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## CCST Officers (2025-27):

President:

**Deborah Auclair**

Immediate Past President:

**Nancy Thorpe**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:

**Vita Balsino**

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres. & Membership Chair:

**Dianna Balsamo**

Treasurer:

**Nancy Thorpe**

Recording Secretary:

**Pat Lunsford**

Board Members at Large:

**Bonnie Alberts, Bernie Chuinard,**

**Ann MacDonald, Liz McCandlish**

## April Fundraiser—Thank You for Making a Difference

The Christ Child Society of Tucson (CCST) held its 5th Annual Fundraiser on Sunday, April 27, 2025, at The Highlands of Dove Mountain. We're pleased to report that this year's event was our most successful to date.

The afternoon was marked by a strong sense of community and purpose, with proceeds supporting our outreach to children and families in need. We wish to acknowledge those who mailed in raffle tickets and donations even though they could not attend or lived out of state!

The raffle included a wide selection of items, and the gift cards were especially well-received. The process of placing tickets into the bags went smoothly, and the American Heritage Girls (AHG), Troop 1212 assisted with prize

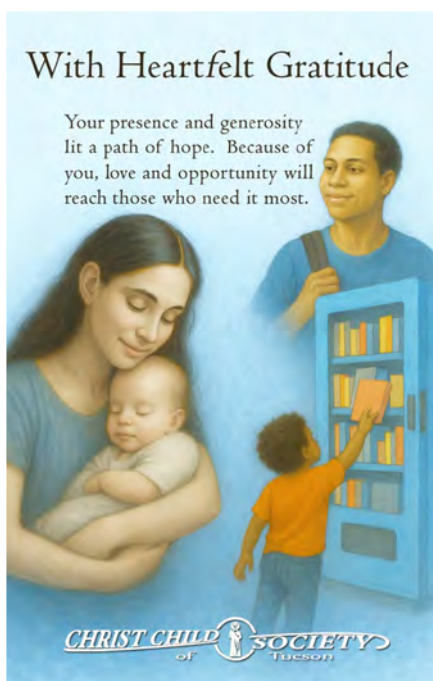
distribution—an addition that helped the process run efficiently.

The auctions and raffles contained wonderful items that our Acquisition's Guru, Bernie Chuinard, obtained. The items totaled over \$18,000.00 in value.

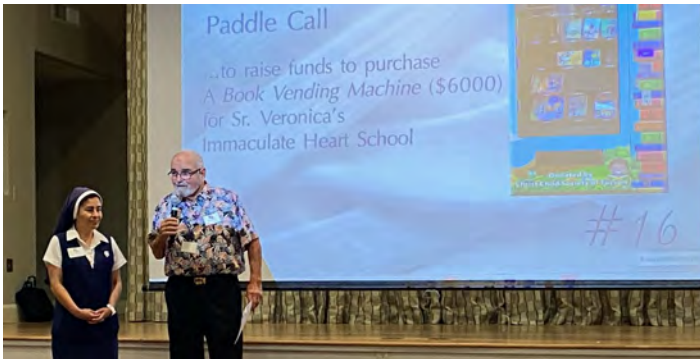
During the live auction, while many noted the absence of our longtime auctioneer Gary, Paul stepped in and handled the role capably, with his wife



Vivian was a guest speaker and showed a book she earned from the book vending machine!



## CCST's Red Wagon Event, cont.



**Sr. Veronica is introduced by MC Bernie Chuinard so she can talk about the importance of a book vending machine for Immaculate Heart School.**



**Nancy Thorpe and friend of CCST, Cindy Ann Olivas, get one of the raffles underway.**

providing helpful assistance throughout the event.

The Dine-Around-Town raffle was a welcome addition. CCST tried this again this year as it had been a staple at fundraisers a decade ago. Nancy's coordination was key, and Ann MacDonald & her daughter Maggie helped with ticket sales.

