

October 2009

Assembly Explores Critical Issues Against Backdrop of Vatican Studies

Meeting in assembly in New Orleans from August 11 to 14, approximately 800 LCWR members and associates engaged speakers and one another on some of the most critical issues facing Catholic orders, the Catholic church, and the people they serve.

Visits to New Orleans Ministry Sites

Aware of the devastation of New Orleans, the need for restoration of the coastal wetlands of Louisiana, and climate change, the members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) met under the theme "Women of Spirit: Creating in Chaos." The assembly began with 250 members touring the work sites and housing of Catholic sisters that had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. LCWR had co-sponsored a recovery project that raised more than \$7 million which enabled sisters to remain in New Orleans and restore their works in education, healthcare, and social services. Among the sites visited were: the Sisters of St. Joseph



Cokie Roberts (center) visits with assembly participants prior to delivering the keynote address



People Program, the Marianites Outreach Program, the Mt. Carmel Cub Corner, and the St. Joseph Rebuild Center.

Public Prayer Witness

Several hundred leaders participated in an outdoor public prayer service, created and led by members of Region 5, on the banks of the Mississippi River where they learned more about the ruinous effects of coastal wetland erosion. The assembly also unanimously affirmed a resolution to take measurable steps to reduce their orders' carbon footprints.

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From the LCWR Presidency Bound in a Beloved Solidarity

by Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA — LCWR President

On August 15 we traveled from the New Orleans LCWR Assembly back to our communities with hearts uplifted by the gracious Spirit of God that consistently prompts us to creative service. We were inspired by the leadership efforts to heal our beleaguered brothers and sisters devastated by Katrina. We heard the stories of our Sisters leading the recovery activities of the city, serving the church with invincible patience at the Vatican, and recreating the stories of our founding Women of Spirit. In deep *conversatio*, we pondered the current Vatican inquiries into our lives. We departed with less anxious bewilderment, perhaps, and bound in a beloved solidarity that gives momentum for every step of our future.



these rules might also serve us well. Rule 1: Refuse to leave behind those who need a special voice. There is a place for all to contribute. Rule 2: Keep driving forward. No matter how strong the forces against us are, never quit believing in the mission. Rule 3: Hold a giving and loving heart. We will endure because we have loved. Rule 4: Live with purpose and joy. Carry on because there is no other choice that our Gospel belief system offers. Rule 5: Be guided by the light, love, and peace of those who have given us these gifts.

Walter Brueggemann describes peace as God's persistent vision that all of creation be as one, each

*This is our Gospel rule of life —
the building up of authentic human
community – which our role
as ecclesial women requires us to
proclaim, witness, and celebrate.*

Benedict XVI in his message for World Mission Day (October 18) said that proclamation of the Gospel must be for us . . . a primary and unavoidable duty. Our

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proclamation will provide light when every occasion of darkness leads us to a new reading of the signs of our times through the lens of the Gospel. Our spiritual traditions teach us to let metanoia, rather than paranoia, fill our hearts. Our Gospel witness will be effective if we live where our hearts are – embracing Christ. If we become pale carbon copies of hostile critics, we will lose our salt and shed our distinct identity as Gospel women.

Recently we honored the very human and practical wisdom as remembered in Ted Kennedy's life. His son spoke of some tireless and mundane rules of life that sustained his father's vision. As we proclaim the Gospel

in community with the other, 'living in harmony and security toward the joy and well-being of every other creature'1. . . It cannot be nurtured privately without affecting how we engage in public life.2

Threats to peace in our church and world are spiritual problems that require spiritual remedies. Our search for a peace-giving culture leads us out of the darkness of our hearts and into the way of setting our hearts free. "We have the opportunity – in our homes and houses of worship – to create cultures of peace, encourage creative conflict resolution, and engage in Christ-like reconciliation. This is our task, the work of spiritual formation and shalom"3.

