

44th Biennial State Convention

April 21-24, 2005 ~ Austin

by Henriette Jalowy, State PR Chairman

“Spirit of God, Renew Us” was the theme of the 44th Biennial Texas State Convention of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas held April 21-24, 2005, at the Renaissance Hotel in Austin.

The 2005 Convention opened with Mass at 5 p.m. Thursday, April 21st, at St. Albert the Great Church. The Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond, D.D., Bishop of Austin and CDA State Chaplain, was the main celebrant of the Mass of the Holy Spirit. Concelebrants were The Most Reverend Daniel N. DiNardo, Coadjutor Archbishop of Galveston/Houston; The Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer, O.M.I., Bishop of San Angelo; Reverend William C. Brooks, Pastor of St. Albert the Great Church; State Clergy Consultant Reverend Donald Ruppert; JCDA State Chaplain Reverend John Peters; priests and Deacons.



The Mass was a very inspirational and uplifting way to open the convention. St. Albert the Great Choir and Orchestra provided music for the officers' procession and the Mass for approximately 1,100 people. Reverend Bill Brooks sang “Ave Maria” for the communion meditation.

The 2002-2005 state officers are: Dee Scheetz, State Regent, Austin; Olga Samaniego, First Vice State Regent, El Paso; Carolyn Bachmann, Second Vice Regent, Scotland; Sheila Martinka, State Secretary, Pasadena; Della Santos, State Treasurer, Houston; Loraine Hilscher, State Parliamentarian, Dallas; Bishop Gregory M. Aymond, State Chaplain, Austin; Rev. Donald R. Ruppert, State Clergy Consultant, East Bernard; and Rev. John C. Peters, JCDA Chaplain, Hallettsville.

Dee Scheetz, State Regent, called the convention to order Friday morning. Most Reverend Daniel DiNardo and Marie Walsh, State Spiritual Enhancement Coordinator, led the opening prayer service.

Most Reverend Gregory Aymond welcomed the delegates to the Diocese of Austin. Court Annunciation #1962, LaGrange Color Guard presented Colors and the State Banner. Marie Walsh led the National Anthem and Opening Ode.

Most Reverend Gregory M Aymond, State Chaplain, was the keynote speaker. He recalled the life of the Late Pope John Paul II. On his papal inaugural day in 1978 he addressed the 250,000 people with “Do not be afraid.” These words were used often by

Pope John Paul II. In conclusion Bishop Aymond said that Catholic Daughters should not be afraid as they pledge their allegiance to the will of God. He also spoke about Pope Benedict XVI and his opening statement, "I am a worker in God's vineyard."

State chairmen announced awards (certificates) that individual courts received for their accomplishments. Over \$32,000 in scholarships was awarded to graduating seniors. Courts and individuals contribute to the State Court Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Speaking briefly on state-sponsored projects were Lillian Hansen, Missions of Mercy; Rev. Michael Seifert of the Brownsville Cameron Park Colonias; Richard Jacobs, Austin, Founder/Director of Gifts for the Unborn; and Mark and Louis Zwick, directors of Casa Juan Diego in Houston. These three projects were selected during this term. Cameron Park has received four mobile homes, school supplies, clothing, and over \$50,000 in donations to their social concerns fund. Gifts for the Unborn received \$25,000 and many baby booties, picture frames, and baby shampoo. Casa Juan Diego received \$25,000 in donations, furniture, hospitality bags and clothing. Each of them received a check for \$1,000 at the convention.

Reverend Donald Ruppert was the main celebrant at the Memorial Mass in honor of all the deceased CDA members from the last convention to this convention and the deceased members of the disbanded courts. Nick Claussen opened the Mass with a prelude of "Danny Boy" on the bagpipes. He played again after communion, "On Mist Covered Mountains." A candle light procession for the deceased members in each court led to the Shrine, followed by Third Vice National Regent Libby Ramirez, Victoria, carrying a picture of Pope John Paul II with the Past State Regents as gift bearers. They are: Margaret Cutbirth, Crosby; Cecina Koeijmans, Dallas; Dolly Pena, Laredo; Eunice Perusic, Houston; Amy Rueda, El Paso; Duchess Collins, Sugar Land, Immediate Past State Regent. Eleanor Treanor of Pasadena was unable to attend.

