



COURT CEDAR RAPIDS 1768 · ST. THERESE, THE LITTLE FLOWER

NEWSLETTER

Events:

Our February 2026 member meeting will be held at a special time. Since many members prefer not to drive at night during the winter months, we will be trying a Saturday morning meeting for February.

Please join us for our speaker, lunch, and business meeting -- we look forward to seeing you there!

~ * ~

Our Next meeting is:

Saturday, February 7th

St. Pius X, Parish Hall, 10:00 AM - Noon

Doors open: 9:30 AM

Speaker: Attorney Karen Volz

Topic: Power of Attorney

Refreshments: ~ 10:30 AM

Lunch: Spaghetti/Italian theme w/Sub Sandwiches, Salads



(Jean Randolph, Kelly Brummer, Cecelia Gustafson, Rita Holmes, Marianne Riester, Maggie Lakose)

Business Meeting: ~ 10:45 AM

After our meeting, we will assemble Valentine Favors for the Sisters of Mercy.

February Donations Accepted:

- Cleaning Kits: Shampoo, Hand Cream (any size), Dental Floss or Flossers, Granola Bars (Please check dates!)
- Comfort Bags: Manual Can Openers, Clorox Wipes, Hot Pads that can handle heat (No homemade knit ones, please!)

Guests are always welcome

to attend our meetings.
Need a ride to our meeting?

Call or text

Stephanie Guzman
319-540-7193



Contact info for our Court

Regent & Newsletter Editor:
Roberta Peters

Email: chrisbert94@gmail.com
Call: (319) 366-0999 Text: (319) 431-222

NOTE: Regular member meetings will move BACK to the 2nd Tuesday, beginning in September 2025. We will use the St. Pius X Parish Hall.

January 2026
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Welcome to our Court, Jeanne Philipp!



After learning about our Court from friends at St. Ludmila Church, Jeanne Philipp attended our November 2025 meeting. She quickly made the decision that she wanted to become a member at our December meeting.

Jeanne is a member of St. Ludmila, increasing our numbers from the parish. For Jeanne's contact information, please refer to the 12/28/2025 email update.

It is great to have you as a member, Jeanne!

December 9, 2025 Member Meeting: Soup's On!

The weather on December 9th was perfect for a hot bowl of soup, and seven ladies provided us with a tasty assortment to choose from. After our meal, everyone selected their favorite. The three top choices received a ladle decorated with ribbons and Christmas candies.

A separate recipe page is attached so you may make the three soups.

- 1st Place: Marla Tursi - Classic Italian Wedding Soup
- 2nd Place: Lola Scott - Easy Wonton Soup
- 3rd Place: Jan Casey - Zuppa Toscana



Photo: (l-r) Lola Scott, Marla Tursi, Jan Casey



That Sweater Sure is Ugly!

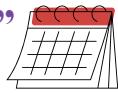
New this year for our Christmas Party: an Ugly Sweater Contest! Ten ladies donned their ugly sweaters for a chance at one of the top 3 prizes - a mini sweater, knitted by Roberta Peters and decorated by Erika Brockmeyer.

Thank you to our Christmas party committee for a fun evening! (Rita Holmes, Karen Meade, & Erika Brockmeyer)

Photos: (top, l-r) Contestants: Carol Steiner, Jean Bean, Virginia Pilcher, Patty Kauffman, Erika Brockmeyer, Barb Heishman, Marla Tursi, Judy Scott, Lola Scott, Bertha Rodriguez; (left, l-r) Ugly Sweater Winners! Jean Bean (2nd); Erika Brockmeyer (1st); Lola Scott (3rd); Ryan Paul (The Piano-Man who helped judge the applause.); (Left, bottom) The 3 prizes with hangers added so they can be hung on a tree.)

MISSION STATEMENT: Catholic Daughters of the Americas strives to embrace the principle of faith working through love in the promotion of justice, equality and the advancement of human rights and human dignity for all.

“Mark Your Calendar!”



Friday, January 16, 2026

- Tour of Bridgehaven Pregnancy Support Center
- ~ 11:30 AM - 12:15 PM
- If you have not signed up, but wish to attend, please contact Stephanie Guzman.
 - 319-540-7193
 - slguzman1992@gmail.com
- We will determine a lunch location soon.

Saturday - January 31, 2026

- Seminarian & Religious Soup Supper
- St. Wenceslaus Glovik Center
- 5:00 - 8:00 PM
(following the 4:00 PM Mass)
- We would love your help! Please contact us!
- Pat Semelroth, Bertha Rodriguez, or Roberta Peters. (LOTS of details coming SOON!)



