

Update

A Publication of the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

December 2011

The New Leader Workshop

Presented by the
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

March 15-18, 2012

University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois

Space is limited

Registration forms are due by **January 6, 2012**

Forms are available at

<http://www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/NLWreg12.pdf>

The program features an outstanding faculty and presentations that are tailored to the particular challenges of religious life leadership today

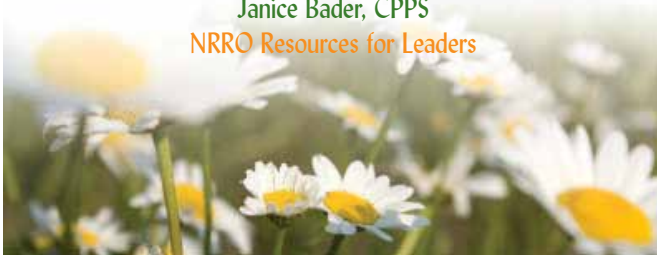
Nancy Schreck, OSF
Dimensions of Spiritual Leadership

Simone Campbell, SSS and Lynn Jarrell, OSU
Leaders and Canon and Civil Law

Lynn M. Levo, CSJ
Survival Guide for Leading in a Time of Change and Transition
Working Together in Teams

Judy Carey, RSM
Leadership and Collaboration

Janice Bader, CPPS
NRRO Resources for Leaders



LCWR's Women & Spirit DVD Makes a Great Christmas Present

LCWR members are asked to promote the *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America* DVD as possible Christmas gifts. Not only are leaders buying them for their benefactors, associates, boards of sponsored ministries, and coworkers, they are also encouraging their members to consider them for gifts for their own family members and friends. The DVD sells for \$19.95, with reduced rates available for bulk orders.

On the DVD is a 56-minute documentary, narrated by Cokie Roberts, that chronicles the story of women religious in this country from 1727 to the present. Also on the DVD are a film study guide and a digital catalog that contains images of all the artifacts and panels that comprise the *Women & Spirit* traveling exhibit.

The DVD also contains five of the short videos from the *Women & Spirit* traveling exhibit:

- In Their Own Words
- The NY Foundling Home
- The Galveston Storm
- It's Elementary: Catholic Sisters in Education
- Service and Leadership

The DVD is being widely used by leaders, mission promoters, vocation directors, and teachers as an educational tool on religious life. All proceeds from the sale of the DVD will help support the mission of LCWR.

Order forms are at: www.womenandspirit.org.



From the LCWR Presidency

Promoting the Common Good

by Florence Deacon, OSF — LCWR President-Elect

During the August LCWR annual assembly in California, those present read the signs of the times and saw a country wounded by partisanship and disparities of wealth and power. They called for a return to civil discourse that “promotes the common good, reaches out to others, engages in constructive dialogue, and seeks together the way forward.” Committing themselves to do the same, they promised “to hold these concerns at the center of our prayer and to respond in love.”



needed respectful dialogue at all levels, including parish and local communities.

- In the 2011 introduction to *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States* the bishops named “civil and respectful public dialogue” as a goal in addition to the formation of consciences and preparation for voting in light of Catholic social teaching. Bringing together our values and our votes, we help to build a better world.

Since then, I have noticed others reading the same signs.

- This fall in my home state of Wisconsin two state senators, a Republican and a Democrat, traveled together in a Common Ground Tour of each other’s legislative district and held joint town hall meetings. They also highlighted areas of agreement with “Ten Ideas for Ten Years” as a starting point for a bipartisan agenda. Last summer political partisanship resulted in recall elections for nine state legislators, and a petition drive is now underway to recall our new governor and four senators, so their bipartisan actions are especially meaningful.
- A Republican city legislator who had served in the military put bipartisanship into perspective: “I literally sat down with al-Qaida in Iraq. I think I can sit down with Democrats.”
- During observances of the tenth anniversary of 9/11, many remembered the unity of the aftermath and called for its return. Bishop Ramirez of Las Cruces, New Mexico said that the sad anniversary “calls us to recommit ourselves to the common good” and challenges us to look beyond our differences, including political and ideological. In particular he called on leaders to work together “to fix a broken economy, reduce deficits and debt, and do so in ways that protect the poor and vulnerable.” He noted that creating a lasting peace with justice

- On a surprising note, Howard Schultz, president and CEO of Starbucks also called on Americans to be catalysts for change. He observed, “As I look at what is happening in America ... the gap between the haves and the have-nots is getting wider and wider,” the *Los Angeles Times* reported. Explaining that “Waiting for Washington to act is not a plan of action,” he announced a nationwide town hall meeting to “send the message to today’s elected officials in a civil, respectful voice they hear and understand, that the time to put citizenship ahead of partisanship is now.”

I am reading Walter Brueggemann’s *Journey to the Common Good* which suggests Isaiah as a “narrative exposé and guide” for our contemporary crisis. He proposes we do a double-read by taking an imaginative leap from the urban crisis in ancient Jerusalem to our own broken structures in need of reconstruction. “What is required now is initiative-taking actions, local and public, that create anew the capacity to sustain the human community and the parallel capacity to maintain an ecosystem that honors all of creation.” Hearing the words of Isaiah this Advent season, may our double-read prepare us for “that hard thought and resolved work [which] are required out beyond our comfort zone,” (p. 105) as we hold these concerns at the center of our prayer, live in hope, and respond in love.

