



# Sisters in SERVICE

MARCH/APRIL 2011

COURT SANTA SOPHIA #2520 · SPRING VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

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## Afternoon Tea and Membership Drive

By Cora McNamee-Lawson

I'm a new member of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, joining in September 2010. When I first started I had no idea what CDA was all about. At my first meeting I felt quite overwhelmed, but I met so many lovely and friendly ladies that made me feel very welcomed and at ease. I was also very impressed with what these ladies put together and do whether it be locally or nationally, working with different charitable organizations, and felt it was time I did my share.

I took the challenge of chairing the Afternoon Tea and Membership Drive held on January 16, 2011. With the help of many of the CDA members it was a huge success. There was an assortment of food, sweets and variety of teas as well as several door prizes donated by some of the members.



Top: Table hosted by Lou Turner



Left: A beautiful buffet

Fr. Devdas made a brief presentation emphasizing the importance of taking a leadership role in various causes supported by the CDA.

I thank each and everyone of you for being there, it's been our pleasure to serve the afternoon tea. I couldn't have done this job without the help of our volunteers, these ladies did a tremendous job.

## REGENT'S LETTER



The Lenten season is here and I wanted to focus on spirituality—which is one thing that I've struggled with all my life. For me, this letter was a little bit of a challenge. I'm sure that it's an odd thing to hear from a church-going woman who does her best to live her life with Christian values. I've always admired the devout

Christians who publicly proclaim their appreciation for God in their lives. Then I ask myself, was I not confident in my faith to do the same?

At the Ash Wednesday mass, I picked up a copy of *Rediscovering Catholicism* by Matthew Kelly. Although I haven't finished reading the book, one thing in particular struck a chord with me—dedicating the “tasks” in your life to prayer. Kelly

gave an example of a trash collector dedicating his working hours as a prayer for a sick neighbor. Through his work, the trash collector develops a relationship with God and with his neighbor. When we inject prayer in what we do, we do it with purpose. Prayers never go to waste and we become what Kelly describes, “the-best-version-of-ourselves.”

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During Lent, we reflect on the great sacrifice of Our Lord, which is why we choose something to sacrifice during the 40 days in his honor. While we tend to sacrifice tangible items like red meat or chocolate, why not sacrifice a “non-purpose-driven-life” and live in prayer instead?

CDA helps us live a purpose-driven life by giving us the opportunity to help others in God's name. We start and end every meeting with prayer and we dedicate our work to Him. We do not have to publicly proclaim God's

involvement in our lives to show that He is with us—we live it. CDA is not a solution to becoming holy, but a mere tool to assist you in becoming all the God created you to be.

I hope you find the time to rediscover your spirituality and pray in whatever way it is most meaningful to you.

In Unity and Charity,



## 2011 Education Contest - “The Lord is My Light”

By Pam Kay

On Friday, February 25, a group of dedicated judges put their heads together to select the 2011 CDA Education Contest winners. Judges included Fred and Liz Chavez, Shirley Yost and Charles and Anne Moeller. We thank them for their enthusiasm and sensitivity while judging entries. The theme that students wrote essays for or created original artwork for was “The Lord is my Light.” All participating students are enrolled at Santa Sophia Academy.

First and second place prizes were awarded in each division. First prize is \$25.00 and second prize is \$10.00.

Artwork was entered in Division 1, which included students in grade 5, and also in Division 2, which includes those in grades 6-7-8. Elise Garcia, grade 5 won first place in Division 1 and Megan McCarthy, grade 7 won first place. The photograph of the 1st place entry in Division 1 is pictured here.

Essays were submitted only in Division 2. The winning essay, as written by 7th grader Hannah Lawson, is printed here.

Top Right: 1st place Division 1 essay, “The Lord is My Light” by Hannah Lawson.

Bottom: 1st place art entries from Division 1 and 2.



### The Lord is My Light

“The Lord is My Light” means several things to me. It means that the Lord helps me to see right from wrong; similar to how a light bulb helps you see in the dark. It also means that He is there to guide me through hardships and relationships. Lastly, it means that He is a window that brings light to all of my situations, both good and bad. It is a comforting feeling to have the Lord as my light because, like a candle, He is warm and He will always be there, even when I fail to make the right choices.

My conscience helps me to see right from wrong. It is the light that guides my actions. Following the light will lead to a happy life and a good relationship with God. When I do not follow the light I must repent to God and build up my relationship once more. I strive to follow my light.

The Lord has been my light and has guided my family through many hardships. The Lord was my light when I was stressed about homework. God was my father's light when he was going through graduate school. He was my mother's light when she had the flu. He was my grandmother's light when she broke her ankle. The Lord has never burned out on us as our light.

The Lord has brought light to many of my situations. When I found money, he told me to turn it in. I was angry, and He told me to let it go. I was sad, and He lifted my spirits. I am thankful that He is my window, my guide and my friend.

I believe that the Lord is in each and every one of us. He represents love and compassion. When we recognize that love or compassion in others and ourselves we find the true light inside of everyone. That is what “The Lord is My Light” truly means to me.

