

Oh Holy Night

National Chaplain

Rev. Shenan J. Boquet

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*The National Board
and the National Staff
pray that you & your families
will be filled
with the Joy and Love
of the Christ Child.*

*The National Chaplain
will be praying for
the Catholic Daughters
and their families
during the Christmas Season*

*Merry Christmas
and
a Blessed New Year*



Catholic Daughters of the Americas[®]
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QUARTERLY**



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December 2023

National Regent's Message

Emily Guilherme,
National Regent



Dear Catholic Daughters of the Americas,

As we approach the wondrous season of Advent and the heartwarming celebration of Christmas, I want to share some thoughts on how we can prepare our hearts and souls for the coming of Jesus Christ. Advent is a season of joyful anticipation, a time of waiting for the arrival of our Savior, and Christmas is the culmination of that heartwarming expectation.

Advent, a word that means "coming," reminds us to prepare for Jesus' arrival not only in the manger but also in our hearts and souls. During this season, we embark on a spiritual journey, much like the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem. It's a time to reflect on the miracle of Jesus' birth and the profound love God has for us.

One profoundly beautiful way to deepen your Advent experience is through Eucharistic Adoration. In the quiet moments spent in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, we have a unique opportunity to encounter Jesus in a deeply personal and intimate way. In His Eucharistic presence, we can reflect on the mystery of God's love and the gift of Christ's real presence among us. Consider setting aside time for Eucharistic Adoration during Advent, allowing the tranquility and stillness to open your heart to Jesus' coming.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas, let us immerse ourselves in Advent traditions and practices, such as the lighting of the Advent candles. These candles symbolize the growing anticipation of Christ's arrival and the ever-increasing light of hope in our lives. Eucharistic Adoration wonderfully complements these traditions, inviting us to meditate on the divine light that Christ brings into our world.

In addition to Eucharistic Adoration, let us embrace the sacrament of Reconciliation during this sacred season. Just as Advent is a time of preparation, reconciliation is a powerful way to cleanse our souls and make room for the arrival of Jesus. Through the sacrament of confession, we can acknowledge our shortcomings, seek forgiveness, and experience the healing grace of God's mercy. Reconciliation not only purifies our souls but also strengthens our connection with Christ.

One essential aspect of Advent is the virtue of patience. Just as Mary and Joseph waited in joyful hope for the birth of Jesus, we, too, should embrace patience in our lives. This season provides an excellent opportunity to nurture patience in our interactions with others, in our prayer life, and in our daily routines. By cultivating patience, we create space in our hearts and souls for the true meaning of Christmas.

In our bustling, commercial world, where the material aspects of Christmas often take center stage, it is critical to remember the importance of humility. The humble circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth teach us that God often works through the simplest moments of our lives. Let us approach Christmas with the same humility, recognizing that Jesus comes to us in the innocence of a newborn child. This humility can be expressed through acts of kindness, charity, and service to others.

As Catholic Daughters, we have such a special role in spreading the love of Christ during this season. Consider organizing charity drives, volunteering in your communities, or supporting causes that resonate with our faith. These acts of kindness are a reflection of Christ's love and serve as a reminder of the true spirit of giving during Christmas.

Advent is also a time for deepening our faith through prayer and reflection. Set aside time for daily Advent reflections, seeking to draw closer to God as we prepare for the birth of His Son. Pray for peace in our world, for healing, and for the well-being of those who are suffering. Additionally, offer prayers for our Church and its leaders, as they guide us on our faith journey.

Finally, as we gather with our families to celebrate Christmas, let us remember that the heart of the celebration is the birth of Jesus. Share the Nativity story with your loved ones, emphasizing the significance of Jesus' arrival in our lives. Create a warm and loving atmosphere in your homes, filled with gratitude and appreciation for the gift of God's love.

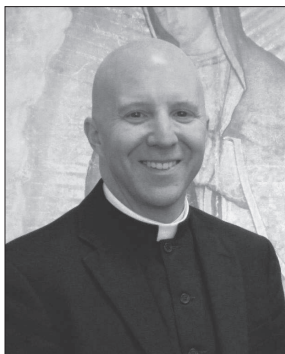
I invite you to fully participate as we prepare our hearts and souls for Jesus' Advent and Christmas joy, let us embrace the true meaning of these sacred seasons. Advent is a time of hope, patience, and humility, while Christmas is a season of joy, love, and celebration. Through Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, and by living out these virtues, we can experience the fullness of God's presence in our hearts and souls during this profoundly heartwarming season.

With heartfelt warmth and love in Christ,

Emily Guilherme
National Regent
Catholic Daughters of the Americas



National Chaplain, Rev. Shenan Boquet



“Prepare the Way of the Lord”

Sacred Scripture is replete with verses that inspire and motivate us to grow in the wisdom of God and to live a life that is pleasing to our Creator. Luke 3:4 is one such verse in which we are invited to grow in union with God by preparing the way of the Lord, making straight His paths.

God wants to be a part of every aspect of our lives. As St. Augustine says, “Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee.” The restlessness of which St. Augustine speaks occurs when we live a double life, compartmentalizing our lives into family life, work life, social life, political life, Church life, etc. But this is not how God wants us to live or how He wants us to treat our relationship with Him. “There is just one life, made of flesh and spirit,” says St. Josemaría Escrivá, “and it is this life which has to become, in both soul and body, holy and filled with God.”

