

July 2025

# NEWSNOTES



Florida Council of Catholic Women - National Council of Catholic Women  
Sisters in Christ,

**NEWSNOTES** is the official publication of the Miami Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, an affiliated organization of the National Council of Catholic Women.

### Organization Objectives

- To unite all Catholic Women Organizations of this Archdiocese in purpose, direction, and action in religious, educational, social, and economic fields.
- To stimulate these organizations to greater efficiency and usefulness in meeting the needs of the times.
- To give full support to the statements and programs of the United States Bishops Conference and to render them assistance in these efforts.

### NCCW Mission Statement

The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its affiliated organizations to support, empower, and educate all Catholic Women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.

<http://www.maccw.org>



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*a message from*  
**The President**



**Miami Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Woman**

**President Report**

Dear Sisters in Christ,

As I reflect on our recent convention, my heart overflows with gratitude and joy. What an extraordinary gathering it was—filled with faith, fellowship, and the powerful witness of women dedicated to serving God and one another. Your tireless efforts, generous hearts, and unwavering commitment made this event not only a success but a true celebration of our mission and values. Thank you.

From those who led prayers and presentations to those who quietly offered help behind the scenes, each of you played a vital part. Our organization is truly blessed because of the spirit you bring into everything we do.

Now, as we carry the light of that experience forward, let us come together once again. The convention may be over, but our journey continues. We have been entrusted with a shared calling: to draw more women into our circle and to lovingly mentor those who feel called to step into leadership. Our council has set its sights on growth—not just in numbers, but in spiritual depth, community bonds, and meaningful service.

I invite each of you to take an active role in this mission. Let's reach out, connect, and uplift one another. Together, we can plant seeds that blossom into lasting legacies.

With gratitude and hope,

**Fabiola Sanchez-De Armas**  
MACCW President

North District of MACCW  
MACCW Summer Board Meeting  
June 28, 2025

Good morning, Madam President, Board members, Rev. Father

Right now, things are quiet in North District, most affiliations are on vacation, some are restructuring so some changes will be made.

Our Pilgrim Virgin is at rest with All Saints for the summer and will start traveling again at our Fall Board meeting.

I only handed out a few Board lists today, with the changes I knew of, there will be more changes by the fall so I will have a more complete list for all at that time.

District wide goal is the same, look into scheduling appointments with parishes within the District who do not have an affiliation.

Madam President this concludes my report.

Diane Tugander, President North District

North District General meetings

**Fall** – October 18, 2025 hosted by St Sebastian

**Spring** – March 21, 2026 hosted by St Andrew



Miami Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women  
Summer Board Meeting – June 1, 2024  
Central District President Report

It was a pleasure to attend the MACCW Annual Meeting. I received the 2 checks from the FCCW Project, Hugs for the Homeless. The Central District chose to send half to the Missionaries of Charity of Mother Teresa Homeless Shelter, Miami, and half to Camillus House, Miami.

The Fall meeting of the Central District will be on November 1, 2025, and hosted by the St. Stephen Women of Fiat. The Spring Meeting will be on March 14, 2026, hosted St. Rose of Lima Council of Catholic Women.

The last week in May, I went on a Pilgrimage to Rome with the Archdiocese of Miami. It was the Jubilee week of Families, Grandparents and the Elderly. It was an amazing experience. When I was talking to one of the other pilgrims in our group, I mentioned my involvement in the Council of Catholic Women. She said that her previous parish had a Council but not her current one. She wanted to start one at her current parish. She is joining us today. Please welcome Barbara Romani from Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. Barbara has already started the ball rolling by asking and getting permission from her pastor and the parish council to start a Council of Catholic Women affiliation at Our lady of Guadalupe. I look forward to helping Barbara with this effort.

I am proud of the wonderful work that has been accomplished by the gifted and generous women of the Central District. May God bless us as we continue to do great things with and for the Lord.

Mary Weber  
Central District of MACCW President

Let's ENJOY  
The SUMMER

## Summer Board Meeting – June 28, 2025

### South District President Report

Dear Madam President, Board Members, Reverend Father and Sisters in Christ,

It is with joy and gratitude that I share this first update as President of the South District Council of Catholic Women. I feel incredibly blessed to begin this journey alongside such dedicated women, united in our love for Christ and commitment to serve through prayer, action, and sisterhood.

