

Notre Dame Council of Catholic Woman

By Denise Michaud

The Notre Dame Council of Catholic Women is affiliated with the Knoxville Diocese CCW and the National Council of Catholic Women (and the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations!), and therefore is united with women the world over who share our faith. As stated so eloquently in its mission statement, "The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its membership to support, empower, and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world."

This is more than just a "church-ladies" guild that meets for fellowship! There is a higher purpose behind all the activity that goes on at Notre Dame's Council of Catholic Women! For example, in June, the Council helped to sponsor high school sophomore Alexa DiBella as the female representative to the Youth Leadership Institute training in Gatlinburg. In August, the Hope Center was the recipient of a bountiful blessing of baby gifts donated by our members as director Sharon Hodgens spoke to the group about the wonderful work that the center provides to its clients, and how our generosity will make a real difference in the lives of babies and new mothers. Notre Dame Council of Catholic Women also donated funds to the parish to purchase vinyl covers for the Breaking Bread missalettes, to Fr. Alexis Osnel from our sister parish in Haiti, and to Water for Life, a Catholic Relief Services program that seeks to help communities find, tap and manage water sources. CRS has long held a close and fruitful relationship with the National Council of Catholic Women, which since 1946 has helped CRS raise \$12 million for programs that help women. Notre Dame's Council accomplishes many of its activities through guilds, each with its own special charism and purpose.

St. Catherine Guild, for which the charism is crafting, brings ladies together to create one-of-a-kind items while sharing in fellowship and spirituality. Their creations of knitted, crocheted, and crafted items are sold to benefit the CCW and our kitchen project. This Guild is chaired by Wendy Hankins and Mary Lou Lamb. Member Carol Marcello also hosts a prayer shawl ministry. Half a dozen shawls have been given to parishioners who may be facing serious illness and loss, and the CCW has received thank you notes recounting the blessings received from this outreach.

St. Elizabeth Guild, for which the charism is outreach to the sick or homebound, and to persons in need, provides the opportunity to prepare meals for delivery to families who may be returning home after a hospital stay. Chairperson Sue Pearson also sends cards to those who have experienced an illness or a loss.

St. Martha Guild, for which the charism is outreach to bereaved families, provides mercy meals after funerals. This guild is chaired by Barbara Price.

St. Veronica Guild, for which the charism is care of the altar and the church, has successfully kept the facilities clean, and the altar linens and vestments clean and in good repair. This guild is chaired by Barbara Violette, and is responsible for saving the parish thousands of dollars annually in maintenance costs. New this year is the experience of Mary Ann Laun, a florist by trade, who has donated her time and talent to setting up an account with a wholesale florist supplier and making beautiful arrangements for the altar each week. Donations are sought in honor of or in memory of someone to offset the costs and hopefully generate a flower fund in the future.

The Council has also benefitted from the wonderful exposure that our new publicity chairperson, Maggie May, has brought. Pictures of the graduation breakfast, the installation of officers, and the prayer shawl ministry have been submitted to the Greeneville Sun, and notices of our monthly meetings have appeared in the church listings.

As a new president for the Notre Dame Council of Catholic Women, I am encouraged when I see the level of involvement from so many wonderful, caring women. And there is so much more that the NDCCW has done that is not listed here. If you have never attended any of the monthly meetings or guild activities, I challenge you (women, that is!) to find just one activity or meeting and bring to it your life's experience, your spirituality, your service. Be part of something big.

St. Elizabeth Guild

By Sue Pearson

This guild serves those in need, whether through an encouraging card, personal visit, or needed meals. Through the prayer card ministry, cards will be sent to those in need of inspiring and supportive messages. A book is located in the vestibule of the church for parishioners to request prayers. Please include the full address if a card is to be sent. Contact Sue Pearson at (423) 636-8419 for further information or to offer assistance.

Life Care Ministry

By Sue Pearson

Every Friday two members visit the residents of Life Care Center from 2:30 until 3:30 to socialize and play card games. We are grateful to all parishioners who generously donate prizes, which the residents love. We are in need of prize contributions, especially for the men; i.e., caps and socks. Prize contributions may be left in the parish hall in a container labeled Life Care Ministry. New members are always welcome. For further information contact Sue Pearson (423) 636-8419.