The Apostle Paul teaches us “that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). God has a purpose, and we who have been made in His image and likeness (cf. Genesis 1:26-27) have been created as part of that purpose and for a purpose. For God who “chose us in [Christ], before the foundation of the world... destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will” (Ephesians 1:5-6; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 294). Hence, we find in union with God *all* that we can desire.

As precursor of the Lord, St. John the Baptist exhorted people to make themselves ready, morally and spiritually, for the Messiah. When the crowds asked for guidance, John said, “Whoever has two tunics should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise.” To the tax collectors he said, “Stop collecting more than what is prescribed.” And to the soldiers who asked what they ought to do he said, “Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages” (Luke 3:10-14). In other words, repent, amend your ways, and turn toward God. Sadly, many in Israel failed to heed John’s prophetic word and did not recognize the Messiah when He walked among them.

The days of Advent are a time of **preparation that** direct our attention to Christ’s second coming and to the anniversary of Our Lord’s nativity on Christmas (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 524). They call us to repentance, conversion, renewal, and remind us that we must be vigilant, ready to welcome the Lord when He comes—always remembering that “[we] know neither the day nor the hour” (Matthew 25:13).

Are we ready?

Each year much of the world, in some manner, celebrates Christmas. But have hearts and minds been truly converted to the ways of God, adhering to His commands and leading lives that are pleasing to Him? Has a clear and straight path been made for the Lord?

Sadly, many ignore the opportunity being offered, allowing the invitation of Advent and Christmas to pass them by yet again. Nothing changes. For a moment, the world stops and offers some recognition—religious services, festivities, lights, and tinsel—but it ultimately rejects the core message of the One who “came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

But this ought not to be our response.

Having been transformed by the love of God in Christ Jesus and by fulfilling the purpose for which we have been made, we make straight a path for the Lord. We remove all obstacles that block His way and prevent Him from reigning in our minds, hearts, and lives. We create room for God to straighten the crooked ways in our life and to guide us on our spiritual pilgrimage toward Him. And in cooperation with His abundant grace—having removed the wooden beam from our eye first (cf. Matthew 7:3-5)—we humbly strive by word and example to “straighten” the life of each family member and the life of our society.

The whole of our life, therefore, is to aim at being in union with God and to realize Luke 3:4, which so perfectly summarizes the daily life of a Christian, who prepares self, family, and society to welcome the Lord when He comes. To this end, let us form holy habits and live virtuous lives that strengthen our union with God, where His will is maintained and deepened. Let us live out the Great Command by loving God and neighbor (cf. Matthew 22:36-40), and let us work to please God, to do all for His glory, and with hearts filled with gratitude to lead every soul we meet to salvation.



Walk for Life
January 19, 2024

JCDA Day
February 18, 2024

2024 60th Biennial National Convention
August 14-18, 2024
Riverside Hilton
New Orleans, Louisiana

*Included
in this issue...*



- National Chaplain's Message
- National Regent's Message
- Christmas Prayer Service
- Membership
- Bylaw requirements



Catholic Daughters of the Americas Bylaws

Susan Moné, National Regent Elect

Although our National Convention 2024 in New Orleans seems far away, it will be here before we know it. Now is the time to be planning for the pre-convention requirements and deadlines to be met in preparation for the Convention.

The Bylaws for our organization is one of those pre-convention considerations. Bylaws are the foundation for our organization to keep all members on track and to keep consistency within the entire membership. Bylaws are the written rules for the conduct of business in our organization. Bylaws are the framework for us to have a firm, strong organization. It is every member's opportunity to have a voice in changes or additions for the good of our organizations.

Who can submit a proposed bylaw change? Bylaws may be voted on and submitted by:

1) Campus Court, 2) Local Court, 3) State Board, 4) State Court, 5) National Board, and 6) National Bylaw committee. Bylaws for proposed changes can be found in our 2022 bylaw book on page 49, Article XXI.

The National Committee on Bylaws shall receive and review all proposed changes to the Bylaws. The Bylaws may be amended at any Biennial National Convention by a two-third (2/3) vote of the delegates present, provided written notice has been submitted to the Local and State Courts four months prior to the Convention. Note, it is possible that not all bylaws submitted will be brought to the floor by the Bylaw Committee at the Convention.

There is an exception for an emergency amendment to be proposed at a Biennial Convention without the 4-month prior notice if it has been approved by the National Bylaw Committee by three-fourth (3/4) vote of the full membership of the committee. The Bylaws may be amended by such an amendment only if approved at any Biennial National Convention by three-fourth (3/4) of the National Court present.

Approved amendments must be signed by the State Regent and State Secretary or by the Local Regent and Recording Secretary. Local courts need to send a copy of the amendments proposed with the rationale to the State Regent. An example of how to write a Bylaw can be found in the Tools of the Trade, Section 4, page 62, Attachment 23.