Saturday, February 7, 2026

- Member meeting, with Attorney Karen Volz who will speak about Power of Attorney
- 10:00 - Noon



Wednesday, February 18, 2026

- Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 18 - March 29: **40 Days for Life** Observance by Court #1768



Monday, March 2, 2026

- “Read Across America” - Dr. Seuss’ Birthday

Saturday, March 7, 2026

- Spring Welcome Brunch
- 8:30 - 10:30 AM
- Speaker: Sr. Linda Bechen with Sisters of Mercy
- More information available soon!

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

- Member meeting, 6:15 PM
- Refreshments: St. Patrick’s Day Baked Potato Bar
- We will assemble 60 Comfort Bags for 2 area shelters at the end of the meeting.

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

- Chrism Mass in Dubuque

Sunday, April 5, 2026

- Easter Sunday



Tuesday, April 14, 2026

- April Member Meeting 6:15 pm
- Member Birthday Celebration



Tuesday, May 12, 2026

- May Member Meeting 6:15 pm
- May Crowning of Mary, Patron of CDA

Saturday, May 23rd & Sunday, May 24th

- Jacob Francois’ Ordination to Priesthood and First Mass of Thanksgiving

Dues (\$28) may be paid at any time. Please submit payment by **February 1st**. Cash or checks may be given to Mary Jo Evers at our meetings. Checks should be made payable to: **CDA #1768**

Or you may mail her a check: 336 Windsor Dr. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402



Homemade With Heart



Our First Annual “Homemade with Heart”

Bazaar was a Success!

Thanks to our Bazaar Committee members who spent many months preparing for the event and working with Court members, we were able to raise **\$2,800** (rounded up) for local charities that support children and families in our area.

SO MANY members shared their time, talents, and treasure to prepare homemade crafts and delicious baked goods for the day. It took all of us working together as a team to get these results.

Committee: Cecelia Gustafson, Jean Bean, Grace Meyer, and Mary Morgan. Thanks, Ladies!

During our December 9th meeting, members voted to donate the funds as follows:

- \$200.00 St. Pius X Church (use of space)
- \$500.00 Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Inc.
- \$500.00 Families Helping Families of Iowa, Inc.
- \$500.00 Central Furniture Rescue
- \$500.00 St. Vincent de Paul
- \$300.00 His Hands Free Clinic
- \$300.00 Community Health Free Clinic



Here are a couple photos from Court members who helped deliver the checks and were able to catch someone for a photo. More photos will be shared in February if provided.



Shh ...

The Results of Our Silent Auction are IN!

Many Court members donated baked goods or gently used items for the **Silent Auction** held at the November 11, 2025 member meeting. This is our **Fall Food Event** and all proceeds go to help those experiencing food insecurity.

We raised **\$593.00** and it was distributed as follows:

- \$193.00 Iowa CDA
(to be distributed by Archbishop Zinkula)
- \$100.00 St. Vincent de Paul
- \$100.00 Freedom Foundation for Veterans
- \$100.00 Bridgehaven Pregnancy Support Center
- \$100.00 metro Catholic Outreach



2025-2026 Program Year



Members joining between April 1st - August 31st have their dues applied toward membership through the next CDA fiscal year. Please note that some members are paid ahead; Mary Jo Evers maintains a list of those members.

If you have any changes or corrections to your contact information (including address, phone or email), please report them to Mary Jo Evers. She will share the updated information with National, State, and Court offices.

Email: eversmaryjo@gmail.com
Cell: (319)389-2568



Faith Robinson, Program & Events Coordinator at Families Helping Families, with Ginger Brown



Vicki Comer, Program Administrator/Volunteer Coordinator for Community Health Free Clinic with Rosie Martin

Sunshine Committee

Shirley Bush, co-chair of the Court’s Sunshine Committee, visited many of our homebound members during December. Flowers were delivered to the following members:

* Bernita Beltz	* Judy Hensley
* Pat Coutentos	* Berta Larkin
* Jean Derby	* Rosie Martin

Shirley also visited with Theresa Gasper and brought her treats to enjoy.

In her last phone visit with Mary Lou Hess, Mary Lou expressed her thanks to the Court for all of the birthday cards she received in December.