While our new board is still finalizing a few appointments—including our Historian and a couple of commission chairwomen—we are eager to begin planning for the year ahead. My vision as President is to build upon the work of those who came before us across all districts, to grow both our affiliations and membership, to welcome younger women, and to continue prioritizing faith formation, service to the vulnerable, the defense of life, and spiritual growth.

Below is a summary of our active affiliations and some highlights that reflect the heart of their ministry and devotion:

#### St. Thomas the Apostle (STA)

- Hosted a beautiful Seder Dinner with over 60 guests
- Successfully directed proceeds from a Second Collection to Respect Life
- Supported multiple MACCW and parish initiatives, including Confirmations and the MACCW Convention

#### Our Lady of Lourdes (LOL)

- Maintained their monthly Bingo ministry at a local nursing home
- Honored their Lady of Good Counsel and Outstanding Member during a joyful celebration
- Took part in the Pentecost Ministry Fair, inviting over 20 women to join CCW
- Ongoing school supply drive to benefit children in need

#### Holy Rosary–St. Richard (HRSR)

- Hosted a meaningful Christmas Brunch and Angel Tree gift collection
- Raised nearly \$2,000 through a Valentine's basket raffle, benefiting the parish
- Two of their members were honored with the Golden Rose Award and a scholarship win at the MACCW Convention



- Held a Chinese Auction to purchase church bells and establish a scholarship in Fr. Danis' name

Each of these activities reflects the strong Catholic faith and servant leadership found in our communities. I am inspired by their creativity, commitment, and love, and look forward to working together in unity and purpose as we continue our mission to be the hands and heart of Christ in the Archdiocese of Miami.

May God open our eyes to see the needs of others,  
our ears to listen to our neighbor's cries,  
and soften our hearts to recognize our own shortcomings.

May He grant us the grace to overcome them,  
and the strength to always do His holy will.

Let us be salty for the world—preserving, flavoring, and igniting His light wherever we go.

In faith and sisterhood,

Daniela Martinez

President, South District Council of Catholic Women



## MACCW Summer Legislation Report

Saturday, June 28, 2025

Catholic Days at the Capitol (CDAC) are days designated by Florida Bishops for catholic men and women of Florida to gather at the state capitol in Tallahassee and put their faith and civic responsibility into action. This year outcome:

### Prison Funding

The legislature has appropriated \$3.8 billion to the Department of Corrections (over 4% increase from last year's budget), representing 3.30% of the total state budget.

The following bills of interest were sent to Gov. DeSantis and have been approved. Additional bills identified in our [Week 9 Session Summary](#) have yet to be sent to the governor for his signature.

### Death Penalty Expansion: OPPOSE by FLCCB

#### ~ Aggravating Factor - Victims Gathered

##### HB 693 (Redondo) / SB 984 (Gruters)

Adds a new aggravating factor for a jury to consider when determining a death sentence if the victim was gathered with one or more persons for school activities, religious activities, or public government meetings. Effective October 1, 2025.

#### ~ Aggravating Factor - Head of State

##### HB 653 (Holcomb) / SB 776 (Ingoglia)

Adds a new aggravating factor for a jury to consider when determining a death sentence if the victim was a head of state, or bystander in an attempt to kill a head of state. Effective July 1, 2025.

#### ~ Capital Felony for Human Trafficking

##### HB 1283 (Jacques) / SB 1804 (Martin)

Makes sex trafficking of children under 12 or persons who are mentally incapacitated a capital felony, which could result in a death sentence. Effective October 1, 2025.

Please prepare to join us for 2026 Catholic Day at the Capitol on February 10-12, 2026. Madam Presidents make it a line item on your budget to send at least one person.

We continue to encourage members to join the advocacy network. **Florida Catholic Advocacy Network.** You cannot go to the Capitol, this is how you can participate in your homes, cars, anywhere you are, you can send messages to the Governor and your legislators through the network.

May the Our Lady of Good Counsel continue to intercede for us to be wise and courageous leaders of the church. Amen.

Respectfully Submitted.

Josephine Gilbert

MACCW Legislation Chair.



