

March NewsNotes



Staying Focused with Lent

Lent is a wonderful time for a new beginning — a time to refresh our hearts and take on a new challenge to grow closer to God. Yet my greatest struggle is staying focused on what I planned to do for my Lenten commitment. I chose to forego certain pleasures, but by day three I am already wrestling with distraction.

In today's Gospel, Matthew 9:14–15, Jesus speaks of Himself as the bridegroom. When the bridegroom is present, there is joy; when He seems absent, there is fasting. This image speaks to something deeply human within me: there are seasons of consolation and seasons of longing. Perhaps the struggle itself is not a failure of Lent, but a welcomed part of it.

As women of the LDCCW, it isn't always easy to pause long enough to feel those warm and tender moments with Jesus. Our minds are often on the next responsibility. For me, it is preparing for the upcoming convention in April. There are many tasks and very little room for focus. This service to others is holy work — but holy work can still feel overwhelming. Martha felt that way too, busy with many things while the Lord was right there.

I am beginning to see that Lent is not about perfect focus, but about faithful returning.

So, I am making a simple plan for when I feel overwhelmed:

When my mind wanders while reading Scripture, I will gently return. If I make the task a short study of 5-10 verses and sit with one phrase. As a wife and mother, I expect distractions. Distraction is not a failure; it is an invitation to begin again. When the to do list overwhelms me, I will whisper, "Jesus, stay with me."

There are times when I don't feel His closeness, I have to remember: the Bridegroom has not left. Sometimes He invited me into a deeper love through quiet perseverance.

The struggle isn't weakness— it is a discipleship. Joy in the presence of the Bridegroom and longing when He feels distant are both part of Love.

End each day with gratitude. Even one small grace noticed is a victory.

Your humble servant

President Judy Weston



I chose the Blessed Mother as my saint to guide me throughout my term. Each apparition of Mary was chosen carefully to represent different countries. Every time a new an apparition was placed in the newsletters, I discovered how much the Blessed Mother gives to all her children. Our Lady of Tears appeared to Sister Amalia of Jesus Flagellated in Brazil in 1930. Jesus and Mary appear to her several times with calls for prayer, sacrifice and penance. Not much has changed and the message is even stronger today.

Please search online-

[Our Lady of Tears](#)



DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

February 18, 2026
Ash Wednesday

Dear Women of the LDCCW,

We have recently entered the penitential season of Lent. It is a season of penance, prayer, repentance, and forgiveness of sins observed while looking toward Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum: the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord—the greatest event in the history of salvation. Keeping the end in mind, we increase our efforts in three areas: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Prayer reconnects us with God, without whom we can do nothing. We increase our efforts by turning to the rosary and confession, attendance at Daily Mass when possible, and Eucharistic Adoration. We refocus our attentions on the sometimes-neglected practices of daily prayer and prayer before meals. These spiritual actions return our attention to the Heavenly Father.

Fasting is something we do interiorly by denying our appetites. We curb these appetites knowing that if we discipline the body, our souls will follow suit. By exercising control over our physical desire for something like food, we gain mastery of our desires for pleasure and increase our resistance to the sin of overindulgence.

Compared to the interior work of fasting, almsgiving causes us to go outside of ourselves, attending to our neighbor. We care for the sick, we visit the lonely, and we provide for the poor.

Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving involves the whole person. That is what the Church asks us to do during these days of Lent, which is a journey we take together. Women dedicated to the Church in service, as you are, work on these virtues constantly and are well prepared for the season of Lent.

I commend your service to the Church and to your neighbor and I encourage you to strive even more, with the end in mind, as we work through this life with our eyes on the eternity of Heaven. May God bless your souls during this holy season.



Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend James D. Conley
Bishop of Lincoln



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Dear NewsNotes Readers:

Pope Leo XIV recently wrote some remarkable words about a spiritual classic which I was introduced to in my seminary days forty plus years ago. It is a very small book entitled *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence. Pope Leo XIV wrote:

This small book places at the center the experience—indeed, the practice—of the presence of God, as it was experienced and taught by the Carmelite friar Lawrence of the Resurrection, who lived in the seventeenth century.

As I have had occasion to say, together with the writings of Saint Augustine and other books, this is one of the texts that have most shaped my spiritual life and have formed me in what the path can be for knowing and loving the Lord.

This is part of the forward, dated 11 December 2025, Vatican City, to a new edition released by the Vatican Publishing House. Very possibly you have heard of this spiritual work. Hopefully you have read it already. If not, perhaps the Pope's words will encourage you to find a copy and read it in prayer. Even if you have read it you would do well to pray with it again. Perhaps during Lent. The Knights of Columbus Council in Cortland recently purchased a number of copies of this title (by a different publisher) for our parish give away for just over \$3 each.

