**WELCOME SPEECH**

**FOR**

**BERYL BLATCHFORD**

Hello everyone!! It’s so gratifying to be with all of you, united in fulfilling a mutual calling…. as eager members of Daughters of the King. Of course, that calling is to recognize the abundance of faith and determination we share, and to use that energy to serve others. While we may have had our “hiccups” in the past, the beautiful part of what we do, not only allows us, but invites us to recommit to doing whatever we can to provide good in the world. I recently read somewhere that, “You haven’t failed until you stop trying.” I’m very happy to have partners, such as you, to find the causes and the means to share our spirit and faith, and in the process, “**not stop trying.**”

Since today is about gratitude, renewal, and looking forward, I would be remiss if I didn’t express heartfelt acknowledgments and my thanks to several people. To our wonderful Associate Priest, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who has encouraged the rebirth of our Order, thank you for your enthusiasm, your wisdom, and most importantly, your faith in this group. I believe you are truly a “people person” in the best sense of the phrase. You guide us, you’re willing to learn and share, and you literally bring people together…. How do I know that??? **Look around**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). To our outgoing President, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ thank you for leading the way with demonstrable willingness… the spirit to rebuild from the ground up…. the courage to make the rules as you went along, and the enthusiasm to keep our spirits engaged….. I think we **ALL** know the resistance that pops up when the “I don’t wanna’s” take hold!!! It takes a special kind of person… one who has true faith in the mission and the process, to “make the magic happen!!!” To our Vice President/Treasurer, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and Secretary, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, where would **ANY** of us be without you??? Above all, you two create a context… a space in which we can all come together, share ideas, and implement the good work that brings us all together.

And that, my friends, leads us to me, finding my way up here, to be with all of you. While I want you to know that I am filled with gratitude to be named this prayer group’s next President, and while I thank each one of you from the bottom of my heart, for the opportunity to serve at a more encompass8ng capacity, I want to be very clear…. I intend for my tenure as President to be a **conversation**…. an ongoing partnership in which every has his or her place. Whether you’ve been around for years or are new to this group, there is a place for each one of you, with mentors and guides to show you how it’s done…. as we work in unison. It is my intention that all the pieces of this puzzle fit beautifully… that when placed together, with our talents and contributions interlocked, we find and fulfill our mission to serve those in righteousness and dignity.

In Matthew 20-28, we learn…. or are reminded….. “By God’s grace we have been set apart from worldly pursuits of greatness. We are called to serve others with the grace and love that God has entrusted to us. God rewards those who give heir time, money, and talents to help others in need. In God’s upside down Kingdom, those who serve are the greatest of all, reflecting the character of Jesus himself, “who came not to be served but to serve.” I could not have said it better myself!!

I have been thinking…. making plans in my head…. Wondering about the best ways we can serve our community…. Researching the places where we would be needed the most. Yes, my brain has been **VERY** active!!!! But I also tell myself one very important point…. Something I don’t forget…. In this new capacity, I am very clear that these are not my plans… they are **OUR** plans. When you get Beryl Blatchford, you get the **ALL INCLUSIVE PLAN**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

I see the upcoming year in broad strokes right now…. Do good…. Support one another….. unite in prayer….. do more good!!! I have bucket lists for my bucket lists!!! I think of sharing our spirit and faith with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**name the boys orphanage**). There are fifty boys hungry for human connection and I believe we can contribute to feeding their souls and giving them hope. That’s one idea…. But as I said, this is a **conversation**…. We have a list that we will ask you to complete. What is **YOUR** bucket list of service??? How can we all get together to make your dream a reality? What are the projects we can tackle to make the world… or at least our community a better place?? Our former President, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ did a wonderful job building a foundation…. planting seeds…. Nurturing growth. It’s now **OUR** turn to make that magic happen!!!

A very important part of giving of oneself to others is making sure there is something to give, which is why God invented **VACATION**!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). It’s been wonderful to be with all of you today. We’ll have another meeting in May, then it’s time to relax, renew, and **regenerate** in order to return in August with clear heads, full hearts, and an unstoppable will to serve. I am really looking forward to working with all of you, sharing the spirit we are so blessed to possess, and serving our neighbors and our community, in the name of God. Thank you all!