

The Well



The Military Council of Catholic Women-Worldwide **connects, unites, and inspires** U.S. military affiliated women to grow in their Catholic faith.

*connect * unite * inspire*

October 2020

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Support our Seminarians

By: Denise Hummel, Director of Seminarian Support

Did you know that the Archdiocese for the Military Services chaplains serve over 1.8 million Catholics? With fewer than 200 active duty priests serving all branches of service, our need for priests is great!

In 2019, MCCW established our first endowed scholarship to financially support our perpetual charity — our beloved seminarians. Stay tuned to both email and Facebook to learn how MCCW will continue to **connect, unite, and inspire** our members in an online platform this coming November.

Adopt-a-Seminarian

MCCW's Adopt-a-Seminarian program connects current AMS seminarians and military chapel groups. Through prayer, letters, and care packages, the chapels provide support to their adopted seminarian and the seminarian learns more about military life through regular contact with families like those he will serve in the future.

To adopt your seminarian today, email: amsliaison@mccw.org.





President's Letter

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Fall greetings to you all! After two years in the deserts of West Texas, I am so excited to be on the East Coast and experiencing a beautiful fall. The leaves are beginning to change, the days are cooler, and dishes featuring pumpkin, apples, and cinnamon are beginning to appear on our table with greater frequency.

It is also a time rich with liturgical year celebrations and events. In October, which is also the month of the rosary, we observe the memorials of St. Therèse of Lisieux, the Holy Guardian Angels, Our Lady of the Rosary, St. Teresa of Avila, and Saints Simon and Jude the Apostles. Before we know it, November will be here and it will be time to observe the Solemnity of All Saints and the memorial of All Souls.

We hope that you and your family, and your women's ministry, will take the time to celebrate some of these special occasions. To help get you started, we have included two special rosary programs you can use in your

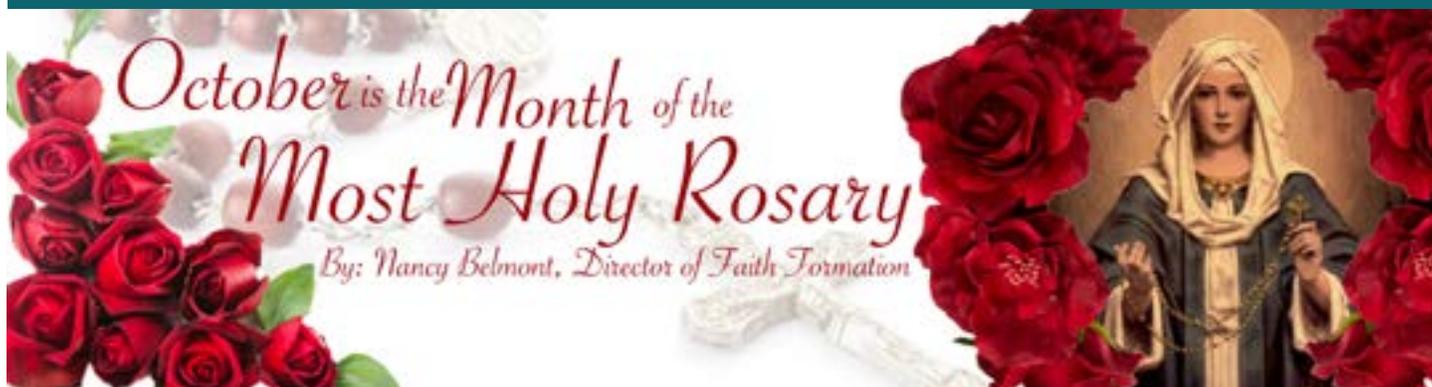
celebration of the Month of the Rosary. Since early November also brings Vocations Week we added some ideas for how you can talk about, pray for, and support vocations.

And just as the church calendar is full this time of year, so, too, there is much coming up on the MCCW calendar. Our European and Asian teams are putting the finishing touches on their virtual retreats after travel restrictions caused late cancelations of in person gatherings. Likewise, the MCCW board is working hard to bring you an amazing Faux Fiesta Forum and to prepare for Worldwide Board discernment. You can learn more about both of these events in this issue of *The Well*.

