



Court Christ the Good Shepherd #2731 – 1/2025

The Spirit

Issue 50 – January 2026

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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 dignity for all.

**Be women of faith*

**Encourage spiritual growth*

**Increase membership*

**Promote the motto of "Unity and Charity"*

Announcements

Next month we'll meet on **Thurs., Jan. 8 at 6:30pm** for a rosary prior to mass at CGS. After mass, we'll celebrate our CDA anniversary with a reception.

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Court Officer Message

Jean Philpot, Financial Secretary



Dearest Sisters,

As we continue to celebrate the miracle of Christmas, I am a firm believer that the only true gift is the gift of faith.

You remind me daily that the important things in life are not things, that smiles are contagious, and that sisterhood is an honor.

I have been asked to offer my reflections for the New Year.

It is said that only about **ten percent** of a Catholic community is responsible for keeping its ministries running. The remaining 90 percent are slow to contribute time or talents.

So how does it happen that three new CDA members, Lori, Olivia, and Jean, become three new CDA officers within that year? Simply stated, because someone asked them! I'm sure are stories are similar: "Come to a monthly dinner/meeting. No pressure. Oh, our Prayer Warriors! The rosary starts at 6 pm; come witness the power and graces received from collective prayer." Again, no pressure, and the rest is history.

Your new officers take their roles and responsibilities seriously. Lori astounds us with her management and computer skills. Olivia, always smiling, delivers accurate and timely treasurer reports. Kathy Kietur, a founding member and solid team player, is also a new officer. I am the person who receives all monies and issues receipts. Also, a gentle reminder that dues are payable by February 2026.

We are also graced with a new Court Chaplain, Deacon Stacy Millsap. He is approachable, dependable, and provides sound guidance.

Sade, also new to CDA, incorporates her personal and business talents to head our new Junior CDA. How impressive to host 29 new members at the installation in May! Thank you, God, for blessing us.

My dear sisters, you are truly the light and the hope for so many people. It is an honor to serve, pray, and know you. I look forward to 2026, sharing your faith, your time, and your talents.

Someone is waiting to be asked to join this wonderful group of women in fellowship and in purpose. Don't miss the opportunity.

With warm regards,

Jean

Court Chaplain Message

Deacon Stacy Millsap, Court Chaplain

If you're reading this newsletter, I suppose that means you have survived . . . the shopping,
the gift-giving,
the parties,
the family visits,
the Hallmark Christmas movies,
the cooking,
the cleaning,
the family visits (did I already mention that?).
Whew!

I hope you know that I'm writing this tongue-in-cheek. I absolutely love the Advent and Christmas seasons! (And I love being your Chaplain.) In addition to my involvement with CDA, I am also a member of the A.C.T.S. Core Team. I know many of you have been involved with A.C.T.S., so you know what a wonderful experience an A.C.T.S. retreat can be. We have two retreats each year – one for men and one for women, and we alternate between English and Spanish. This year we are adding something new for those who have ever been to an A.C.T.S. retreat – a reunion! An evening of renewal, prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, and reflection. I hope you can all attend – even if you've never been to an A.C.T.S. retreat. All are welcome! I truly believe we can all benefit from this two-hour experience.

The English reunion will be on **Wednesday, January 14**, in the main church from 7 pm to 9 pm. The Spanish evening will be on January 28th, same schedule. Assuming you are reading this somewhere around Epiphany or the Baptism of the Lord, that means we are entering into a very short period of Ordinary Time. Then we will soon be in the penitential season of Lent. That's right, Ash Wednesday is on February 18th this year, and the A.C.T.S. evening of reflection promises to add to your Lenten experience. Don't you just love the rhythm of the liturgical seasons? No sooner than we pass through the seasons of Advent and Christmas, then we're thinking about the upcoming seasons of Lent and Easter. It's amazing to be a Catholic Christian, and it's amazing to have the privilege of being your Chaplain. Thank you, ladies, for being such a big part in enriching my life!

Be blessed!

