



Photo credit: Diocese of St. Petersburg Web-sites

Angie Ducker is a Sacred Heart Council of Catholic Women Member

## Tampa Women Steps Outside Her Comfort Zone to Live the Gospel Courageously

After many years away from the Church, Angie Ducker returned to the faith renewed and eager to be a more faithful, dedicated follower of Jesus. What she didn't expect was the invitation to become a leader. Initially hesitant, Ducker answered the call to head up Sacred Heart Parish's Eucharistic Ministry at Tampa General Hospital. She has seen the ministry bear great fruit and grow to include over 60 members who weekly bring the Body of Christ and spiritual comfort to the sick and suffering.

"Sometimes our Catholic faith inspires us to step out of our comfort zone and live the Gospel courageously. Eucharistic Ministry at Tampa General Hospital was one such step for me," said Ducker. "I was scared to say the least because being a convert and then again a 'revert,' this was not in my plans. But today I am glad I accepted this challenge. It is quite rewarding knowing you provide spiritual comfort to the sick-especially at a time when they need the strength and comfort of the Lord. Through our smiles, prayers before Holy Communion, a light touch, and of course the Eucharist, I know we are a vessel of the Lord's comfort and peace."

"Each and every time I approach the altar after the Sign of Peace, I realize the magnitude and responsibility of being a Eucharistic Minister," said Ducker. "I am so truly grateful for this privilege. I'm also humbled. I look into the eyes of

each and every person receiving the Eucharist and an absolute joy fills my own heart and soul when I prayerfully say, 'The Body of Christ' or 'The Blood of Christ.'

She emphasizes that the ministries at the parish are able to extend God's love and mercy because of the comradery and teamwork of the men and women who work together for a cause and goal.

"It's the love we share for what we do. The teams I work with are the glue that binds our efforts in courageously living the gospel," said Ducker.

Ducker is also involved in the Altar Server, Hospitality and Event Planning Ministry, serves on the Liturgical Environment Committee and has been an RCIA sponsor for five years. She is grateful to give back to a community that has done so much for her.

"After the passing of my husband, I found myself yearning for something more in my life, a closer walk with Christ. I discovered Sacred Heart Church and immediately felt this joyful community of churchgoers, welcoming friars and the invitation to participate – better stated, a sense of belonging," said Ducker.

"I truly believe that we are given opportunities to share our faith by our actions in our daily lives," said Ducker. "We serve Christ when we serve others and share of ourselves with others."

Angie Ducker is a 2019 St. Jude the Apostle Award Honoree.

# EXECUTIVE BOARD

## ELIZABETH AUBIN

### DIOCESAN PRESIDENT



From Left: Sonia Tummings, Linda LaGrande, Doreen Ward, Linda Seufert, Alma Shamblin, Josephine Maestas, Melissa Garrett, and Elizabeth Aubin

Greetings Council Sisters, we should be very grateful that we did not get Hurricane Dorian. We need to continue to pray for the people of the islands, as they recover from the devastation. It has been a very hot and busy summer and fall. At the SPDCCW 51st Convention our new officers were installed. President Beth Aubin, (St. Joseph Parish) First Vice President Melissa Garrett (Corpus Christi), Second Vice President Josephine Maestas, (St. Patrick) Recording Secretary Alma Shamblin (Incarnation), Corresponding Secretary Chave Johnson (Sacred Heart) who had other commitments, we thank her for her help. We now have Elizabeth Butterfield, (Our Lady of the Rosary) as our Corresponding Secretary.

I would like to thank all the ladies who helped make the Summer Workshop a success. Our First Vice President did a fantastic job.

Eleven of our ladies attended the 99th NCCW Convention in Atlanta, Ga., Theme “**Caring for God’s Creation**” 700 members from all over the country from Minnesota, Idaho, Texas, California, and many from Florida. We had three full days of wonderful speakers, lots of information, there was also many Spiritual Advisors in attendance. The **NCCW 100th Convention is in Washington, D.C. in August, 2020.**

We had a meeting with Bishop Parkes in September to ask what the Council could do for the Diocese. Funds we will continue to support, the Burse Club, the Purse Club, Heavenly Benefactors, and the Scholarship fund. Bishop Parkes asked us to check with Fr. Chuck Dornquist, Director

of Vocations, to discuss the Purse Fund, how we can help here in the Diocese. We have a meeting scheduled with him in October. Volunteer hours will not be necessary anymore, **HOORAY!!!** The other Diocese are not collecting hours.

