



Original location of the National Catholic School of Social Services in Washington D.C..



Mary's Garden at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington DC.



1934 gathering of NCCCW members at the White House in Washington, DC.

March 4, 1920, the National Council of Catholic Women was founded by the United States Bishops (National Catholic Welfare Council) with the stated purpose:

To give to the Catholic women of the country a common voice and an instrument for unified action in all matters affecting Catholic or national welfare.

To ensure proper Catholic representation on, and the proper recognition of Catholic principles in national committees and national movements affecting the religious, moral and material well-being of the country.

### The First Twenty-Five Years

- Emphasis was given to the education and formation of Catholic Women so they could exercise their new-found civic duties granted them as the "Right to Suffrage" in 1920.
- Under the direction of the National Catholic Welfare Council, the NCCW participated in an inaugural program called Immigrant Aid to assist Catholic immigrants with their relocation experience.
- Focused on the promotion of Catholic education and the establishment of Parent Teacher Associations, catechetical instruction, and affiliation with university Newman Clubs.
- Created and funded the National Catholic School of Social Services in Washington D.C., now housed at Catholic University of America.
- Endorsed the work and actions of the Children's Bureau and the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor.
- Diligently promoted social justice and world peace and the diminution of armaments among all governments of the world.
- Educated women on the sanctity of marriage and the threat to the family structure posed by divorce and birth control.
- Affiliated with the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues, now known as World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WU-CWO).

### 1945 - 1970

- Pledged support for the United Nations.
- Focused on international relations, just peace treaties, human rights and the opposition to genocide.
- Started an International Affairs program and collaborated with the National Catholic Welfare Council's War Relief Services, now known as Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Including a program known as the "Madonna Plan," that focused on assisting women in the developing world. This still exists today.
- Endorsed minimum wage, Social Security and health insurance legislation.
- Promoted the Catholic Press and "healthy reading habits" through the establishment of parish libraries and subscriptions to diocesan newspapers.
- Launched the Military Council of Catholic Women.
- Developed a formal leadership training program known as the Leadership Institute: Fashion Me A Person.





### 1971 - Onward

- Commenced working toward an end to abortion and euthanasia.
- Created and implemented the RESPITE program to provide support for caregivers.
- Addressed the issue of domestic violence through education and advocacy programs.
- Collaborated with Catholic Relief Services to establish the Refugee Women Emergency Fund.
- Created and funded Mary's Garden at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.
- Implemented the Vocation Purse Club to assist women seeking to enter religious life with their financial obstacles.
- Formation of a mentoring program, Women Embracing Women.
- Implemented and continue to implement new communication strategies through online and digital media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, new databases and updated web presence.
- Worked to end Human Trafficking with affiliated organizations and US Catholic Sisters.
- Established outreach program with children in the Holy Land and students in the USA.
- Established affiliate levels for high school and college age women.
- Provided formal program of formation in our faith for members.
- Developed series of mini-retreat resources.
- Established Leadership Training and Development program.



### History of Communication

- 1963-1971 Word Magazine published ten times per year.
- 1971-1975 People
- 1975-present Catholic Woman Magazine published quarterly
- 1980-1993 Colloquy published 3 times per year.
- 1994-2004 NCCW Bulletin Board
- 2005-present Connect (Electronic Newsletter)

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# A Brief History

1970 -2020 Celebrating 100 Years

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF

CATHOLIC WOMEN

[www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org)