MACCW Summer Board Meeting - June 28, 2025  
Scholarship Fund Committee Report

The Scholarship Committee was very pleased that there were 23 people from scholarship recipients, family, friends, and school staff attending the MACCW Convention Luncheon on April 26, 2025. The support shown for these girls was outstanding. Seven eighth grade girls received a scholarship of \$4,000.00 each, to attend the Catholic high school of their choice. Five girls received the Lucy Petrillo Scholarship Award. The 5 girls are: from St. Mary Cathedral Catholic School, Claranjah Pierre, who will be attending Msgr. Edward Pace High School; from St. James Catholic School, Markayla Sylvain, who will be attending Msgr. Edward Pace High School; from Annunciation Catholic School, Adriana Brito, who will be attending Msgr. Edward Pace High School; from Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic School, Christina Jasmine, who will be attending St. Thomas Aquinas High School; and from Good Shepherd Catholic School, Monica Zuniga, who will be attending Archbishop Colman Carroll High School. Two girls received the Ray and Doris LaCombe Scholarship Award. The 2 girls are: from Our Lady of the Holy Rosary-St. Richard Catholic School, Kormora Edgecombe, who will be attending Archbishop Coleman Carroll High School; and from St. Rose of Lima Catholic School, Anaissa Gustinvil, who will be attending Msgr. Edward Pace High School. These girls were presented with their respective Scholarship Award Certificate at the MACCW Convention Luncheon.

We made many changes in the Scholarship Committee this past year. I want to thank those that served on the committee this past year, Fr. Greer, Fabiola Sanchez-De Armas, Kitten Auer, Sharon Utterback, Diane Tugnader, Josephine Gilbert, Marie Mohammed, Karen Lorenzen, Nancy Shutt-Aine, and Barbara Asfendis. I want to thank them for working as a team, their excellent service, and outstanding dedication to helping sustain the Scholarship Fund. I look forward to working with them again this coming year.

We thank you for your support. We hope you will continue with your generosity to the scholarship fund so that together we can continue to make girls dreams come true .

We will continue to seek ways to make the MACCW Scholarship Program financially viable. We are looking into getting a QR code for online giving and participating on Tuesday Giving. Our 2026 Scholarship Fundraiser Luncheon will be held on February 28, 2026, at the Miami Shores Country Club, 10000 Biscayne Boulevard in Miami Shores. This is not just for Council Members, please consider inviting family and friends. I hope I see all of you there.

Thank You!

Mary Weber  
MACCW Scholarship Chair





## RESPECT LIFE REPORT

This year, our districts have demonstrated unwavering commitment to upholding the dignity of every human life through a wide variety of compassionate and action-oriented initiatives.

Our Respect Life Clinics received continuous support through numerous donations of baby showers, including essential items such as clothing, diapers, and financial contributions. These heartfelt efforts have greatly assisted expecting mothers and families in need.

Members remained steadfast in prayerful witness through ongoing vigils held at abortion clinics, maintaining a peaceful and loving presence as advocates for the unborn.

The *Hugs for the Homeless* campaign continued to flourish, providing comfort and connection to those living on the margins. During the Christmas season, instead of exchanging gifts among ourselves, members chose to collect presents and essentials, which were joyfully distributed to residents in nursing homes, bringing smiles and companionship during the holidays.

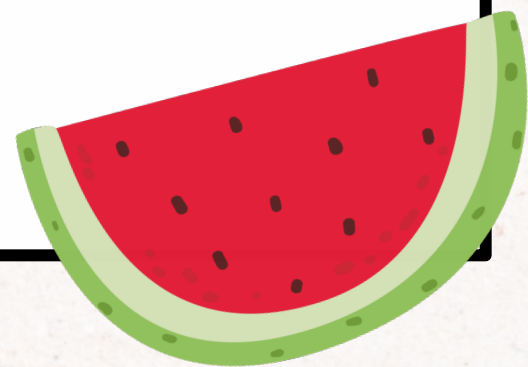
Collaboration with St. Vincent de Paul allowed us to reach more individuals in need through hands-on support and generosity. Efforts also extended to raising cash donations for *Kids in Distress*, helping create stability and joy for vulnerable children.

Our commitment to spreading joy and hope was further exemplified by our continued involvement in the *Boxes of Joy* program. Each box was a symbol of love sent across the miles to children who may otherwise go without.

Finally, we were proud to witness an enthusiastic turnout for *Catholic Days at the Capitol* in Tallahassee. This important annual pilgrimage deepened our civic engagement and reminded us of the power of faithful citizenship.

In all these works, the spirit of life, service, and love has prevailed. Our members have given selflessly, prayed fervently, and acted boldly — and for that, we give thanks.