The **Theme for our 52nd SPDCCW Convention** with the Bishop’s approval will be “**Courageously Living the Gospel, through the Lives of Catholic Women. April 30th – May 3rd mark your calendars!**”

We have a statue for our scholarship fund to raise funds for someone to go to our Convention in May. “Generations” a Christian Sculpture by Timothy Schmalz.

Our Spirituality Commission Chairman, Sonia Tummings, planed an ADVENT RETREAT on Dec 7th, 2019 Fr. Mike Owens, has planned a full day. All of the Districts and Affiliations where invited to the retreat.

Fr Ted , Mary Woltman, Gail Merrill (who has joined the Service Committee of FCCW) and attended the fall meeting in Orlando Oct 4th. At this meeting, Sheila Hopkins, FCCW President, asking for help, for storm victims, items, etc. Our SPDCCW made a donation to the Catholic Relief Services.

Our Lady of Grace had their Fall Conference, what a great job Elaine Lee and her officers do for the community.

WANT TO JOIN OUR COUNCIL JUST VISIT OUR WEBSITE [www.spdccw.org](http://www.spdccw.org) and I will contact you.

*May Our Lady of Good Counsel  
pray for you and your families.*

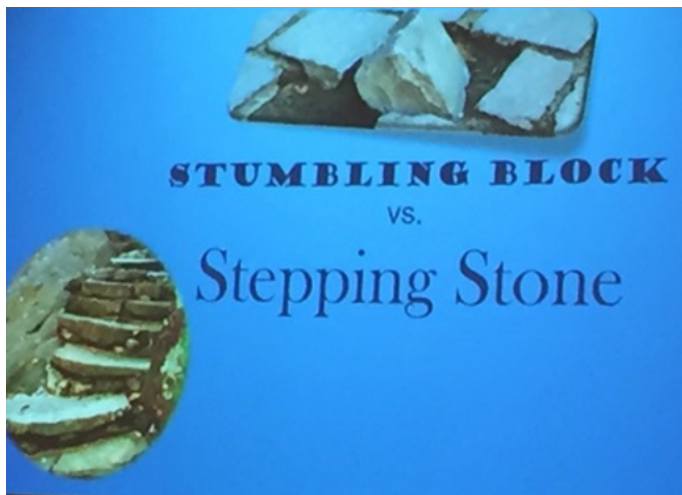


# MELISSA GARRETT

DIOCESAN FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

It has truly been a great summer. We have had many great events and leadership opportunities. It started with our 51st Annual Convention May 2-5, 2019. We had great speakers. The theme for that convention was “Courageously Living the Gospel with Mary as our Guide”. That was followed by the Orlando Diocesan Council of Catholic Women’s (“ODCCW”) Leadership Symposium at Lake Yale July 27&28, 2019 and our St. Petersburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women’s (“SPDCCW”) Leadership Workshop; the theme was “Every Pot has a Lid”. The summer concluded with the 99th Annual Convention of the National Council of Catholic Women (“NCCW”) held in Atlanta, GA, where over 600 women and priests gathered together to celebrate the theme, *NCCW Caring for God’s Creation*.

## SPDCCW Convention Highlights:



Our keynote speaker was Sr. Mary Jackson. She gave a great talk reminding us that with God all things are possible; God can overcome anything. God said – I know that virginity would be a block to having a baby, but He overcame that with the birth of Jesus to Mary Ever Virgin. Mary was Courageous when she said “YES”. When we have a problem such as, overwhelming responsibilities, family conflicts or disappointments, health difficulties, or financial issues, do we allow our encounter with God to diminish or do we lean on Him for strength? **Will that problem be a stumbling block or stepping stone? They look the same, the only difference is the way we use them.**

Saturday was filled with breakout sessions for our three commissions: Service, Spirituality and Leadership.