---Deacon Stacy Millsap



Court Happenings

Trunk or Treat – October 24, 2025

CGS hosted its annual “Trunk or Treat” event. The JCDA members chose the theme of “Saints” and hosted a “trunk.” CDA assisted by providing treats. JCDA distributed nearly 30 pounds of treats.



Flags Up Social Game Event – November 1, 2025

CDA District #54 gathered at Christ the Redeemer Church for “Flags Up” game event. Members enjoyed the game, door prizes, light food, refreshments, and fellowship.



Northwest Assistance Ministries Toy Bags – November 8-9, 2025

Thank you to all the CDA members who volunteered to distribute the NAM toy bags for children after all the masses this weekend.



December Social & Christmas Angels – December 4, 2025

In lieu of a December meeting, CDA members joined for a social event during which food & games were enjoyed.

CDA started a volunteer service/donation committee identifying a specific focus for each month of the year. For the month of December, a special family who has a child with serious medical needs was selected. CDA members donated clothes and toys for the children in this family.

Thank you so much for all the donations to our adopted family for Christmas. They were overjoyed with your generosity.

---Diana Samson



Advent by Candlelight – December 5, 2025

CDA in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus contributed to funding for an “Advent by Candlelight” event for ladies to share in prayer, fellowship and reflection in preparation for Advent. Special thanks to the individuals who organized this event and the Knights for serving food.



JCDA Year-End Potluck – December 18, 2025

JCDA members enjoyed a year-end potluck with food, sweet treats, and a hot chocolate bar. Members played games including bingo and an “inspirational message” snowball fight.



Manna Bag Assembly – Fall & Winter 2025

Hope Center is a local center for the homeless. Twice monthly CDA members gather to assemble food items and make “manna bags” which are donated to the center for distribution. Come join this corporal work of mercy serving our homeless brothers and sisters. Upcoming manna bag assembly dates are below.

- Mondays at 7pm – 1/5, 2/2, 3/2
- Thursdays at 3:45pm – 1/15, 2/19, 3/19



Manna Bag Assembly – Fall & Winter 2025 (continued)



Upcoming Service Projects

January Service Project – Thursday, January 8

Please bring Jared box items to our January meeting. The items will be sorted and delivered to patients at Texas Children's Hospital in The Woodlands. The target age group for this time is **3 to 6 years old**. If preferred, Sheryl Andrews will be accepting monetary donations and items will be purchased with the amount collected.



February Service Project – Thursday, February 5

CDA will collaborate with JCDA to have a service project providing physical assistance to a family in need. More details will be provided at our January meeting.



Ongoing

Mass Cards

CDA offers \$3 mass cards which offer a dual benefit—1) for the named individual and 2) for a student. Once a mass card is purchased for a named individual, Fr. Dalton Ervin as the Texas CDA state chaplain, will include the intention for the named person at a first Friday mass each month for 12 months. Funds collected for the mass cards provide scholarships for relatives of CDA members. Scholarships can be used for attendance at college or a catholic high school. In 2023 through 2025, the state CDA awarded \$120,000 to 85 students. The goal for 2025 through 2027 is \$122,000. Mass cards can be purchased at any CDA meeting or by contacting Mary Roberts at (281)813-4074.

Praying the Rosary

On the second Thursday of the month, CDA joins at 6pm by the Marian windows of the church to pray the rosary together for the intentions of those gathered for prayer.




Legislative Updates

Issues & Action

Are you interested in any of the topics listed in the screenshot below? To learn more about these issues in relation to church teachings, visit the USCCB website:

