



THE WELL

MILITARY COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN - WORLDWIDE, INC.



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2013

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The steadfast love of
the Lord never ceases,
His mercies never
come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
“The Lord is my portion,”
says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in Him.”

Lamentations 3:22-24

MCCW reflects a visible presence of Christ in military communities by fostering and nourishing women in spirituality, leadership and service. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, MCCW serves as a vital enhancement of the religious support mission of military chapels.

LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

“Be still, and know that I am God” – Psalm 46:10

Waiting is hard.

Ask any child on the night before Christmas, any bride-to-be on the night before her wedding day, my children as they anxiously await the first day of school. It never gets easier.

I am not a fan of sitting idly by while the world spins away – I am usually in the midst of a great many projects, going in every direction at once. That is a comfort zone for me. Waiting – not so much.

This transition has involved a lot of waiting, and you are probably as tired of hearing about it as I am of writing about it; it is my prayer that we can move onto a new topic very soon. So let me focus on some of the exciting things MCCW has in store. First off, look for Regional Retreats in your area. While these are not sponsored by MCCW this year, in many cases the local chapel groups have reached out to MCCW speakers. Next, look for an updated website with many great resources for your chapels! Thank you to Kristen Smith for volunteering to serve as our new Social Media Coordinator, and a grateful thank you to Gwen Hudak who served in that position during 2 different Board cycles. Finally, check out April Golden’s articles and FB posts about our upcoming spring 2014 MCCW-Worldwide Conference!

One area where you can really make a difference is by helping us to rebuild our finances so that we can continue to provide you with resources – right now, any travel or other expenses by the Board are completely out of our own pockets. Because we are a 501(c)3, you are authorized to have a designated offering in your chapel for MCCW-Worldwide. We would also welcome any private donations you may be able to send. Our website and Facebook page will soon have links you can click on to make online donations – you’ll just have to **wait** a little longer to see them active.



Erin Raymond
President

THANK YOU

to *Gwen Hudak*, for your service as our
Social Media Coordinator,

and to *Kristen Smith*, for volunteering
to “carry the torch” for that same position.

WORLDWIDE BOARD UPDATES

Pope Francis has called us to a Year of Faith; he has declared that it should be a “summons to an authentic and renewed conversion to the Lord, the One Savior of the world” (Porta fidei 6). The Year of Faith began in October 2012 with a Synod on New Evangelization. The two go hand-in-hand, as New Evangelization is “a call to each Catholic to deepen his or her own faith, have confidence in the Gospel, and possess a willingness to share the Gospel” (uscgb.org). It is an especially exciting time to be Catholic!



April Golden
1st Vice President

It is my hope and prayer that this Year of Faith has ignited an intense fire of faith and evangelization in each of you. Evangelization will be the theme of this year's MCCW Worldwide, Inc. Conference, and Isaiah 6:8 has been my inspiration. Spend some time contemplating this verse, allowing it to settle into your heart. We will spend time together in April 2014, growing our faith and friendships, and strengthening our minds and hearts to share it with the world.

'Here I am, send me!'



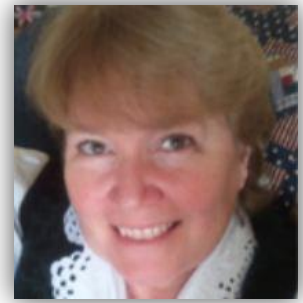
1955 45	
BOARDING PASS	
MCCW Worldwide Conference	
TRIP NAME	
For His Glory	
REASON FOR TRAVEL	
April 24 - 28, 2014	
TRIP DATE	
DESTINATION	
To Be Determined	
DEPARTURE TIME	
Yes	April Golden
FOOD	INFORMATION
MCCW Airlines passenger ticket	

Where will it be?! Check out our next issue to find out our “Destination” for our Worldwide Conference 2014!

AROUND THE REGIONS

Howdy, from the Western Region Catholic Women! How busy we all have been to prepare at our chapels a fun and fulfilling new year. We have experienced great change and have placed our trust in God our Heavenly Father to lead us through our daily challenges. Let us hear His word of life amid the noise of our busy lives. It has been far too long since I have written, and I pray...from the *Magnificat*:

"O God, you speak the word of life through the eloquence of the faithful servants whom you call to proclaim the good news of salvation. By the example and intercession of Saint John Chrysostom, raise up courageous and convincing preachers in our day to stir faith to life, to heal the broken-hearted, and to offer new life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen"



Karen Fletcher
Western Regional Director

By each of you and your example to step up to the challenge of leadership, I am inspired. Thank you for listening to His voice in the chaos of our daily lives to share His love with the women of our servicemen and active-duty women at our chapels.

RETREATS! That's the new name for our Western Region gatherings, instead of a single conference. We are so blessed to have so many active chapel groups in the west, that I hope you may wish to sponsor a retreat in your area. Our newly formed MCCW-Worldwide, Incorporated, and I are here to assist with the planning and successful spreading of our faith! I hope you will contact me, and with the help of our chapel Priests, we can work wonders...to fill our vessels and share our faith! I know you are out there, new leaders of the Catholic women, and I am only an e-mail or phone call away. Please let me know if you have established a new group, and need some ideas, or just need to chat about issues that concern you. I look forward to hearing from all of you soon!