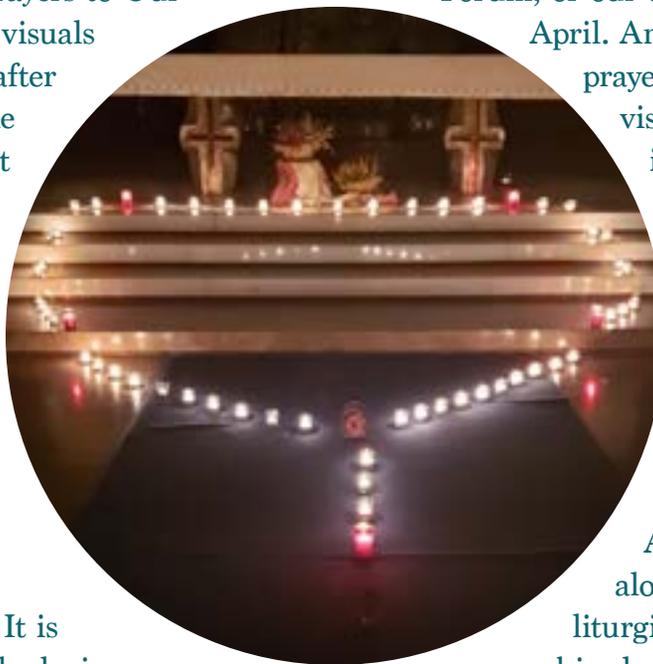
I pray that each of you will enjoy the richness of this time of year, whether it be through delicious family meals, special liturgical celebrations, or participation in one of MCCW's many events.

Yours in Christ,
Kim Miller, President, 2018-2020





One of the most beautiful books I've read about devotion to the Blessed Mother is "The Secret of the Rosary" by St. Louis de Montfort. Although it was written over 300 years ago, de Montfort's accessible prose explains why we should entrust our prayers to Our Lady. He uses powerful visuals that stay with you long after you close the cover of the book. Did you know that rosary literally means "crown of roses?" Every time you pray the Rosary, with each "ave" you say, you offer Our Blessed Mother's tender heart a fragrant, incorruptible rose. Our words are powerful and can build up or tear down people. It is beautiful to ponder gentle, loving words flowing from our mouths and encircling the head of Our Lady. With each prayer, we recognize her gentle strength and powerful intercession for those we love and for those with whom we struggle.



The Illuminated Rosary

A beautiful way to experience this devotion is through MCCW's signature program, the Illuminated Rosary. You might have prayed the Illuminated Rosary at a regional retreat, Forum, or our online Day of Reflection in April. An illuminated rosary is one prayed with the accompanying visual of lit candles formed into the shape of a rosary. Learn how to pray the Illuminated Rosary in your home or introduce this practice to your chapel group by consulting MCCW's devotion guide [here](#).

Additionally, you can pray along with MCCW Forum liturgist Kristin Foss in this archived clip from our online [Day of Reflection](#).

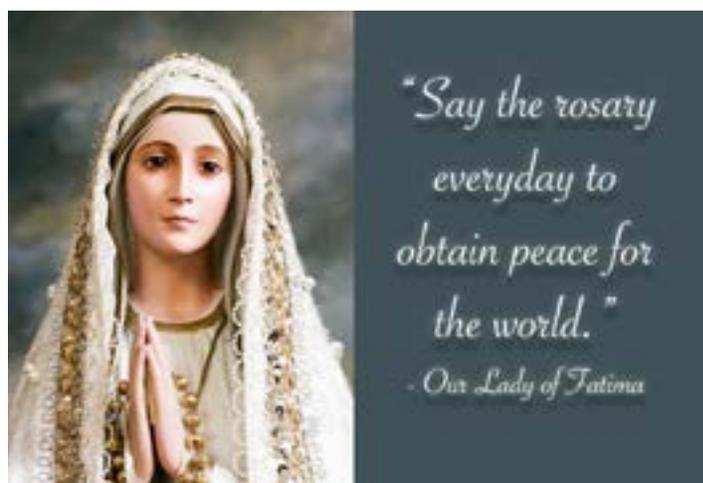
The Rosary for Warriors

“The Rosary for Warriors began out of grief and concern for the families of deceased Soldiers,” says MCCW member Lynda MacFarland.