A highlight of the afternoon was the Book Vending Machine Paddle Call. The room rallied together to meet a \$6,000 goal—and in a generous gesture, Father Vu of Santa Catalina Parish matched the donation, funding a second machine. We're grateful for this unexpected but welcome support.

The first machine will be awarded to St. Ambrose Catholic School, with ribbon cutting August 22. The second machine made possible by Santa Catalina will be awarded to Immaculate Heart School, where Sister Veronica serves as principal. It is scheduled for delivery in July, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 8.

These machines serve a unique purpose. Teachers distribute tokens to students who meet academic or behavioral goals—such as improved grades or attendance—which can be redeemed for a new book the child keeps.



Thanks to your support of the fundraiser, we're able to provide assistance:

New mothers will receive essential supplies during uncertain times.

Teens in foster care will receive practical items that affirm their dignity and value.

Children in schools will have increased access to books and encouragement to thrive.

We are grateful for your compassion, generosity, and commitment to helping Tucson's most vulnerable.

With sincere thanks,  
*The Christ Child Society of Tucson*



**CCST member's Ann MacDonald's daughter, Maggie Piazza, strategizes with Lisa McCullough & Bernie before the guests arrive.**

Over 70% of low-income households have no books at home, making access to books all the more critical. These machines help address that gap in a structured and meaningful way.



## CCST's Red Wagon Event cont.

### The Highlands at Dove Mountain

The Highlands venue was outstanding again this year. We have tentatively booked March 1, 2026 for our next event. Some guests commented that the food was good and not your typical fundraiser food.

Negotiated by one of our two male members (Bernie Chuinard), our guests had wonderful items to choose from. Bernie's skills are unsurpassed!



Sr. Veronica from Immaculate Heart School and Judy Chuinard celebrate the day!



Pat Lunsford and Nancy Marie Jones discuss the day and catch up on CCST's activities,



Dianna Balsamo & Karen Znamenacek –Baker show off Dianna's salad bowl full of "greens!"



Pat Lunsford proudly shows her granddaughter her cork wreath she made for the raffle.



Ann MacDonald, Vita Balsino & Diana Balsamo take a "breather" during setup.



Pat Lunsford and Liz McCandlish always do a wonderful job with seating arrangements.



## CCST's Red Wagon Event continued

### Heads or Tails; The Bead Toss Game

This year's fundraiser introduced a new activity: the Heads or Tails game. Guests purchased beads to participate for a chance to win a prize package valued at over \$230. Special thanks to Karen Znamenacek-Baker, whose willingness to take a chance helped bring this fun addition to life. The game was lighthearted, engaging, and got plenty of laughs—clearly a crowd favorite. It's definitely a keeper for future events!



Ida Androwich and Fr. Huy Vu participate!

## Play Heads & Tails!



### How it works:

The whole room plays just one game  
Buy 3 strings of beads to play \$20 total-(cheap!)  
When play begins, all players stand at their table  
The MC will instruct players to choose 'Heads' or 'Tails'  
To choose place your hands on your Head or or  
on your tail (don't make us draw a picture!).  
MC will toss a coin and announce how it fell.  
If you're wrong, remove one set of beads.  
Tosses continue until only one person is wearing beads.

Prize package: 2 Gaslight Music Hall Tickets 2 Gaslight Theatre Tickets \$100 in Cold Beer & Cheeseburger gift cards	Worth \$230
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Karen gives directions for the game, Chris Auclair tosses the coin.



Karen gives the Head-n-Tails winner, Ida Androwich, the prize.