All proposed Bylaw Amendments must be postmarked by January 15, 2024. Five (5) copies of each amendment proposal are to be sent to the Bylaws Chair with one amendment per page. Send to: Susan Moné, 2550 S. Ellsworth Road #535, Mesa, AZ 85209



New Court

Saint Andrew #2792

Instituted - September 26, 2023

Carol Laurence, Regent

125 N. Allen Avenue

Pasadena, CA 91106

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A Family Christmas to Remember

I am sure that just like me, you can recollect some of your favorite family Christmas moments. There is even a movie titled “*An Old-Fashioned Christmas.*” Why do so many families try to make their family Christmas season one like they had growing up? Is it the nostalgia or the wonder they felt as children? What are some of your favorite childhood Christmas memories?

My fondest memories of Christmas are of gathering as a family. Big meals were always part of those gatherings. I remember playing games with my nieces that were my age. I remember listening to Bing Crosby and Elvis singing Christmas songs from my mom’s stereo. The stereo was a piece of furniture in our living room. I bet many of you had one of those too. I remember a few of the toys and gifts I received. I have few of those left but the fond memories linger.

How can we create a Christmas that our families will always remember? Spending time and making memories will last much longer than the beautifully wrapped gifts. It is not the money spent but the time and quality of that time given to our families.

Here are a few suggestions that just might lead to those memories. Maybe your family has done some of these. Perhaps you could add one or two to your holiday season.

1. Celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas on December 5. Find the story of St. Nicholas at <https://www.stnicholascenter.org>.
2. Celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12. Pray a litany to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Plan a Mexican feast for dinner.
3. Play Kris-Kringle by pulling names among family members on December 1. Family members must secretly leave a message for their secret pal each day. Maybe give each family member a pad of Post-it Notes. On Sunday, they can give a little gift to their secret pal. Set a \$1.00 limit.
4. Start listening to Christmas music. Sing along as a family. Act out the *Twelve Days of Christmas*. Go Christmas caroling in your neighborhood. Maybe invite another family to go with you. Make a Christmas Playlist. Teens can help with this one.
5. Volunteer in your church or community. Call your parish office to inquire how your family could help at church. Help decorate your church for Christmas.
6. Choose a needy family to help out at Christmas. Many churches have an Angel tree for parishioners can take a name from the tree and bring back a gift. Bring a needy family all the ingredients they need for their Christmas Dinner.
7. Bake a Christmas treat that is not a cookie. Have you ever tried to bake a figgy pudding or a Chocolate Christmas Log?
8. While running errands, play Christmas “I Spy.” See who can find the most front door wreaths, Christmas Trees, or Outdoor Lighted Reindeer.
9. Wear matching Christmas P.J.s. Take silly pictures while wearing them. Maybe you could do this with suggestions #13 or #17.



10. Hold an Eggnog tasting. Round up a few different varieties and hold a festive tasting to discover a new favorite—or find one that's more palatable than the usual. Help the kids bake some Christmas cookies to go with the eggnog.
11. Have a coloring contest. All family members color a copy of the same page, even the parents. Don't put names on them but have a grandparent or neighbor judge them. The prize for first place could be a large candy cane.
12. Build a fire. Put your fuzzy socks! If you don't have a fireplace, build a fire outside and make smores. Read a Christmas Story.
13. Have a Family Slumber Party by sleeping by the Christmas Tree. Pull out those sleeping bags and sleep as a family under the twinkling lights of the Christmas Tree.
14. Give an unexpected gift. Is there an elderly person in your neighborhood? If not, you could call a senior center or nursing home. There are always some who don't have family and friends who live close to them.
15. Go on a Christmas Scavenger Hunt. Split the family into teams and ask them to find a range of Christmas-related items or take pictures of each other doing a list of festive tasks. Think making a snow angel or singing a Christmas carol to the neighbors.
16. Send a Christmas card to a soldier. The holidays can be a difficult time for deployed members of the armed forces. Help them with a little Christmas spirit while they are away from home by sending a card to someone who might not otherwise get one. The *Red Cross Holiday for Heroes* can help you with the address to a soldier.
17. Have a Christmas Movie Marathon. When it comes to Christmas movies, there are so many fantastic options on streaming services. From *Elf* to *It's a Wonderful Life*, you can't go wrong. Spend a Friday or Saturday night watching Christmas movies until everyone is asleep.
18. Read a Christmas book, maybe two. Visit your public library and check out a Christmas book for everyone in the family.
19. Go on a Christmas Display Drive. Pack everyone in the car to drive around town to see all of the Christmas displays that local residents have put in their yards. Maybe even put a few strands of lights in your yard.
20. Share Christmas memories from the past. Tell your children and grandchildren stories of how you celebrated Christmas as a child.

I hope that you were inspired to add one or two of these suggestions to your family celebrations this Christmas season. May your family make memories this year as you celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Connie Dronette

2nd Vice National Regent



Junior Catholic Daughters of the America PROCLAMATION 2024

JCDA NATIONAL DAY

Whereas, on February 22, 1926, a religious, faith-based program was created for Catholic girls to practice the Catholic faith and live a life of service and charitable works, and

Whereas, membership in the Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas program is composed of Catholic girls from 6 years of age to 18 years of age, and

Whereas, the Junior Catholic of the Americas motto is “Be Useful” and its standard is to “Love God, Serve Others and Live Nobly, “and

Whereas, the activities of the Junior Catholic Daughters provide leadership skills for a lifelong journey in leading others to do God’s work with their hands; therefore, be it

Resolved, each Junior Catholic Daughter member will pursue meaningful deeds to fulfill the Junior Catholic Daughter program, and be it further

Resolved, that Sunday, February 18, 2024, be observed as the Ninety-Seventh Anniversary of the National Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas Day.