## The 2011 Catholic Daughters of the Americas Catholic Charities' Annual Baby Shower

By Anne Havin

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Catholic Charities Baby Shower was a complete success! I think this was our best year ever, as a result of very generous donations and the attendance of a special guest, one of Catholic Charities' mothers, as well as our State Representative for the San Diego Diocese, Melody Ciaravino.

I really want to extend a special thanks to our own court and particularly to Dina and Kyle Howard (Sam & Rosa Caeti's daughter and son-in-law) who made a very large contribution of clothes ranging from ages newborn to 2 years. We are eternally grateful to the Howards and all of the other ladies at Court #2520 for graciously donating the best of the best to our mothers and families in need.

On January 29th, we had arrived at Catholic Charities at 9:00 a.m. and it seemed that the schedule was changed to 10:00 a.m. However, this gave us plenty of time to set up before the other Courts arrived. The extra time also gave us an opportunity to meet our special guest and mother. She is a young woman who is married and a mother to 5 children. She appeared to be very courteous, grateful and yet humble. We were delighted to be able to talk about child-rearing stories with our special guest and realized that we, as women, had much in common.



*Above: Participating CDA Courts show off their donated items.*

As other ladies started to arrive, more baby clothes, blankets, diapers & toys were set out and everyone met our special guest finding it equally enjoyable exchanging stories. The CDA organizer of the baby shower, Rose Parknaven, thanked everyone for their wonderful contributions and introduced our dignitaries and our guest mother, Halima. Halima spoke about her experience with the Catholic Church through Catholic Charities. Her first baby was born with Downs Syndrome and her family had abandoned her. She turned to the Catholic Church who opened their arms to her with multiple avenues of assistance. She had continually articulated her gratitude to the Catholic Church as if they were her second family in the absence of her birth family. I think about how I had tears in my eyes just listening to her witness.

*Below: Anne Havin and Halima, a mother who benefitted from services provided by Catholic Charities.*



I really felt honored to get to know this very special lady. There are many anonymous heroes in this world and we were privileged to meet one of them that day.

After our special guest spoke, Lizzette and Wendy talked about their role with Catholic Charities. A very good question was asked about contributing throughout the year and Lizzette said that as the donations are greatly appreciated the supply only lasts up to 3 months, as the needs are great, especially during these financially difficult times. They would also like to focus on receiving items for babies that are newborn to 1 year as there are other avenues of charities who donate to older children's needs.

All in all, it was a great experience. It is so critical to give to such a worthy cause where women are helping other women and children in need.

### STATE AND NATIONAL NEWS

#### The State Convention Project

this year is to support *Shoes That Fit* by collecting new athletic shoes for school-age children. Shoes for children size 10 to adult can be brought to the convention.

Congratulations to **Court Immaculata #1854** in San Diego who celebrated their 50th Anniversary this past March!

Thank you to all the members who have so generously contributed to the **Return Address Label National**

**fundraiser**. Your generosity will continue to help CDA support many charities and projects.

Court Checks are only accepted for orders made on the **online CDA store**. Consult your officers prior to ordering.

## Garden of Innocence - Providing Dignified Burials for Abandoned Babies

The sun was a welcomed friend on the morning of January 15, 2011. While the earth at El Camino Memorial Park was damp from the recent rains, the hearts of the attendees for the burial of baby Nick were not. Among the participants at the Garden of Innocence's graveside service were CDA members from Court Santa Sophia - Georgene Kruzell, Diana Garra,



Cora McNamee-Lawson, Melinda Bauers and Melissa Hiatt. Each played a role in the service, from reading names of the babies to releasing doves in their honor.

The ceremony began with the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus processing to the grave site while carrying the tiny casket of baby Nick. Soloists sang spiritual songs and inspirational words were shared by a pastor from a Christian church. The attendees had a chance to hold the casket and say a prayer over baby Nick before he was laid to rest.

It was a touching and heart-felt ceremony. Tears of joy were shed for baby Nick, who will live (and play) in peace with the Lord in heaven.

Court Santa Sophia has committed to support the Garden of Innocence. We do so by raising funds, making bracelets and attending ceremonies. Members are notified by email of any upcoming services and are encouraged to participate.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### MARCH

3/24/11

General Meeting

3/25/11

CDA Lenten Fish Dinner

### APRIL

4/28/11

CDA General Meeting

### MAY

5/1/11

Mother-Daughter Afternoon Tea

### A FRIENDLY REMINDER...

If you haven't paid your dues, please send your \$30 to the Financial Secretary, Rebecca Kelly at 11223 Del Rio Rd., Spring Valley, CA 91978.



**Catholic Daughters of the Americas**

**Court Santa Sophia #2520**

9800 San Juan Street

Spring Valley, CA 91977

## Mission Statement

Catholic Daughters of the Americas strives to embrace the principal of faith through love in the promotion of justice, equality and the advancement of human rights and human dignity for all.