



St. Katharine Drexel Council of Catholic Women

May 2026

The St. Katharine Drexel Council of Catholic Women is an affiliate of the Diocese of Venice Council of Catholic Women (VDCCW) and the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW). The NCCW is a member of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO) and is an affiliate of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).



St. Katharine Drexel
Council of Catholic Women
General Membership Meeting

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 7, 2026

Meets the 1st Thursday of the Month

Place: Faith Formation West

Mass: 9:00 am

Meeting: 10:00 am – 12:30 pm

Lunch: 12:30 – 1 pm

Catered – Pizza & Salad

Speaker: Maddy DeBlois



Crowning of Mary

Saturday, May 9th – 9:00 am Mass

St. Katharine Drexel Church

Mother's Day Cards

Sat. – Sun – May 9 & 10 at All Masses

Happy Mother's Day!!

SKD CCW Board Meeting:

Faith Formation Building West

Thursday, May 28, 2026



Nominating
Commission

Presenting!! The New SKD CCW Board of Directors

Installation of Board members is on Thursday, May 7, after the 9 am Mass.

Everyone is welcome! Please be sure to attend, wearing your CCW scarves.

After the installation, we will go to our final CCW Meeting in Faith Formation West.

President	Mary Ann Bedell
President-Elect	Ellen Stock
Treasurer	Eileen Hartley
Recording Secretary	Vicky Parker
Parliamentarian	Madeleine DeBois
Spirituality & Spiritual Advisor	Rose Talbot-Babey
Leadership	Donna Scherer, Sue McClure
Membership	Roxana Nicholson, Co-Chair Open
e-Communications	Kathy Giardina
Service	Peggy Thomas, Kat Donahue
Nominating	Ellen Stock
Hospitality	Judy Curtis, Ann Young
Historian	Barbara Gianelli, Robin & Julie Eliuk



A Word from Our President ... Mary Ann Bedell

Now that I have had a year to “get my feet wet,” I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve as your President for one more year. I welcome our new Board members and thank those who have stepped into different roles. Your willingness to serve is what keeps our organization strong. As I reflect on the idea of “stepping up,” I am reminded that our organization is changing. Many of our long-time members have passed away, moved away, or are no longer able to participate as they once did. Because of this, we will be looking to our general membership to consider taking on leadership roles, especially for our time-honored CCW events. Your involvement, large or small, makes a meaningful difference. In the coming year, one of my goals is to foster a deeper spirit of friendship among our members. I hope we can grow not only in service, but in connection -- taking the time to truly know one another and appreciate the unique gifts each person brings.



SKD CCW Scholarship Committee Report
Ellen Stock & Susan McClure

This year we were blessed to support students from our parish who are continuing their education in Catholic and local schools. Scholarships were awarded to students attending the University of Florida, Florida State University, Ave Maria University, University of Mary, Florida Southwestern College, and Florida Gulf Coast University. Additional scholarships were awarded to students attending Bishop Verot Catholic High School, St. Andrew Catholic School, and Sacred Heart of Jesus Private School. In total, 15 students from our parish received scholarships this year. The total amount distributed was \$8,000. We congratulate these students and continue to keep them in our prayers as they grow in faith and knowledge.



SKD CCW Donations Committee Report
Madeleine DeBlois & Susan McClure

The Donations Committee met monthly to review donation requests from our membership. Each request was carefully evaluated for its mission, values, and alignment with those of SKD, CCW, and NCCW. We prioritized supporting our parish needs, the youth of our parish, and local community charities. Our recommendations were presented to both the CCW Board and the general membership and were approved by both groups. From September 2025 through April 2026, the Donations Committee facilitated contributions totaling \$1,921.08 to organizations such as Bootstraps, Table of Plenty, Feed My Starving Children, the Seminarian Fund, and others.

From our President-Elect, Ellen Stock

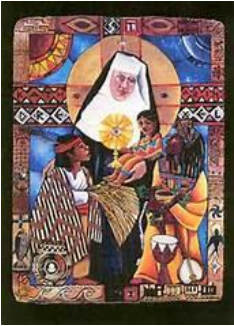
I want to thank all of you wonderful ladies for a very productive year. Our charitable events would not be possible without all of you helping! I also enjoyed our retreat and our trip to St. John XXIII. I look forward to another very exciting year with all of my CCW sisters!

Blessings...Ellen

From your Editor:

Thank you for another wonderful season of allowing me to bring you our newsletters. It has been a privilege to write and edit these articles. I learn something new every time! We may publish a Summer Bulletin in August; our regular newsletter will return in September. Wishing you all a bountiful and blessed summer.