God is present to us always. We need to be aware and receptive to his presence. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us there are various ways the Lord is present to us:

¶ 1373: "Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us," is present in many ways to his Church: 197 in his word, in his Church's prayer, "where two or three are gathered in my name," 198 in the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned, 199 in the sacraments of which he is the author, in the sacrifice of the Mass, and in the person of the minister. But "he is present . . . most especially in the Eucharistic species." 200

¶ 1374 The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend." 201 In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained." 202

Pope Leo's forward continues:

The path Brother Lawrence points out to us is simple and arduous at the same time. Simple, because it requires nothing other than constantly calling God to mind, with small, continual acts of praise, prayer, supplication, adoration, in every action and in every thought, having as our horizon, source, and end Him alone. Arduous, because it demands a journey of purification, of ascetic discipline, of renunciation and conversion of the most intimate part of us—of our mind & our thoughts even more than of our actions.

It is what Saint Paul already wrote to the faithful of Philippi: "Have in you the same sentiments as Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5). Therefore, it is not only our attitudes and behaviors that must be conformed to God, but precisely our sentiments—our very way of feeling. In this interiority we find His presence, the loving and burning presence of God, so "other" and yet familiar to our heart. As St. Augustine writes, "the new man will sing the new song" (Sermons 34,1).

The experience of union with God, described in Brother Lawrence's pages as a personal relationship made of encounters and conversations, of concealments and surprises, of trusting and total abandonment, calls to mind the experiences of the great mystics—first among them Teresa of Ávila, who had also testified to this familiarity with the Lord to the point of speaking of a "God of the pots and pans." However, it indicates a path accessible to all, precisely because it is simple and every day.

Like many mystics, Bro. Lawrence also speaks with great humility but also with humor, because he knows well that every earthly thing, even the most grand--& even dramatic--is a very small thing before the infinite love of the Lord. Thus, he can say ironically that God "deceived" him, because he, having entered the monastery perhaps a little pre-sumptuously in order to sacrifice himself & harshly expiate the sins of his youth, found there instead a life full of joy.

Through the path that Brother Lawrence proposes to us, little by little, as the presence of God becomes familiar and occupies our inner space, the joy of being with Him grows, graces and spiritual riches blossom, and even daily tasks become easy and light.

The writings and testimonies of this Carmelite lay brother of the seventeenth century, who with luminous faith lived through the troubled events of his century—certainly no less violent than ours—can be an inspiration and a help also for the life of us men and women of the third millennium. They show us that there is no circumstance that can separate us from God, that every action of ours, every occupation, and even every mistake of ours acquires an infinite value if they are lived in the presence of God, continually offered to Him.

All Christian ethics can truly be summed up in this continual calling to mind the fact that God is present: He is here. This remembrance, which is something more than a simple memory because it involves our sentiments and affections, overcomes every moralism and every reduction of the Gospel to a mere set of rules, and shows us that truly, as Jesus promised us, the experience of entrusting ourselves to God the Father already gives us the hundredfold here below. Entrusting ourselves to the presence of God means tasting an anticipation of Paradise.

May God grant us a holy Lent.

I look forward to seeing you at the LDCCW Convention.



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There is a Theology of Leisure

I think the range of topics was unusual in the seminaries I attended. The first, in Erlanger, KY across the river from Cincinnati, OH, had the regular prerequisites. Also, music appreciation; accounting; Spanish, once a week for one semester; and NT Greek. For no credit we were taught a most helpful course from the book: "Speed Reading Self-Taught." It actually worked! You had to keep practicing what you learned, or you lost the ability.

The second seminary was in Emmitsburg, MD. We had core theology courses there and electives. As an elective, I took psychology 101 and modern Protestant and Jewish theologians. The one I will say a few words about was, I think, called, "The Theology of Leisure."

If you look up "leisure" in the Catechism you won't find it. I seem to recall it is more a philosophy than a theology, but I can't find the textbook we used. And the book about leisure by Josef Pieper is among my boxes - somewhere. I'm going to have to write what memory gives me.

Leisure is not play. Leisure happens when, free from (manual) labor, a person uses his time not to play video games or browse the internet or even to participate in sports (although sports involve the betterment of self and people more than the others). Leisure is using one's time to grow inwardly in thought and virtue, even in culture. We grow inwardly only when we know ourselves more honestly. When people take the time to do this, then they may desire be more noble, which would help a free society to flourish. Still, not without some pains.

Socrates is not a bad example of someone who used his time for leisure. I believe his family or wife thought he used his time too much for it. However, a quote I read about him describes how his use of leisure had made him and others better, more noble. And that seems to be an original goal of "leisure."

