

Daily Recap – Wednesday, July 20

Opening Mass at 9:00AM was celebrated by His Eminence Most Rev. Roberto Octavio González Nieves, O.F.M, Archbishop of San Juan, Puerto Rico. Readers included National Regent Sherry Nilles, Puerto Rico State Regent Wilma Cedeño-Raspaldo and National Regent-Elect Emily Guilherme, and they did a fine job from the altar. The Catholic Daughter choir accompanied and supported Mass beautifully, leading Archbishop Nieves to say, “we have a choir of angels.”

After Mass the gathering moved to the large San Juan Ballroom. A splendid procession was held down the long aisle of the Meeting Room to the front row seats and dais, beginning with the color guard and banner bearers followed by the National Directors, five National Officers and National Clergy Consultant Father Siby Punnoose.

Retired Marine Master Sergeant and Second Vice National Regent Essie Walker led the Salute to the Flag and First Vice National Regent Susan Moné led the Star-Spangled Banner.

The State Regents then processed individually down the aisle proudly waving their state flags.

Sherry Nilles, who functioned as Master of Ceremonies, then introduced the members of the Credentials Committee.

Special guest Puerto Rico Mayor Miguel Romero-Luno spoke of the history, organization and mission of the Catholic Daughters, saying, “We salute and congratulate the Catholic Daughters of the Americas on such a long-standing record of helping others in the service of the Lord.”

She told the gathering about the upcoming activities and festivities in San Juan to celebrate the city’s 500th anniversary and pointed out the social and ethnic heritage of “Hispanic culture we inherited from Spain, and the American culture from when we became a state in the United States of America.”

The mayor concluded, “When you return home we hope you feel as though you cherished your stay with us here in Puerto Rico.”

National Clergy Consultant Father Siby Punnoose said, “I come from India and have been working with my parish for 23 years. We talk about “Working Together as Catholic Daughters” and I believe that I and the Catholic Daughters are working together for God, working together as disciples of Jesus, Jesus will guide us.”

“Thank you for doing the work of God and thank you for doing the work of the church and thank you for being Catholic Daughters and God bless you all.”

Sherry added, “thank you Father for all your valuable spiritual advice these past two years” and then asked State Convention Chairman Ivone da Silveira, to “come up to the stage and give us a real Puerto Rico welcome!”

Ivone did. Filled with energy, she said, “Welcome everyone to Puerto Rico! It’s an honor to have you here. This Convention has been five years in the planning. Puerto Rico has been with the Catholic Daughters for 101 years but we have never had a convention. Thank you for coming, I love you and I hope you enjoy every single minute!”

State Convention Chairman Wilma Cedeño-Raspaldo added, “Let’s work together, pray together and have fun together! We are so proud to have all of you I praise these ladies and hope to make these days unforgettable.”

National Convention Chairman Emily Guilherme spoke next. “I want to thank the National Regent for giving me the opportunity to chair the convention. I want to thank Ivone and special thanks to her mom. They say everything is big in Texas. Everything is really, really big in Puerto Rico! I love you Puerto Rico! Thank you and God bless!”

Sherry noted that Ivone was an outstanding guide, “she has sometimes kept me from screaming! Ivone, thank you for always being there to answer questions and present them to us in understandable ways.”

Sherry continued, “Two years ago, we found something in our bylaws explaining what was required to justify cancelling a convention. A very difficult decision was made by then National Regent Olga Samaniego to cancel the Convention in Dallas. It was a terribly difficult decision to make. Everyone in Texas had worked so hard and it was a terrible disappointment to them. We need these conventions: As women we need to go out and refresh ourselves and our relationships.”

When Sherry asked “first timers” to stand there was a surprisingly considerable number and they were met with rousing applause.

Sherry brought attention to the Blood Drive happening during convention, explaining that it was “something very new to us...if you would like to give something back consider giving blood, Puerto Rico does not have a plentiful supply of blood and is need.”

Sherry thanked “Deacon Paul, who asked if he could have Adoration in the chapel from 6am to 8am and because of Deacon Paul the beautiful chapel is open. He said, ‘Don’t we all need prayer!’”

Education Chairman Darlene Moritz announced scholarship winners. “There were 304 entries, 291 were judged. You need your Education Committee members to understand the rules and regulations. I learned that some states were changing deadlines. National Headquarters does not change deadlines. All entries must be postmarked no later than April 1.”

Darlene continued with the all-important Education Contest theme options for the next contest, which will come out in August. The first option is, Second Corinthians, 5, Verse 7, which says, “we walk by faith not by sight”; the second is “when do I have to lean on my faith more than sight.”