Although she had never been drawn to this devotion, she began to cling to the rosary as an expression of hope and trust in the Lord in the face of despair. In this Month of the Most Holy Rosary, join with your MCCW sisters to pray this special devotion and entrust the needs of our nation’s warriors and their families to Our Lady, who will undoubtedly bring them to her Son.

The Rosary for Warriors is prayed by remembering a specific intention through each decade of the Sorrowful Mysteries:

- **Agony in the garden:** For deployed soldiers and their safety
- **Scourging at the pillar:** For wounded soldiers and for their healing
- **Crowning with thorns:** For deceased soldiers and repose of their souls
- **Carrying of the cross:** For families of deployed, wounded and deceased soldiers, and for strength and comfort
- **Crucifixion:** For our nation, for the victims of war and for peace in the world



MCCW Faux Fiesta Forum

The pandemic may have caused us to cancel our in-person Forum and our host city of San Antonio to cancel its Fiesta, but we have decided we won't let it cancel all the fun and faithfulness! Watch your inbox in the coming week for your invitation to our first-ever (and hopefully only-ever!) Faux Fiesta Forum - all the formation, friends, and fun you're craving!

When is the Faux Fiesta Forum?

MCCW's first-ever Faux Fiesta Forum will take place from **Sunday, November 8 through Sunday, November 22**. Some events will be live and others will be pre-recorded. Events will be scheduled to be available to the greatest number of MCCW women around the world.

How can I get involved?

There are several ways to participate in MCCW's Faux Fiesta Forum. Please consider...

...joining us online from your home! Connect with us via Facebook and Zoom to hear speakers, watch pre-recorded talks, and participate in small-group discussions.

...inviting a small group of friends over to take part in the activities. Connect live with us via Facebook and Zoom or watch at your own pace with pre-recorded videos on YouTube and our website.

...gathering your CWOC for a Faux

Fiesta Forum mini-retreat. If you live in an area where small gatherings are allowed, reserve a space at your chapel and use the live and pre-recorded materials to host a mini-retreat for your CWOC or women's ministry.

If you can't make it to the live events, don't worry - most of the programming will be recorded and posted to Facebook, YouTube, and our website for you to watch when convenient.

Do I need to register?

Most of the events will not require registration, but if you want to participate in any of the live events on Zoom, you will be asked to pre-register. Registration information for those breakouts will be shared via email and on social media in the coming days.

Participation in one of our most beloved traditions, the Promised Priest Online Auction to support our seminarians, will also require registration. Details about that event will be shared by email and online shortly.

What will be included in the virtual Forum?

Our Faux Fiesta Forum will be a mix of MCCW favorites like the Promised Priest Auction, inspiring speakers, quiet prayer time, and regional gatherings adapted in fun ways for a virtual environment. We can't wait to celebrate with you!



Final Call for Discerners

"Give your hands to serve & your hearts to love." Mother Teresa

Discernment for five positions on the MCCW-Worldwide Board will take place during the beginning of November, and the current board has been actively praying for the Holy Spirit to bring called, competent, and committed women to the table.

As we approach the group discernment, we wanted to share these words from Discernment Coordinator, Kelly Oliver, with you:

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Do you hear the clarion call? MCCW needs you!

Each one of us has made our homes a sacred place to dwell in prayer, in hope, and in living out our daily activities by serving the ones we love, during this time of semi-seclusion. Jesus is calling each one of us "by name" to draw closer to HIM by loving and tending to one another. Some of us serve by tending to our homes, our children, our parents, our neighbors, and our work. All these can be so sanctifying! Some are in a place where they can give of their time, too, and help their sisters by volunteering within MCCW.

MCCW has been important to us all; it is the ministry thread that binds us all together. The MCCW board is still serving, even behind the scenes. They set up meetings on Zoom,

coordinate within the regions and with local chapel groups, and they are even going forward with the next MCCW Worldwide Forum in 2022. "Going forward" is a great theme for us all.

