting an outstanding Christmas Tea on December 6.

Over 100 women from the diocese enjoyed soup, sandwiches, munchies, and dessert. A musical trio played Christmas hymns, and the TDCCW Board provided door prizes. The A/R ladies worked many hours creating snowmen table decorations.

Snow may melt, but love will last was the theme. Everyone spent an enjoyable afternoon at St. Ignatius. Thank you, Father Mark, for your presence as well!
The following topics were designed especially for Councils of Catholic Women to provide an explanation and overview based on the New Evangelization. TDCCW has edited and added some commentary.


2. **Sharing Your Faith with Other Catholics** – You may be the only witness to people you meet—those who have lost their way or are struggling. Let your light shine and let people know Jesus loves them!

3. **Hospitality and Welcome** - Hospitality and welcome need to be inclusive, welcoming everyone with love.

4. **Hearts to Love and Hands to Serve** – Include evangelization in the service projects and community outreach events.

5. **Holy Holidays** – Reach out to younger children by celebrating holidays with a “HOLY” focus. Christmas is celebrating the Birth of Jesus and Easter celebrates and rejoices in Jesus Christ's resurrection and our salvation. Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny are not the reason for the seasons.

6. **Reaching Out to Young Women in College and Beyond** – Keep your college aged kids and grand kids connected to the Church. Teenagers and young adults are tech savvy. There are many Catholic websites and blogs. Ave Maria Radio – EWTN are excellent resources for all.

7. **Faith Sharing in Everyday Life** – Let's show our faith to those around us—in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities—evangelizing everyone we meet.

8. **Social Justice Shows God's Love** – Keep abreast of moral and social issues and visit the USCCB website to learn what the Catholic Bishops have stated on many social and moral issues.

9. **Learning Never Ends** – Our spiritual journey never ends. Let the holy Spirit continue to reveal Divine Truths through prayer, Scripture reading, spiritual books, and life experiences.

**NCCW** - The Board of Directors, with representation from thirty provinces around the country, convened in Washington, D.C January 21-24, braving an historic snowstorm for the annual NCCW Board of Directors’ meeting. On January 21st, NCCW Board members attended the Solemn Opening Mass for the 2016 National Prayer Vigil for Life held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York and Chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, was the principal celebrant and homilist. Members also participated in the March for Life Jan. 22 with fewer groups attending due to the incoming blizzard.

NCCW President Sheila Hopkins, 2014 recipient of a “People of Life” award from the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, says: “NCCW stands in solidarity with all people of good will who believe in the sanctity of life and we join together in prayer for an end to abortion and to the social and cultural conditions that cause women to see it as their only option.” The National Council of Catholic Women has been, since its foundation by the U.S. Catholic bishops in 1920, a voice for the dignity of every human person from conception through natural death.

**POPE FRANCIS** - Pope Francis visited CeReSo 3 penitentiary in Ciudad Juarez. Over 700 detainees were in the presence of Pope Francis where he greeted fifty in person. One of them gave a testimony in which he affirmed that the presence of the Holy Father was a call to mercy especially for those who had lost hope in their rehabilitation and for those who had forgotten that there are human beings in prison. Pope Francis then addressed those present, remarking first that he could not have left “without greeting you and celebrating with you the Jubilee of Mercy”, adding that mercy "embraces everyone and is found in every corner of the world. There is no place beyond the reach of his mercy, no space or person it cannot touch."

In the penal chapel, the Pope addressed the penal staff and priests of the penitentiary pastoral service; “You encounter much fragility. Therefore I would like to offer you this fragile image”. referring to the crystal crucifix he gave to the Centre. “Crystal is fragile, it breaks easily. Christ on the Cross represents the greatest fragility of humanity; however, it is this fragility that saves us, that helps us, that enables us to keep going and opens the doors of hope. It is my wish that each of you, with the blessing of the Virgin and contemplating the fragility of Christ Who died to save us, sowing seeds of hope and resurrection.”
LADIES ...SAVE THE FOLLOWING DATES:

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2016**
Volunteer Recognition Day 10:30 am - 2:00 pm  
Camden Falls, Tiffin

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2016**
Day of Renewal  
Wednesday, May 11, 2016 – *Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation, Carey, Ohio*  
Theme: “An Encounter with Jesus: Women of the Bible”  
presented by Sister Shannon Shrein, OSF, Ph.D

JUNE 2016 - LEADERSHIP EDUCATIONAL DAYS

**2016 TDCCW CONFERENCE**
Pre-conference *Friday evening, September 23*  
**Saturday, September 24 @ Peru St. Alphonsus, Norwalk**  
Theme: "Be Merciful As Your Father Is Merciful"  
*Presenters: Fr. Ben Cameron, Fathers of Mercy, and Pat Oedy-Murray*

Council Contact  
Winter 2016