Benedict XVI noted in his 2009 World Day of Peace message that "we share in a single divine plan: we are

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Assembly Explores Critical Issues

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Keynoter Cokie Roberts

ABC News and NPR analyst Cokie Roberts, a New Orleans native educated by Catholic sisters, addressed the assembly. She offered a historical perspective on the resiliency and creative contributions of Catholic sisters to the nation since they landed in the city in 1727. Roberts referenced the apostolic visitation saying that while she was not qualified to speak on the quality of life of women religious, she could “speak with some authority about the quality of the lives changed by religious women in this country — the dignity with which you treat the poor; the services you provide for the frightened pregnant girl so that she has the courage to choose life; the care with which you comfort the elderly and sick; the education you insist on for children who are left behind by their school systems. I have seen the hospitals you run with efficiency and best economic practices as well as great concern for the patients — both medical and spiritual. I spend a good deal of time in the schools of the Sacred Heart order where I delight in the girls growing into young women who are dedicated to the service of the people of God, which they understand to be their shared humanity. I know that the quality of the lives of thousands of people in this country are improved everyday by the women in this room, and I am eternally grateful to you for what you do all day every day for all of us. And over the centuries since the Ursulines first arrived in this great city in 1727, millions of lives have been affected by Catholic religious women working in every imaginable field.”



Members visit Mt. Carmel Cub Corner in New Orleans

Roberts concluded by noting, “The official numbers of women religious in this country might have fallen — but it’s safe to say that the number of religious women who are acting on their faith to serve society is higher than ever before in human history. Those of us who feel that calling feel it because of you, you awe-inspiring and holy women — you women of spirit have taught us well and your teaching will go on, constantly creating a better world for the People of God — corralling the chaos to create a quality of life for others that you can be proud of.”

Apostolic Visitation and Doctrinal Assessment

The assembly body also discussed the apostolic visitation as well as the separate inquiry being conducted by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on the position of LCWR in matters pertaining to Catholic church doctrine. Following analysis of the experience of these studies thus far, the leaders noted that while their orders have always been fully accountable to the church and plan to collaborate with the Vatican in these studies, they request that those conducting the inquiries alter some of the methods being employed. Among the expressed concerns are a lack of full disclosure about the motivation and funding sources for the studies. The leaders also object to the fact that their orders will not be permitted to see the investigative reports about them that are being submitted directly to the Vatican.

Throughout the assembly, the leaders emphasized that their orders have remained faithful to the reform and



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renewal of their communities called for by the Second Vatican Council that urged women and men religious to adapt their lives, prayer, and work so they may most effectively fulfill their mission. They reclaimed their commitment to what they believe is the unique and needed role of religious life which includes serving at and speaking from the margins of the Catholic church.

NRVC-CARA Vocation Study

The leaders noted that this study of their lives has drawn national and international attention and provided them the opportunity to explain the substance and focus of religious life, not only to those conducting the probes, but also to the public. In a presentation on a recently conducted national study on vocations to religious life, Paul Bednarczyk, CSC and Mary Bendyna, RSM emphasized the need to increase public understanding of religious life. Bednarczyk, executive director of the National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC), and Bendyna, executive director of the Center for Applied Research for the Apostolate (CARA), addressed the assembly on the findings of the national study their two organizations conducted over a period of two years on vocations to religious life.

NRVC is now preparing materials for leaders to use



to work with the study findings. More information on those materials will be forthcoming from NRVC.

Presidential Address

Outgoing LCWR president J Lora Dambroski, OSF called the leaders to move forward together as she spoke of some of the issues addressed during the assembly. She said, "Reflecting these days on the present challenges in our way of life within this church and world, there was no desire to 'hash' and 'rehash' discussions, news articles, interviews, blogs, twitters, or gossip, but to ask in one another's presence as members of LCWR how we are sister to each other in this experi-



ence, what is our truth, and how do we act as leaders with integrity through this our time of chaos.

"We claim and often work from the premise that we as women have other ways of living in and working through conflict and chaos... more relational, respectful, transparent, dialogic, less judgmental and more reflective. The respectful stance is that while holding and relating out of our own truth we are open to the truth of the other. While seeing the specks and beams in the eyes of our critics, we also can see the specks and beams in our own eyes that may blur our vision (as well as theirs). At the same time this does not mean debasing our own expressions of faithfulness."

Election of Offices

President-elect Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA assumed the office of LCWR president for 2009-2010 after the members voted in Mary Hughes, prioress of the Dominican

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Sisters of Amityville, New York, as the new conference president-elect; and reelected Ellen Dauwer, a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of Convent Station, New Jersey, as conference secretary. Elizabeth Ney of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet assumed the office of treasurer.