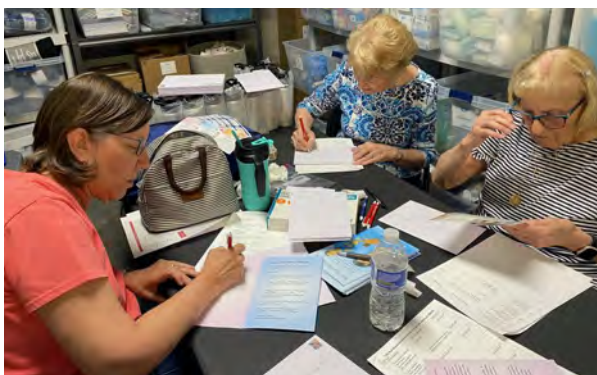


## Finishing all the last details of the Red Wagon Event—Thank you notes!

The members of the Christ Child worked diligently to send thank you notes to our 60 generous donors.



Dianna Balsamo gets the cards ready.



Marcia Wells, Fran Vicino and Vita Balsino hard at work!

# This Year's Sponsors

## Please support our generous sponsors

April 27, 2025

Albertson's  
Alfonso's Gourmet Oils  
Align It! Chiropractic and Nutrition  
Anthony's Cigar Emporium  
AZ Winery Tours  
Barnfire Mesquite Grill  
Cayton's Kitchen @ Ritz Carlton  
CDO Barbershop  
Cold Beer & Cheeseburgers  
Creative Giving – SaddleBrooke Ranch  
Cute Nails  
Dominick's Restaurant – Real Italian  
Dove Mountain Golf at Ritz Carlton  
El Conquistador Resort  
Embassy Suites- Paloma Village  
Gaslight Music Hall  
Gaslight Theatre  
Home Depot  
Homewood Suites, St. Philip's Plaza  
HoneyBaked Ham  
Jersey Mikes' Subs  
LaHacienda Restaurant  
Lowe's Ventana Canyon Resort  
Marriott Starr Pass  
Mescal Movie Tours  
Mister Car Wash  
MountainView The Preserve GC  
Northcutt Construction & Remodeling  
Old Tombstone Theme Park  
PF Chang's Restaurant

Ritz Carlton Dove Mountain Resort  
SaddleBrooke Golf Club  
SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club  
Safeway  
Sam's Club  
Sandy Northcutt Team - Long Realty  
Scordato's Pizzeria  
Sonoran Hot Dogs El Sinaloense  
Sprouts  
The Spa @ Ritz Carlton @ Dove Mtn.  
The Ritz-Carlton Hotel  
The Gallery Golf Club @ Dove Mtn.  
The Highland Golf Course @ Dove Mt.  
The Manning Group – Tierra Antigua Realty  
The Views Golf Course  
Trinity Bookstore  
True Ranch Hospitality  
Truly Nolen Pest Control  
Tucson Appliance  
Uptown Burger  
Village Bakehouse  
Vivace Restaurant  
Walmart  
Westward Look Resort  
White Stallion Ranch  
Wild Garlic Grill  
Wild West Tours  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
Zinburger Restaurant



## CCST's Red Wagon Event—The Angels of Creative Giving Shine Again

This past quarter, Creative Giving truly outdid themselves. They generously donated a beautiful quilt, which was featured in the live auction at our Red Wagon Event and helped bring in a meaningful contribution. In addition, they contributed an

original watercolor painting, which was warmly received in the silent auction and now hangs proudly in the home of one of our members. We are grateful for their continued creativity and generosity.



Sharon Morey's original watercolor was a nice addition to our silent auction.



Jolene Ormonde of SaddleBrooke Ranch Creative Giving proudly displays her quilt.



Four Members of Creative Giving attended the event.



# Workshop at Creative Giving May, 2025

Helping Others in Need:  
Creative Giving of SaddleBrooke Ranch  
**Linda Shannon-Hills & Dian Gowen (Co-Leaders)**

Creative Giving SaddleBrooke Ranch (CG-SBR) has been a significant contributor to CCST. Every month they supply us with bibs, burp-cloths, blankets (sometimes all three items are matching which really make the Layette Ladies happy). They also are very good at making baby toys and we



**CCST Member Mary Barrios hard at work!**

continue to be blessed by their generosity and talent. Each month we see a new toy, whether it be a hedgehog or a knitted ball with crinkle paper. All these items are so beautifully made and the mothers of the newborns that receive them are thrilled to own them.