Presented Sunday, February 18, 2024

Signed:



LAS HIJAS CATOLICAS DE LAS AMERICAS PROCLAMA JHCA 2024 Día Nacional de las Cortes Juveniles

- Mientras que,** El 22 de febrero de 1926, fue creado un programa religioso para que las jóvenes católicas practicaran su fe, viviendo una vida de servicio y obras caritativas y
- Mientras que,** la membresía de la Corte Juvenil de las Hijas Católicas de las Américas se compone de un programa para niñas de 6 a 18 años de edad.
- Mientras que,** El lema de la Corte Juvenil de las Hijas Católicas de las Américas es ser una persona útil, amar a Dios, servir a otros y vivir noblemente y
- Mientras que,** Las actividades de la Corte Juvenil les desarrollan destrezas para una jornada de toda la vida de guiar a otros, a hacer las obras de Dios con sus manos, por eso, sea.
- Resuelto,** Cada miembro de la Corte Juvenil perseguirá obras significativas para cumplir con el programa de las Hijas Católicas de las Américas y más.
- Resuelto** que el Domingo, 18 de febrero de 2024 sea observado como el Aniversario número noventa y siete de las Cortes Juveniles de las Hijas Católicas de las Américas.

Presentado el domingo, 18 de febrero del 2024.

Firma: _____





ADVENT.....LESS STRESSING & MORE BLESSING!

Here we are once again near the end of another year and another Advent season. Thank you Lord for the blessing of another year! We all know that Advent is a season of hope, peace, joy and love. It's a time to prepare for the coming of Jesus and to welcome God into our hearts and lives. Why it is that we don't often feel that peaceful? It is easy to get caught up in the holiday hoopla and expectation of the Christmas season with shopping, entertaining, decorating etc. Maybe we can all try to stress less and add something meaningful to our Advent schedule. As we ready our homes, let us ready our hearts as well.

Giving of ourselves with our time as well as our treasure can help support our National Projects and Charities on a more personal level. Money and prayers are always welcome and needed, of course, but real involvement has it's own rewards and is so needed in our parishes and communities. Do you have a favorite cause you believe in? If so, find a way to help. Prayer is good but plan some action or effort if at all possible. Think about the difference you could make in someone's life. What could you do close to home? Here is a short list of some ideas to help in your community. The ideas are really endless and keep in mind the words of Mother Teresa. She says, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

Make food for Habitat workers and volunteers working on a build.

Visit aging clergy or provide a service for a local convent or religious community.

If you live near a port consider getting items needed by those working at the port or those coming from around the world on ships. Contact Apostleship of the Sea or Stella Maris chapters.

Volunteer in some way for Catholic Extension and Charities in your diocese.

Pray the Rosary more often personally or with a group like Father Patrick Peyton of Holy Cross Family Ministries encourages us to do.

National tries to help when disaster strikes but maybe there is some way you could help when tragedy happens near where you live.

Other ways to open our hearts to others could be calling a friend we have been out of touch with, visiting a lonely neighbor or those in nursing facilities, bringing something to a local shelter or volunteering. We can still enjoy special holiday fun and traditions but let's keep our hearts open to others and not forget the **"Real Reason for the Season."**

Michele Bowman, National Director, Chairman of Projects and Charities

Advent Christmas Prayer



In the upcoming holiday season, as we busy ourselves with shopping, gift giving, decorations, let us also remind ourselves of the real meaning of Advent and Christmas. Advent to all Catholics/Christians is a time of preparation. Let us prepare our hearts, minds, and spirits for the Coming of Christ and His presence in our lives. We look forward to the time when we will see Him face to face in eternity. We celebrate His birth.

In the early centuries, Advent or something like it was a prep for baptism at the Epiphany, which made it feel more like Lent. Not until later in the 4th century, with prayer and works of penance, did the West and then the East decide that 25 December was the date to celebrate Christ coming. The Latin word “adventus” which means advent, designates the anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. The Advent season starts on the Sunday closest to the feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle, November the 30th. The following four Sundays and four weeks of preparation of heart, mind, and spirit are for the anniversary of Christ's birth. Something of interest is that Bethlehem is the city of bread. It reminds us that Christ was laid in a feeding trough, a place of food to feed the animals and later, He brought us the mystery of the Eucharist, Bread of Life, food for our soul. The colors used during Advent are important to our faith. Purple is for repentance. Take the time to receive the sacrament of penance to clean our hearts, our minds and our spirit of distractions that cloud the possibility of repentance and redemption. The Rose is for sober and somber rejoicing for the coming festive season Christmas! Saint Bernard Clairvaux read in the liturgy of the hour and gave us three meanings to Advent; 1. The coming of Christ, 2. Coming again to judge the living and dead, 3. Coming into our hearts here and now.