Five-Year Conference Plan

At the assembly the members unanimously approved a five-year plan for future conference studies and planning which includes the creation of two committees.

The Contemporary Religious Life Committee will assist the conference to actively read the signs of the times from a gospel perspective, assume an anticipatory role in understanding the implications for religious life, and bring the emerging questions, issues, and trends to the attention of the members. These questions will inform the planning of the programs, services, and resources offered to LCWR members to assist them in their ministry of leadership.

The focus affirmed by the assembly for particular attention by LCWR during the year 2010 is the ecclesial role of women religious.

The LCWR Strategic Operational Plan Committee will develop a plan that maximizes the conference's life and effectiveness in light of its demographic and financial realities. This plan would include studies of possible reconfigurations of the governance structures of LCWR, including the presidency, national board, committees, and regions, as well as of the LCWR national office. The committee will also examine ways of enhancing use of the services offered by other entities serving religious life.

CARA Study on Sexual Abuse Policies

The conference heard findings from a study commissioned by LCWR and conducted by CARA on the policies and practices in place in orders of Catholic sisters for responding to allegations of sexual abuse and for



Carmen Schnyder, CPPS assists in the transfer of leadership ritual for the LCWR officers

prevention of abuse. This study was a follow-up to an assessment conducted in 2005. The findings showed the vast majority of orders have appropriate policies in place.

Outstanding Leadership Award

The assembly closed with the conferring of LCWR's highest honor, its Outstanding Leadership Award, on Sharon Holland, IHM, who until June 2009 was one of the highest-ranking women at the Vatican, and on Helen Maher Garvey, BVM, project coordinator of LCWR's traveling museum exhibit *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*.

Many materials from the assembly are available on the LCWR website at www.lcwr.org/lcwrannualassembly/2009Aassembly.htm. Included there are photos from the assembly; the addresses of Cokie Roberts, J Lora Dambroski, Paul Bednarczyk and Mary Bendyna, Sharon Holland, and Helen Maher Garvey; the LCWR Call for 2010-2015; the LCWR resolution on the reduction of carbon footprints; and information on ordering CDs and DVDs of the assembly presentations.

Cokie Roberts Donates Speaker's Stipend to SOAR

In lieu of accepting a stipend for her keynote address, Cokie Roberts requested that LCWR make a donation to Save Our Aging Religious (SOAR).

LCWR and US Women Religious in the News

Since early August LCWR and US women religious have been the focus of much media coverage. The following are some of those articles, essays, television news segments, and radio programs.

“US women religious leadership at crossroads”
National Catholic Reporter commentary by Ken Briggs
ncronline.org/news/women/us-women-religious-leadership-crossroads

“Vatican, US women religious tensions go back decades”
National Catholic Reporter article by Ken Briggs
ncronline.org/news/women/vatican-us-women-religious-tensions-go-back-decades

“Women religious study to include ‘soundness of doctrine’”
National Catholic Reporter article on apostolic visitation
ncronline.org/news/women/women-religious-study-include-soundness-doctrine

“What’s on the mind of many women religious”
National Catholic Reporter article
ncronline.org/news/women/what-minds-many-us-women-religious

“New Nuns and Priests Seen Opting for Tradition”
New York Times article on NRVC-CARA vocation study
www.nytimes.com/2009/08/11/us/11nun.html?_r=1&emc=tnt&tntemail1=y

“The Lives of Modern American Nuns”
 NPR – Talk of the Nation
 Includes interview with LCWR member Mary Pellegrino, CSJ
www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=111780954

“LCWR honors Sharon Holland, Helen Garvey”
National Catholic Reporter article
ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/lcwr-honors-sharon-holland-helen-garvey

“LCWR raises \$7 million to help New Orleans needy”
National Catholic Reporter – Blog of Tom Fox
ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/lcwr-raises-7-million-assist-new-orleans-needy

“Under fire, women religious leaders gather in New Orleans”
National Catholic Reporter article written during LCWR assembly
ncronline.org/news/women/under-fire-women-religious-leaders-gather-new-orleans

“800 Catholic Sisters Convene in New Orleans”
Times-Picayune coverage of LCWR assembly
www.nola.com/news/index.ssf/2009/08/1500_catholic_sisters_convene.html