So in addition to the Layette and Foster Teen items that they provide us each month, they are a great example of their name. They are certainly creative and they are certainly giving!

So many people in the world are in need foster care babies, young children, and teens, as well as older adults. Over the past two years, CG-SBR has made more than 2,000 items for various charities in the

area. It is amazing that they are so productive. They have 37 active members. Almost half of their donations come to CCST. So far this year they have made items valuing over \$8,500.00.

In addition to helping CCST with layette items and drawstring bags for foster teens, CG-SBR also helps people in need in the SaddleBrooke Ranch community who may be having a knee or hip replacement, a sports injury, or pain doing regular household chores.

They provide over 16 hand made items (rehab pillow, walker bag, neck scarf with pockets, etc.) to their neighbors to help relieve some pain, provide convenience when recovering from surgeries, or make every day living a bit easier.

[Helping Others in Need: Creative Giving of SaddleBrooke Ranch – SaddleBrooke Ranch Roundup](#)

CG-SBR has a monthly workshop for all members. They invited CCST and we attended May's workshop where they put us to work. Dian Gowen is quite organized and had areas for stuffing toys for cutting fabric to make toys, to sewing flannel blankets.



**Fran Vicino helps a Creative Giving Member stuff toys.**

## Layette Support from Walking With Moms in Need

I'm incredibly proud to share that our Layette Program is flourishing, thanks to the hard work of our dedicated committee, the generous leadership of Fr. Huy Vu, Pastor of Santa Catalina, and the continued support from the SaddleBrooke community of seamstresses, who lovingly provide handmade items such as blankets, bibs, balls, and more. A heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in making this ministry thrive.

The past three months have been especially fruitful. We received a generous donation from St. Augustine High School's Lenten collection, and with the invaluable assistance of Dr. Ana, we are expanding our ability to serve even more mothers and families in need.

We are also working to deepen our involvement with the Walking with Moms in Need program—a national initiative that encourages parishes to accompany and support pregnant and parenting women in practical and compassionate ways. Looking ahead, we are hopeful for continued growth and new opportunities to serve.

As we approach the end of our fiscal year in June, the Layette Committee is on track to distribute 600 layettes—a testament to the commitment and generosity of all who support this program.

### What is Walking with Moms in Need?

Walking with Moms in Need is a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops initiative encouraging every parish to become a beacon of mercy for pregnant and parenting women. As Pope Francis reminds us, our parishes must be “islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference.”

This initiative invites Catholic communities to “walk in the shoes” of mothers in need by:

- Accompanying them with friendship and care
- Connecting them to local resources and support services
- Conducting a parish-based inventory to identify gaps in assistance



Diapers were generously donated and are essential because we give out over 14, 000 each year.

- Creating a thoughtful parish response tailored to those needs

“We are excited to contribute to this important effort and hope to strengthen our partnership in the months to come.” —*Dianna Balsamo*



The donations were plentiful thanks to the coordination of this WWMN event by Angela Schneider and Diana Davenport.



Here are the attendees of the Shower held for Walking With Moms in Need and CCST held on April 26, 2025.



## Catholic Daughters of the Americas — Partners in Service

The Catholic Daughters, led by Cici Carbajal and operating out of St. Christopher Catholic Church in Marana, have been a tremendous blessing to our ministry. We are deeply grateful for their generosity, kindness, and willingness to serve. Their support has made a meaningful impact, and we truly look forward to continuing this partnership in the future.