Pope Francis, Angelus, 2018. “Advent invites us to a commitment to vigilance, looking beyond ourselves, expanding our mind and heart in order to open ourselves up to the needs of people, of brothers and sisters and to the desire for a new world.”

During the final days of Advent (Latin. “ad-venae” or to come to), let us focus on our preparation for this great celebration of the Nativity of our Lord at Christmas. In the Old Testament we find hope in proclaiming the fulfillment of the coming of Christ both then and in the present or the future. Luke 21 :34 - 36. “Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.” This leads us to the belief that Christ will come again. Maybe not in our lifetime, but faith said that he will come, and every knee will bend and worship the Lord our God, three in one, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen Alleluia.**

Do you have an Advent wreath and candles? If not, let us construct one. You will need something like a metal hanger to form a circle, wrap it with evergreen leaves. Place three purple candles and one rose candle or a white candle spaced evenly into the wreath. Each week, repeat the mass prayers at home and have your own candle lighting ceremony. Let it remind us of the season's importance, the anticipation of Christ for the second time, and His spirituality. That he came into this world poor but full of love for his children. To save us from our sins while redeeming us for the chance to have eternal life with him in eternity. That our mortal body will no longer feel pain and illness. That we will be able to walk by His side and rejoice in all His graces and blessings.

Let us pray: Lord, let this Advent and Christmas season preparation free our fellow sisters' and brothers' hearts, minds and spirits of all the cobwebs. Those of fear, envy, anger, confusion, gluttony, greed, lust, pride, sloth, disbelief, hurt, arrogant eyes, lying tongues, hands that shed innocent blood, hearts that plot wicked schemes, feet eager to run to evil, lying witnesses who give false testimony, lack of morals and respect of others regardless of race, religious belief or economic status. Those who have lost their faith in You can find a path back. That all life is precious in your eyes. That your children of all ages get to know that your love for us is everlasting. Taking the time to stop and listen with an open heart and mind, for in the silence we might hear your voice clearly with the solution or a direction that brings us closer to you. Let the joy of the season brighten our days and spirit to the wonders of the Lord and that we spread this joy of Christ to others with a smile and a hand of praise. **Amen Alleluia.**

The history of the nativity scene is a custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Christ. It originated with Saint Francis of Assisi who made the first Christmas creche, for Christmas Eve in 1223. When a family puts up the nativity scene at home, a blessing takes place on the vigil of Christmas or at a suitable time by the parent or a family member.

Let us pray: Lord bless all who look upon this Manger, may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus and raise our thoughts to Him who is God- with- us and Savior of all and who lives and reigns forever and ever. **Amen. Alleluia.**

The Christmas tree came to use in a medieval mystery play that used the Tree of Paradise with lights or candles to symbolize Christ as the light of the world. Some customs are to put up the tree up before Christmas and to take it down after the Solemnity of the Epiphany.

Let us pray: Lord, let your blessings come upon us as we illuminate this tree. May the light and cheers that it gives breathe a sign of joy to fill the hearts of your children, young and old in this glorious season. May we delight in the Christmas lights for you are the light of the world, and that salvation will be ours. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen. Alleluia.**

Peace and Blessing this Advent and Christmas Season my sisters in Christ.

Brenda West,
National Director,
Spiritual Enhancement Chairperson



Prepare – Follow – Deliver

The anticipation of Christmas is always a time for us to prepare our hearts, our homes and to be filled with the excitement of welcoming Jesus into our lives; it's my favorite time of year. I want to simplify and summarize Matthew 2:1-11: Three Wise men were called from afar by King Herod, to go east and search for a young child and then return, letting him know the location so that he could go and pay homage. The Wisemen or Magi left their homeland, gathered provisions, and traveled hundreds of miles following a bright Star in the East. The Star guided them to Bethlehem and to a humble stable, where they found the Holy Family. The gifts presented to the Christ child were of the best to offer: Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. Listening to an Angel, the Magi returned home by another route. Indeed, they were Wise men, listening, responding, listening again, and responding. In essence, they prepared, followed, and delivered. This is what Leaders do.

How does this story of the Magi fit into your Catholic Daughter way of life as a Leader? As a Leader, we are in fact called to go forth, with instruction to 'go the distance' and then deliver what is needed. As a local, state, or national leader, there are times when we ask ourselves "Am I really ready to go the distance, with what the Lord is asking of me?" "Am I prepared for what is to come?" It is natural to ask this, but remember, you are not alone. You have guiding 'stars' both now and in the upcoming New Year, 2024, the Blessed Mother and Holy Spirit. What are they guiding you to do? Do you ask for their intercession to help you find solutions, to take new paths and bring your finest gift to this organization? Do you genuinely hear a whisper in your ear or the answer over and over, again and again. You are not going crazy, this is the answer the Holy Spirit, or Blessed Mother is giving you. Will you listen and then act or prepare for what is being asked of you? Stepping forward is scary. However, nothing is impossible with God. Will you be asked to step up and serve at a higher level? Are you strong enough to take a new road for your members? Pray about this possibility and listen for the whisper placed on your heart.