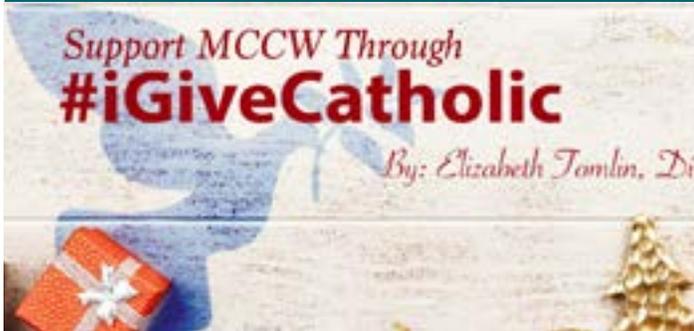
Many positions on the MCCW-Worldwide Board will be vacant very soon. The women who currently hold these positions have been gracious to stay well beyond their appointed period since the pandemic started. NOW is the time we must "go forward" and begin the process of discerning new MCCW-Worldwide Board positions. The current five positions available are: President, Forum Director, Finance Director, Communications Director, and one Director-at-Large position.

If you would like to know more about the positions and are interested in beginning the discernment process, please reach out. I am here to help you through the process of discovery.

Your Servant in Christ,
Kelly Oliver
Discernment Coordinator
discernment@mccw.org

To learn more about discernment for the MCCW Worldwide Board, reach out to Kelly or read more [here](#).



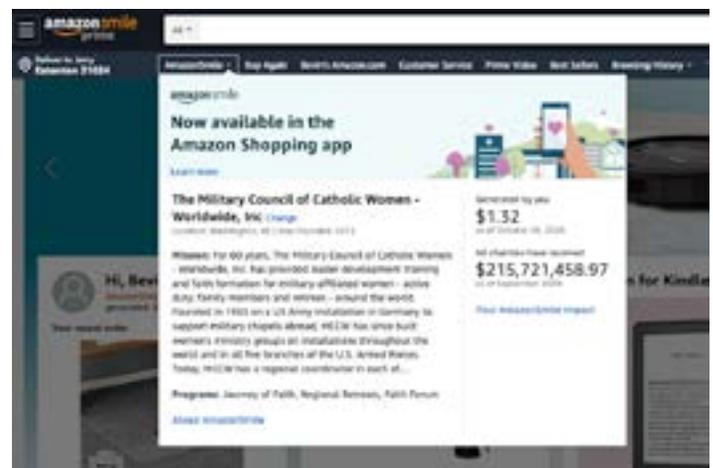


Beginning November 16, we will have a new opportunity for you to support MCCW through #iGiveCatholic! Celebrated annually on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday, #iGiveCatholic is the U.S. Catholic Church's Giving Day that kicks off the charitable season and brings the Catholic community together to give thanks and give back. As the first-ever giving day created to celebrate our unique Catholic heritage, #iGiveCatholic inspires faithful stewards to "Give Catholic" on Giving Tuesday.

I'm excited that MCCW has joined the Archdiocese for the Military Services, and 38 other dioceses to participate in #iGiveCatholic. MCCW's #iGiveCatholic campaign opens on November 16th and closes at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1.

Supporters of MCCW consistently share that their faith and families have been transformed through the spiritual growth they have experienced through MCCW. They also share that the friendships they form through MCCW provide them with the support they need to navigate all the challenges of military life. As our global ministry continues to grow, please consider supporting MCCW with a gift through #iGiveCatholic. Links will be available in early November on our web site.

Along with the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, MCCW receives donations when our supporters shop through Amazon Smile. Through this program, Amazon Smile donates 0.5% of your purchase to MCCW. As we near the holiday season, now is a great time to set up your Amazon Smile Account today! Simple visit smile.amazon.com and select the Military Council of Catholic Women as your designated charity. Since beginning our participation with Amazon Smile, MCCW has received more than \$650 in donations. Thank you for your support.