<https://www.usccb.org/topics>

 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops			ABOUT USCCB	PRAYER & WORSHIP	BIBLE	ISSUES & ACTION	NEWS	RESOURCES	VATICAN
Abortion	Assisted Suicide	Ministry Formation & Certification							
Africa	Euthanasia	Natural Family Planning							
African American	Environment	Pastoral Care of Migrants							
Annual Report	Environmental Justice	Refugees							
Asia	Equal Rights Amendment	Permanent Diaconate							
Asian/Pacific Islander	Europe	Pope Francis							
Bible	Evangelization	Popes							
Bioethics	Faithful Citizenship	Pornography							
Canon Law	Family Life	Poverty							
Catechesis	Financial Reporting	Pray for Life							
Catechetical Sunday	General Assembly	Prayer							
Catholic Safeguards	Global Poverty, Development and Trade	Pregnancy Support							
Catholic Social Teaching	Grant Programs	Priesthood							
Child and Youth Protection	Healthcare Policy	Project Rachel							
Consecrated Life	Human Rights	Promotion & Defense of Marriage							
Contraception	Human Trafficking	Public Policy/Advocacy							
Sterilization	Immigration	Racism							
COVID-19	International Policy	Religious Liberty							
Criminal & Restorative Justice	Jubilee 2025	Respect Life Program							
Cultural Diversity	Laity	Sacraments							

CDA National Legislative Link:

https://catholicdaughters.org/circle-of-love#tabContent_2505669

Local, State, & National CDA News

Local Events

- **Painted Churches** – CDA is offering a field trip to and tour of 5 churches in Schulenburg, Texas on **Sat., Jan. 10** for \$25 per person. A bus has been reserved and will leave CGS at 7am. Lunch will cost \$13.95 per person without gratuity. The \$70 guide fee will be split between attendees. For additional details, please contact a member of the Social Committee members: Maggie Zanco, Priscilla Hargraves, Phyllis Rourke, Magdalena Barrera, Laura Aguirre, Jane Johnson.
- **Lenten Retreat** - You're invited to a CDA multi-district event hosted by districts #8, 25, 54, and 66 on **Sat., Feb. 14 from 8am to 2pm**. The theme is "Renewed in Spirit/Rekindling Your Mind" with several state officers serving as guest speakers and will be held at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, 1801 Sage Road, Houston, TX 77056. Early registration through 1/31/26 is \$20. On-site registration is \$25. Contact Antonio Ledesma at eledesma@sbcglobal.net for more information.

State News

- **Texas Rally for Life** on Sat., Jan. 24 from 1-4pm in Austin. For more information: <https://www.texasrallyforlife.org/>
- **Memorial Scholarship Fund** application deadline is Jan. 31. CDA relatives (i.e., son/daughter, grandchild, niece/nephew, brother/sister) are eligible to apply for the scholarship for attendance at a college or catholic high school. To access the application, [click here](#)
- **Biennial Texas State Convention** April 7-11, 2027. Visit the Texas CDA website for more information: <https://texascda.org/2025-convention-home>

National & International News

- **Pray for Leaders** – As always, pray for our elected officials and leaders.
- **March for Life** – on January 24 in Washington, DC
- **CDA Campus Court Scholarship** – due May 15. For more information: <https://catholicdaughters.org/2026-scholarships>
- **Biennial national Convention** – July 22-26 in Coralville, Iowa. For more information: <https://catholicdaughters.org/national-biennial-convention-2026>
- **Charities & Ongoing Projects** - CDA supports several national charities and projects such as Habitat for Humanity making 6 Texas homes safe for the elderly in 2 years, Apostleship of the Sea, Catholic Relief Services, Disaster Relief Fund, Human Life International, and Missionaries of Charity. For a full list visit the website: <https://catholicdaughters.org/national-projects-and-charities>





January Birthdays

Melody Barr 1/10
Catherine Peplau 1/23
Magdalena Barrera 1/28

January Anniversaries

February Birthdays

Margaret Medina 2/12
Candice Tyrrell 2/14
Charlotte Prieve 2/19
Mary Lou Roberts 2/21
Mari Castaño 2/21
Kathy Kietur 2/27

February Anniversaries

Norina Fisher 2/14

March Birthdays

Margaret Williamson 3/2
Carol Cason 3/16
Mary Ellen Crawford 3/16
Veronica Arnold 3/21
Jackie Vail 3/22

March Anniversaries

Sade Effiong 3/24



Newsletter Editor: Marinela Castano

Many thanks to all those who contribute photos and event details!!!

Please submit corrections or feedback to mari.castano@comcast.net