We all have had disappointments, heartbreaks, illness, and distress. That is why turning to our Lord, to follow His ways, His teachings, being as difficult as it may be, is where we need to turn. I have relied on family and friends to pray with me for help and strength during my hard times. Prepare yourself with the tools needed to become a great leader. Do you seek the wisdom of those who have walked the walk? Have you met and discussed the possible options with your Board or has your team become broken? I stress so often that communication is one of the qualities a Leader needs; just to clarify, or explain something. Prayer too is communication of great importance. Have you prayed daily for answers, have you prayed a novena or rosary to invoke your Patron Saint to come to your aid? Be prepared to follow your stars and embark on your journey.

As with those precious gifts the Magi presented to the Child, you will need to deliver. Delivering a gift to your membership is being able to support an idea or answer questions with resolutions; that is all anyone seeks. Delivering an answer to a problem, can be difficult at times, but persistence in your attempt to find a resolution is what a leader is to do. It is easy to bury our heads and hope things go away, but that only delays the many good resolutions that could be found. Pray and Prepare for your journey with faith and knowledge. Deliver the results that are best for your members locally, statewide or nationally. Leadership is not about the power of the office, but the power to encourage, inspire, motivate, and to resolve all that comes before you. Always do the right thing for Catholic Daughters and for our Lord. Are you up for the task to follow as the Wisemen did? I know you can. *Prepare* yourself for what lies ahead. *Follow* your Star to guide you on the journey. *Deliver* the gifts that are needed at this moment in your life, for your family and for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. *Prepare, Follow and Deliver*, just as the Magi did. You got this!

In closing, I wish each of you a Christmas season filled with the joy of knowing a baby, a child sent by God just for you and me. What a beautiful and most precious gift – The King of Kings, Jesus. *Merry Christmas!*

*Brenda Anderson, National Director
Leadership Chair*

Membership

The parable of the mustard seed is a reminder that even a small amount of faith can be powerful. In Matthew 17:20, Jesus says, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to the mountain, ‘move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

During Advent, we are preparing for the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus is the embodiment of God’s Power and Love. He came to the earth to save us from our sins and to give us eternal life.

When we have faith as small as a mustard seed, we are trusting that God loves us and wants what is best for us. During Advent, we can reflect on the parable of the mustard seed and ask ourselves:

- Do I have faith as small as a mustard seed?
- Do I believe that God is powerful enough to do anything?
- Do I trust that God loves me and want what is best for me?

If we can answer yes to these questions, then we can hope for the future. We can know that God is with us and that He will help us through any challenges we face.

Here are some ways that we can cultivate faith as small as a mustard seed during Advent:

- ◆ **SPEND TIME IN PRAYER.** This will help us to deepen our relationship with God and to trust in His love and power. Add new prayers to your daily prayers. Set up a prayer chair or special spot for the morning prayer. My personal goal is to say four rosaries each day of each of the mysteries.
- ◆ **READ THE BIBLE.** The Bible is full of stories about God’s truthfulness and love. Reading the Bible can help us to grow in our faith. Join a Bible study. Start a Bible study. Invite other women to join you. Journey with the gospels in the birth of Jesus.
- ◆ **SERVE OTHERS.** When we serve others, we are following the example of Jesus Christ. Serving others can help us to grow in our love for God and others. Provide families with Advent wreaths, Advent prayer booklets, or Advent calendars. Bake for parish members that are homebound. Assist and/or donate to food pantries—cookies, cakes, bread mixes, and don’t forget the icing and sprinkles!
- ◆ **BE GRATEFUL FOR THE BLESSINGS IN OUR LIVES.** When we are grateful, we are reminded of God’s goodness and love. Gratitude can help us grow in our faith. Send handwritten cards and notes to family, friends, parish staff, school staff, hospital staff, and emergency workers. It’s a great time to write a personal note to your parents, spouse, children, grandchildren, and siblings. Following the death of my parents and inheriting their address book, I sent a Christmas card to everyone in that book and included a memory I had about a Christmas with my parents or a memory about them with my parents. It was very healing for me. The receivers appreciated the moment.

By cultivating Faith as Small as a Mustard Seed during Advent, we can prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus Christ. We can also be filled with the hope and anticipation for the future. This faith will enable the Catholic Daughters Organization to grow and be more widely known to Catholic women by our example of faith.

Susan Hicks
National Director, Membership



Quality of Life

We are a catholic women's organization that is susceptible to a SCAM.

Everyone of us has the potential to be scammed as in 2022 the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) took in over 5.1 million reports. That's a lot of reported scams. Do not be embarrassed if you are one of those reporting a scam. We get scammed because we are Catholic Women who want to be there in a crisis or for a family member in need. It is just what we do and who we are.

Scammers are cunning, smart, and devious. The more we share, read and learn about scams the more we can stop them from swindling us from our assets. The better educated we are about scammers, the more able we will be to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

SCAM by definition is: "a fraudulent or a deceptive act or operation." Merriam-Webster

Rule Number One: Don't answer a phone call with an unknown number. The caller can leave a message and you can return the call. Even if the area code and prefix is the same as yours.

Rule Number Two: NEVER give out personal information to an unsolicited caller, texter or emailer.

Rule Number Three: If it sounds too good to be true, it is. Even if it appears to come from an organization or agency that you trust.

