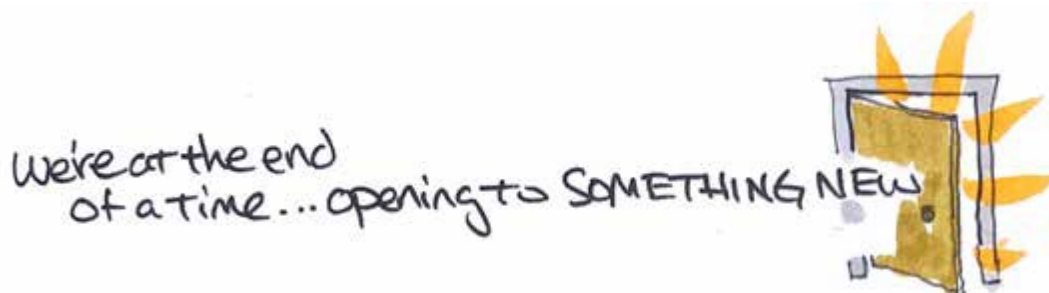


**LCWR Discerning Our Emerging Future**  
**Opening Prayer for Discernment Session with Religious Institutes**



Thresholds are the space between, when we move from one time to another, as in the threshold of dawn to day or of dusk to dark; one space to another, as in times of inner or outer journeying or pilgrimage; and one awareness to another, as in times when our old structures start to fall away and we begin to build something new. The Celts describe thresholds as “thin times or places” where heaven and earth are closer together and the veil between worlds is thin.

Thresholds are liminal times when the past season has come to a close but there is a profound unknowing of what will come next.

In the monastic tradition, *statio* is the practice of stopping one thing before beginning another. It is the acknowledgment that in the space of transitions and threshold is a sacred dimension, a holy pause full of possibility. This place between is a place of stillness, where we let go of what came before and prepare ourselves to enter fully into what comes next.

Christine Valters Paintner, *the soul's slow ripening*

For the Time of Necessary Decisions

--John O'Donohue, *To Bless the Space Between Us*

The mind of time is hard to read.  
We can never predict what it will bring,  
Not even from all that is already gone  
Can we say what form it finally takes;  
For time gathers its moments secretly.  
Often we only know it's time to change  
When a force has built inside the heart  
That leaves us uneasy as we are.

Perhaps the work we do has lost its soul  
Or the love where we once belonged  
Calls nothing alive in us anymore.

We drift through this gray, increasing nowhere  
Until we stand before a threshold we know  
We have to cross to come alive once more.

May we have the courage to take the step  
Into the unknown that beckons us;  
Trust that a richer life awaits us there,  
That we will lose nothing  
But what has already died;  
Feel the deeper knowing in us sure  
Of all that is about to be born beyond  
The pale frames where we stayed confined,  
Not realizing how such vacant endurance  
Was bleaching our soul's desire.



We bless the work we are doing  
Trusting the guiding hand of Spirit  
And the enduring strength of our common call  
To witness to and extend the loving work of God.

Discerning Our Emerging Future