- **Service:** Respecting the Right to a Dignified Life. There was a discussion on the movement toward allowing assisted suicide in Florida; it is one to be feared and is certainly not something that is in line with our Catholic faith.
- **Spirituality:** The Joy of the Gospel. There was an activity which focused on highlights from the five chapters in the church document written by Pope Francis.
- **Leadership:** Leadership, what does it look like? By our baptism, we are called to be priest, to be holy; we are called to be a prophet, speaking on behalf of God; and we are called to be a king, for servant leadership for self-care – physical, emotional, intellectual, social. What is the most important quality of leadership? Listening and mentoring.

Throughout the weekend, we also enjoyed great fellowship with our sisters in Christ. It is always a joy to see old friends and to make new ones.

## ODCCW Leadership Symposium at Lake Yale Highlights:

They had many great sessions during the weekend with sessions for our three commissions: Service, Spirituality and Leadership.

- **Service:** Evangelization and Faith – Faith without action is death. Be faithful in “action”, get up and move. Evangelization is service – when we are doing service for others you are acting and sharing God’s love.
- **Spirituality:** They told the story of Mary and the Rosemary plant. It was a great story about how when Mary touched the white blossoms on the Rosemary plant they changed to blue.



- **Leadership:** How to WIN the battle of membership. W – Welcomed – we must make the guests and members feel welcome, greet them with a smile, and wear your name tag. I – Important and Informed. N – Needed. Invite her to help. Start meetings with introductions of speakers. Ask if there is anyone there for the first time. If so, ask them to tell the group a little about themselves, also introduce her to a mentor. Invite her to return, offer to pick her up and take her home; tell her who the people are and why they are setting there or reporting on something; tell her we are part of a bigger organization (FCCW, NCCW, WUCWO). If a member misses a meeting, give her a call. Listen to ideas. Survey all members, even those that are just a name on a list and you never see at a meeting. Have hostesses greet everyone at the meetings. Keep them engaged by not using “foreign” terminology (NCCW). Keep negativity down – nothing spreads quicker than a wildfire except negativity. Start with an icebreaker or a positive sharing session.

## SPDCCW Leadership Workshop Highlights:

We had great breakout sessions for the different officer positions as well as the commissions. One of the best sessions I led was the one entitled “Council Soup”. It was a reminder that all the women of council have diverse backgrounds and varied personal and professional responsibilities within both council and our daily lives. Each District had a representative that was a vegetable in our soup. It started with a pot (a blow-up pool) and a stone (a nod to the folk story of Stone Soup), Immediate Past-President, Cathy Pena. The Eggplant, President Elizabeth Aubin, kept trying to be a part of our soup, but she was spreading rumors or gossip, spreading negativity and failing to communicate with others, so she was not allowed in the soup pot. A reminder that those are the things that work against our councils.



## NCCW Convention Highlights:

The National Convention was amazing. Three days jam packed with speakers and activities to excite and invigorate the members. Many of the speakers focused on the theme for the convention; sharing information and innovations to help save our planet and care for God's Creation. One of the best speakers during



the convention was Kim Polote who sang and gave her presentation titled: *The Divine Shopping Spree...Being a Kept Woman in His Word*.

She began with a slow, beautiful rendition of *How Great Thou Art* and then she began her talk. Imagine there was a great sale at the mall. It was a great sale. So, of course you had to tell your friends and encourage them to go. She said what God has done for us is far better than that sale and she can't help but share that. It's like a divine shopping spree. When you feel down, you go shopping and it makes you feel better – Sale – Clearance – there are no better words. This shopping spree costs nothing because our debt has been fully paid.

If I gave you a gift, wouldn't you open it? Wouldn't I enjoy seeing you open that gift? Wouldn't I enjoy seeing you wear that gift? What if I know you re-gifted it? I guess you didn't really like it. You didn't really receive it with the spirit in which I gave it. God's gift was dying on the Cross. Nails couldn't keep Him on the Cross, LOVE did. He paid a debt, a price He didn't owe. Do we receive that gift with the full spirit of the gift?

