



Exploring the Archdiocese of Washington's Post Cana program

- Lives change dramatically after the death of a spouse.
- The Archdiocese of Washington's Post Cana organization provides for the mutual support of widows and widowers of all ages and faiths, sponsored by the Office of Family Life of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, DC.
- Today's Speaker: Mary Dugan, President of Post Cana

Hosted by

Council of Catholic Women-Archdiocese of Washington

Virtual Tea & Reflection

Sunday, May 21, 2023

Welcome - Cheryl Holley, CCW-ADW President



- Housekeeping Notes.....Cheryl R. Holley
- Opening Prayer..... Carol Monaco,
Vice President, CCW-ADW
- Introduction of Presenter.....Elizabeth Mariani
- Scripture Reading..... Elizabeth Mariani
- Presentation.....Mary Dugan,
President of Post Cana
- Reflection & Discussion..... Breakout rooms -
Group Sharing
- Closing RemarksCarol Monaco,
Vice President, CCW-ADW
- Closing Prayer..... Elizabeth Butler

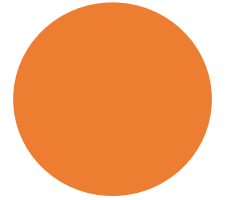
Housekeeping

- Enjoy your afternoon Tea & Reflection
- We are recording
- Voices will be muted
- If on screen, please enter your name and Parish
- Teacups up, enjoy this “Afternoon Tea”

Council of Catholic Women – Archdiocese of Washington

“Connecting Catholic Women”

<https://www.councilofcatholicwomen-adw.com/>



Opening Prayer

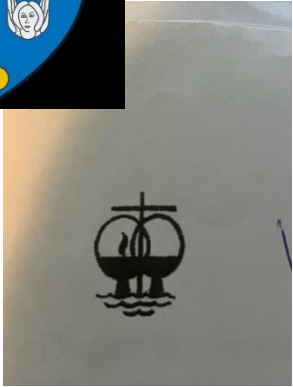
Most loving God, you know the pain and sorrow of death; mercifully hear our prayer for those who mourn the death of their beloved.

The nights are lonely, and the days are too long. Comfort them and bring an end to the days of tears. Bless them and bring an end to their days of sorrow. Renew them with the joy of life and bring to an end their days of mourning.

Let the bond of love which you have for your people be the foundation of their hope that love never ends and that precious moments with our beloved are forever held dear in our hearts. Amen.



Introduction to our Speaker



- Early childhood Montgomery County Maryland
- Father was a diplomat so 1958 went to Calcutta, where she watched her parents help Mother Teresa as she was establishing her ministry for the dying destitute and the neglected; her teenage years were in Rome and Holland
- Graduated from Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa and obtained a Masters in World and U.S. History from Dayton University
- Taught for 39 years in Montgomery County, Maryland
- Met her husband teaching and raised their family in the parish of St. Martin's in Gaithersburg
- In 2007, her husband's health declined, and they moved to Leisure World
- Ten years later her husband passed away
- In 2018, went first Post Cana meeting held in Leisure World
- In 2019, she set up a Post Cana group at Our Lady of Grace
- In 2020, despite the pandemic she organized Post Cana meetings ...outdoors
- In 2021, President Barbara Nunan asked to take over as President
- February 2022, Cardinal Wilton Gregory says Mass for 180 widows and widowers at Our Lady of Grace, Leisure World

Scripture Reading

Take care of widows who really need help.

But if a widow has children or grandchildren, the first thing they need to learn is this: to show their devotion to God by taking care of their own family. They will be repaying their parents, and this pleases God.

A widow who really needs help is one who has been left all alone. She trusts God to take care of her. She prays all the time, night and day, and asks God for help.

1 Timothy 5:3-5

Honor widows who
are widows indeed

1 Timothy 5:3



Post Cana – The Need

- The U.S. Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, mentioned some very relevant and alarming news....
- **LONELINESS** among Americans of all ages is the new big killer in the United States. For those people suffering from it, you can equate it to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.





Post Cana – Fulfills The Need

- We need to rebuild the social infrastructure our in-person connections.
- In the last 50 years we have seen a decrease in community organizations, civic organizations, faith organizations.
- We need a way to build stronger connections, especially in the wake of how technology has changed how we interact
- **Post Cana** is a social outreach in the most intimate ways.....through spiritual and social fellowship
- Members engage in spiritual, social, intellectual, and other positive programs that promote and enrich their lives through fellowship.