In part, here's the quote: "When you agree to listen to the talk of Socrates, it might seem at first to be nothing but absurdity... he seems to be always saying the same things in the same words, so that any ignorant and foolish man would laugh at them. But when they are opened out, and you get inside them, you will find his words, first, full of sense, as no others are; next, most divine and containing the finest images of virtue, and reaching farthest, in fact reaching to everything which it profits a man to study who is to become noble and good," from *Great Dialogues of Plato* trans. By W.H.D. Rouse.

One day the rector of our seminary spoke to us with concern. He reminded that all around us were men and women working, busy making a living and raising families. We, on the other hand, were in the seminary not mainly to learn a trade or to work, but to apply our minds and hearts to study and pray, to get know Jesus, to have a relationship with him, to use our time in a spirit of leisure to grow in wisdom and holiness to become good and noble men and priests. I think that day what some of us had in a class hit home.

In any walk of life, I believe leisure is meant for reflection to grow in goodness and for prayer to receive the grace of God. Play is needed to be healthy, but leisure has a more serious, noble meaning.

Fr. Thomas McGuire, St. Andrew's, Tecumseh; St. Mary's, St. Mary's, NE



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Walking With Jesus: The Stations of the Cross and the Women of the LDCCW

Lent invites us into a sacred journey — a forty-day pilgrimage of prayer, sacrifice, and deeper conversion. For the women of the LDCCW, this season is more than a liturgical observance. It is a call to walk closely with Jesus, to accompany Him step by step, and to allow His Passion to shape our hearts for service.

The Stations of the Cross offer us a roadmap for this journey. Each station reveals a moment of Christ's love poured out, and each one mirrors the spiritual path we walk as women committed to living our faith through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

1. Jesus Is Condemned to Death — Standing Firm in Faith: Jesus accepts His mission with courage, even as He faces injustice. LDCCW women stand in that same courage when we defend the dignity of every person, speak truth with charity, and remain faithful even when the world misunderstands our convictions.

2. Jesus Takes Up His Cross — Embracing Our Call: Christ lifts the cross willingly. We, too, lift the crosses entrusted to us — family responsibilities, parish ministries, community needs — not with resentment, but with love. Our “yes” becomes a witness of hope.

3. Jesus Falls — Rising Again in Grace: Jesus falls, yet He rises. We fall in our spiritual lives, in our relationships, in our attempts to grow in virtue. But LDCCW women rise again, strengthened by prayer, sisterhood, and God's mercy.

4. Jesus Meets His Mother — The Strength of Holy Women: Mary's presence is quiet, strong, and unwavering. Like Mary, the women of the LDCCW accompany others with compassion — mothers, daughters, widows, the lonely, the forgotten. Our presence becomes a ministry of its own.

5. Simon Helps Jesus — Serving Shoulder to Shoulder: Simon steps in when the burden becomes too heavy. This is the heart of our councils: women helping women, parishioners helping parishioners, communities helping communities. Service is not a task; it is a shared mission.

6. Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus — Mercy in Action: Veronica's simple gesture becomes an icon of love. Every act of mercy we perform — feeding the hungry, comforting the sorrowful, visiting the sick — is a modern veil pressed to the face of Christ.

7. Jesus Falls Again — Persevering in the Journey : The second fall reminds us that holiness is not linear. LDCCW women persevere through discouragement, trusting that God works through our persistence more than our perfection.





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Continued:

8. **Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem — Compassionate Solidarity:** Jesus pauses to console the women who weep for Him. We, too, are called to console, encourage, and uplift. Our councils become places where women find strength, friendship, and spiritual renewal.

9. **Jesus Falls a Third Time — Trusting God Completely:** The third fall shows the depth of Christ's exhaustion — and His unwavering trust. When we feel overwhelmed, we remember that God carries us. Our surrender becomes our strength.

10. **Jesus Is Stripped — Letting Go of What Holds Us Back:** Jesus is stripped of everything. Lent invites us to strip away pride, impatience, harsh words, and distractions — anything that keeps us from loving fully.

11. **Jesus Is Nailed to the Cross — Love That Costs Something:** Christ's sacrifice is total. Our love, too, is sacrificial: giving time we don't feel we have, offering forgiveness that stretches us, serving when it's inconvenient. This is love that transforms.

12. **Jesus Dies — The Depth of God's Love:** At the cross, love reaches its fullness. LDCCW women stand at the foot of the cross with Mary, trusting that God brings life even from suffering.

13. **Jesus Is Taken Down — Holding One Another in Sorrow:** The body of Jesus is placed in Mary's arms. We hold one another in grief, loss, and hardship. Our councils become places of healing and compassion.

14. **Jesus Is Laid in the Tomb — Waiting in Hope:** The tomb is not the end. As women of faith, we wait in hope for the Resurrection — in our families, our parishes, our ministries, and our own hearts.

