

October 2014 President's Message

By Rebecca Woodhull, Ph.D.

The NCCW 2014 Annual Convention was a source of abundant blessings. Let's look at a few results:

As we work and pray together on selected critical topics, we propose key resolutions at the national convention. All dioceses are urged to adopt the [NCCW Resolutions](#). Adopting resolutions is one of the important functions of a **national organization**, and we ask **all** our affiliates to adopt them.

The Leadership Commission's new resource, [We Are Called to Witness](#), will help your A/DCCW incorporate the New Evangelization into existing programs at your parish. Each of the nine chapters (topics) can easily be used at monthly CCW meetings or you can select those chapters that fit your parish schedule. My hope is that parish CCWs will take this leadership opportunity to act on the suggestions in this new resource and lead your parish in the New Evangelization. It is free to download on your computer or a CD from the NCCW [website](#).

This month is full of saints' days (catholic.org/saints) and special intentions including: Oct. 19 World Mission Sunday; Vocation Awareness month; Respect Life month; Holy Rosary month; Domestic Violence month; and, of course, holy days that need to be re-emphasized to our families for what they are. "Halloween," for example, is a contraction of "All Hallows Eve," and it designates the vigil of All Hallows Day, more commonly known today as All Saints Day. ("Hallow," as a noun, is an old English word for saint. As a verb, it means to make something holy or to honor it as holy.) All Saints Day, November 1st, is a Holy Day of Obligation, and both the feast and the vigil have been celebrated since the early eighth century, when they were instituted by Pope Gregory III in Rome. (For more information, please visit [Catholic Answers](#).)

I love that so many Catholic families have their children dress up as saints rather than as goblins, and this is an excellent opportunity to remind our families that almost every "holiday" is derived from a "holy" day. This is part of the New Evangelization too!

Our prayers are needed in so many places: the threat of the Ebola virus not only to us but to the world; the Gaza war; the Iraq-Pakistan conflict; the victims of human trafficking and internal wars in many parts of the world.

Here at home we have our own war going on over the HHS Mandate. The recent revision is not acceptable. USCCB General Counsel Anthony Picarello and Associate Counsel Michael Moses recently submitted written testimony, that "[T]he mandate continues to substantially burden the religious liberty of stakeholders with religious objections to the mandated coverage. Because it does not further a compelling government interest by the means least restrictive of religious exercise, the mandate continues to violate the Religious Freedom Restoration Act." Please exercise your "faithful citizenship" and work with our NCCW affiliates to respond to the issues of our day. This is one of the best ways to make our NCCW **voice** heard--by writing to your Congress wo/men and government officials protesting violations of our religious freedoms. Elections are coming up and they are paying a little more attention to public opinion right now!

May the Lord and Our Lady of Good Counsel give us this grace!