Accepting Change

in Your Vocation to Motherhood

By: Elizabeth Tomlin, Director of Financial Stewardship



I spent \$133.47 at my son, Patrick's, college bookstore on move-in day in August. I had not spent that much money on nonessentials since the pandemic hit. But I enthusiastically plunked the money onto the counter at the College of William and Mary bookstore and happily walked outside to the Virginia summer humidity sporting a new ball cap and a bag full of college mom paraphernalia that screamed my pride in Patrick's next step in his adult life.



Arriving to Patrick's new residence hall, we unloaded bins of school supplies and a semester's worth of clothing, bedding, and ramen noodles.

We were amateurishly clumsy in our unloading tactics as items fell out of grocery bags and rolled across the sidewalk. While chasing a rogue bottle of Gatorade, I noticed that the mom and son in the car in front of us had expertly packed everything in large, zip-up Ikea bags. Several college mom bumper stickers on her SUV tailgate confirmed that she had past experience with freshman move-in.

Once we transported the gear to Patrick's room, we started to arrange the furniture. Patrick rejected each suggestion I gave for how to fit his mini-fridge into his rather small room, and it became clear that he wanted, and perhaps needed, to arrange his room without me. I left Patrick and his sister to the task of arranging the furniture while I ran to the store for a few necessities.

As soon as I got in the car, I was grateful for my new ball cap and oversized sunglasses because the floodgates opened. I cried my eyes out all the way to the store and up and down laundry detergent aisle. I even ignobly cried my way through the Chick-fil-A drive through on my way back to campus. When I returned to the dorm, Patrick and his sister were beaming with satisfaction. They had made the bed, hung posters, strung Christmas lights, and even found a spot for the mini fridge. The room looked great – without my input.

I invited Patrick to go to dinner with us, but he opted to eat with other freshman. My daughter and I ate dinner and drove past the dorm later in the evening to see if Patrick needed anything. From a distance, I spotted him sitting on the lawn with other



students. We slowed down to look but kept driving. I didn't want to intrude. We said our goodbyes in the dorm parking lot the next morning.

I left Patrick with the following words:

Be good. Study hard. Go to church.

And I cried – surprise, surprise. I told myself that I would feel less sad when my daughter leaves for college. However, as I put the minivan in reverse, I saw the expert unloader family from the day before. The seasoned college mom hugged her son goodbye with a smile, but as soon as she slid into her car, she burst into tears.

I was not prepared for college mom grief. It is a confounding grief. A paradox, really.

It's a paradox because unlike other types of grief, in grieving a child leaving the nest, we're grieving exactly what we worked so hard to attain for so many years.

Throughout our motherhood journey, we traverse “long days and short years” often filled with pregnancy nausea or the anticipation of adoption, teaching our children to read, celebrating birthdays, confronting medical challenges, leading scout meetings, navigating finances, getting kids to behave in church, reheating cups of coffee, attending sports practices and music recitals, and helping our kids learn to share, do chores, and make good friends. We joyfully and exhaustedly parent our children.

With our work often unseen, we raise squirmy, snuggly children to become God-loving, independent, kindhearted young adults who don't need our help to set up dorm rooms, find dinner, or make friends.

But the manifestation of that adult can break our mom hearts a little as we think about the childhood years where they desperately need our physical presence.

It's okay to grieve that our children don't need us the way they used to. It's okay to cry on college move-in day. It really is. Once again, I bawled my eyes out on the flight home from Virginia to Washington. Somewhere over Missouri, I recalled words that my friend Mary Lenaburg wrote about grief.

“Acceptance is where healing begins,” she wrote.

So the goal in this new stage of parenting is acceptance. God called me to motherhood that began with a child who desperately needed me for nearly his entire life until now. Now, however, my vocation as his mother is to accept that my son needs me in different ways. He needs the hidden work of my prayers instead of overt actions. He needs the subtlety of a listening ear instead of direction. He needs me to support him even if he does things differently than I would. He needs me to observe him from a distance while he forges his way. His Mom driving away is exactly what Patrick needs.

As for me, I need to accept that happiness and sadness can co-exist in this new chapter of motherhood.



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