

**DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN**  
**January 28, 2023**

**OPENING PRAYER**

**ALL:**

Lord God,  
we come before you this morning to thank you for your mercy and kindness.  
We humbly pray that you ignite the fire within us,  
so that we might choose to live as you meant for us to live.  
We ask for the courage we need to forgive.  
We ask for the strength of heart to love as you love.  
We ask for the wisdom to choose the hard right over the easy wrong.  
We gather as a community to lend support to one another.  
Walk with us, Lord, help us to perform all our actions for the love of you.

**Reading: 1John 3:18-24**

Children, let us love not in word or speech, but in deed and truth. Now this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth and reassure our hearts before him in whatever our hearts condemn, for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God and receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit that he gave us.

**ALL:**

Lord, inspire me to give of my best  
and make good use of the talents you have given me.  
Show me how to be positive in attitude, appreciating and valuing others,  
always being ready to encourage and give praise.  
Sometimes I draw conclusions about people in terms of  
what I think is meant by “success” and “failure”, but the “failure” of one person  
might count as a great “success” of someone with other talents.  
Lead me never to judge people but to accept others as they are,  
knowing that it is together, each with our differences, that we build up your Kingdom.  
Amen.

**LEADER:**

We offer our prayers of petition.

**Leader:** That we believe God loves each of us and that we are precious and loved by God, we pray:

**ALL:** **Lord, open our hearts.**

**Leader:** That we may respond to God's call, we pray:

**ALL:** **Lord, open our hearts.**

**Leader:** That our time together may enlighten, teach, and challenge us to see with new eyes, hear with an open mind, and have a new heart in which to bring Christ to others, we pray:

**ALL:** **Lord, open our hearts.**

**Leader:** That we learn to see life and relationships in a new way. Allow us to recognize that each person in the body of Christ is needed and necessary, we pray:

**ALL:** **Lord, open our hearts.**

**Leader:** That we be always mindful Lord that our first goal is to serve you through serving others, we pray:

**ALL:** **Lord, open our hearts.**

**ALL:** Eternal Word of God, we rejoice in this opportunity to gather in your name. We trust your Spirit will be with us and will guide us. Amen

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**ALL:**

Lord, thank you so much for all the blessings you have provided in my life.

I have so much, and I know it is all because of you.

I ask you today to continue to provide me with these blessings and to provide me with the opportunities I need to continue to do your work here.

You always stand beside me. You provide me with a future full of your love, blessings, and guidance.

I know that no matter how bad things get, you will always be by my side.

I know I may not see you. I know I may not feel you, but I thank You for giving me Your Word that tells me you are here.

You know my dreams, Lord, and I know it is a lot to ask to realize those dreams, but I ask that you hear my prayer of hope.

I would like to think that my hopes and dreams are all part of your plans for me, but I trust that you always know better.

I put my dreams in your hands to mold and fit to your will.

I surrender my hopes to you. In your holy name, Amen.

## **PRAYER TO CLOSE THE MEETING:**

With hearts filled with gratitude,  
we thank You, Lord our God,  
for gifting us with good friends.

We are grateful for all those persons in our lives  
who have chosen us to be their friends  
for truly this is a rich and sacred trust.

By the sacrament of friendship,  
we share our mutual journeys to you, Sower of All Love and Life.  
In sharing, we find our happiness expanded and our sorrow lightened,  
and, for this blessing, we are grateful.

We prayerfully rejoice that Your Son, Jesus, has called each of us  
from the position of servants to the honor of being His friends.

Blessed are You, God of Unity, for entering our lives through friendship.  
Make us, we pray, worthy of such a gift  
by being faithful but non-possessive, by being loyal but honest  
and by being ever grateful for the gift of good friends. Amen

**"As we express our gratitude,  
we must never forget that the highest appreciation  
is not to utter words, but to live by them..."**  
*~John Fitzgerald Kennedy*