### Who Are the Catholic Daughters of the Americas?

St. Christopher - Marana, AZ

Founded in 1903, the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) is one of the oldest and largest organizations of Catholic women in the Western Hemisphere. The organization currently includes over 55,000 members across 1,150 local courts in 45 U.S. states, as well as Puerto Rico, Mexico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

The Catholic Daughters offer a vibrant blend of local spirituality, fellowship, and service, supported by a strong national structure. Members support a wide range of charitable efforts, administer scholarship programs, and aim to be “helping hands where there is pain, poverty, sorrow, or sickness.” They are united by their motto: “Unity and Charity.”

Rooted in faith and guided by love, the Catholic Daughters actively promote justice, equality, human dignity, and the protection of human rights—living witnesses to the Gospel in action.



**Cici Carbajal, Georgia Crissy and Dianna Balsamo unpack all the donations from the Catholic Daughters.**



**Alyssa Tesar, Mary Barrios, and Georgia Chrissy assemble Wing's foster teen dignity bags.**



Our Lady of the Desert recently hosted a beautiful *Shower of Love* for our Christ Child Society of Tucson (CCST) ministry, generously providing many lovely items for our layette program. In turn, CCST held its own *Shower of Love* on May 17th at the home of Diann Balsamo, in support of **New Life Pregnancy Center**, a ministry of Arizona Baptist Children's Services. The event was a tremendous success!

We are grateful to Dianna for her warm hospitality and to our members for their generous gifts. Guests had the pleasure of meeting **Taiya Duenas**, the Executive Director of New Life Pregnancy Centers, who graciously shared her insights into their impactful work. As a new mother herself to a 9-month-old boy, Taiya brings both passion and personal experience to her leadership.

A few facts about New Life Pregnancy Center:

- Founded in the 1960s in a church setting
- Now operating **7 locations in Southern Arizona**
- Has distributed **over 3 million diapers** since 2011
- Celebrates **400 commitments for Christ**
- Serves children from **newborn to 16 years old**
- Operates a *Baby Boutique* where moms earn points to "shop" for larger items
- Staffed by **100 employees statewide**
- Currently praying for a certified **ultrasound technician**

We continue to distribute layettes to more families in need. Thank you to all who donate and to the faithful volunteers who serve on this committee. Your generosity makes a lasting difference.

Taiya Duenas and Marcia Wells pack the car with all the shower items. Taiya had to come back for a second trip to bring all of the items donated to the women at New Life Pregnancy Center.

1 - Taiya & Nancy    2- Dianna & Taiya  
3 - Angela & Taiya    4 - Taiya & Marcia

## CCST "Shower of Love" a Heartfelt





# CCST Wings Foster Teens Helps Cath. Comm. Svs. Kinship Families

On May 2, we helped Catholic Community Services with their Kinship Conference that was held at St. Andrews in Sierra Vista. This conference was for foster children who are a part of kinship families. Kinship children are being raised by an aunt or grandmother. CCST supplies a bag of goodies for 100 families who are invited to participate. The bag included a blanket, games, book, water bottle and a journal. It was a fun and informative day for all.



Lillian Downing, M.C., Program Manager, Child Welfare Programs, Children & Family Services picks up the 100 bags to drive them to Sierra Vista.



A kinship family from Sierra Vista receives welcome bags from CCST.



George Rushing, Exec. Dir. Pio Decimo, discussed other partnering opportunities with CCST member, Ann MacDonald.



Contents of the welcome bags. 4Imprint gave CCST a \$500 donation with which we purchased the bags.