In God's Love, Karen Fletcher western@mccw.org



Beth Manning
Central Regional
Director

As in the words of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians "We give thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father, knowing, brothers and sisters loved by God, how you were chosen." (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4) The Central Region continues to serve and thrive in our military communities where God has planted us.

The Women of Saint Ignatius (WOSI) will be having a one day fall retreat on Thursday December 5th from 8:45am-2:45pm at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. We will be having Meg Hunter-Kilmer speaking along the opportunity to share in the sacraments of mass and reconciliation. You can go to Meg's website at www.piercedhands.com to learn more about Meg, her background, and her role today in God's world. If you are in the Central Region, please see if you can join us at this fall event.

We will also be offering an additional opportunity in the evening for those who want to hear Meg speak more or are unable to attend the daytime session on either Wednesday night or Thursday night but those details are still being finalized. We just had our first WOSI gathering after summer break on August 22nd. We will have hotel information available for those interested in spending the night off base. Additionally, we will be hoping to have some WOSI homes on post available to host women coming in from out of town.

May you all continue to persevere in your faith within your domestic church and wherever you are planted.

The Light Within Can Prevail Over Darkness

Pure evil walks our earth and its' ever constant presence is ready to find weakness in the moral fabric of who we are. On September 11, 2001 I watched in horror the events of that day as did our nation and our world. Why have I decided to refer back to this dark day? This day was up front and personal for me and it still unsettles my heart. As I sat at home wondering the fate of my own husband that autumn day my heart was full of sorrow for the victims. I retreated to prayer and asked for healing for the victims and their families. As the horrors of that day unfolded I recognized that my heart also ached for the individuals who acted out this act of evil. How could they have allowed pure evil to enter into their hearts? How could they turn a blind eye to everything good? Evil has continued to present itself since the 911 attacks both on our shores and abroad and we as Christians must act through our love of Christ.



Jane Gottardi
Europe Region Director

Saint Paul's words in the Letter to the Romans: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (12:21). Evil is never defeated by evil; once that road is taken, rather than defeating evil, one will instead be defeated by evil (Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of World Youth Day of Peace, 1 January 2005 Do Not Be Overcome By Evil But Overcome Evil with Good).

Our teachings come from Christ, and yes our faith is of supernatural origin. Abide in the laws of God and your light within shall shine for all. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love" (Jn 15:10).

We can all be warriors for Christ by taking our faith to the next level. Expand your education in the faith. Take an on-line Catholic course, visit Catholic websites and explore the vastness of our faith. Pray unceasingly throughout your day, partake in the sacraments, join a small group session with your spouse and get connected with others in the faith. Allow yourself to enter deeper into the family of Christ.

In Christian community we allow Christ to be present in our lives. Through organizations such as Catholic Women of the Chapel (CWOC) and The Knights of Columbus (KofC) we have many opportunities to grow in the faith. In Christian community we help strengthen our parishes on many levels, we allow ourselves to build friendships, we build unity and bonds of mutual respect, trust and love and we add a wee bit of light to the lamp within us. Our light will never dim so long as it is frequently tended to. Coming together in small groups, praying together and doing charitable works can be both powerful and life changing. Everyone can do with more prayer in their lives, with more time spent in adoration, in daily mass, time reading scripture, and in works of charity. Our hearts need to understand that Christ is always ready to shine more light and love into us. Faith needs to live outside the Sunday Mass and in the moments we live during our week. Including Christ in all we do helps to improve us in every way and improvement of ourselves directly affects the people around us.

One lit candle can be seen in the darkness and its light illuminates the area around it. Imagine the impact that over 77 million practicing, loving and well informed American Catholics can have on our society. We have the ability to touch millions of lives in such a profound way. According to 2012 statistics we have over 1.2 billion Catholics worldwide. Imagine uniting the light of 1.2 billion people! Our light combined would be very difficult to be dismissed by those who do not yet know Christ. Humanity is hurting on so many levels. Change for the better happens when we genuinely love. Our faith shows us that the dignity of every person is right and just. Our faith opens our hearts to forgiveness and the more frequently we remind ourselves that God is in charge we are able to serve with humble hearts. The healing of our world lies in each one of us. United our light can touch all the corners of our earth for all to witness.

The Catholic Church feeds and clothes more people on this earth than any other institution on the planet. In holding fast to Christ and His teachings we not only live in the light, we become the light for others. Being deeply rooted in the faith helps us to be prepared for any circumstance and it empowers us with the ability to change lives.

Jesus Christ, the "light of the nations", shines upon the face of his Church, which He sends forth to the whole world to proclaim the Gospel to every creature (cf. Mk 16:15).