Sherry then explained attendees would be treated to a “five-minute taste” of what the luncheon presentations would be. Tom Gorton of Catholic Extension said, “Our mission is to build vibrant Catholic faith communities. This was our mission when we were founded in 1905 and remains the guiding light of all our messages. Located in Chicago we are a fund-raising organization and we invest in the future. Last year we gave to the church \$92 million from fund raising.” He then showed an inspiring video featuring the head of Catholic Extension, Father Jack Wall.

John Martin, Executive Vice President of Human Life International said, “Human Life International has a long 50-year history. We encourage people to fight against cultural forces and take pro-life, pro-Catholic Church positions across the world. We also do a fair amount of direct aid, and care for women who are being expelled from the families since there are many cultures across the world where being pregnant is a disgrace for the families. Our affiliate in Hungary has an adoption service, training couples who want to be adoptive parents, so the mom gets to choose who the parents of her child will be.”

After the break, Tom Gorton gave his scheduled presentation, explaining that Catholic Extension helps 87 of the 196 dioceses in the United States. He then showed another video, this one featuring Father Jack Wall, who said, “our purpose is to very directly work with others to create strong, vibrant Catholic based communities,” adding “poverty isolates and another word for Catholic Extension is ‘hope.’ We build confidence, we have a greater mission to bring God’s caring to everyone. Catholic Extension pays the salaries of missionary priests and hundreds of lay Catholics.”

Finally, there was a special video from a nun in Ukraine thanking Catholic Extension, saying “you are always in our hearts and in our prayers. I hope one day I can meet and thank you in person. Until then we are praying for you every day.”

Father Shenan Bouquet then led the afternoon prayer, urging everyone to visit “Thessalonians Chapter 5” and pray with verse 15 through verse 22. “Do not despise prophetic utterances,” Father Bouquet said. “Refrain from every kind of evil. Our decisions should not reflect self, but always reflect the Other. We are made in your image and likeness and thus we are made for community, for The Other. All that you do is for The Other. Help us to emulate this, to witness it.”

Credentials Chairman Theresa Duran then gave the Credentials Report:

As of 12:08PM on July 20, 2022:

	Potential	Actual
National Officers	5	5
National Directors	9	9
Past National Regents	7	7
State officers	186	6
Local court delegates	2154	249
Potential votes	2362	376

The Standing Rules were presented by Chairman Barbara Ward, a sampling being that: badges must be worn; delegates shall sit in the area for their state; members of the clergy and office manager may enter into discussions but may not vote; all new business not on the agenda must be presented to the National Secretary-Treasurer no later than 9:00AM, Thursday July 21.

Parliamentarian Susan Draftz said, “I recommend when you go back to your courts that you bring back what you learned at Convention and especially what you learned through the different liturgies. You’re probably going to get more parliamentary procedure than you want at this Convention but when we have this many people we must stick to those rules pretty closely. The idea of sticking to rules is to help you stay on track, not to be used as a weapon as it sometimes is.”

Sherry introduced the all-important Timekeepers and National Directors Darlene Moritz, Barbara Ward and Michele Bowman announced the Education, Newsletter and Website Contest awards respectively.

The report of the Nominating Committee was announced in English and Spanish:

The Committee has elected for 2022-2024:

National Regent-Elect Susan Moné
First Vice National Regent Essie Walker
Second Vice National Regent Connie Dronette
National Secretary-Treasurer Ivone da Silveira

National Directors nominated (listed below in order of the initial of their first name):

Barbara Ward
Duchess Collins
Irene Gramza
Mary Impellizeri
Michele Bowman
Nancy Bambenek
Shirley Hall
Yvette Griego

There is one vacancy for National Director

There were three nominations from the floor for National Director:

Brenda Anderson
Brenda West
Darlene Moritz

Each of the National Director nominees were given two minutes to promote their candidacy.

Nominations were then taken from the floor by the highest-ranking officer present from each state for the 2024 Nominating Committee:

Arizona - Jordan Taillon
California - Maria Santos-Silva
Colorado - Bonnie Valcik
Florida - Barbara Erdmann
Iowa - Rita A. Carlson
Louisiana - Cindy Vincent
Maryland - Joanna King
Massachusetts - Patricia Adams
Minnesota - Cathy Nelson
Nebraska - Janet Macklin
New Mexico – Rosie Duran
New York - Dr. Heather Rave
North Carolina – Brenda Spizzo
Oklahoma - Martha Karin Dudash
Oregon – Irene Duda
PA – Jeanette Kitch
Puerto Rico – Primavera Johnson
Texas - Terrie Vacek

Many of the above nominees were later present at Candidates Night, a lively and sometimes raucous event in which nominees were able to talk personally to members about why they thought they were right for the job.

Three resolutions were introduced and all passed.

In the evening, prayers and memorials were offered for deceased past officers at the National Directors Dessert Reception.