Rule Number Four: To prevent from being scammed, look for details. Unknown email, unknown phone number, big winnings and promises that are unbelievable. They are. You are being scammed.

Examples

- There are very few true crises. When you receive a phone call, email or text from a family member with a so-called emergency/problem needing your money: take a deep breath, pray and start to ask questions. Which family member are you? You are waiting for them to give YOU a name. DO NOT offer a name to them. HANG UP when they cannot respond with an accurate response. If you find yourself overwhelmed or sucked in, tell them you will call them back shortly after consulting your attorney (real or not) or another family member. There is nothing so important that needs your immediate action. You can collect your thoughts and call that resource person for advice. Then return the call but only after you are sure there is a REAL problem that you can help with. We want you to use your assets wisely.
- Don't open an email that comes to you from a sender that you do not recognize the sending address or has several odd characters or misspelling in the subject. These are red flags warnings. Heed them.
- Another example would be an email asking you to go and get gift cards. This is usually to a big box store and once you have given them the code on the back of the card, they then will own them. This is another way to scam you out of your savings. Requesting you to wire money is also apart of a scam.
- Scammers claim to be a part of a government agency such as the IRS, Medicare, Police etc. Government agencies will send you a letter with their official business and never demand you to give them your savings account or checking account number for a payment over the phone, through a text or email.

Report your experience to your local police department. Write down details of the phone call as best remembered. Save all the emails and text messages you have received from the scammer.

Books have been written on this topic but I wanted to start you thinking about protecting yourself from the roaming wickedness and snares of the devil. This is a real battle for St. Michael the Archangel.

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; And do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world for the ruin of souls.

Nancy Bambenek
National Director, Quality of Life Chair



For Advent, let our prayer be ‘Maranatha: ‘The Lord is Coming’

With the coming of Advent, we often hear the Aramaic word, *Maranatha*, which translates as “Come Lord Jesus,” or “*The Lord is Coming*.”

The baby Jesus born in Bethlehem came to be “the Way, the Truth and the Life.” He came to open the doorway between God and man, showing us how to live and becoming our one and only Mediator with the Father. We humbly kneel before the manger and pray, “Jesus, be the Lord of this day and every day. Show me how to love others the way you did. Help me to serve you the way you served everyone else.”

Jesus as Lord is truly our Supreme Authority. As we seek to follow him, we work for justice and peace in our world. We pray, “Lord, help me to bring your message of healing and hope to a broken world. Open my eyes to see those whom no one sees and to help those who need a kind word and a helping hand.”

In Baptism, we became partakers in the Divine life of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. At a Catholic funeral, we are again covered with a white garment, reminding us that we were baptized into Christ’s death and Resurrection. We realize that our time on Earth is short compared to eternity. “Jesus, help me to live my faith in such a way that I show your Eternal Love to the world. Help me to live my mission to win souls for your Kingdom. Forgive me for the times I fall short, and bring us all safely to your Heavenly home, where we may praise You forever and ever. Amen.”

At the end of time, Jesus will come again to win the final victory over sin and death. “Lord of Heaven and Earth, keep me focused on You, not on the problems of this life. Help me to surrender my will to You, for only You can heal perfectly. O Jesus, I trust in You! Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus.”

Daughters in National March for Life January 19

The National Board of Catholic Daughters and Catholic Daughters’ members from many states will gather to walk in the National March for Life January 19, in Washington, D.C.

The two days prior there is a March for Life Expo where various pro-life organizations from around the country explain their goals and disseminate information to help people in the pro-life cause. The headquarters for the March is at the Westin DC Downtown Hotel, formerly the Renaissance DC.

The pre-rally concert for the March begins at 11 a.m. on Friday, January 19, on the National Mall. The March for Life Rally is from noon to 1 p.m., and the March itself begins at 1 p.m. A new, longer route will be used this year to walk past the office buildings of US Representatives. The March concludes in front of the US Supreme Court.

The Board of Catholic Daughters participates in a Mass at the Shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception the day before the March.

The March for Life brings tens of thousands of people together in the largest annual human rights demonstration in the world. According to the website, there are still more than 900,000 abortions annually.

The website says, “The goal of the national March for Life is to not only change laws at the state and federal level, but to change the culture to ultimately make abortion unthinkable.” The Hyde Amendment, which has saved more than 2 million lives, is the most important pro-life policy in our nation’s history, and it must be continually defended. The website says, “We envision a world where every life is celebrated, valued, and protected.”

FBI has been investigating Catholics at the local parish and diocesan level

According to an article on the House Judiciary Committee website from April 10, Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) revealed that the FBI planted an undercover agent and used local religious organizations as “new avenues for tripwire and source development” while investigating “mainline Catholic parishes” and “diocesan leadership.”

The FBI issued a document titled, “Interest of Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists in Radical-Traditionalist Catholic Ideology Almost Certainly Presents New Mitigation Opportunities.” The FBI proposal suggested the agency develop sources to report on suspicious activity at the church and diocesan levels. The documents were reviewed and approved by two senior intelligence analysts and the Richmond, VA, Chief Division Counsel. The FBI distributed the document to field offices across the country.