Friday evening the attendees were entertained by Chris Bludau and Chris Hesson as they sang and danced in their 50's clothes at the Fabulous Fifties Fun Night.



State Regent Dee Scheetz presented gifts to these top 5 of the 52 District Deputies: Ginger Shea, #38, Houston; Estela Ramirez, #31, Los Fresnos; Peggy Hill Rosales, #7 and #44, Austin; Angela Acker #33, Nazareth; and Barbara Britton #40, San Antonio.

The State Regent's Awards were these: Habitat for Humanity--- Eve Trevino, Habitat Chairman; Frances Salazar, Scheduling Meals Chairman; Donna Nunnelly, Scheduling Weekly Workers Chairman; Dalia Sanchez, Appliances, Furnishings, and Gifts

Chairman; Juanita Hale, Photographer; Julie Guerrero, Habitat Dedication Chairman; Ester Tobin, State Publicity Chairman. Missions of Mercy awards: Lillian Hansen, Chairman, Missions of Mercy; Cathy Bittner, Vice Chairman; and Courts St. Monica Patroness of Women #2577, Plano, Celo Smith, Regent, and John Paul I #2239, LaMesa, Lucy Ybanez, Regent.

The State Regent also recognized the 2002-2005 state officers, State Parliamentarian and the Third Vice National Regent with service plaques in appreciation of their hard work.

Libby Ramirez, Third Vice National Regent, was the guest speaker Saturday. The topic was "National Goals and Objectives".

Junior Catholic Daughters presented a skit about the organization that is sponsored by the Catholic Daughters. Rev. John Peters, JCDA State Chaplain, was the celebrant for the JCDA Mass in which the state JCDA officers participated.

Delegates attended workshops on ten subjects such as fundraisers, Circle of Love, financial reviews, Spirituality, Legislative, Prison Ministry, National Projects, Parliamentary Procedure, Public Relations, websites, newsletters, and scrapbooks.



Elected as the 2005-2007 State Officers are Peggy Rosales State Treasurer, State Secretary Carolyn Malik, Second Vice State Regent Sheila Martinka, First Vice State Regent Carolyn Bachmann, and State Regent Olga Samaniego.

The theme for the banquet Saturday night was "Our Lady in Art". Leo Hanus, State Deputy of the Knights of Columbus, was a guest and spoke on the many achievements of CDA and the joint efforts of CDA and the Knights of Columbus. The keynote speaker was humorist Toody Byrd who kept everyone entertained.

Rev. Donald Ruppert was the main celebrant for the Installation Mass Sunday. Installed were these: Olga Samaneigo, State Regent, El Paso; Carolyn Bachmann, First Vice State Regent, Scotland; Sheila Martinka, Second Vice State Regent, Pasadena; Carolyn Malik, State Secretary, Shiner; Peggy Hill Rosales, State Treasurer, Austin.

Special luncheons held during the weekend were for the Chaplains and men guests, Past Regents, and the State Regent's thank you luncheon for the State Chairmen and District Deputies.

Convention chairman Peggy Hill Rosales reported that around 932 Catholic Daughters registered for the convention.

The 2007 convention will be in Dallas at the Fairmont Hotel. McAllen bid for the 2009 convention.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas is a non-profit organization for Catholic women over the age of 18 who are interested in doing spiritual, charitable, and educational work. The first court was instituted in Utica, New York, in 1903 by the Knights of Columbus under the name of "The Daughters of Isabella". Later the name changed twice to the present The Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Internationally, there are over 100,000 members with about 1,130 courts in the United States, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Guam, and Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. At present, there are 15,725 members in Texas in 211 courts in Texas.

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