All my best, Sandy Caldwell



250 Years of Faith, Service, and Courage: Honoring Women Who Shaped Our Nation

St. Katharine Drexel (1858–1955) — Champion for Racial Justice

Born into a wealthy Philadelphia family, Katharine Drexel could have lived a life of comfort and privilege. Instead, she dedicated her life and resources to addressing the deep racial inequalities faced by Native American and African American communities in the United States. In 1891 she founded the *Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament*, a religious congregation devoted to education and missionary outreach among these communities. Over her lifetime, Mother Drexel contributed nearly \$20 million of her personal fortune to establish schools, missions, and churches throughout the South and Southwest, where educational opportunities were often limited or unavailable. Canonized in 2000 as the *second U.S.-born saint* (after St. Elizabeth Ann Seton), she is remembered for using her faith, influence, and resources to promote dignity and educational opportunity for those on the margins of society. Her legacy continues through the ministries of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament today.

A woman of faith who answered Christ's call to serve.



We pause this month to give thanks for the women who have shaped our lives with love, care, and guidance. We think of our mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers – women who we have loved and come to understand more as we grow older ourselves. But motherhood reaches beyond biology. There are so many women who “mother” in other ways. They are the aunts, teachers, mentors, friends, neighbors, and caregivers who nurture, encourage, and support those around them. They show up, they listen, they notice, and they care. Mother’s Day can also be a bittersweet time – as we think back on those we’ve lost. We can honor them by remembering them this month. Mothering is love in action. We are grateful to each one of them!



Roxana Nicholson, Chairwoman

Dear Counsel of Catholic Women: As we are about to close out our year, we reflect upon how fast this year has passed and how the Council at Saint Katharine Drexel has successfully managed all our planned activities. We thank you all for your great participation. We had great speakers, fundraising events such as the Fall Bazaar and the Fashion Show. As we might have observed, all of our accomplishments would not have been possible without our active members. As we head into the summer and quiet our activities, we also look forward to our next season this coming September with great optimism. Please remember the value of inviting new people we meet to the Council. We encourage current members to attend our enjoyable monthly meetings. As you can see, we need all of our members to engage if we are to enjoy a successfully operating Council. *Thank you!!*



Kathy Giardina

Kathy reminds us that e-Communications does not stop during the summer. She asks us to keep in mind that if you have any questions, comments, or need to share something, including a prayer request during the summer break, please feel free to email her at staroflife4003@aol.com.

Wishing you a safe and Christ-filled summer!



All Children and Families Are Invited
Saint Katharine Drexel Parish
Crowning of Mary

First Holy Communicants and their families are particularly invited to this special tradition of honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary during the month of May. Children are asked to dress in their First Communion attire.

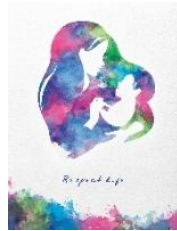
**Saturday
 May 9th
 at the 9:00 AM Mass**

Communicants will be provided flowers.
 All are welcome to bring flowers from your garden. Rosaries will be distributed and recited after Mass.




Respect Life:

Maria Maddalena
239-540-7096



Our mission is to foster respect for human life from conception to natural death.

- Praying at Planned Parenthood Fort Myers – every Thursday – Noon to 2PM
- Rosary for Life – SKD Chapel – Wednesday, May 13th at Noon
- Diaper Drive, May 16-17 (size 4, 5 and 6) + wipes + shampoo

Bootstraps – We Need Your Help!



The Bootstraps team will have a collection bin in the Parish Hall during our May General Membership Meeting. Thank you for your generous donations. In addition to the usual items (socks, razors, shampoo, bar soap, canned meat, granola bars, deodorant, toothpaste, peanut butter, AA/AAA batteries, and plastic bag), Bootstraps is in dire need of: AA & AAA Batteries & Bug Spray. Please bring your items and place them in the Bootstraps Collection bin. Thank you for your generosity. Your donations make a real difference for those served by this ministry!



Spirituality – a Few Reminders from Eileen Hartley, Chairwoman

Ascension of Our Lord will be celebrated Sunday, May 17
 Pentecost Sunday, May 24. Please wear red to Mass for Pentecost if possible.

The 2026 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage begins Memorial Day weekend in St. Augustine, FL and travels up the East Coast, ending in Philadelphia over the Fourth of July weekend for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The theme, *One Nation Under God*, calls us to prayer for renewal and unity in our country through Christ in the Eucharist. All are invited to participate in person or in spirit. More info: www.eucharisticpilgrimage.org