There is so much more I could share from her talk, but I want to keep your attention peaked because there is a possibility we will have the great pleasure of having her at our next convention – the 52nd Annual Convention 4/30-5/3/2020.

Please join us there.

# JOSEPHINE MAESTAS

## DIOCESAN SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

After years of wanting to attend, I was finally able to attend the Lake Yale Leadership Symposium hosted by the Orlando DCCW. I learned a lot and can't wait to attend next year. Here are some highlights of what I brought back:

- One of the first things they did was have a panel of all of the Past Orlando Diocesan Presidents in which they took turns answering a variety of questions, such as how did they become part of their CCW, when did they decide to run for President, what talent helped them the most to be President, who mentored them - just to name a few.
- I also learned that you should take whatever job/position you have seriously but not yourself and if you don't delegate you are being sinful by not allowing others to do God's work with the talents, He gave them.
- We should all know the acronym WIN – Welcome, Important and Needed. This is how we want to feel and how we should strive to make others feel within our various levels of council. Meetings should be welcoming from the start to the very end.

I also was very blessed to have attended my very first National Convention in Atlanta. **WOW** seems to sum it up best for me as I hit the ground running from the moment, we entered the hotel. One thing I noticed and very much enjoyed was that if we step out of our comfort zone and are opened to sit with people outside of our group, we have the opportunity to meet so many new people from all over the country. Although there were 4 of us that always seemed to sit together, it left room at our table which allowed me to connect with people from Iowa, Michigan, South Carolina

just to name a few. This could and should act as a simple act that we could implement at any event, meeting, conference, convention, etc. we attend. One of my favorite sessions was the Spirituality Commission Session – they covered 3 topics

- **Bullies** – Bullies prey on people they perceive are weaker than themselves. In today's technology world, bullying happens more often than not on social media such as Facebook, twitter, etc. In the world today with all the air brushing pictures of celebrities, model, etc. we face body shaming. Another form of shaming is job shaming which often happens in the workplace. It is up to us to teach out future. Listening is the second part of communication.
- **Suicide** – Suicide hotline is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You are always a child of God and God's love never fails us. Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Shame, stigma and judgements associated with suicide complicate the healing process for the families. There is always hope and a little kindness goes a long way. They shared a story where a man was on his way to kill himself and he had a note that said if one person smiles at him while he is making his way to his destination then he would not kill himself – he ended his life.
- **Loss of a child** – how to turn loss into love – turn to God. Block the sorrow head toward joy. The souls are in Heaven that we will one day see.

*May the Blessed Mother Mary's loving arms always be wrapped around you.*

# SONIA TUMMINGS

## DIOCESAN SPIRITUALITY COMMISSIONER

At the September 14th, 2019 board meeting, Kathryn Huey (St. Joan of Arc) and I discussed having a retreat in the fall. We also discuss the 2020 convention and finding a speaker. Both Kathryn and I wanted someone from the Pastoral Center. The topic would be keeping in line with our convention "theme".

Since the board meeting, I was able to procure Corpus Christi Church for an Advent day of reflection on December 7th, 2019. Thank you to all that attended.

*Blessings to you and yours.*

## COMMISSION CHAIR

*Advent*  
A Season of Hope  
& Expectation

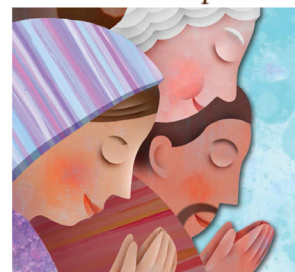






Photo credit: Diocese of St. Petersburg Web-sites

Thank you to all who are praying for vocations. There are 16 men studying for the priesthood in our Diocese. Your prayers are working. To read about our seminarians, go to <https://www.dosp.org/vocations/meet-our-seminarians/>. The Vocations Office has a wonderful new prayer card

with pictures of all the seminarians. You may order them for your affiliation.

Follow St. John Vianney and St. Vincent DePaul Seminary on Facebook.