### **Respect Life Team**



# Human Trafficking in Miami, FL: A Report for the Women's Catholic Council

## Introduction

Human trafficking is an egregious violation of human rights that affects millions worldwide, and Miami, Florida, is no exception. As a vibrant metropolitan area with a significant influx of tourists and an extensive immigrant population, Miami faces unique challenges regarding the prevalence and visibility of human trafficking. This report aims to provide an overview of the current status of human trafficking in Miami and identify actionable opportunities for outreach and advocacy through the Women's Catholic Council to raise awareness both within parishes and the broader community.

## The Status of Human Trafficking in Miami

The state of Florida ranks third in the U.S. for human trafficking cases, with Miami being a major hotspot due to its geographical location, bustling tourism industry, and diverse population. According to the Florida Department of Children and Families, human trafficking encompasses both sex trafficking and labor trafficking, with a significant number of victims being young females and individuals from marginalized communities. The National Human Trafficking Hotline reported that Miami-Dade County had the highest number of human trafficking cases in Florida, citing domestic violence, substance abuse, and poverty as contributing risk factors.

Local law enforcement agencies and non-profits have identified several types of trafficking occurring in the area. Notably, sex trafficking is prevalent due to the city's nightlife and entertainment sectors, while labor trafficking often affects migrant workers in industries like agriculture and hospitality. These factors contribute to a complex web of vulnerabilities, making it crucial to approach the issue with a multifaceted strategy.

## Areas of Opportunity for the Women's Catholic Council

Given the alarming status of human trafficking in Miami, the Women's Catholic Council has a unique opportunity to lead community awareness and advocacy efforts. Here are several actionable steps the council can take:

- 1. Educational Workshops and Seminars:** Organizing workshops within parishes to educate congregants about the signs of human trafficking can empower community members to identify and report suspicious activity. Collaborating with local anti-trafficking organizations to provide training can enhance the effectiveness of these sessions.
- 2. Outreach and Partnerships:** Forming partnerships with local law enforcement, non-profits, and social service agencies can create a robust support network for victims. Engaging with organizations like the Miami Human Trafficking Task Force will enable the council to stay informed about ongoing efforts and developments in the fight against trafficking.
- 3. Awareness Campaigns:** The Women's Catholic Council can spearhead awareness campaigns using various media platforms. These campaigns could feature social media posts, informational flyers, and talks during church services to educate the community about the realities of human trafficking and promote resources available for victims.
- 4. Support Services for Victims:** Organizing initiatives to support survivors, such as clothing drives, job placement services, and counseling sessions, can create a safety net that helps individuals reintegrate into society. The council can engage its members by volunteering their time, skills, and resources to these initiatives.
- 5. Advocacy for Policy Change:** Advocating for stronger anti-trafficking legislation and policies at the local and state levels is essential. The Women's Catholic Council can mobilize its members to participate in advocacy campaigns, thereby amplifying their voice in pressing for the protective legislation needed to combat trafficking.
- 6. Involvement of Youth Ministry:** Engaging youth through parish youth ministry programs can provide valuable educational opportunities on the topic of human trafficking. Workshops tailored for teenagers will not only help them recognize the signs of trafficking but empower them to take action.

## Conclusion

Human trafficking is a serious issue facing Miami, FL, and it's imperative that the Women's Catholic Council take proactive steps to address this crisis. By raising awareness, providing education, and forming strategic partnerships, the council can play a critical role in combating human trafficking in the community. Through a commitment to advocacy, outreach, and support for victims, the Women's Catholic Council can help foster a safer and more informed community, turning the tide against this devastating violation of human rights. By mobilizing their resources and passion for social justice, the council stands poised to make a significant impact in the fight against human trafficking in Miami.

## MACC 2025/26 CALENDAR

Year	Month	Date	Event / Function	Place
2025	June	28	MACCW Summer Mtg	St Augustine
	August	9	MACCW Meet & Greet	Holy Rosary - St Richard
		19-23	NCCW Convention	Orlando
	September	??	Layette Mass	TBD
		27	SDCCW Fall Mtg	TBD
	October	4	MACCW Fall Meeting	Our Lady of Lourdes
		18	NDCCW Mtg	St Sebastian
November	1	CDCCW Mtg	St Steven	
2026	January	24	MACCW Winter Mtg & Afternoon of Reflection	All Saints
	February	10-11	Catholic Days at the Capitol	Tallahassee
		28	MACCW Scholarship Luncheon	Miami Shores Country Club
	March	14	CDCCW Spring Meeting	St Rose of Lima
		21	NDCCW Spring Mtg	TBD
		28	SDCCW Spring Mtg	TBD