This Lent, let us walk the Stations as companions of Christ. Let us allow each station to shape our hearts for mercy, deepen our commitment to service, and strengthen our unity as women walking together toward Easter joy!

God be with you all on your Lenten journey,

Val Able, President Elect

Message from the Past Presidents of the LDCCW

Are you willing to pray one hour a week for Holiness and Happiness in Families and for Priestly and Religious Vocations? If so, please consider becoming a member of the Council Women of the Eucharist - Mary's Marthas. There are no dues. There are no meetings. The only requirement is your commitment to pray for one hour for families and vocations. If interested in becoming a member, please contact Ann Jansky at arjansky@gmail.com or (402) 826-0219.

Here we are, well into Lent. We may already have our Lenten routine and sacrifices well planned out, but if not, here are a few reminders of what can make for a good Lent. Besides the usual “Fast and Abstinence”, most of us strive for some other type of personal sacrifice to strengthen our soul, our spirituality, and our relationship with God.

The traditional Catholic guidance is to take part in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. But this year, Pope Leo XIV's message was entitled “Listening and Fasting: Lent as a Time of Conversion.” and it seems like a good time to review a bit of his advice. He asks us to place the mystery of God back in the center of our lives in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life. He particularly asked us to be better listeners in our relationships with others. And, he asked us to turn to other forms of self denial aimed at acquiring a more sober lifestyle. But, what stood out to me was his suggestion to abstain from words that “offend and hurt our neighbor.”

As the Pope said, “ Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, hatred will give way to words of hope and peace. “

I hope that maybe this can give us as Council Women a bit of a twist on our Lenten devotions and we can be a part of bringing more words of hope and peace into our daily conversations.



CATHOLICS @ THE CAPITOL

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA



MARCH 4TH, 2026

St. Monica Prayer Cards



Prayer for the Intercession of St. Monica

O God, You are the comfort of those who mourn, and the Savior of all who trust in You. Blessed Monica's loving tears moved You to convert her son, Augustine. Help us, who pray to You for the salvation of our sons and daughters too. May we also grieve for our sins, and win the grace of your pardon, through the intercession of this loving saint, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

St. Monica & St. Augustine. Pray for us!



In 1978, the Prayer Auxiliary of St. Monica was established by the women of the Diocese to seek to emulate St. Monica in a never-ending prayer of petition. Each day of the year, a woman of the Council of Catholic Women attends Mass to pray for the return of our family to the church and for the works of the Council.

During the past 47 years the women of the Diocese have prayed this prayer using small sheets of paper with the prayer on it. 47 years later we now have official holy cards!

I have heard there are those who need more of the holy cards. Please email me at ldccwpresident@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

- March - Plattsmouth Deanery—St. Monica Prayers
- March 4 - Catholics at the Capitol
- March - Month of St. Joseph
- Mar 19 - Solemnity of St. Joseph
- Mar 25 - Annunciation of Our Lord
- Mar 29 - Palm Sunday

Pope's Intentions for March

FOR DISARMAMENT AND PEACE - Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

Charitable Works Survey

The 2025 Charitable Works Results are [online](#). Congratulations to the women of the LDCCW! We received 100% response from all the deaneries in the diocese. We have learned much from you and have more to learn. Thank you for being faithful women of the diocese!



Divine Mercy Chair

Bonnie Damrow bdamrow6@gmail.com



DIVINE MERCY

A LITANY OF FASTING

Jesus...the smallest sacrifice finds great value in My eyes (639)

St Faustina fasted exhaustively. It's one of the best ways to love God and our neighbor, and it helps us say no to temptation by inviting the Holy Spirit into our hearts. If we are more virtuous, we will naturally be kinder to our neighbor.

A LITANY OF FASTING

Help me fast from fear, and feast on trust. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from pressure, and feast on prayer. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from self-concern, and feast on compassion for others. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from discouragement, and feast on hope. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from discontent, and feast on gratitude. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from judging others, and feast on Christ dwelling in them. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from words that destroy, and feast on words that build. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from idle gossip, and feast on silence. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from anger, and feast on patience. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from ill thoughts, and feast on the healing power of God. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from bitterness, and feast on forgiveness. Jesus, I trust in You.

Help me fast from the shadows of sorrow, and feast on the light of the Resurrection. Jesus, I trust in You.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Let us pray. I thank You, Heavenly Father, for giving me the grace to fast. Grant that I may discover Your immeasurable love with which You love all creatures. Fill us with the Spirit of prayer and fasting so we may recognize and fulfill Your will; to love You above everything else and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

PRAYING WITH JESUS AND FAUSTINA during Lent and in Times of Suffering compiled by Susan Tassone

Service Commission—Joyce Reich

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We are now 10 days into Lent. How is it going? Have you started your Lenten practices? Are you still strong in your them or is it like New Year's resolutions for many, you are already sidetracked? The good news is that it is not too late to get on the right track. The Church gives us the penitential season of Lent to turn hearts back to God through self-discipline and reflection on Jesus' sacrifice for us. It is a perfect time to reflect on our thoughts and actions and to strengthen in service to others.