History of Post Cana

- In 1960, through the initiative of Frances Reardon, a widow who had been active in the Cana group of the Family Life Bureau.
- Cardinal Patrick O'Boyle gave his blessing and Post Cana came into existence under the Family Life Bureau (now the Office of Family Life) of the Catholic Archdiocese of Washington.
- Cana is taken from the town of the wedding feast where Christ changed water into wine and signifies marriage.
- The purpose of the organization is to offer companionship, support, counsel, and social and spiritual activities for people who have lost a spouse and are looking for something to fill up the emptiness.
- Mrs. Quirin served as the first president. From the first group came other groups, centered on parishes or geographic locations.

History of Post Cana

- In 1993 there were 547 members!!
And 12 group leaders: Holy Cross, Holy Redeemer, Northwest Post Cana, Our Lady of the Snow, Regina, St. Camillus/St. Bernadette, St. Catherine LaBoure, St. Jane de Chantal, St. John the Evangelist, St. Mary's, Landover Hills, St. Nicholas, Laurel and St. Pius, Bowie.
- Their social and spiritual activities ranged from potluck suppers, picnics, boat trips, train rides, and weekend trips.
- In 2010 there were 10 groups
- There have been 30 presidents since 1960





Post Cana Today

- We are a branch of Family Life Bureau of the Archdiocese of Washington
- Our Purpose is to encourage widows and widowers to engage in spiritual, social, intellectual and positive programs that enrich their lives through mutual assistance, problem-sharing, decision-making
- Our Membership is open to all unmarried surviving spouses of all faiths
- We have one main Group in Leisure World and are actively looking to support other groups.
- We just have around 90 members in our directory most of whom are in their 60's 70's on up
- Our hub has been Our Lady of Grace, because it has a bigger community of retirees that have joined,
- We also meet the first Monday of the month after the 9.00 a.m. Mass

Post Cana Today

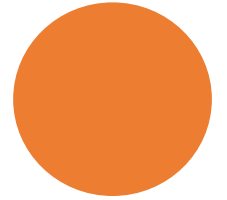
- We host 5 events a year:
 1. A Lenten and an Advent Day of Reflection followed by a box lunch;
 2. Christmas Party and a
 3. Spring Fling, a
 4. Memorial Mass for our Loved ones in June and a
 5. Business meeting held at St. Bernadette's in late September
- We are actively contacting local parishes and reaching out to pastors and secretaries.
- We were recognized by **Cardinal Wilton Gregory** when he came to say Mass at Our Lady of Grace 2 years ago. We had around 180 widows and widowers show up.



How are we organized?

- **Groups:**

- A group may consist of any six or more members without regard to religious affiliation, parish, or other geographical boundaries
- **Each group:**
 - Obtains authority from the Membership Chairman
 - Selects their own officers
 - Their leader is a member of the Executive Council to represent their views at Council meetings
 - Shall make their own rules, consistent with the general rules
 - Select their own programs based on common interests as well as cooperate with other groups
 - Activities shall be reported to the Council
 - Make recommendations to strengthen Post Cana organization
 - Implicitly support the policies, programs and directives of the parent organization



How are we managed?

