



20 of us from the San Francisco Province (2 from Orange, 3 San Francisco, 1 Santa Rosa, and 14 from SLC) attended the 97th Annual Convention of the National Council of Catholic Women at the beautiful Anatole Hilton in Dallas Texas. Over 600 women and 45 priests gathered together to celebrate the theme, *Catholic Women: Living the Joy of the Gospel!* Prior to the official Convention kick-off, an optional comprehensive tour of Dallas was offered on September 5th. The following day, an optional tour of Fort Worth Highlights included a longhorn cattle drive right down the main street!

On Wednesday, a beautiful Leadership Liturgy (open to all) was held with the Chair of the Spiritual Advisors, Rev. Richard Dawson, as the principal celebrant. Following Mass, the Board of Directors met. The NCCW Leadership enjoyed a luncheon with Mother Susan Catherine Kennedy as the speaker. On Wednesday evening we had a very special treat courtesy of Carmel Communications, a Silver Sponsor of Convention. They provided a free pre-release screening of a major movie, *Same Kind of Different as Me* and we were privileged to have the author of the book, Ron Hall, with us to speak with us after the movie.

On Thursday, after a general opening session our keynote speaker, Mary Rice Hasson, spoke to us on the theme of How to Be a Joyful Catholic Woman in a post-Christian World. She encouraged us to embrace our "label" of Catholic women proudly. To understand how our Catholic identity informs our lives in whatever station we hold and to draw comfort and strength from being women with our unique gifts, offering them to the world and the Church. Thursday afternoon, we heard the commission workshops. First was Spirituality who presented: Women on a Journey-Sharing Our Stories. We were reminded of all the incredible work we do to bring Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy to our world. Next, the Leadership Commission addressed the difficulties of securing new women for leadership positions by using a wonderful skit. They then provided a great Power Point talk on mentoring that went with a mentoring handout in our convention bags. Last, the Service Commission had Kathy Bonner speak powerfully on Domestic Violence, showing us how simple it is to use the new step-by-step NCCW Guide to Help End Domestic Violence. They concluded their session with a video that demonstrated how to make mats for the homeless from the plastic bags one receives at various stores like grocery stores. The Opening Liturgy on Thursday was beautiful. Anne Boyer was again our Liturgy Coordinator and as masterful and organized as always. Over 345 attendees gathered Thursday evening for the hilarious *Sister's Christmas Catechism: The Mystery of the Magi's Gold*. In short, just about everything you might recall from your grammar school days if you attended your parochial grammar school was a topic for Sister.

We began Friday morning outside in the Sculpture Garden on a gorgeous day. We gathered there to be led through the Joyful Mysteries of the Holy Rosary in a rosary developed by our Spirituality Commission that is titled, *Rosary Mediation on the Dignity of Women*. At 8am we gathered for breakfast after which we heard from a most extraordinary young woman, Stacy Thomlison. Using her amazing life story (to date!) she showed us how trusting in the path that God gives to us leads one to a fulfillment that can never be achieved from following what the world calls success. Currently serving as a missionary for FOCUS in Rwanda, Stacy recalled her early life, her highs and lows, and demonstrated that even when God does not seem to be listening, He really is. We next met for Mass where we greeted our Past Presidents who each carried a yellow rose to the altar where the flowers were placed in a vase near a lovely portrait of Our Lady. The intention of the Mass was for our deceased Council members. Friday afternoon, President Sheila Hopkins called the Annual Business Meeting to order and after observing the required formalities, we heard the officer's reports, passed one Bylaw amendment, and 6 resolutions: Cultural Diversity, Mentoring, Respite, Legislative Advocacy, Praying for Our Country,

and Return of Lapsed Catholics. All passed, though some with minor modifications. The resolutions as passed may be found on our website. That night, the Province of San Francisco met with the Provinces of Atlanta, Cincinnati, and Denver for a fun Province Dinner.

Saturday, we gathered in general session to listen to our speaker for the day, Dale Recinella, who explained how his ministry and that of his wife, bring the light of Christ to those in the deepest despair in our prisons, particularly those who are sentenced to death. He spoke to us of how prison ministry can illumine the lives of those incarcerated, making them better people, and how it touches the lives of all those involved. We then moved into a most entertaining session presented by the LTD Team called, *LTD Live-Dallas Edition!* Using the format of a morning talk show, we had segments on cooking, weather, news, etc. all with information on how the LTD team can help you establish or rejuvenate your Council of Catholic Women. In the afternoon, we began our sessions with the 7 Dolors of Mary Rosary, guided by a Power Point and our Spirituality Chair, Beth Mahoney. It was touching and beautiful, relating Mary's sorrows to those experienced by mothers, grandmothers, aunts, really anyone who loves a child and sees that child hurt in any way. President Hopkins opened the closing session with prayer and after some reports we installed the new Province Directors, gave a gift to President Hopkins and then were invited to the next NCCW Convention in Pittsburgh on August 20-September 1, 2018. We celebrated the closing Liturgy and installed the new NCCW officers. That evening we met for the last time to enjoy the banquet and were entertained by a local folklore group.

All of you are cordially invited to the San Francisco Province Meeting

- WHEN: Friday, February 9, 2018 - Sunday, February 11, 2018
WHERE: Crystal Inn 230 West 500 South Salt Lake City, Utah 84101
COST: \$225.00 registration fee (includes meals: Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, & dinner; and Sunday breakfast & lunch)
LODGING: Individuals will make their own room reservations by calling 801-328-4466 and referencing group code CWE318. 15 rooms have been blocked until January 9, 2018. The rates are as follows: Single/Double \$102.00; Triple \$112.00; Quad \$122.00 per night. The unused portion of the room block will revert back to the hotel for general sales on January 9, 2018.
MISC: Free shuttle to and from the airport by calling 801-328-4466. Free complimentary parking for overnight and day time guests.
DEADLINE: January 9, 2018

The focus will be Legislative Advocacy, Cultural Diversity, Mentoring and Respite. More information will be available at the next DCCW meeting.

Love and Prayers,

Pat Voorhes
2017-2018 Province Director