There are three main areas we are encouraged to develop during Lent. The first is prayer. Increasing or deepening our prayer life allows us to enter more fully into the heart of Christ. We can start going to daily Mass, say a rosary each day, pray the Stations of the Cross, or add an hour of Adoration each week. All are wonderful practices for ourselves but can we take it a step further? What about offering a rosary or Mass each day for someone else? By praying for others, we are opening them to the graces of God. What better service can we give than showing them the love and mercy of our Lord? I'm doing something new for me this Lent. Each of the forty days, I offer my prayers, works and acts of sacrifice for someone that I've said to "I'll keep you in my prayers." In forty days, I'll have prayed specifically for forty people.

The second Lenten practice that the Church encourages us to partake in is fasting. This is to provide a longing for something we want or like so that we begin to long for the companionship of Jesus. Most people automatically think of food when it comes to fasting. I once had an elderly priest that would always say he was giving up watermelon. It didn't work for two reasons. First, watermelon isn't in season during Lent and produce wasn't readily available year-round like it is now and secondly, he didn't even like watermelon! He did get a good laugh out of it though. Be more like one of my CCD kids. He said he is fasting from sweets. When I asked if that would be hard for him, he replied, "Oh, yes! I REALLY like sweets!!" But what about fasting from unnecessary chatter, too much social media, gossip, not being open to new ideas or programs (think in your PCCW), unjust snap opinions about the people being served, or hardness of heart toward others.

The object is that fasting should be a sacrifice to draw you into the heart of Jesus.

The third Lenten practice the Church encourages is almsgiving. This might be the easiest for some to think about in the practice of service to others. Giving your time or resources is something that many of you already do through your PCCWs or parishes. Keep up the good work! Donate to food banks. Give bottled water, food for a nice Easter meal, staples for their pantries, coffee, and fresh produce or eggs if they have storage for it. Make a point to visit the homebound or those in care homes. Give prayerful consideration to help with a project in your PCCW or even holding an office. Offer to give a ride to Mass or other church services to someone who no longer can drive.

Please continue to collect old eyeglasses. Bring them to the Annual Convention in April that will be held in Hastings.

We have two months left to help fulfill the President's project of helping pregnancy Centers. Consider giving to Apostles for Life if you haven't already. Your donation goes directly to several centers.

A recent reading from Sunday Mass sums up our work of the service commission quite well. Re-read Isaiah 58:7-10. And from Tobit 4:5,7: Perform good works all the days of your life. Do not turn your face away from any of the poor, and God's face will not be turned away from you."

Leadership Commission

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Thank you for updating your local PCCW officer and service commissions contact list. Could you remind others in your Deanery to do so? It would be very helpful to have name, mailing/home address, email address and phone number for each officer/service commissions. You can also shoot me an email saying that your officers did not change. You can continue to send those updates to me at ldccwleadership@gmail.com. Thank you!

It is also not too late to fill out the Charitable Works Survey. We have amazing women in our parishes that answer God's call to holiness!

On Sunday, I was in Omaha at Mass and saw a fellow "Sister in Christ". I would have not met Shelly had it not been for LDCCW. The LDCCW Biennial Convention will be in Hastings this year on April 17 – 18. Prayerfully consider attending this event. Meet new friends that share your faith in a spiritual environment! We also have an enjoyable time together!

To the Deanery Presidents

As we grow closer to the 65th Biennial Convention, I believe this is a meaningful time to reflect on the importance of your role within LDCCW.

We hold quarterly Full Board meetings to conduct and vote on the necessary business of the diocese. Your presence at these meetings is vital. As a Deanery President, you serve as the voice and representative of your members, and your participation ensures that their concerns and perspectives are included in diocesan decisions.

The upcoming Biennial Convention will also provide a beautiful opportunity for fellowship, collaboration, and spiritual renewal with women from across the diocese. Your leadership and involvement help strengthen these connections and support the mission we share.

According to the LDCCW Bylaws, Article 3 Section 2 Page 3 in the Bylaws

Biennial Convention Voting Full Board Members consist of the

Deanery Presidents

Deanery Presidents – elect

Deanery Directors – Past Presidents

This Biennial Convention:

Each parish shall have the privilege of sending two (2) voting delegates to the LDCCW Biennial Convention, chosen by the parish AS/PCCW.

