

Smoky Mountain Deanery CCW

President's Report: KDCCW Convention Meeting

Spring 2018

The Affiliate CCW's of the Smoky Mountain Deanery are continuing to work hard supporting our individual parishes and pastors, as well as reaching out to those in need in our neighboring communities and around the world. We provide our membership with opportunities to grow in faith and to motivate involvement and broader participation in the parish. As a Deanery CCW, we have enjoyed gathering in our board meetings and general meetings to exchange ideas and encourage each other. We are all very busy, but appreciate the opportunity to learn from one another at the meetings, and enjoy the inspiration of various speakers, advice and encouragement from our Spiritual Advisor (Fr. Joe Brando) and to join together in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Our Fall General Meeting was at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Madisonville, with Fr. John Orr as speaker. His topic was "Rest and Refreshment in the Lord for the Weary and Burdened". This subject was close to the hearts of many of us who fulfill multiple roles at home, work and in our parishes. Fr. Orr filled us with scriptural references to draw upon and remind us of God's desire for us to rest and of the source of true and lasting refreshment for each of us.

Our Spring meeting was at St. Mary of Gatlinburg Parish. Our speaker Deacon Dave Pecot recharged us to be open to God's call and to recognize the gifts He provides to each of us any time He calls us to serve. His talk was entitled, "Please Lord, Not Me!" and he reminded us of how many people whom God has called to serve in very important and formidable situations (Moses, Jonah, Gideon, Rahab, and many others) were at first resistant to the call and felt terrified or completely inadequate to the task. He reminded us, however, that God equips us for any task he calls us to perform. Our job is to listen and be open to his call and trust God to gift us with what we need and see us through to completion. (This provided us with a good balance, lest we get too rested following Fr. Orr's talk in the fall!)

Immaculate Conception Parish CCW served as a drop-off point for Cross Catholic's "Box of Joy" project in the Knoxville area and found it to be a very successful service project with broad and enthusiastic participation in the parish. At our Deanery Spring General Meeting, we voted to make this a Deanery project. Several parishes plan to participate on at least some level in Fall 2018. The time frame for the project will be approximately August/September-October/early November. Shipping Week is the first week of November. This is too early for an Advent project, but is an opportunity for a good "hands-on" service activity for children and adults and provides a gift of love to poor children who have never received a Christmas gift in their lives.

- St. Mary Gatlinburg Parish CCW is still in recovery mode since the fires of Fall 2016 which forced relocation of many members and left almost overwhelming tasks for others. It is most heartening and impressive to hear of their persistence in serving the needs of their surrounding

community as they provided winter wear, bath bags and Christmas gifts in the fall and winter, honored Veterans and then hosted our Spring Deanery Meeting this year.

- St. John XXIII continues to provide Sunday Suppers and final exam snack support to college students.
- St. Joseph the Worker Parish hosted an ecumenical potluck dinner and a Lenten Luncheon with area Christian churches, an Advent by Candlelight tea, and an Italian dining out fundraiser.
- Holy Ghost also hosted an Advent by Candlelight event and in February a multilingual Family Mardi Gras Celebration with a Bagpipe and Drum parade as a grand finale in addition to monthly parish-wide breakfasts and other activities to support the parish. Membership continues to grow, aided by a supportive pastor and an email/text communication tool called Flocknotes.
- Holy Cross CCW supported the parish with various receptions, bake sales, bereavement dinners and donations from votive candle sales. They supported the Women's Care Center by hosting baby showers twice a year and the Smoky Mountain Rescue Ministries through selling Christmas bows and ornaments and Christmas stockings. A Spring Bazaar is planned in May.
- St. Francis of Assisi Townsend is one of our newer affiliates with a dedicated membership. They have hosted a number of Lectio Divina events during Advent and Lent which have been very popular as well as bake sales and caramel apple sales, and a new Parish Christmas party which was so successful the pastor has asked them to put the date on next year's calendar to make it an annual event.
- Our Lady of Fatima CCW president, Bernadette Pendleton, is a talented musician and enthusiastic speaker and meeting planner for her group. They have had presentations on Spiritual Warfare and the Saints, the Power of Prayer, and other spiritual topics. They play fun games and have creative activities and drawings at their meetings to help grow the membership. She sang at the SMDCCW Fall Board Meeting and we have future plans to tap her talent!
- In addition to Box of Joy, Immaculate Conception Parish sponsored numerous successful projects, including the "Wrap it Up" program that provides hand-made quilts and blankets to Meals on Wheels recipients during Lent, a craft fair and a kitchen sale. Pres. Pat Ryan is an amazing fundraiser, according to CCW members, and shared with us that 15% of every fundraiser goes back to their parish, an idea they learned from another affiliate. They also hosted their first Lenten Reflection Program with speaker, Sr. John Catherine Kennedy, which was extremely well-received.

As a Deanery, we want to continue to pursue reaching out to those parishes in our area who are not affiliated with CCW and to increase our connectedness and participation among those affiliates we interact with less frequently and strengthen our bonds of friendship and sisterhood.

Submitted by Mary A. Wilson,
SMDCCW Pres., Holy Ghost CCW Pres.