

Daughters of the King are a prayerful presence in the diocese

▶ *About 50 members belong to the eight parish DOK chapters across Southwestern Virginia*

By Christie Wills

THE ORDER OF the Daughters of the King is a national Episcopal organization dedicated to service, prayer and evangelism.

Founded in 1885, the order has grown to include about 18,000 members who pledge themselves to strengthening the spiritual life of their parishes and dioceses.

In the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, over 50 women belong to eight DOK chapters around the diocese.

Women in these chapters work together on service projects in their communities and for the impoverished around the world. Some of the parish projects include:

- Collecting supplies for the new domestic violence shelter in Altavista
- Acting as lay Eucharistic ministers and calling on shut-ins
- Knitting shawls and blankets for the ill
- Sewing dresses for orphans in Rwanda
- Collecting food and medicine for local food pantries and overseas missions

Before beginning any service project, however, daughters commit themselves to discernment through prayer. For example, diocesan chapter president Georgia Stromer of St. Paul's, Lynchburg, prays daily for her parish's prayer chain, leaders and ministries of the diocese and our companion dioceses in Sudan, and for unity, peace and the spread of Christ's word. They also meet for study—for example, several chapters have been discussing "Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World," by Joanna Weaver.



Photo courtesy Rebecca Mays

SEWING SEEDS OF LOVE

Daughters of the King from Bedford sewed dresses for orphaned girls in Rwanda. From left, Helen Ann Spessard, Louise Pipkin, Brenda Arbogast and Blu Ayers

Daughters in the diocese meet twice each year in assemblies, often held at Evans House diocesan offices. Last spring, their speaker was DOK member Nancy Strachan of St. John's, Bedford, who spoke about her experiences with children in several orphanages in Rwanda. At their Nov. 1 meeting this fall, the daughters heard about the ministries of Jackson-Feild Homes, a home for girls and young mothers in the Diocese of Southern Virginia. They plan to adopt Jackson-Feild as their collective outreach project for the next year.

Several chapters in the diocese also support Junior Daughters of the King chapters in their parishes for young women between the ages of 7-20. Junior daughters are also called to serve their parishes and communities. Some of their recently completed projects include care packages for military personnel and projects that support the Millennium Development Goals. //

To find out more about Daughters of the King, contact diocesan president Georgia Stromer at [gstomer@msn.com](mailto:gstromer@msn.com) or 434-851-1768.

DOK Chapters in Southwestern Virginia

- Ascension, Amherst – Tabitha Chapter
- St. John's, Bedford – Mary and Martha Chapter
- Christ Church, Blacksburg – St. Elizabeth Chapter
- Emmanuel, Covington – Ruth Chapter
- St. Thomas, Christiansburg – Ann-Frances Chapter
- St. Stephen's, Forest – Holy Cross Chapter
- St. Paul's, Lynchburg – Holy Spirit Chapter
- St. James, Roanoke – The Shepherdesses of St. James