Delegate credential cards shall be sent to the president of each parish prior to the Biennial Convention. The credential card will be exchanged for a voting card at the Biennial Convention registration desk.

No one who is already a member of the Diocesan Full Board may represent a parish organization as a voting delegate.

Please review this with your parish president and deanery board members.

Thank you for your continued service, commitment, and dedication to LDCCW. Your role truly makes a difference.



LEGISLATIVE & GOVERNMENT

REPORT

By Alice Licht-Anderson Legislative Commission

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NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE HITS HALF-WAY MARK ON FEBRUARY 20

This week has brought a flurry of floor debate and action as well as many bills of interest heard before Legislative Committees. The last committee hearings are projected to conclude on February 27. This will bring full-day (versus half-day) floor debate. Friday, February 20 marks day 30 out of the 60-working day session.

Priority bills have been selected by Senators (49), Committees (33) and the Speaker (25). This will set the tone for those bills which will be given priority in floor debate for the remainder of the session. Couple this with dealing with the \$471 million budget deficit, the next thirty days will be fully packed with floor debate.

Among those priorities selected include property tax issues, requiring a judicial warrant for ICE entering schools, interest and foreclosure on medical debt, hunger free schools, regulations applying to chemical abortions and providing for schools and state agencies to designate restrooms and locker rooms based on sex and require state agencies to define an individual's sex as either male or female for purposes of rules and regulations, the enforcement of administrative actions, and adjudication of disputes.

TWO BILLS OF INTEREST DISCUSSED AND MOVED IN FLOOR DEBATE THIS WEEK L.B. 795 (Senator Barry DeKay) provides for adding Bromazolam to the list of Schedule I controlled substances. The bill was further amended to include fentanyl distribution felony statutes (Senator Tanya Storer). The amendment was fought through filibuster by senators Dungen and Conrad and others, but was successfully amended on a 35 out of 49 vote to end the filibuster. (33 votes are required to end the filibuster.)

The bill was passed on second reading and awaits Final Reading. Several amendments have been filed to potentially kill, amend or recommit the bill to committee by Senator Conrad (Lincoln).

L.B. 320 was passed on Final Reading and sent to the Governor for signature. Introduced by Senator Rita Sanders (Omaha) strengthens efforts to combat human trafficking by encouraging awareness and training in the hotel/lodging industry.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16 CHOCK-FULL OF BILLS OF INTEREST HEARD BEFORE COMMITTEES

Whether or not these bills will be discussed on the floor this year remains to be seen. If they were not chosen as priority bills, they will fall to the bottom of the list of bills to be discussed. They must also be voted out of committee to be discussed on the floor.

L.B. 779/Conrad: Disallows interest on medical debt for 90 days and then caps it at 3 percent; disallows foreclosure and filing of liens on primary residence. Priority bill.

L.B. 960/McKinney: Allows for non-voting student representative on school boards.

L.B. 966/Machaela Cavanaugh: State pick up the cost over the federal reimbursement rate for students qualifying for reduced rate meals which will make them free. Current cost was quoted at 40 cents per meal. Priority bill.

Legislative Chairman

Alice Licht-Anderson

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L.B. 1034/Dungan: No enforcement activities by immigration agents without valid judicial warrants. Currently operating with administrative warrants. A judge would be required to sign off on the activity. Priority bill.

L.B. 1207/Juarez: Provides for full-time school employees five mental health days per year without medical or health provider documentation. Bill opposed by school administrators and others indicating 10 sick days already and should be in contract negotiations.

L.B. 730/Kauth: Provides for schools and state agencies to designate restrooms and locker rooms based on sex and require state agencies to define an individual's sex as either male or female for purposes of rules and regulations, the enforcement of administrative actions, and adjudication of disputes. Bill heard January 28, designed a Priority bill this week.

L.B. 732/Kauth: Prohibits health care practitioners from providing cross-sex hormones and puberty blockers to individuals younger than nineteen years of age. Bill heard January 29. Bill moved out of Committee on a 4-3 vote and placed on General File (first reading). Vote to move out of Committee (4): Senators Hardin, Ballard, Hansen, Meyer, Glenn. Against (3): Senators Fredrickson, Quick, Riepe.

L.B. 1242/Murman: Allows courts, in consultation with the mother, to grant child support payments during pregnancy. The start date for such obligations may begin with the first month in which the child was conceived, as determined by a physician and shall begin with that month if the mother so requests.

L.B. 843/Rountree: Provides that immigrant Nebraskans recently excluded from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program through H.R.1 have access to food through SNAP. The bill instructs Nebr. Department of Health and Human Services to request a federal SNAP waiver to return immigrant eligibility in Nebraska.

L.B. 908/Storm: Requires a judge to take in to account credible research showing increased intellectual and social growth in children who have equal access to both parents when developing parenting plan in divorce proceedings.

DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER FOR CATHOLICS AT THE CAPITOL WITH NEBRASKA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE To register, search Nebraska Catholic Conference and you may register on their main page. Deadline for registration is February 27 for the March 4 event.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION! This Biennial Convention there will be proposed Bylaw Changes. We will vote on these changes at the April meeting. Please go to <https://www.lincolndiocese.org/lincoln-diocesan-council-of-catholic-women/bylaws-resource-manual/2603-ldccw-bylaws-revised-2026/file>

Social Media Manager

Heather Lipovsky

402-768-3472

ldccwsocialmedia@gmail.com



Hello Ladies!

Thank you to everyone that sent their council pictures for our social media pages. We have so many encouraging comments from others as they enjoyed being reminded to share their PCCW activities in our busy daily lives. We enjoy recognizing all of you for all your parishes and would like to share the activities and various happenings on our social media Pages please send your pictures with a small paragraph to ldccwsocialmedia@gmail.com.

Be sure to like and follow our Pages at Facebook Lincoln Diocesan Council of Catholic women [instagram@ldccw.catholicwomen](https://www.facebook.com/LDCCW) God bless!! I would encourage you to visit our website at <https://www.lincolndiocese.org/lincoln-diocesan-council-of-catholic-women/about-the-ldccw> and Follow/Like our [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/LDCCW) <https://www.facebook.com/LDCCW> for current happenings and special days of our Catholic faith.



Past President Trudy Burenheide presenting 'Love Made Visible'



Presentation of check to Villa Marie



**Province Director Report
February 20, 2026
Tricia Ferguson
Province of Omaha**

† Province of Omaha Executive Board meeting will be Tuesday March 3, 2026 6:00 PM CT at St. Michael Catholic Church, 9101 S. 78th Street, Lincoln NE 68516. The St. Michael's CCW will host.

† **Catholics at the Capitol** will be March 4th, 2026: 8:00 am – 3:00 pm CT Register by Friday February 27th at Nebraska Catholic Conference : necatholic.org The cost is \$15.00.

† I am on the Spirituality Commission. Save the date for the March Rosary Call, Friday March 13th at Phone # 202-926-1107 Access code 703 993# 7:30pm ET & USVI/6:30 CT/5:30 MT/4:30 PT

† **Spirituality Commission Zoom** meeting is Thursday February 26 at 5:00 pm MT. We will discuss the March 13th Rosary call, resolution that will be submitted for the NCCW Convention Grands Rapids Michigan August 26th – August 29th , 2026.

† I plan on attending my Council of Catholic Women Deanery Meeting on Saturday March 7th. The program is: Mary's Prayer Garden and Praying in Poetry".

† Council Chat is an excellent way to keep up with the NCCW and share with you own Council of Catholic Women. It is on the second Monday of the month. March 9th will be the next one, times are 4:00 PM (PT), 5:00 PM (MT), 6:00 PM (CT), and 7:00 PM (ET) on ZOOM! Those who have a NCCW membership will receive an email.

† LENT : As we navigate lent, I pray that the Province of Omaha, Council of Catholic Women will have a blessed and holy lent.

† **Save the Date:** Province of Omaha Meeting Monday July 20th, 2026 , Resurrection Catholic, 4110 Cannon Rd., Grand Island, NE 66603

† **Continue to check out the NCCW website for updates for the 2026 Convention**

Respectfully,

Tricia Ferguson
PO Box 103
112 West Cherry Ave
Ashby NE 69333

triciaferg8@gmail.com
308-458-9595

64th Biennial Convention

April 17 & 18th 2026

St. Michael Catholic Church

715 Creighton Hastings NE 68901

As in the past, we would like the help of each deanery (via each parish) in making preparations for the LDCCW Banquet and Convention April 17 & 18, 2026. The items listed below require the attention of deanery presidents, with the support of all parishes. **EACH DEANERY** (not each parish) is asked to please:

