All four exterior walls of the 7th Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) Texas Habitat for Humanity state build were raised and secured in less than six hours on Saturday, September 19th. At the ground blessing ceremony, CDA State Chaplain Reverend Bob Dunn said, “Help us to be the hands and feet of Jesus as we seek to build a just society and proactive Church... bless this site and guard over all who will work here. Now let’s go hit a nail, we’re beating the devil!”

No matter how advanced Americans become with technology, elaborate conveniences, and are spoiled with today’s fast food mentality, absolutely nothing can replace the spirit of one woman with a hammer, or an air gun, a saw or a level, another with a shovel, and yet another providing workers a meal, each taking action to maintain the dignity and rights of humanity.

Seventy eight (78) members of the Catholic Daughters from thirty one (31) courts throughout Texas traded in a Saturday manicure for a pair of work gloves; they travel hundreds of miles to partake in a day of hard labor working in 90 degree Corpus Christi heat and humidity. Joining them were eight members of the Knights of Columbus, two clergy, three spouses, and three teens.
Former National Habitat for Humanity chairman, CDA National Regent Shirley Seyfried, Battle Lake, Minnesota, not only presented the Texas State Court and CDA Habitat project with a National CDA check for $25,000.00 in support of this build, she rolled up her sleeves and helped to raise the first wall of the home. Seyfried was presented a “Key to the City” by Corpus Christi City Council member Colleen McIntyre.

The Mayor of Corpus Christi, Honorable Nelda Martinez, was present to welcome and thank everyone for their contributions in making a positive difference in the lives of others. Reverend Patrick Donohoe, Chancellor, Corpus Christi Diocese, and pastor of Holy Family Catholic Church shared words of thanksgiving adding, “This build is not just a house, but a home for a family in my parish community.”

When the need of another touches the heart of a Catholic Daughter, life changes; for both the provider of the service and the recipient. Jesus spoke right into the depth of their hearts when He said, “Whatever you do for the least of them you have done for me.” He changed the way Catholic Daughters view those struggling in these economic hard times. CDA members don't see age, color, size or status; but an opportunity to love a brother or sister in Christ.

Even before the blessing and ground breaking ceremony, the saw was running, hammers were swinging and the walls were taking form. Texas past state regents, First Vice National Regent Olga Samaniego, El Paso; Past National Regent Libby Ramirez, Victoria; Past National Director Duchess Collins, Sugar Land; Carolyn Malik, Shiner; and Sheila Martinka, Victoria joined the build efforts. Samaniego read a letter from Past State Regent, National Director Carolyn Bachmann who was unable to attend.

State Regent Eve Trevino, Corpus Christi; First Vice State Regent Rosie Stockwell, Edinburg; Second Vice State Regent Melodie Brunt, Texarkana; State Secretary Becky Brown, Angleton; State Treasurer Terri Beltran, El Campo; State Chairmen, District Deputies and members of the Catholic Daughters from each corner of Texas worked side by side, stud to stud, and raised wall after wall of the Habitat home located at 2818 Soledad, Corpus Christi.

CDA in partnership with Corpus Christi Habitat for Humanity has now become a beacon of love for a deserving family who will also contribute sweat hours on their future home. CDA volunteers not only worked on their Habitat sponsored home, they helped lay the roof to the habitat home being built right next to their project home.

On hand for the first day of construction was Joe Martinez, Director of the Community Action Agency, donors of the lot; Barb Sweeney, Habitat for Humanity (HfH) Executive Director; Mark Blankenship, HfH Project Manager; and several members of the HfH Board of Directors.

The National order of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas has partnered with Habitat for Humanity in building thirty two (32) homes for deserving families. State and Territorial Courts of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas have built an additional twenty two (22) Habitat for Humanity Homes; six of those homes were built by Texas CDA members.
God empowers CDA members to go beyond the norm and step into opportunities that walk a journey with individuals working to the best of their ability to survive. And then, at the end of a productive work day, they take a knee giving thanks for the blessings of hard work, community, faith and hope. The banner of Unity and Charity in action is boldly visible through the loving service of CDA sisters.

Habitat for Humanity State Chairman Minnie Dennis and committee members worked endless hours behind the scene in preparation for the Corpus Christi build. Scheduled work days are each Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a completion goal sometime in April 2016. The volunteer packet, gifts in kind, T-shirt order forms, and more information about the Catholic Daughters may be found on the CDA state website at texascda.org.

Minnie Dennis-HfH Chair at 361-658-4709/ minden816@aol.com or
Patsy Cantu-HfH Co-chair at 361-215-6322/ patsycantu@yahoo.com

For the Glory of God
CDA Builds Habitat Homes

Mayor Nelda Martinez
Seyfried and McIntyre

Trevino, Rev. Dunn, and Seyfried

Olga Samaniego & Minnie Dennis

Joe Martinez
L-R Second Vice State Regent Melodie Brunt, Texarkana; State Regent Eve Trevino; State Chaplain Reverend Bob Dunn; First Vice State Regent Rosie Stockwell, Edinburg; State Secretary Becky Brown, Angleton; State Treasurer Terri Beltran, El Campo; Habitat State Co-Chair Patsy Cantu, Corpus Christi; and Habitat State Chair Minnie Dennis, Corpus Christi.
L-R  First Vice National Regent Olga Samaniego; National Regent Shirley Seyfried; Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Barb Sweeney; State Regent Eve Trevino; State Chaplain Reverend Bob Dunn; Fr. Patrick Donohoe; Habitat State Chair Minnie Dennis; and Corpus Christi Council member Colleen McIntyre.
MOM’s State Chair Cathy Bittner
The first weekend build closes with a Mass by State Chaplain Reverend Bob Dunn