“Do Nuns Have Bad Habits?”
ABC World News on Vatican Studies
<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=8341554>

“LCWR Asks for Vatican Changes in Visitation”
America Magazine — Blog of James Martin, SJ
www.americamagazine.org/blog/entry.cfm?blog_id=2&id=28244910-3048-741E-1916639938901479

“US women religious should be proud of their ministries, says speaker”
 Catholic News Service article following LCWR assembly
www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0903692.htm

“Catholic sisters under Vatican review want answers”
USA Today — Associated Press article following LCWR assembly
www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-08-18-catholic-sisters-vatican_N.htm

“American Nuns Under Vatican Microscope”
Religion Dispatches – essay by Mary Hunt
www.religiondispatches.org/archive/religionandtheology/1766/american_nuns_under_the_vatican_microscope

“US Nuns and the Vatican”
Religion & Ethics Newsweekly – TV interview with Tom Fox
www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/episodes/august-21-2009/us-nuns-and-the-vatican/3968/

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LCWR and US Women Religious in the News

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“Why they stay(ed)”

National Catholic Reporter – essay by Sandra Schneiders, IHM
ncronline.org/news/women/why-they-stayed

“LCWR says Vatican has not fully disclosed reasons for US visitation”

“Women religious praised for efforts to rebuild schools after Katrina”

Catholic News Service articles following LCWR assembly

www.catholicnews.com/data/briefs/cns/20090818.htm

“American Nuns Question Vatican Scrutiny”

NPR Morning Edition

Includes interviews with LCWR member and former LCWR president Nancy Schreck, OSF and former LCWR president Camille D’Arienzo, RSM

www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112080711

“Religious Women Question Vatican Probe”

Religion News Service article following LCWR assembly

ncronline.org/news/religious-women-question-vatican-probe

“US Nuns: Pawns or Queens?”

Washington Post

Column by Anthony Stevens-Arroyo

newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/catholicamerica/2009/08/will_us_nuns_checkmate_the_vatican.html

“Not your parents’ Sisters”

USA Today

blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2009/08/column-not-your-parents-sisters.html?loc=interstitialskip

“Sisters’ leadership prepares for investigation”

The Catholic Transcript

www.catholictranscript.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1042&Itemid=1

“Renegade Nuns”

Canadian Broadcast Corporation - The Current

An interview with three women, including Nancy Schreck, OSF

www.cbc.ca/thecurrent/2009/200909/20090911.html

“Discerning ministerial religious life today”

National Catholic Reporter – analysis by Sandra Schneiders, IHM

ncronline.org/news/discerning-ministerial-religious-life-today

Bound in a Beloved Solidarity

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called to form one family in which all . . . model their behavior according to the principles of fraternity and responsibility . . . what [is needed in order] to be oriented toward a goal of profound solidarity are men and women who live in a profoundly fraternal way [and who] accompany individuals, families, and communities on journeys of authentic human development. . .”⁴

This is our Gospel rule of life — the building up of authentic human community — which our role as ecclesial women requires us to proclaim, witness, and celebrate.

¹ Walter Brueggemann. *Living Toward a Vision*. Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1976, 15.

² Amanda Hendler-Voss. “The Search for a Peacemaking Culture” in *Reflections*. Yale Divinity School, (Spring 2009, Vol. 96, No. 1), 40.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Pope Benedict XVI. *Fighting Poverty to Build Peace*. Nos. 2, 8, 13, 14. January 1, 2009.

www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict/svi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

A retreat for LCWR members and
LCWR associates who are serving in
congregation leadership

January 17 - 22, 2010

Redemptorist Renewal Center at Picture Rocks

Tucson, Arizona
www.desertrenewal.org

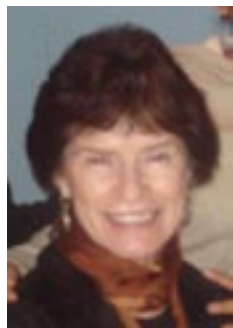


Join with other women religious leaders for a five-day retreat that will provide opportunities to reflect on the blessings and challenges of religious life leadership today. The days will include input, quiet contemplative space, a variety of ritual experiences, and some opportunity for individual and group spiritual direction for those who so choose.

Retreat Directors



Regina Bechtle, SC



María Elena
Martínez, OSF

Registration Form:

<http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/retreat.htm>

Participation will be limited to the first 25 members
to send in their form and check.