## Christ Child Society: Bringing Comfort and Connection

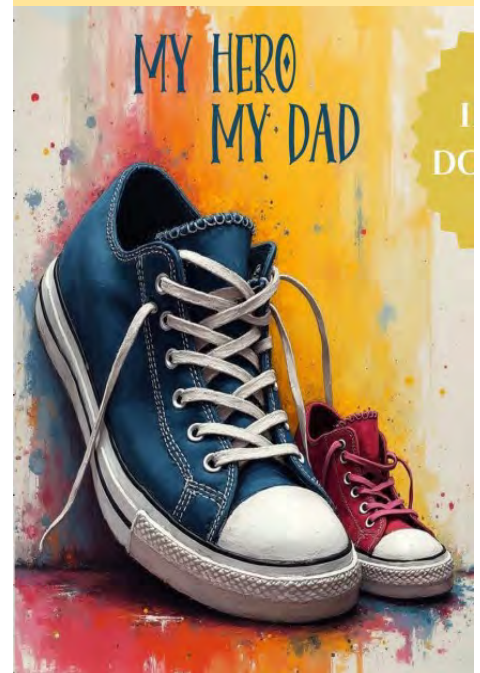
On June 13, we will once again support **Get on the Bus AZ**, a heartwarming program that helps children visit their incarcerated fathers. This year, 24 children from 11 families—twice as many as last year—will travel from Phoenix and Tucson to spend a special afternoon with their dads. They'll share pizza, exchange Father's Day cards, and enjoy precious, quality time together. For several of these children, it will be their very first in-person visit with their father.

Members of the community help at the Cathedral and some are even going into the prison to be part of this beautiful act of love and support.

Pictures will be available in the next newsletter!

Thanks to your continued generosity and prayers, we are able to bring compassion, hope, and dignity to vulnerable children and families throughout Southern Arizona. - *Deb Auclair*

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY



Friend of CCST, Georgia Crissy, helps assemble Wings dignity bags.



## Literacy and the Oro Valley Library Connection

Fact: Over 70% of low-income households have no books in the home.

Promoting literacy is a core mission of the Christ Child Society of Tucson (CCST), and thanks to a generous connection, we're expanding our impact. Georgia Crissy, a friend of CCST and a member of the Friends of the Oro Valley Library, arranged for us to "shop" the library's book sale after it ended—at no cost!

As a result, we were able to collect a wonderful selection of books for babies and teens, helping us continue our mission of nurturing young minds and encouraging a lifelong love of reading. These books will be included in our layettes and care packages for families in need.

The Oro Valley Library shared that they see this as the beginning of a great partnership—and so do we!



## CCST Retreat at Our Lady of the Desert, March 10, 2025



Judy and Bernie Chuinard are ready for Fr. Paul's retreat.

Our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Paul Coury, C.Ss.R., led a deeply meaningful spiritual retreat centered on the themes of gratefulness and purposefulness. His guidance invited us to reflect on the many blessings in our lives and how we can live with greater intention in service to others.

Throughout the day, we shared personal stories, insights, and reflections, which helped us grow closer as a community. Even though some of us have known each other for many years, the retreat gave us the opportunity to connect on a deeper, more spiritual level.

It was a special time of renewal, fellowship, and encouragement that reminded us of our shared mission and the joy of walking this journey together.



Patsy Klein, M.Ed., Coordinator, St Jagan Ministry with Elders, Catholic Community Services of So. AZ, is in deep thought sitting next to Vita Balsino and Dianna Balsamo.



Liz, Pat, Vita and Dianna are set up for the retreat morning.



CCST Members L to R: Vita Balsino, Dianna Balsamo, Eileen Geraghty, Michele Way, Karen Znamenacek-Baker, Ann MacDonald, Nancy Thorpe, Judy Chuinard, Bernie Chuinard, & Fr. Paul (Patsy Kline, Liz McCandlish, Pat Lunsford, & Deb Auclair not pictured)



## In Memory

### Gail Rubino, CCST Member

Former member of CCST, Gail Rubino, went to be with the Lord on May 5, 2025. There will be service for both Gail and Larry, her husband, who preceded her in death. It will be held on July 12th at 10:00 AM at Alive Church on LaCholla.

CCST Board Member, Liz McCandlish, recalls, "The first time I met Gail it was at Bunco. She found out that I was going to catch some shows and we became instant friends. She had just lost her pixie bob cat of seven years. She and I went to many cat shows together. That's where I bought my ocicat, the love of my life! Gail was a precious friend. She loved the Lord."

Gail was a great member and dear friend.