## FOCUS 11

Focus 11 is February 11-12, 2020, at Higgins Hall, St. Lawrence in Tampa. They love the DCCW cookies!

## BVF CARDS

Please use the Bishop's Vocation Fund cards. The \$10 donation for each card helps educate our seminarians. The seminarians pray for the person named on the card, who is also remembered in the masses at St. John Vianney and St. Vincent DePaul Seminaries. We have memorial, get well, and celebration cards. Encourage your affiliation to use them; encourage your members to use them personally. Every affiliate should have cards so that they are easily available to its members.

## PENNIES FOR PRIESTS

Encourage your affiliations, your parish schools, your families to have their own "Pennies for Priests" jar. Tell them when they get a penny, to say a prayer for vocations or for a particular priest, deacon, or religious, and put the penny in the jar. Never put money in the jar without saying a prayer for each coin deposited. Putting the money in the jar is a reminder to pray for vocations; seeing the amount of money in the jar increase serves as a visual tool to show how many prayers have been offered for vocations. Affiliates send the money they've collected to the DCCW treasurer before convention to be given to the Bishop for seminarian support. Families or parish schools may wish to use their penny jar money to support vocations in a different way, although the DCCW will be happy to receive it.

PRAY for VOCATIONS.

*"The harvest is plenty, but the laborers are few."*

**BARBARA BYARS**

DIOCESAN BISHOP'S VOCATION FUND



## ELAINE LEE

### OUR LADY OF GRACE DISTRICT, PRESIDENT

we can accomplish if we are united in Christ and His will. I want us to come together in three areas: Spirituality, Service and Leadership.

**Spirituality:** We had a Day of Reflection Nov 16, 8:30am-3pm at Sacred Heart North Campus. All Catholic Women were invited. It was a wonderful day of reflection with fellow women.

There will be another Day of Reflection in the Spring at St Patrick's, more information to come.

**Service:** We are Collecting Shoes for underprivileged children to be distributed at Easter.

**Leadership:** We developed a new member kit template to be used by affiliates, to be given out to new members. We created an OLG Gmail account to streamline/coordinate district email correspondence. We created an Eventbrite account for events going forward. Lastly, we updated our standing rules by adding two new standing rules.

Besides bringing our district together in common projects, my other goal is to bring more women to the Council of Catholic Women. To accomplish this, we opened our Fall Conference up to all women of the District. We sent invites to all the churches in our district. We offered registration the conventional way thru each affiliate CCW as well as Eventbrite. We had 79 attendees, 22 first time attendees,

many who were not members of a CCW. We gave information on how to join and offered to visit any church that doesn't have a CCW. We have planted the seed.

We had two speakers, Marty Kelly, Director of Project Shoes and Ana Hidalgo Stooks, Director of Guiding Star of Tampa. Both speakers were very informative about their respective Ministries.

Project Shoes provides shoes for underprivileged children in our neighborhoods. Boys & Girls Clubs, Christo Rey, and St Peter Claver are a few of the recipients. Last year they gave 1300 pairs of shoes to children at Easter.

Guiding Star of Tampa is a life affirming pro women's healthcare practice in Lutz, FL. The practice offers alternatives to the women thru ultrasound, the abortion pill reversal, and wellness checkups, whether you have insurance or not.

As a fundraiser we invited Marla Moran, an ambassador for Sanctuary Girl to be a vendor at our Conference. Their mission is to empower and embolden women to share their faith and their story. Marla donated a portion of the sales to us. We still had Share the Wealth & Chinese Auction.

Our Lady of Grace District is assigned Fun Night, Saturday, May 2 at the SPDCCW Convention. We formed a committee to plan the event, our basket & table décor. More information will be coming. It's going to be FUN; you won't want to miss it.

OLG Spring Conference will be March 14, 2020 at Sacred Heart North Campus. More detail to come in the Spring Newsletter.

## REV. TED COSTELLO

### SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

The January Board meeting of the St. Petersburg DCCW will be held on January 11, 2020. The meeting will take place at Espiritu Santo Catholic Church, 2405 Phillippe Pkwy, Safety Harbor, FL. 34695 (727) 812-4650

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