



## *Military Council of Catholic Women*

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PO Box 4456, Washington, DC 20017

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Dear Sister in Christ,

We are so happy you have taken the time to read this discernment packet – and that you have listened to the call of God on your heart, asking you to consider a position of servant leadership with MCCW.

MCCW uses discernment, a prayerful way of making decisions, as its method for selecting new leadership. MCCW discernment is done in two parts: first, a personal discernment process that gives a possible servant leader a guide to praying and talking with God about the decision; and second, a group prayer service during which possible leaders share their gifts and talents and new leaders are selected.

In this packet, you will find an easy-to-follow guide to the personal portion of discernment. If you feel even the slightest tug on your heart, please spend the time to complete this packet prayerfully. It truly will help you determine if you are being called to service at this time.

All who discern a MCCW position are also asked to provide a letter of support from their priest or chaplain. This letter does not have to be anything fancy – simply a letter stating that you are a member in good standing of the Church and your chapel community or parish. You will submit this letter at the time of your group discernment.

Serving MCCW will be fun and fulfilling work. You will learn and grow in ways you never expected. It will help not just the women you serve, but also you to grow in all of MCCW's pillar values: spirituality, leadership, and service.

Will you answer the call to serve?

Your sisters in Christ,

The MCCW Board of Directors



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### Servant Leader Information Form

Being a servant leader in MCCW will involve time, talent, treasure, travel, and an endorsement by your priest. Please begin by completing the information below:

1. Please provide the following information (*Print Clearly*)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Best time/day/place to call \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Occupation/Vocation \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of years affiliated with MCCW/CWOC/Other Catholic Women's  
Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Chapel Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
Priest/Chaplain: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chaplain's Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
What other ministries or volunteer activities are you involved in? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Are you willing and able to occasionally travel? (Please consult with family before answering.)

3. How much time would you realistically be able to offer MCCW?

- Weekly (\_\_\_\_ number of hours)
- More than once a month (\_\_\_\_ number of hours)
- Monthly (\_\_\_\_ number of hours)
- Special projects only (\_\_\_\_ number of hours)

4. If I am married, is my marriage validated or con-validated in the Catholic Church?





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### **Beginning Personal Discernment**

Discernment is a beautiful, prayerful, and Holy Spirit-led method of making decisions. It takes time to discern well – for some, weeks; for others, months; so take your time in consideration. As you use discernment to guide your decisions about serving in a leadership role in Military Council of Catholic Women, we ask that you do the following:

1. Pray, spend time with the Holy Spirit and ask what is to be revealed to you. It is especially fruitful if you are able to spend time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.
2. Complete the Sharing Your Gifts Exercise (see below).
3. Ponder St Ignatius' Ten Guiding Principles of Discernment (see below).
4. Talk with your priest. Share with him why you feel called, committed, and competent to serve and ask for his written endorsement.
5. Fill out the Servant Leader Information Form and bring with you to the group discernment process at your retreat.

If you have questions during this process, please contact the discernment facilitator at [discernment@mccw.org](mailto:discernment@mccw.org).



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### **Sharing your Gifts**

Every person has personal gifts and abilities, some of which are already known and others which may be cultivated. The following brief self-questionnaire is to help you ponder those gifts and how you can use them as servant leader within MCCW. Give yourself plenty of time to prayerfully ponder these questions. You will find that many insights will be revealed to you. Ask yourself these questions and write down your thoughts – this will deepen your discernment.

1. How do I bring out the best in others? (Letting others shine)
2. Can I seek the most common good for the matter at hand? (Cohesive)
3. Am I self motivated to reach a goal? (Initiative)
4. Do I have a heart to serve unselfishly? (Humility)
5. Do I try to live out the virtues I proclaim to others (Integrity)
6. What are the desires that the Lord has placed on my heart? (Introspection)
7. How does God want me to serve within Chapel? (Assurance)
8. If you are being prompted by the Holy Spirit to be a servant leader, submit with humility and trust God. Write down some of your gifts or attributes that come to mind.



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### **St Ignatius's 10 Guiding Principles of Discernment (Adapted for the Military Council of Catholic Women)**

*Jeremiah 29:11-13*

*For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for the woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope. When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord.*

When you begin discerning, it very important to start in prayer and open your life completely to the Holy Spirit, for it is in the Spirit where the revealing process of clarity and truth begins.

1. Look deeply into all areas of your life. Ask, (what is my **vocation**: a mother, wife, armed forces personnel, etc.) Would serving within Military Council of Catholic Women ministry enhance or distract from your vocation?
2. When discerning, be honest in evaluating your **time**. Being a servant leader for Military Council of Catholic Women does involve time, travel, and financial commitments. (Some positions more than others). Prayerfully evaluate your life in essence of time to ponder if you have the ability to serve.
3. To discern properly it is important to **confide** in people who know you well and in whom you trust. A friend, spouse, or priest can help reveal to you, out of love, your strengths, weakness and natural abilities.
4. **Listen** to your whole person; your heart, mind, intellect and intuition. All “facets” should play a role. One should not dominate another. For example, our emotions can be so strong that we don't consider things practically.
5. Fear complicates and distorts discernments. Instead **trust** and courage will move you forward in the discerning process.



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6. The discernment process should be a calm process where internal **peace** lies. To become a servant leader takes a bit a time and self-evaluation, don't make a decision in haste, rather, your choices will be well guided when it yields peace, justice, faith, love, and bears fruit!
  
7. At the center of servant leadership is **humility**. It is saying yes to be a vessel for our Lord in which HE can do HIS great work. Being humble is a process not a destination.
  
8. Ask yourself, "What are the areas in my life that I may have difficulty **letting go**? How would letting go of those areas enhance my being a servant leader?" Ask yourself, "Is this the time in my life that God has chosen me to become a servant leader for my chapel?" Honest discernment will reveal this.
  
9. **Jesus** is THE example of true servant leadership. His teachings show us how to treat people with, mercy, truth, faith, fairness, justice and love. Ask yourself, "How do I emulate the teachings of Jesus to people I encounter each day. Have I put on the garment of love?"
  
10. Call upon the Holy Spirit to inspire you to make a decision. An answer "Yes" or an answer "No" are both holy decisions. When answered yes, you have full peace that the Spirit is moving you forward to servant leadership. If the answer is no, it is because it may not be your time yet, and the Holy Spirit has other plans for you. Either way, when the Holy Spirit is involved, the decision itself is **holy**!

*Mark 10:42-45*

*Jesus summoned them and said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

*Amen!*