### Marilyn Rose Mallberg, Friend of CCST

Marilyn Rose Mallberg, 81, of Marana, Arizona entered eternal life on Saturday, February 22nd. Born on 1943 in Minnesota, she lived in Marana, AZ. When she was sitting, she was usually knitting. She shared her many knitting projects with people she loved and people in need, making baby hats, blankets, scarves, and prayer shawls. Marilyn was a devout Catholic who gave much of her time and talents to the church. Angela Schneider introduced her to CCST at an ACTS retreat. Marilyn became a good friend of and donor to CCST. Her presence will be sorely missed by all who knew her. In lieu of flowers, her family requested donations in her memory to Christ Child Society of Tucson or your local [DAV](#) ([Disabled American Veterans](#)).



### CCST Key Dates:

2025 CCST May and beyond events		as of:	6/7/2025
05/02/25	Fostering Hope Conference -St. Andrews, Sierra Vista. CCST provided 100 filled drawstring bags		
05/12/25	CCST meeting - officer voting		
05/17/25	Shower of Love at Dianna's		
06/09/25	CCST meeting - officer installation - meeting begins at 11:30 AM		
06/13/25	Get-on-the-Bus AZ - children visit incarcerated Dads CCST providing 24 back packs with items		
07/14/25	CCST Board Meeting -Budget for 7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026		
08/08/25	Immaculate Heart School Book Machine Ribbon Cutting 10:30 AM		
08/11/25	CCST Board Meeting - Program templates (Christmas/ Layette/ Literacy/ Wings)		
08/22/25	St. Ambrose Book Machine Ribbon Cutting		
9/13-14/25	Pulpit Pitch @ SCCC for Layette of Love 4 PM Mass - covered by Marcia; 7 AM Mass by Deb		
9/20-21/25	Santa Catalina Layette of Love		



## In Closing ...

**“I want to live the rest of my life with no regrets...”**

*...And I'm sure gonna to try to figure out how.”*

Just as she's turning 60, a life-altering event brings Lisa face to face with this startling realization.

The mother of three beautiful children, grandmother to a sweet newborn grandson, a woman with close friends and plenty of activities to keep her busy, Lisa thought she was satisfied with her ordinary life. But now she just can't shake the feeling that something is missing.

Determined to die with no regrets, Lisa launches into a powerful journey to make the most of the fourth and final quarter of her life. Along the way, she enlists the help of Anthony, the happiest 97-year-old she's ever met, encounters a nun who sparks a soul-stirring experience, and discovers in herself greater strength than she knew she possessed.

A captivating and groundbreaking fable, *No Regrets* is the only book out there that provides a roadmap for how to make the most of the final season of life. If you, like Lisa, are searching for greater meaning in your life, then join authors Allen Hunt and Matthew Kelly as they reveal five incredible secrets to living intentionally and making the most of your own fourth quarter.

Today I learned about a term called a “glimmer.” Which is the opposite of a trigger. Glimmers are those moments in your day that make you feel joy, happiness, peace, or gratitude. Once you train your brain to be on the lookout for glimmers, these tiny moments will appear more and more.

No matter what quarter of life you find yourself in, you will be inspired, moved, and encouraged to make the most of the one life you've been given.



## The 5 Keys to Living and Dying with No Regrets

### Say Yes to God

- God invites you onto a wonderful journey. When you say yes to God's invitation, you know where you're going.

### Focus on a fourth quarter virtue.

- Pursue one fourth-quarter virtue, God has specifically placed in you. Then watch it, create blossoms in all areas of your life.

### Give. It. Away.

- The more you give yourself away, the happier you'll be.

### Forgive. Often.

- Bitter and resentful is no way to live. And it's definitely no way to die.

### Be open.

- Your fourth-quarter can be more of a birthing than a dying. Be open to what can be.

Excerpts from

***No Regrets*** by Allen Hunt & Mathew Kelly