

# ECW Functions Bring Women Together in Faith, Health, and Fellowship

—by Catherine Wallace, ECW President—

We have been blessed with two wonderful ECW programs recently in the beautifully decorated Parish Hall. The purpose of these events is to join together in fellowship and to strengthen and explore our faith in God. We also celebrated our speakers by making contributions in their honor to LAMB, One80 Place and Water Mission.

The first event was the Fall dinner with presentations by Elizabeth Hagood and Penn Hagood on the trip to Israel taken by many from our congregation. What an incredible journey that brought alive the Bible by walking on the same paths as our Lord Jesus did so many years ago! This past week at the Advent Lunch, Dr. Ann Kulze and Father Nicholas Amato presented on the importance of wellness and contemplative prayer. Connie Stahl prepared a very healthy lunch full of colorful fresh vegetables and fruit to support our nutrition and health. We splurged on dark chocolate which Dr. Ann kindly brought to us, instructing us on its beneficial antioxidants for heart health. Dr. Ann gave us suggestions for how to live a stress-free, joyful and healthy life, and how contemplative prayer can be incorporated into day-to-day life.

With great enthusiasm, Dr. Ann turned the program over to Father Nicolas to share his story of what contemplative prayer has meant to him. He recalled that at ten years old, he felt joy in the solitude of nature. This experience led him to becoming a Catholic priest and pastor. Father Nicolas, with dedication and passion, described how reciting God's word in prayer can lead to our inner awareness of joy and God's Amazing Grace. This is described in his latest book, "Moving from Stress to Joy."



As we enter the Advent season, let us all take time to give thanks and to contemplate the miraculous birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "Joyful indeed are those whose God is the Lord." (Psalm 144:15 NLT)

*At left, Catherine Wallace stands with Father Nicolas, Dr. Ann, Speaker Liaison Pringle Franklin, Chef Connie Stahl, and Luncheon Co-Chair Chase Wood.*