Women & Spirit Schedule

The Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future
Dallas, Texas — September 25 - December 2009

**Smithsonian-International Gallery
in the Dillon Ripley Center**
Washington, DC — January 15 - April 2010

**Statue of Liberty National Monument/Ellis Island
Immigration Museum**
New York City — September - December 2010

Mississippi River Museum
Dubuque, Iowa — February - April 2011

Other venues will be announced when confirmed.

Approximately 66,000 People Visit Exhibit in Cincinnati

According to the Cincinnati Museum Center, 65,916 persons visited the *Women & Spirit* exhibit during its May - August showing. LCWR thanks all who created a local segment honoring the women religious of Cincinnati and worked to promote the exhibit, particularly Barbara Hagedorn, SC; Patsy Homan, OSU; and Miriam Kaeser, OSF.

Women & Spirit in the News

"Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America"
St. Anthony Messenger – article by Carole Shinnick,
SSND

www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Aug2009/Feature2.asp

"Traveling Exhibit Showcases Catholic Sisters Meeting Needs"

Catholic Health Association's *Health Progress*
www.chausa.org/Pub/MainNav/News/HP/Archive/2009/09Sept-Oct/Articles/Features/hp0909i.htm

"Charity Sisters" — Catholic TV

An interview with Helen Maher Garvey, BVM
www.catholictv.com/shows/default.aspx?seriesID=72&videoID=640 (The section with Helen starts around 14:40.)

LCWR National Board Meets in New Orleans

The LCWR national board met both prior to and after the assembly to conduct conference business and discuss significant issues facing LCWR. Among the topics addressed were:

- A public statement from the LCWR presidents and national board on healthcare reform
- Preliminary discussion of the 2010 focus for LCWR: The Ecclesial Role of Women Religious
- The CDF doctrinal assessment of LCWR
- The CICLSAL apostolic visitation of US women religious
- The NRVC-CARA study on vocations
- The CARA study on sexual abuse policies
- The LCWR Call for 2010 – 2015 and the creation of new committees

As an outcome of the board meeting, LCWR posted on the members' information section of the LCWR website additional materials requested by members during the assembly to assist their preparation for the apostolic visitation.

Faith, Ecology and Economics (FEE) Promotes ENOUGH! Campaign

Looking toward the major UN climate change conference in Copenhagen in December, Faith, Ecology and Economics (FEE) undertook three preparatory actions. Members sent a letter to President Obama expressing the need for attention to the larger context in which discussions take place, i.e., that the current growth-led global economic model is not sustainable in a natural world with real limits. There is need for new thinking which puts Earth and human rights as the central starting points and moves away from the idolatry of economic growth at all costs.

Cards which capsize this message by declaring ENOUGH! are available for distribution.

FEE is also working on a statement which envisions a

new economic model that embodies social and ecological values bound by Earth's biophysical limits. The statement has been through several drafts and will soon be ready for distribution.

LCWR Leadership Issues Statement on Healthcare Reform

During the LCWR board meeting following the annual assembly in New Orleans, the presidency and executive director developed a brief public statement on healthcare reform based on the principles advanced by the USCCB and CHA (Catholic Health Association). Subsequently the statement, made in the name of the LCWR presidents and national board, was sent to the bishops, CHA, President Obama, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, and key members of congress, as well as to LCWR members and associates. The statement is posted on the LCWR website at www.lcwr.org/lcwrpressreleases/public-statements.htm.

Following the president's September 9, 2009 address on healthcare reform to a joint session of congress, USCCB officials issued a news release welcoming the address, particularly President Obama's statements regarding abortion and care for the poor. Given the hostility against healthcare reform evidenced at town hall meetings in August and following the president's address, the challenge to keep pressure on elected officials is urgent.

LCWR Think Tank 2010 Scheduled for Florida

LCWR Systemic Change Think Tank XII, open to both members and justice coordinators of member congregations, is planned for March 1-4, 2010 at Bethany Center, Lutz, Florida. The facilitator is Carol Zinn, SSJ who will use the framework of spiral dynamics to develop the theme, "The Evolution of Human Thought and Religious Life for the Life of the World." Bethany Center has 36 available rooms, and registrations are due by December 11, 2009. A registration form is available at www.lcwr.org/lcwrsocialjustice/think-tank.htm.

