



Diocese of the Midwest, Diocesan Assembly 2023
OCA Clergy Wives Advisory Group (CWAG) Report

Who are Clergy Wives?

**Matushka, Presbytera, Popadija, Protinitsa, Preotesa, Pani, Panimatka, Diaconissa, Widows of clergy
All the wives of clergymen**

Our OCA's clergy wives advisory group (CWAG) serves the entire clergy wives population and offers various programs and activities to clergy wives and widows. Currently, CWAG functions under the guidance of Bishop Gerasim of the South (OCA Office of Pastoral Life's liaison hierarch) and Fr. Nicholas Solak (the chair of OCA's Office of Pastoral Life).

The group was formed as a result of the online retreat held in July 2020. The retreat was organized in response to the pandemic which brought many challenges to clergy and their families. Currently, CWAG consists of 6 priest wives representing different dioceses. The members are Mka. Alexandra Safchuk (Washington DC), Mka. Valerie Zahirsky (Midwest), Mka. Wendy Cwiklinski (West/Military), Protinica Lela Powell (West), Mka. Jennifer Levine (South/Military), and Mka. Miho Ealy (Midwest). In addition to our group members, we have many clergy wives as diocesan point people (DPP). DPPs help distribute news and communicate with local clergy wives. For the diocese of the Midwest, point people are Matushka Valerie Zahirsky (Parma, OH), Protinica Michelle Jannakos (Palos Hills, IL), and Mka. Miho Ealy (Dayton, OH).

CWAG activities

CWAG group meets twice a month to plan activities and events.

Events are:

Quarterly Online Zoom Retreat (Saturdays, 1-3pm ET)

Quarterly Online Newsletter (both in English and in Spanish)

Clergy Widows Online Retreat

Call for Clergy Wives Prayer List

Partnership with Thriving in Ministry (peer-learning group)

Communication via our diocesan point people and share news from each diocese

Our main focus is to connect and support each other. Being a clergy wife in a parish setting brings many challenges. It's a unique position and can be demanding and isolating. We would like to continue to reach out to clergy wives and hope to institute more programs to meet the needs of clergy and clergy families throughout the OCA.

Respectfully submitted,

Matushka Miho Ochiai Ealy (St. Paul the Apostle Church, Dayton, OH)