

Smoky Mountain Deanery CCW President's Report

Spring 2019

I would like to begin by thanking all who have served on our Deanery Board as officers and Commission Chairs and representatives over the past two years, those who have served in our parishes in leadership roles and those who have agreed to step forward as officers in the upcoming term. For some of us, the step forward in Deanery and Parish leadership has been a step out of our personal comfort zones. Several have served simultaneously in Deanery and Parish leadership because they were needed. Others, experienced in leadership have been so very generous in lending support to the new officers, well beyond the ordinary call of duty. These ladies have believed in, served, and loved our organization from the parish level to the National and International levels. We have been blessed to have such women as mentors and friends in the Smoky Mountain Deanery. We have also been blessed with a dedicated and caring Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Joseph Brando, for whom we have the utmost respect and who has been a delight to work with!

We have 9 active and distinctly different affiliates in the Smoky Mountain Deanery, each serving in our parishes and surrounding communities according to individual gifts and the needs of the affiliate parish. In many of our parishes, CCW is the women's group, the parish life committee, the welcome committee, the altar society, etc. Others serve their parishes through various guilds, or other groups, but still elect representatives to the Deanery CCW, realizing the importance of connecting with other Catholic women beyond the parish boundaries. We welcome each of our affiliates to stay connected with us in whatever way they are able (possibly even experimenting with online meetings for some of our faraway parishes who have trouble with the distance for some future meetings). We learn from each other and benefit from the experience and the ideas shared from parish to parish.

Our Fall General Meeting was at Holy Cross Parish and included beautiful fall table decorations, door prizes and a lovely luncheon. Our speaker, Fr. Adam Kane, gave a wonderfully inspiring talk focusing on St. Frances de Sales and his writings. The Spring General Meeting, scheduled in early March at Sacred Heart Cathedral's Shea Room was hosted by the ladies of the Sacred Heart PCCW in the late afternoon and followed by the conference at the Cathedral with internationally-renowned speaker, Fr. Jacques-Philippe of the Community of the Beatitudes. Fr. Philippe's topic for the evening was "How to Grow Through Trials and Sufferings", a perfect pre-Lenten preparation for us!

Our parish affiliates have many plans for encouraging each other to grow in our Catholic faith, hosting and attending retreats, evenings of Lectio Divina, prayer and adoration events as well as all of the service projects and bake sales and Bazaars that are ever popular. We collaborated as a Deanery on the Cross Catholic Outreach "Box of Joy" project in the fall. Immaculate Conception Church served as a drop-off point for the Deanery parishes to bring their filled boxes ready for shipping to children who would otherwise receive no Christmas gift at all. It was a very popular and fun project for parish families to do together.

As a Deanery, we want to continue 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, supporting and encouraging one another as we answer Our Lord's call to serve in humility and in love.

Submitted by Mary A. Wilson, SMDCCW President