

Catholic Woman's Club
Fund Raising Best Practices for the December and Spring Events

1. **Start Early:** There are only two main fund raising events during the CWC “year” so it’s critical each be a success for the benefit of our charities. It takes time to organize the committee, recruit vendors, organize raffle baskets, promote the event to members and guests, etc.

Do not delay getting started.

2. **Utilize the Committee:** A generous number of members are typically assigned for the fundraising event committees. Many hands make for light work! However, it’s important for the committee to understand the value of their participation, what their specific role in the process will be, deadlines for tasks and so forth. The committee is a source of creativity, contacts, and resources so they should be utilized. Organizing a committee meeting after a general meeting is usually a good way to get the process started. Following-up with email communication and/or additional meetings is necessary.

3. **Event Promotion:** Save the date cards, email blasts, meeting announcements (make a “commercial” or provide a teaser for your event highlighting vendor participation or raffle basket themes) and event sign-ups at meetings are helpful for generating excitement and getting participation. You may choose to tap into membership for donation of items or cash for the purchase of raffle items. If soliciting items be specific as to what you are wanting.

4. **RSVP:** It’s very important to understand how many will be in attendance so this is an important number to track. Designate no more than two points of contact for making an RSVP and make sure those two committee members are communicating well and often. A number of guests will need to be reported in advance of the event and the number reported is the number of guests we will be charged for regardless of actual attendance. Keeping accurate RSVP records, sending an email to membership of who is recorded as having RSVP’d so each member can confirm for themselves whether or not they have responded, and using tools such as Survey Monkey are all helpful in gathering an accurate count. Work for the “sell out”! Encourage membership to invite guests. It’s a great way to “recruit” for future members and introduce family and friends to CWC. Guests bring in more revenue through purchase of their event ticket, buying raffle tickets, and shopping from vendors. Remind members and guests that reservation payment will be required, as stated in the yearbook, for a reservation made but an event no show. The Reservation Team will be responsible for collecting these monies.

5. **Raffle Baskets:** Have a theme for each basket with corresponding items. Items can be procured and/or purchased with donations from membership. Creating a basket team from among committee members works well. They are responsible for the procurement and/or purchase of items and final basket presentation. (please see procurement form, letter of explanation of CWC) Provide visual examples – the internet can be a source of basket theme ideas too.

If the basket “container” can fit the theme, even better. We recommend selling chances at one ticket for \$5.00 or, five tickets for \$20.00. Members can choose which basket(s) they want to put their tickets in. Remember, you will need a receptacle in front of each basket for collecting tickets. It’s also helpful to have an itemized list of the contents of the basket clearly posted as some items can get “lost” in the display. You may choose to ask the vendors to donate an item to include in a raffle basket.

6. **Vendors:** Check with the Treasurer to learn if there are any vendors who are currently not in good standing with the club due to lack of payment. Recruit six to ten vendors who sell a variety of merchandise with the agreement to give 30% of their day of event proceeds back to CWC is a great way to augment fund raising efforts. There is a vendor information letter that can be helpful in ensuring that communication and expectations have been made clear. Create a buying atmosphere by having them located in a “shopping area”. Be strategic by including vendors who can offer a variety of merchandise and perhaps encourage them to bring specific wares to complement the other vendors in attendance. The better our vendors do the better the club does so we want to ensure their success and not have too many selling the same things. (Please see vendor information letter and vendor donation form)

7. **Supplies Available to You:** We have approximately 20 acrylic “table tents” that can be used to hold an event program, vendor/donor recognition forms, promotional material for the event, etc. Additional supplies include a large chalkboard that can be used at the welcome area for the event, and 6-8 clipboards with holders that can be used to list and display the contents of a raffle basket.

8. **Centerpieces:** These might be donated and/or could be made available for purchase at the end of the event in order to defray costs.

9. **Keep Notes:** Keep notes of what you did, what worked well, what you might do differently to pass along to the following year’s event chairs. Include details on raffle basket themes and items; participating vendors and their contact information; what food was served and who prepared it, etc. Take photos of the event to include in your notebook; sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words.

10. **Communication:** Please see attached samples of a procurement form, a procurement explanation of CWC, a vendor information sheet, and a vendor donation form.

11. **Event Set-Up:** If possible, it’s helpful to complete this the day before the event. Coordinate with the venue, committee members, and participating vendors to orchestrate set-up.

12. **Day of event:** Be prepared with a cash box, a schematic of how you intend to arrange the venue, committee member assignments for the event (who is doing what specifically), raffle baskets, raffle tickets and baskets for ticket sellers, guest list, program agenda, and acknowledgements. Distribute the vendor donation form to each vendor for payment either that day or to be sent to the CWC Treasurer by a specific date (the Treasurer’s name and address is included on the form). Please follow up with all vendors and the Treasurer to ensure their donations are made. Coordinate with the Treasurer to see if the venue will be expecting payment the date of the event.

13. **Turn in receipts for reimbursement:** Make sure all receipts for expenses incurred for the event are turned in to the treasurer.

*Please remember there are many resources available to you; the past chairs, the club Officers, and an entire CWC sisterhood that want you to be successful so please do not hesitate to reach out and let your needs and or concerns be known. Thank you for serving the club in this most vital role!!
Wishing you success!!*