

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2009

Contact: Andrea Schellman

703-224-0990, ext., 104

aschellman@nccw.org

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

MEETS IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA, ELECTS NEW OFFICERS

Arlington, VA –More than 950 members and friends of the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) met September 23-26, at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, to renew their commitment to spirituality, leadership, and service and to explore practical ways to bring their faith to bear on problems at home and around the world.

During the opening liturgy of the convention, Bishop Victor Galeone of the Diocese of St. Augustine began his homily by reflecting on faith, saying that “no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the power of the Holy Spirit. God’s eternal son in the flesh became one of us. We have his spiritual DNA.” He ended by talking about peace, especially its connection to forgiveness. “When I forgive, I give up my right to hurt you for hurting me,” he suggested. “I want to close with a very practical suggestion. When something [hurtful] is said and the wall goes up, please reach out. Send a Christmas or birthday card. Please, do that and let God do the rest.”

A highlight of this convention was the presentation of a full revision of the NCCW bylaws. Some 747 voting members present at the convention discussed, amended, and approved the revision as well as amendments to the organization’s Articles of Incorporation. Under the revision, member organizations such as diocesan, deanery, or parish women’s groups can cast two votes at national meetings. Individual members retain one vote. Other changes involved the composition of the Board of Directors which will now consist of the officers and 28 Province Directors, a reduction in the size of the nominating committee from nine to five, and the creation of the position of a president-elect to ensure continuity in the leadership of the Board of Directors. The shift from regional vice presidents to a president-elect will be fully implemented at the close of the 2011 convention; the vice presidents elected at the 2009 convention will serve their full two-year terms. Other changes included the expansion of voting (electronically or by mail) to all members whether they attend the convention or not and the ability for the Board to amend the bylaws based on the needs of the organization.

NCCW President Bobbie Hunt of Layton, Utah, announced the results of the biennial election held during the convention. On September 26, the following officers were installed to lead the NCCW for the next two years: President— Patty Johnson, Diocese of Knoxville; Region I Vice President— Joanne Pohland, Diocese of New Ulm; Region II Vice President—Karen Painter, Diocese of Tulsa; Region III Vice President—Judy Powers, Diocese of Palm Beach; Secretary—Jane Schiszik, Diocese of Superior; Treasurer—Kathleen Jones, Diocese of Salt Lake City.

The convention featured workshops on topics of importance to Catholic women and the organizations they serve, including immigration; evangelization, unity, and diversity; servant leadership and the Church in Africa; developing a positive and powerful image; and human trafficking.

At the closing Eucharist of the convention, Bishop Michael Bransfield of Wheeling-Charleston commended council members, saying “I admire your ability to preserve this wonderful organization for our nation and the Church and the work you have done. Keep up your prayers for priests; if we don’t have good pastors, it’s going to affect you the faithful more than anyone else.”

End