- **Executive Council:**

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

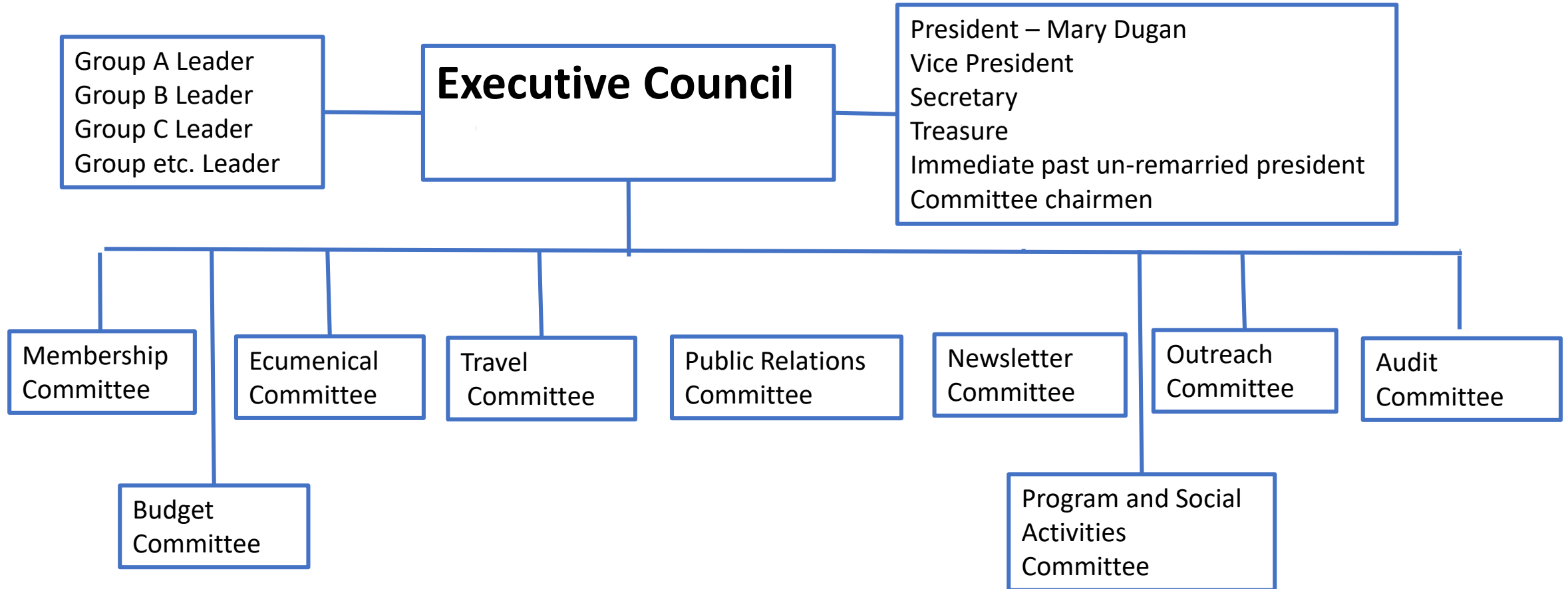
- **Committees:**

- Program and Social Activities
- Ecumenical
- Membership
- Public Relations
- Newsletter
- Outreach
- Travel
- Budget
- Audit

- **Group Leaders:**



Post Cana Organization Chart



Final Thoughts

In our May newsletter, I quoted my late husband, Tom Dugan.

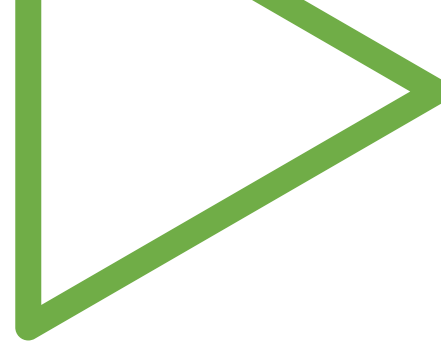
In the fall of 1961, Tom was a busy Freshman at Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, Maryland, yet he found the time to write to his grandmother:

“.... thanks for thinking of me. The stamps and the money and your prayers are appreciated very much. God knows I need those prayers. Gram I don't know if my prayers for you will do any good, but I'll say them just the same for your special intention. Next to Mother, Gram I think you are the greatest person in the world and I mean it....”

“...All this week I've been a nervous wreck mainly because I had a speech to give. It was on friendship and the great need for friends. ...”

Reflection & Discussion

- Let's think about the need for friendship especially after the death of a beloved spouse!
- How we might learn about the need for Post Cana in our community
- The next steps to start a Post Cana Group to meet the need



Closing Remarks

- **Join CCW-ADW 's Nightly Phone Rosary
8 PM,
7 days a week Call 605-468-8016, code
357090#**
 - **If you want to know more about CCW-
ADW and how you and/or your parish can
get involved email us at
archdioceseccw@gmail.com**
 - **Council of Catholic Women – Archdiocese
of Washington
“Connecting Catholic Women”
[https://www.councilofcatholicwomen-
adw.com/](https://www.councilofcatholicwomen-adw.com/)**
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Closing Prayer



Heavenly Father, let your constant love guide the lives of widows all over the world. May your faithfulness always lead them to places you want them to go. Please help them to keep company with people who revere you and to avoid wicked people. Be their light and salvation, shelter them in their times of trouble. Teach them what you want them to do and lead them along a safe path. May they live to see your goodness in this present life. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.

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