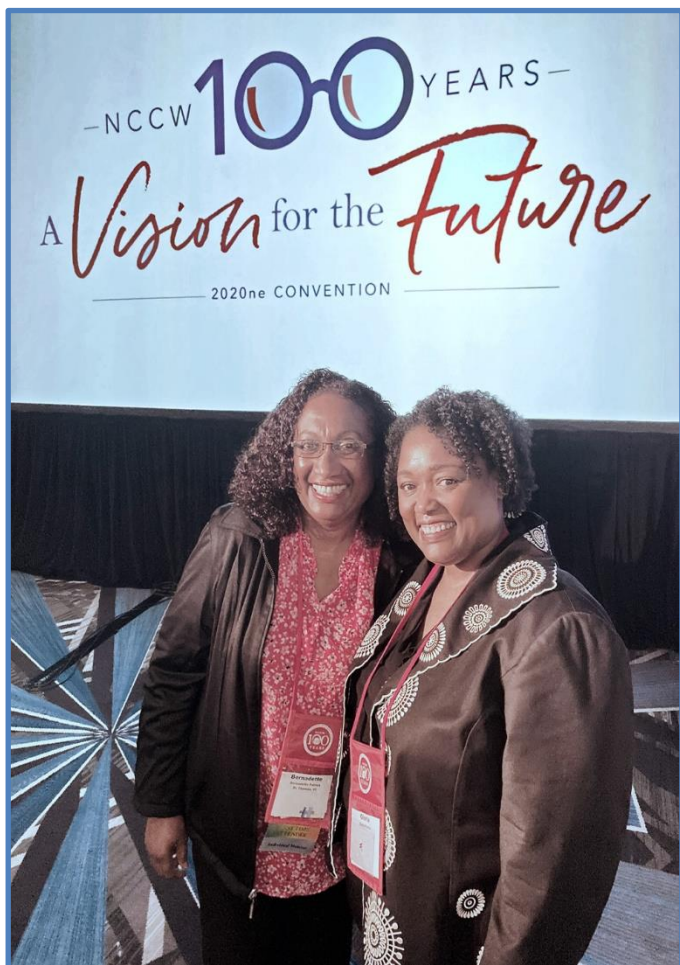


NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN (NCCW)

Now in the Diocese of St. Thomas
in the Virgin Islands

by Bernadette Patrick



**At the NCCW 2021 Convention:
Left, Bernadette Patrick,
Right-Gloria Purvis, speaker.**

I greet you with an over-whelming joy of having encountered women filled with the spirit of the Gospel. On Jesus' encounter with women in the Bible, the women shared with joy and enthusiasm. The Samaritan woman at the well; "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" (John 5:29). Then, we have Mary Magdalene who encountered the risen Christ; "Mary Magdalene went and said to the disciples, I have seen the Lord." (John 20:18). It is with these same joyful sentiments, that I write about the special encounter with the mission of Christ for women through the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW).

The Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands made a connection for all women of the Diocese to become women of prayer and action. In August 23-28, 2021, the NCCW celebrated 100 and one years of NCCW legacy and leadership. The theme of the Conference was "A Vision for the Future."

The NCCW was founded by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) in 1920 as a united platform to give a common voice to all Catholic Women, and Catholic representation on national issues of faith and morality in the United States.

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its members 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.

The Diocese of St. Thomas, upon the invitation of the NCCW was represented at the 2021 Conference and joined with over 500 women in celebrating the 100 and one celebrations.

Subsequently, Bishop Jerome Feudjio cemented the Diocese's support by officially signing off on the Diocese as an Affiliate of the mission of the NCCW. Our Province, the Archdiocese of Washington is already affiliated to the mission, and indeed we had a most remarkable encounter with the women of the province. We look forward to further encounters with these women as we expand the council in the Virgin Islands.



Cardinal Gregory stands with members of the National Council of Catholic Women from the Archdiocese of Washington and the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. (CS photo/Andrew Biraj)

All women and women's organizations in Parishes are urged by our Bishop to be part of this overarching Council of Women, in the Diocese of St. Thomas. We are all Catholic Women living out the mission of the NCCW.

The Diocese is excited about this new venture, our Metropolitan, Cardinal Wilton Gregory who officiated at the 100th Conference activities in Washington "praised the NCCW for the steadfast witness of faith in challenging times." (Catholic Standard)

Among the Distinguished Speakers were the USCCB Episcopal Liaison to the NCCW, Bishop William A. Wack, CSC, and Gloria Purvis, Catholic Media personality, who addressed women on the topic "Women Persevere in Faith."

Virgin Islands Catholic Women can now look forward to having a greater exposure to resources and programs that will impact them, family, parish, and community, and inclusivity, with women sharing the same goals and challenges, giving strength and support to the common voice of the NCCW, in fulfilling the mission of Christ, as witnesses to the joy of the Gospel message, like the Samaritan woman and Mary Magdalene.

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