National Charities: Disaster Relief Fund

The Catholic Daughters maintain a Disaster Fund to which our members contribute. At the request of the State Regent where a disaster occurs, monetary assistance is forwarded to the Bishop of that diocese for distribution.

Recently donations were made to Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas due to hurricanes. Relief has also been sent to New Mexico, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, and Texas as these states experienced major flooding. Dioceses received funds in Arkansas following tornadoes and West Virginia during a mine disaster.

(catholicdaughters.org/national-projects-and-charities)

As a Court, we sent funds directly to Asheville, North Carolina after Hurricane Helene hit the area in 2024. Also, in 2025, we made a large donation to the Disaster Relief Fund for Texas Flood Relief.

Iowa CDA State Fundraiser

“When Things are in Pieces ... Quilt Them Together”

Iowa is full of Scrap Quilters. Take home a handmade quilted item made with love by your Iowa CDA Sisters.

Attendees for the 61st Annual National Convention are invited to stop by the Iowa Catholic Daughter table for a bit of quilter charm. As an Iowa CDA Sister, you are asked to make small, quilted items for the fundraiser. Keep in mind that most of the CDA Sisters in attendance will be flying in and have limited space in their suitcase. SO, small, flat items, that can easily be tucked into a small spot would be great. Start working on them now. Collection information will be coming as the convention nears.

Epiphany Concert & January 2026 CDA Social

The annual Epiphany Concert was held at St. Pius X Church on Sunday, January 3rd at 3:00 pm. The concert featured Catholic Church choirs and musicians from all over the Cedar Rapids deanery. Admission was free, but cash donations and food pantry donations were collected for Metro Catholic Outreach (MCO).

The event was well-attended, with many Catholic Daughters from our Court sprinkled throughout the audience, and Vice Regent Sue May performing. A full church took in the beautiful sounds of vocal and instrumental performances. Just prior to the final song, MCO Executive Director, Anni Thorn, spoke of her gratitude for the many gifts brought that day for the organization. So many people in our community will benefit from the food and monetary donations.

Many took advantage of the reception that was held after the concert, with Catholic Daughters spread out at several tables. Here is a photo of Betty Bockenstedt and Shirley Bush enjoying refreshments with their friend Madonna.

Photo: (l-r) Madonna, Betty Bockenstedt, and Shirley Bush



St. Therese, The Little Flower
Patron Saint of Court #1768
Feast Day: October 1st

St. Therese a Saint: Becoming a Saint

(Continued from the December 2025 Newsletter)

Once she was declared Blessed, it took only two years for the necessary next two miracles to be approved. In 1925, two cures had been investigated and judged to be supernatural, through the intercession of St. Therese.

The first involved Gabrielle Trimusi from Parma, Italy. Gabrielle had suffered from arthritis of the knee and tubercular lesions of the vertebrae.

The final cure involved Maria Pellemans of Schaerbeck, Belgium. Maria suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis which had spread, as Therese's illness had, to the intestines. The diagnosis of pulmonary and intestinal tuberculosis was made by a Dr. Vandersteen, who also examined Maria after she came back from visiting Therese's grave.

The doctor testified, “I found Miss Pellemans literally transformed. This young woman, out of breath from the least movement, moves about without fatigue; she eats everything given to her, with a very good appetite. The abdomen presents no tender point, when formerly the least pressure produced severe pain. All symptoms of tubercular ulceration of the intestine have disappeared.”

In reports predating Maria's return to health, two other physicians confirmed Dr. Vandersteen's diagnosis of pulmonary and intestinal tuberculosis.

On May 17, 1925, Therese was officially declared a Saint by Pope Pius XI.

www.littleflower.org/st-therese/frequently-asked-questions/

Power of Prayer—Rosary for Life

Wednesday November 19 was the last **Power of Prayer** this fall at St Wenceslaus Church. We will resume on Ash Wednesday, February 18th. Elaine Boes

If your schedule allows, please join the Pro-Life Rosary at All Saints Church on Friday mornings. See below.



Pro-Life Rosary

Friday's After the 8:00 am Mass at **All Saints Church**
Begins around 8:30 am ~ ALL are Welcome!

Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/CDACourt1768

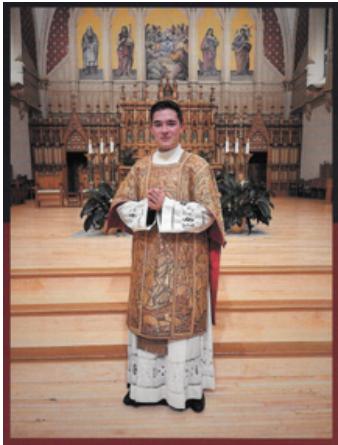
Court #1768 Website: www.catholicdaughterscr.org

Iowa CDA website: www.IowaCatholicDaughters.org

National CDA website: www.CatholicDaughters.org

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Congratulations, Rev. Mr. Jacob W. Francois!



On Saturday, December 20, 2025, **Seminarian Jacob W. Francois** was ordained to the Diaconate at a 10:00 am Mass at the Cathedral of St. Raphael in Dubuque. Jacob is now in the Transitional Diaconate phase of his formation process to become a priest. During the next five months, Jacob has been assigned to **St. Thomas Aquinas Church** in Ames, Iowa. His ordination to the priesthood will take place on **Saturday, May 23, 2026** with his First Mass of Thanksgiving the following day at St. Patrick Church here in Cedar Rapids.



Several members of the Court and their guests attended the Diaconate Mass of Thanksgiving and the Reception on Saturday, December 20, 2025. It was an honor to hear his first homily as a Deacon and then celebrate with him and his family.



Photos: (top-down) Deacon Jacob from his 2025 Christmas card; Marla Tursi & Mary Morgan; Leo and Marianne Riester; The Casey's - Pat and Jan, Coe Molumby, and Rita Holmes.

Photos: (right top, back row, l-r) Stephanie Guzman, Rita Holmes, Marla Tursi, Erika Brockmeyer, Rev. Mr. Jacob Francois, Coe Molumby, Sue May, Jan Casey, Angie Eltze; (front row, l-r) Roberta Peters, Mary Morgan, Marianne Riester. (right, bottom, l-r) Tony & Sue May, Angie Eltze, Stephanie Guzman, Erika Brockmeyer, Roberta & Chris Peters.

Ah, Nuts! The Pecan Sale was a Success!



The net profit from the sale of **Natural and Cinnamon Pecans** from **Genuine Georgia** was **\$1,650.00**. To support the State's 2026 Convention budget, **\$500.00** has already been allocated from this amount. The remaining balance will be designated toward the **2026 National Convention**, (to support members attending and assisting the State). This allocation will be discussed and voted on at our February 7th member meeting.

Thank you to everyone who purchased pecans and promoted the sale - - we truly appreciate your support!!

Monthly Member Spotlight:

Mary Morgan

By Stephanie Guzman

Hello CDA Sisters of Court Cedar Rapids #1768. It's time to put the spotlight on Mary Morgan.

Mary started her journey to Catholic Daughters via a conversation with a co-worker at Mount Mercy College. She was excited to hear of the various charities and service opportunities offered and wanted to share them with her friend Judith.

Mary and Judith Hensley first connected through the St. Patrick's Adoration Chapel, where the "seed" of involvement was planted. The next step was attending a meeting to learn more about our faith-filled, fun, and charitable court. Mary recalls attending court meetings at St. Wenceslaus and getting to know the members. She is proud to be a Catholic Daughter sister, helping to spread charity throughout Cedar Rapids.

Mary has served as a co-chair for several Court fundraisers. She began by assisting our late Phyllis Mussman with garage sales and, in recent years, has worked alongside Shirley Bush on the Silent Auction. Mary shared that participating in these fundraisers allowed her to get to know fellow Court members and discover shared interests. Most recently, she joined the Christmas Bazaar committee, an experience she describes as both enjoyable and rewarding.

It was a pleasure to visit with Mary. Our Court has been blessed with her many talents and service. Thank you for your commitment to CDA for 10 years!



National CDA News: Delegates & Alternates

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas 61st Biennial National Convention will be held in Coralville, Iowa!

The dates are July 22 - 26, 2026.

As of September 30, 2025, our Court membership is under 75 members, which entitles us to two **(2) DELEGATES** and four **(4) ALTERNATES** for the **2026 National Convention**.

We have a form to complete and return (postmarked no later than 3/15/2026).



Do YOU Want to Attend the Convention as a Delegate or an Alternate?



Please submit your name **NOW** or at the February 7th meeting, to **Regent Roberta Peters**. We will then **VOTE** on our Delegates (voting members) and Alternates at the March 10th meeting.

- Guests are also welcome, but the Court does not have to vote on them.
- No pricing is available yet as registration information is not yet available.
- If you want to learn more about the Convention, check out the Iowa CDA and National Websites.