Catholic Members of NRCAT Visit Congressional Offices

Although healthcare reform is the front burner issue in DC, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), wants to keep issues related to torture on the minds of congress. Members of the Catholic Leadership Council of NRCAT, including LCWR, spent two days visiting the offices of Catholic senators, and a few representatives, urging needed legislation for preventing torture. In particular they called for inclusion of "The Golden Rule," i.e., a requirement that the secretary of defense, secretary of state, and attorney general would certify that every interrogation technique used by the United States would be considered lawful and morally acceptable if used against a US citizen by another country, and also, that the CIA and other government agencies report all detainees to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and allow the ICRC adequate access to them. Visits to members of the Armed Services Committee also included a request for support of the Holt Amendment which would require videotaping of interrogations of detainees.

JFI Convenes, Educates, and Advocates

The Justice for Immigrants (JFI) Campaign of the USCCB will hold another education and organizing convening October 7-9, 2009 in Philadelphia for Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. Information is on the JFI website, www.justiceforimmigrants.org. A one-day convening is planned for October 20 at St. Thomas University in Houston.

A parish packet will be available on the JFI website by early to mid-October. Under consideration is a short mailer to every parish, referring them to the website. Meantime, JFI members continue to visit congressional offices urging support for comprehensive immigration reform.

In collaboration with the Interfaith Coalition for Health Care Reform, JFI circulated a letter to congress urging that any healthcare reform legislation include legal immigrants "and other vulnerable immigrant popula-

tions." LCWR and a number of member congregations signed the letter. Also, JFI supported a prayer service at the Capitol on September 15 to pray for an end to hateful rhetoric and the politics of fear that scapegoats immigrant communities. Bishop John Wester, chairman of the Committee on Migration for the USCCB, participated in the prayer on the day when FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform), designated a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, traveled to DC for their annual lobby day and where an estimated 47 extremist radio talk show hosts broadcast live from DC.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat
Redemptorist Renewal Center
 Tucson, Arizona
 January 17 — 22, 2010

LCWR Systemic Change Think Tank
Bethany Center
 Lutz, Florida
 March 1 — 4, 2010

LCWR New Leader Workshop
The Retreat Center at St. John's
 Plymouth, Michigan
 March 11 — 14, 2010

LCWR Assembly
Dallas, Texas
 August 10 — 14, 2010

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat
San Pedro Spiritual Retreat Center
 Winter Park, FL
 January 16 — 23, 2011

LCWR New Leader Workshop
The Retreat Center at St. John's
 Plymouth, Michigan
 March 24 — 27, 2011

LCWR Assembly
Garden Grove, California
 August 9 — 13, 2011

Nominations Begin for LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award

During the fall regional meetings members of LCWR will be discussing and nominating at least three persons per region for the LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award. As members prepare for the regional meetings, they are asked to reflect on the following information and be prepared to propose potential recipients of the award.

Past recipients have been Mary Luke Tobin, SL; Theresa Kane, RSM; Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN; Catherine Pinkerton, CSJ; Joan Chittister, OSB; Sharon Holland, IHM; and Helen Maher Garvey, BVM.

The Mission of LCWR

The purpose of the conference shall be to promote a developing understanding and living of religious life by:

- Assisting its members personally and communally to carry out more collaboratively their service of leadership in order to accomplish further the mission of Christ in today's world.
- Fostering dialogue and collaboration among religious congregations within the church and in the larger society.
- Developing models for initiating and strengthening relationships with groups concerned with the needs of society, thereby maximizing the potential of the conference for effecting change.

The Award

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious has established the LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award to recognize and honor persons who have significantly contributed to the ministry of leadership and who reflect the LCWR mission.

Nomination

National members of the Leadership Conference for Women Religious may nominate a person for consideration for the LCWR Outstanding Leadership Award.

Criteria for the Award

The person must have significantly contributed to the ministry of leadership in a manner that reflects the mission of LCWR. The nominee(s) evidence:

- Commitment and collaboration in the ministry of leadership
- Faithfulness to gospel values and mission
- Witnessing to creative and innovative leadership in one or more areas
- Making significant contribution, as a leader on the national and/or international level, particularly to women religious congregations in the United States



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