The closer we come to Christ the wider our scope is on how vital each one of us is to one another and to humanity. We need to pray for our enemies so that they may experience a conversion of heart. Let us raise each other up by our actions by living and experiencing our faith. We are very different than those who attacked us on 9/11. We do not dilute the truth into something that is twisted and dark. 'Thou shall not kill' (Commandment 6) If we allow ourselves not to be active in the faith there lies potential for our own vision to become blurred on what is right and just. We have a population of Catholics that have their gears shifted in the idle mode and regardless of what their reasons are I hope they snap out of it and realize that they play a vital role to the living Church. Time away from living the precepts of our faith allows time and space for darkness to brew. Time away from God denies us the fullness of Christ's love.

First Vatican Council (1869-1870) Profession of the Faith 7.
The abandonment and rejection of the Christian religion, and the denial of God and his Christ, has plunged the minds of many into the abyss of pantheism, materialism and atheism, and the consequence is that they strive to destroy rational nature itself, to deny any criterion of what is right and just, and to overthrow the very foundations of human society.

Darkness can find no corners to cast its shadows when we allow God's light to shine through us in all we do. Humanity is a rainbow of color, a rainbow of light. Each person is a child of God. Mirroring our lives with Christ offers Him praise. It brings peace and love to our hearts, sheds light of understanding of what is right and just, it expands our compassion for humanity, builds strong bonds of friendship and we begin to expand our vision and charity beyond ourselves.

Jesus asks us to follow Him and to imitate Him along the path of love, a love which gives itself completely to the brethren out of love for God: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12).

When we give at the level of the heart we help others to see that faith in Christ is something very special. When our actions reflect Christ people begin to pay attention and in time, they begin to understand that Christ is the living well for peace. Living for Christ brings about love and love can change attitudes, it can liberate and it can bring hope.

Harden not your hearts for those who do evil, pray for them and in all circumstances and let your actions reflect his goodness. United we can bring His light to the world.

“United we can
bring His light to the
world.”

Life So Complex, Yet So Simple

I recently started visiting a local nursing home, Villa St Francis. I would like to say I thought of this all on my own initiative, but the truth is one of my close friends, Bob from my Bethany prison ministry just moved into Villa St Francis probably three weeks ago.

Villa St Francis is a Catholic Nursing Home sponsored by our “Call to Share” program in the Archdiocese of Kansas City (www.archkck.org). I observed many things through my participation of mass there (which is offered daily at 10am) and just visiting. I have seen so many different crosses being carried by the residents.

A few of the ones I noticed are the thinning of hair, swelling of ankles and hands (edema), missing teeth, curvature of the spine, and wheel-chair or walker bound mobility, but the reality is there are many other crosses that the residents are carrying.

Anyone who knows me realizes the importance I place on attending daily mass as often as possible and being that living tabernacle for Christ. These residents may possibly be near the end of their journey on Earth, but they get the importance of the essential Food for the Journey, the Eucharist, for their travel onward to everlasting life. They so understand the meaning of John 6:56 “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in Him.” These residents amidst their physical pain or simply the absence of their immediate family see the importance of life in God’s world as simply coming daily to the Table of Plenty.

As I occasionally catch myself throughout my day going through a laundry list of things I wanted to accomplish (from starting at washing clothes and typically ending at cleaning the house with many things in between), and I am sometimes disappointed in myself. I can beat myself up in just judging myself against others, and not appreciating the small successes I have throughout my day even if all my goals are not accomplished. In my visits to Villa St Francis, it helps me put life back into perspective. I can see how complicated or complex I choose at times to make my life, but the reality is all that really matters is quite simple. Those men and women in the nursing home get it (and maybe it is for the first time in their life). “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-40) I hope by spending time at the nursing home I can appreciate the gifts God has given me and continue to rejoice in God my savior.



Beth Manning
Central Regional
Director

“You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
and with all your mind.”

Matthew 22:37

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE HOLY FATHER

General Intention: Value of Silence.

That people today, often overwhelmed by noise, may rediscover the value of silence and listen to the voice of God and their brothers and sisters.

Mission Intention: Persecuted Christians.

That Christians suffering persecution in many parts of the world may by their witness be prophets of Christ's love.



Prayer for Vocations

Father, we're your people, the work of your hands.
So precious are we in your sight that you sent your Son, Jesus.
Jesus calls us to heal the broken-hearted,
to dry the tears of those who mourn,
to give hope to those who despair,
and to rejoice in your steadfast love.
We, the baptized, realize our call to serve.
Help us to know how.
Call forth from among us priests, sisters,
brothers and lay ministers.
With our hearts you continue to love your people.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever.

**"Sometimes it is possible
to live without knowing
our neighbours:
This is not Christian"**

Pope Francis via Twitter, @Pontifex

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MCCW Prayer to Our Lady of Good Counsel

O Lord of heavenly wisdom,

Who has given us Your own Mother Mary

to be our guide and counselor in this our lives,

Grant that in all things we may have the grace to seek

maternal instruction

and to profit by it in humility and love.

O Mother of Good Counsel,

Patroness of the Military Council of Catholic Women,

help us to understand and fulfill

the mind and will of your Divine Son, Jesus Christ.

Under the blessing of the Father,

and by the power of the Holy Spirit,

may we be responsible and intelligent

daughters of the Church.

May we labor in the spirit of renewal

to realize more perfectly the kingdom of God here below

as the only true preparation for our share

in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Amen.