The House Judiciary Committee article said, “In light of this information and the serious consequences for the free exercise of Americans’ First Amendment rights [to freedom of religion and free speech], Chairman Jordan issued a subpoena today to FBI Director Wray for all documents related to the FBI’s actions.”

In an August 9, follow-up article, Rep. Jordan revealed that the anti-Catholic memo “explicitly shows that the FBI Portland and FBI Los Angeles field offices were involved in or contributed to the creation of FBI’s assessment of traditional Catholics as potential domestic terrorists.”

Rep. Jordan said the committee is working “to inform our ongoing oversight of the FBI and to ensure the First Amendment guarantee of free exercise of religion is protected from government overreach.”

Diane Coleman letter explains the harms in legalizing assisted suicide

Diane Coleman of Rochester, NY is president and C.E.O. of Not Dead Yet, a disability rights group that opposes legalizing assisted suicide. Her letter to the *New York Times*, was published October 4, 2023, in response to an article “A Lawsuit Aims to Expand Aid in Dying.”

“This article assumes that physician-assisted suicide is acceptable health policy. However, there are two significant questions state states should address when considering its legalization: Should it be a medical treatment, and what are the harms of legalizing it?”

“On the first, many in the medical profession oppose physician-assisted suicide, including the American Medical Association, which holds that it is fundamentally incompatible with the physician’s role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks.”

“On the second question, major disability rights organizations oppose physician-assisted suicide because it increases the risks that people with disabilities face in receiving medical care, as they are already too often subject to unequal treatment.

“Adding physician-assisted suicide as a medical treatment exposes people with disabilities to systemic pressures to end their lives in the context of life-threatening illnesses. Before adopting physician-assisted suicide, or any extension of it,

we need to ask, answer and understand the implications of such a step.”

Funding for AIDS relief in Africa keeps pro-life protections in place

According to Population Research Institute (the US House reauthorized the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and kept pro-life protections in place. Despite the Biden Administration fighting to include abortion funding, the House extended PEPFAR for one more year with an amendment to prevent funding or promoting abortions overseas. After heated debate, the bill passed 216-212.

Everyone must be helped to become aware of the intrinsic evil of the crime of abortion. In attacking human life in its very first stages, it is also an aggression against society itself. Politicians and legislators, therefore, as servants of the common good, are duty bound to defend the fundamental right to life, the fruit of God’s love.

-Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Written by Margaret Sitte, National Legislative Chair;
Approved: Emily Guilherme, National Regent



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Thank you and Good Luck!

*No donation is required for entry into the drawings, but any gift
you make to support our ministries will be greatly accepted
and will help to make the drawings a success!

CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAS



A GIRL'S TRIP TO THE
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Where Are We Going??



A committee of Catholic Daughters from many parts of our Nation has been appointed by the National Board with the task of studying the use of our ceremonial robes.

Committee Members:

- Emily Guilherme, National Regent, California – Ex Officio
- Helene Shepard, Past National Regent, New York – Chairman misshelene2018@gmail.com
- Alicia Baer, State Officer, Massachusetts – aliciabaer12@gmail.com
- Rita Carlson, Immediate Past State Regent – Iowa – lowafarmgirl4@hotmail.com
- Rosie Duran, State Regent – New Mexico – rduran@newmexicocatholicdaughters.org
- Irene Gramza, National Director – Arizona – igramza@aol.com
- Debbie Lattus, Past National Director – West Virginia – lattusdl@gmail.com
- Barb Wiechmann, Past State Regent – South Dakota – mbwiech@charles-mix.com

A brief survey is attached. We hope **every Catholic Daughter** will respond **now**. The results will be compiled and presented to the delegation at the next National Convention in August of 2024 in Louisiana. Survey deadline January 31, 2024.

There are many factors that have motivated this study. It is time we updated our use of the robes. We must take into consideration the financial costs (*cleaning, alterations, fabric fading*) and the availability of these robes at affordable prices. Therefore, we need to research other possibilities that will allow us to maintain the dignity and distinction that we have had for so many years at our ceremonies.

Your input is very important as we plan to maintain our mark of distinction in all that we do. Please take the time today to give us your thoughts and ideas to help us accomplish this task. Feel free to contact any member of the committee.

Send your response:

- Email to: aliciabaer12@gmail.com
- Postal Mail to: Helene Shepard, Chairman
Robe Committee
PO Box 455
Washingtonville, NY 10992

In the name of the entire committee **Thank You** for your part in helping to make a difference in the Catholic Daughters of the Americas.



Catholic Daughters of the Americas®

National Robe Survey

1. Should we continue with the current style of Ceremonial Robes for: *

	Yes	No
National Officers:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Officers:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Officers:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. If we replace our Ceremonial Robes, choose one: *

Please use the "Other" option to enter your suggestions. We encourage everyone to share their ideas.

Sash



Medallion



Other _____

3. What would we wear with the sash/medallion (choose one): *

Please use the "Other" option to enter your suggestions. We encourage everyone to share their ideas.

- White Dress
- White Top with Black pants/skirt
- White Top with White pants/skirt

Other- Specify: _____

4. Additional comments:

5. Name * _____

6. Court Name & Number: * _____

7. State: * _____



