**SCCCW names Altenburg, Sister Gertrude, women of the year**

GREENVILLE—Palmetto State women spent a weekend of faith, fellowship and prayer at the 90th annual convention of the South Carolina Council of Catholic Women. The event, held March 13-15 at Embassy Suites in Greenville, was hosted by conference affiliates from the Greenville Deanery.

The conference drew 126 participants, who focused on discerning how they can serve people in their own parishes and the community, following the conference theme “Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?” It was one of the last large gatherings to take place before cancellations began to take effect as a precaution against COVID19.

Bishop Robert E. Guglielmone celebrated Mass for the women on March 14 and then presented two annual awards.

Jeannette Altenburg, a member of All Saints Church in Lake Wylie, was named Catholic Woman of the Year. The New York native moved to Rock Hill in 2009. At All Saints, she serves multiple roles, including extraordinary minister of holy Communion, lector, usher, and member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. She is also on the finance council and co-chairs the building fund with her husband, Bob.

She was the first elected SCCCW president of the Rock Hill Deanery and has helped grow their presence in the area’s parishes.

Altenburg has organized community events to raise awareness about human trafficking, domestic violence and poverty, and helped the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul furnish their new convent when they moved to Lake Wylie.

“I feel the need to continue in the Lord’s work and to train others to follow in our footsteps to carry on the work of the conference,” she said.

She and her husband have three sons and seven grandchildren.

Sister Gertrude Bassey of the Sisters for Christian Community received the 2020 Woman Religious of the Year award. She currently serves as a primary care provider at Bon Secours Primary Care in Mauldin and Greenville.

Prior to joining her current order, she was a member of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, where she made her first religious profession in 1988 and final vows in 1991. She holds a master’s degree in nursing/family nurse practitioner from South University in Savannah, a doctorate in biomedical sciences and a medical doctorate from Einstein Medical Institute in Florida.

Sister Gertrude has spent most of her ministry serving the most vulnerable members of society, especially the sick and those in marginalized communities. Her work has taken her to Nigeria, Ghana, Brazil and other nations before returning to work in the U.S. She promoted the education of women in Nigeria and Ghana and worked with battered women in Brazil.

She is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Greenville, where she sings in the choir, works with youth, and visits sick parishioners.