

## CDA Membership

Our Cedar Rapids Court #1768, St. Therese, the Little Flower, has been blessed with 14 new members this past CDA year. Our State Regent Jan Grundmeyer has asked our Court to share what we attribute our increase in membership to. Our Court tries to provide various opportunities for our members to express their desire for prayer, acts of charity, and social activities.

Members appreciate the opportunities we have at our meetings and other events to enhance our prayer life. We find prayer an integral part of CDA. Besides the prayers at the start and end of our meetings, our Spiritual Advisor leads us in special prayer and reads petitions from the members. Our Seminarian Correspondent leads us in prayer for our seminarians. We are honored to lead the Rosary at funeral Visitations for our members and members of their families. CDA provides us special opportunities for prayer, such as the annual retreat at the American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls, the annual Memorial Service for Members at our November meeting, and Catholic Daughters Sunday. A couple of opportunities that are specific for prayer in our Court are: leading the *Rosary for Life* every Monday at Mercy Hospital Chapel during the spring and fall *40 Days for Life* campaign, and participating in the *Holy Rosary Relay* by praying the Rosary on *Our Lady of the Rosary* feast day, October 7, where members sign up for a half-hour slot from 8 am–4:30 pm to honor Our Lady by praying the Rosary.

Our CDA Court is quite active, with a variety of charitable works that are of interest to our members. CDA provides some special opportunities for charitable works, such as the annual Life Savers Campaign which benefits victims of domestic abuse; the annual Fall Food Event which for our Court is a Bake Sale, that benefits our local food pantry; and our monetary donations to National CDA for the five projects and charities. Charitable events our CDA Court members participate in are: the Comfort Bag program where members sew drawstring bags which are filled with various toiletries donated by members and given to local homeless shelters; Spring Easter favors made at our meeting to be given to the retired Sisters of Mercy; our May Garage Sale where members donate items and conduct the sale, with leftover items donated to St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Shop; our Fresh Colorado Peaches Sale with a portion of the funds going to a charity decided by the members; members who read for *Reading Across America Day* at a local Catholic School, and then donating the book to their library. When we have speakers at our meetings, we make a monetary donation to their non-profit organization, and oftentimes members donate items for their use, such as paper products for Camp Courageous and non-perishable food for Metro Area Catholic Outreach food pantry. Details of events are published in the monthly newsletter handed out at the meeting and sent to those who were unable to attend. Another charitable work that is so important to our Court is performed by the ladies on the Sunshine Committee. These ladies visit our members who are in the hospital or care centers, and send greetings on members' birthdays and other occasions.

In addition to prayer and charitable activities, our Court has time for various social events too. We had a beautiful celebration of our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary last November. We celebrate all members' birthdays at our April meeting with a game, a thrift shop gift for all, and cake and ice cream. In December we hold our meeting at a local restaurant in celebration of Christmas. A time is set aside at each meeting for socializing and refreshments.

Some other ideas from our Court that I believe help increase our membership are:

- Recognition of Members – presenting years of membership pins, inviting members to be Chairs of committees, supporting members in their Court duties, listening to each and all members as they present ideas at meetings, encouraging members to participate in a particular activity, thanking members for all they do for our Court

- Membership Committee – formed this past year to reach out to ladies to learn about CDA through word of mouth and events like our Welcome Brunch held this past spring where ladies were invited and asked to bring their favorite coffee mugs and tell the story of why it's their favorite. Guests learned about CDA and met many of the members in a social setting.
- Members reaching out to friends at church and work, inviting them to a meeting. Guests at meetings introduced and sent home with a CDA flyer and current newsletter.
- Bulletin notices each month on date, time, place, activity, contact info, and a sentence about CDA, always ending with "Guests are always welcome."
- Planning – The Court Officers and any interested members are invited to a meeting in August to plan for the coming CDA year. We decide on upcoming activities and events, open to new ideas and suggestions. We decide on speakers who are relevant to our Catholic faith and to the current needs of our world and community.
- Communication – Keeping members informed is very important. We do it through the National CDA *Share Magazine*, *The Voice* State CDA newspaper, our Court newsletter *In the Know Court #1768*, Church bulletins, Facebook, e-mail, phone calls.

I hope sharing these ideas and some of the things our Court does has been helpful. There are many ladies out there who are searching for a way to express their faith with other women of faith – us. Let's invite them in.

In Unity and Charity,  
*Susan Frischkorn*