



Build

Facilitator Guide

Building Your CWOC from the Ground Up

(60 minutes)

Purpose: Starting a new CWOC can seem like a daunting task, but with MCCW's Sourcebook as your guide, you can have a flourishing ministry in no time. Learn some of the first steps you should take and hear from others who have walked your path. Find out how MCCW and your regional coordinator can assist you along the way and get a priestly perspective on CWOC.

Together, ask for the intercession of Our Lady of Good Counsel, patroness of MCCW.

Let us pray. 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.

Roles (why?):

Moderator



Panel (3 persons)

Priest (if available, to give a pastoral perspective)

Ice Breaker: (suggestions?)

Lessons:

We know certainly that our God calls us to a holy life. We know that he gives us every grace, every abundant grace; and though we are so weak of ourselves, this grace is able to carry us through every obstacle and difficulty. — St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Source:

<http://catholicdigest.com/from-the-magazine/quiet-moment/st-elizabeth-ann-seton-we-know-certainly-that-our-god/>

1. “We know certainly that our God calls us to a holy life...” (Don’t be afraid to be the first!)
 - a. How are you being called? By your priest? By the women in your chapel? In your heart?
 - i. From *The CWOC Sourcebook*, page i: “Why Women’s Ministry?”
 - b. How to answer – go to your priest!
 - i. From the Sourcebook, page 2: “Where Do We Begin?”
 - c. Priestly Perspective (if applicable)
2. “We know that he gives us every grace, every abundant grace...” (No special skills required!)
 - a. In all things, begin with prayer
 - i. From the Sourcebook, page 7: “Fostering Servant Leadership.”
 - b. What resources do you have?
 - i. past CWOCs
 - ii. MCCW Sourcebook/website
 - iii. Regional Coordinator
3. “...this grace is able to carry us through every obstacle and difficulty.” (You will overcome challenges)
 - a. Challenges you might face



- i. From the Sourcebook, page 2: “Where Do We Begin?”(ask the group to identify which of the “Where Do We Begin?” items might be most challenging in their community, brainstorm ideas)
- b. Q & A

Holy Role Model: Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton (from
<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-elizabeth-ann-seton/>)

Mother Seton is one of the keystones of the American Catholic Church. She founded the first American religious community for women, the Sisters of Charity. She opened the first American parish school and established the first American Catholic orphanage. All this she did in the span of 46 years while raising her five children.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton is a true daughter of the American Revolution, born August 28, 1774, just two years before the Declaration of Independence. By birth and marriage, she was linked to the first families of New York and enjoyed the fruits of high society. Reared a staunch Episcopalian, she learned the value of prayer, Scripture and a nightly examination of conscience. Her father, Dr. Richard Bayley, did not have much use for churches but was a great humanitarian, teaching his daughter to love and serve others.

The early deaths of her mother in 1777 and her baby sister in 1778 gave Elizabeth a feel for eternity and the temporariness of the pilgrim life on earth. Far from being brooding and sullen, she faced each new “holocaust,” as she put it, with hopeful cheerfulness.

At 19, Elizabeth was the belle of New York and married a handsome, wealthy businessman, William Magee Seton. They had five children before his business failed and he died of tuberculosis. At 30, Elizabeth was widowed, penniless, with five small children to support.

While in Italy with her dying husband, Elizabeth witnessed Catholicity in action through family friends. Three basic points led her to become a Catholic: belief in the Real Presence, devotion to the Blessed Mother and conviction that the Catholic Church led back to the apostles and to Christ. Many of her family and friends rejected her when she became a Catholic in March 1805.

To support her children, she opened a school in Baltimore. From the beginning, her group followed the lines of a religious community, which was officially founded in 1809.

The thousand or more letters of Mother Seton reveal the development of her spiritual life from ordinary goodness to heroic sanctity. She suffered great trials of sickness, misunderstanding, the death of loved ones (her husband and two young daughters) and the heartache of a wayward son. She died January 4, 1821, and became the first American-born citizen to be beatified (1963) and then canonized (1975). She is buried in Emmitsburg, Maryland.



Reflection

Elizabeth Seton had no extraordinary gifts. She was not a mystic or stigmatic. She did not prophesy or speak in tongues. She had two great devotions: abandonment to the will of God and an ardent love for the Blessed Sacrament. She wrote to a friend, Julia Scott, that she would prefer to exchange the world for a “cave or a desert.” “But God has given me a great deal to do, and I have always and hope always to prefer his will to every wish of my own.” Her brand of sanctity is open to everyone if we love God and do his will.

Closing Prayer

Lord God,

You blessed Elizabeth Seton with gifts of grace;

As wife and mother, educator and foundress,

So that she might spend her life in service to your people.

Through her example and prayers

May we learn to express our love for you

In love for our fellow men and women.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,

Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

One God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Source:

<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/about-us/the-diocese/our-history/saint-elizabeth-ann-seton-integercessory-prayer/>