- Pay \$25.00 toward the cost of centerpieces that will be displayed on the tables at the parish hall during Convention. Please send the check to Teresa Koch, LDCCW Treasurer, 812 W. Walnut Road, Odell, NE 68415. The check should be made payable to LDCCW.
- Supply a basket with a theme (such as coffee or the Blessed Virgin Mary) for the Basket Raffle (this is in place of a silent auction). The theme can be religious but does not have to be. You start with a basket of any size and add items to represent the theme. Usually, the basket will be wrapped in clear cellophane and a list of the items inside is attached to the basket. A minimum of \$50 worth of items is suggested but not required. These can be brought to Theisen Hall at St. Michaels Catholic Church 715 Creighton Hastings NE 68901. Proceeds from the basket raffle will go to help fund the **Villa Marie Schools**. You may purchase additional raffle tickets at the convention.
- Sell raffle tickets among your deanery (and promote within your parishes) beginning immediately. Please post the flyer, which is included in the deanery packet, in your parish and begin selling raffle tickets now. You need not be present to win. Raffle tickets will also be sold at the Convention on April 13-14. Proceeds from the raffle will go to three great causes – **Camp Kateri**. Send raffle tickets & money to Teresa Koch, 312 West Walnut Road, Odell NE 68415 or bring them to the convention.
- Collect money from parishes for the President's Project (Pregnancy Centers of the Lincoln Diocese.) Please ask your parishes what Pregnancy Center they have donated to and the amount. Please email ldccwpresident@gmail.com
- Continue to donate to the Bishop's Project "Enhancing the Chancery Library," money will be given to Bishop Conley at the Convention. Send checks to Teresa Koch, LDCCW Treasurer, 812 W. Walnut Road, Odell, NE 68415.

2026 Biennial Convention Raffle



Garden Statue 3' Tall

Crochet Bed Throw 75" x 53" w

Port Authority robe w/ study Guide
size M fits like a large

Butterfly Blossoms Lap Quilt 64"
square



<p>NAME _____</p> <p>ADDRESS _____</p> <p>PHONE _____</p> <p>Make checks payable to LDCCW. Holy Land Olive Wood Cross - Chosen Bathrobe~ Crochet throw~ Butterfly Blossoms Quilt-Concrete Mary Statue - Proceeds go to Camp Kateri</p>	<p><u>LDCCW 65th Biennial Convention Raffle</u> (Lincoln Diocesan Council of Catholic Women) St. Michael's Catholic Church 715 Creighton. Hastings, NE Saturday, April 18, 2026 \$5.00 EACH, OR 6 FOR \$20.00 Bring to convention or mail to Teresa Koch 812 W. Walnut Road Odell, NE 68313 ?? Contact ldccwpresident@gmail.com or 402-984-5856</p>
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**Lincoln Diocesan Council of Catholic Women
65th Biennial Convention Hastings, Nebraska
April 18, 2026**

Parish Voting Delegate Credential Card

Each Altar Society/PCCW President and President Elect, in the Lincoln Diocese, is given two votes at the Biennial Convention. To receive a voting card, you must **send in the bottom portion** of this form and **bring the top portion to the Convention** registration desk, where a voter card will be given to you. If the President or President Elect is unable to attend, the President or President Elect may transfer that vote to a representative. In case of a vote transfer, this form must be filled out by the designated representative and signed by the President. **Please return the bottom portion by April 6, 2026** Please make every effort to have your parish represented at Convention.

Please print:

Name: _____ Office or Title: _____

Address: _____ City, State _____

Parish: _____ City: _____

Telephone _____ email _____

For transfer of vote:

_____ is authorized to represent _____
(Name) (Organization)

as a voting delegate at the April 18, 2026, LDCCW Convention in Hastings, Nebraska.

signed: _____
(Signature, President of Organization)

Please present the top portion at the Convention Registration Desk

----- **cut here** ----- **cut here** ----- **cut here** ----- **cut here** -----

Parish Voting Delegate Registration

Please print:

Name: _____ Office or Title: _____

Address: _____ City, State _____

Parish: _____ City: _____

Telephone _____ email _____

For transfer of vote:

_____ is authorized to represent _____
(Name) (Organization)

as a voting delegate at the April 18, 2026, LDCCW Convention in Hastings, Nebraska.

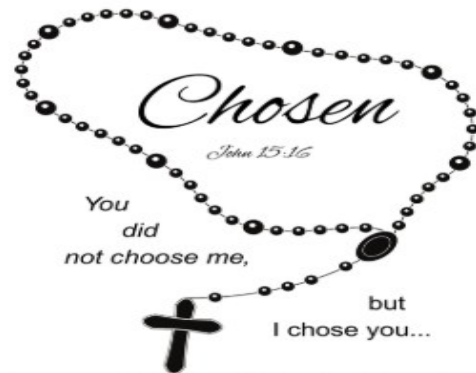
signed: _____
(Signature, President of Organization)

Mail to Karen Dey 3914 Branched Oak Road Staplehurst NE 68313 knrdey@gmail.com - include this bottom portion now with your Registration form.

Please let us know if you want to continue receiving the Council Connect by email or the NewsNotes. Please send us your current address and email to

Contact at Donna Havlat
donnahavlat@gmail.com

Save the Date
65th BIENNIAL
LDCCW CONVENTION



FRIDAY AND SATURDAY APRIL 17 -18, 2026
St Michael's Catholic Church
715 Creighton
Hastings NE 68901



Judy Weston
707 N Brass Ave
Juniata NE 68955