LCWR Officers Attend Various Meetings in Washington, DC Area

The LCWR executive committee met from November 7 -9 at Washington Theological Union (WTU). Participating in the meeting were: Pat Farrell, OSF; president; Florence Deacon, OSF, president-elect; Mary Hughes, OP, past president; Barbara Blesse, OP, secretary; Sheila Megley, RSM, treasurer; Nancy Schreck, OSF and Carol Zinn, SSJ, members-at-large; and Janet Mock, CSJ, executive director.

The meeting agenda included reports from the presidents and executive director; review of the budget and several recommendations from the LCWR Finance Committee; reports from the committees focused on Contemporary Religious Life, Strategic Operational Planning, and Leadership Development; and plans for the 2012 LCWR assembly. The three LCWR associate directors also joined the committee for discussion of their work.

On November 10, the LCWR and CMSM executive committees held a joint meeting at WTU.

The following day, Pat, Florence, Mary, Barbara, and Janet attended the annual meeting of the Commission on Religious Life and Ministry. The commission is comprised of representatives of LCWR, CMSM, the US Catholic Conference of Bishops, Council of Major Super-



LCWR Executive Committee: Carol Zinn, SSJ; Nancy Schreck, OSF; Florence Deacon, OSF; Sheila Megley, RSM; Pat Farrell, OSF; Mary Hughes, OP; Barbara Blesse, OP; and Janet Mock, CSJ

riors of Women Religious, and the National Religious Retirement Office.

Janet represented LCWR on November 12 at a meeting of the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations where she and representatives from various consultative groups reported on their organizations' activities over the previous year.

The presidency and executive director also attended some sessions of the November USCCB meeting as observers on November 14 and 15.



CMSM and LCWR Executive Committees: (standing) Ron Talbot, SC; Janet Mock, CSJ; John Edmunds, ST; Mary Hughes, OP; John Paolik, OFM Cap; Sheila Megley, RSM; Florence Deacon, OSF; Nancy Schreck, OSF; Carol Zinn, SSJ; Thomas Smolich, SJ; and Barbara Blesse, OP; (seated) Giles Hayes, OSB and Pat Farrell, OSF

THE Occasional Papers



Order Additional Copies of the Winter 2012 Occasional Papers

An order form for the Winter 2012 issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers* is available on the LCWR website at: www.lcwr.org/lcwrpublications/OPordersWinter12.pdf

Orders are due by **December 20**.

This issue focuses on the deep transformation that needs to occur so that we can be open to perceiving “the new” – whether the new be in our understandings of the world, life, the church, faith, religious life, etc. What does it take to live in the world today where much of what seemed certain and secure is no longer such, and where divisions in ways of thinking and perceiving lead to separation? What is it that the world needs from women religious at this unique time?

Content will include an interview with 2011 LCWR assembly speaker theologian Maricarmen Bracamontes, OSB; and interview with Mary Jacksteit of the Public Conversations Project, reflections by LCWR members on what it takes to shift one's thinking about core beliefs; an article on perspectives on leadership from younger/newer women religious; and more.

Although all members, associates, and subscribers will receive their own copy of this issue, many leaders order additional copies for their members. If you have any questions about an order, please contact Carol Glidden at cglidden@lcwr.org or at 301-588-4955.

LCWR Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography on religious life prepared by LCWR's Contemporary Religious Life Committee is available for the use of all members. The bibliography may be found at www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/bibliography.htm.

A set of reflection questions accompany the recommended readings. LCWR members are encouraged to utilize the bibliography and share it with their community members as well.

New to the bibliography is the following:

“That was Then...This is Now: The Past, Present and Future of Women Religious in the United States”
Lecture by Sandra Schneiders, IHM
This 40-page monograph can be purchased for \$3 per copy. Instructions for ordering can be found at: www3.saintmarys.edu/spirituality/women-spirit-exhibit

LCWR and Women Religious in the News

“What to be thankful for this Thanksgiving”
National Catholic Reporter
Essay by Richard McBrien
November 14, 2011
ncronline.org/blogs/essays-theology/what-be-thankful-thanksgiving

“Nuns Who Won't Stop Nudging”
New York Times
By Kevin Roose
November 13, 2011
www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/business/sisters-of-st-francis-the-quiet-shareholder-activists.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

“The future of religious life and the plight of young adult Catholic women”
National Catholic Reporter
Column by Jamie L. Manson
October 27, 2011
ncronline.org/blogs/grace-margins/future-religious-life-and-plight-young-adult-catholic-women

LCWR Leaders Receive Awards

LCWR past president Mary Hughes, OP received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Molloy College in New York. This honor is bestowed on an alumnus who demonstrates the true spirit of the college mission, and whose professional career is characterized by a series of outstanding achievements. Mary accepted the award on November 12 at the Molloy 2010 Gala.

LCWR executive director Janet Mock, CSJ received the Mary Emil Penet, IHM Award from the Religious Formation Conference. Named for one of the founding mothers of RFC, the award is given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to initial and lifelong formation of women and men religious. Janet received the award at the RFC congress in Kansas City on November 19.



Molloy College president, Dr. Drew Bogner presents Mary Hughes, OP the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award



Janet Mock, CSJ (center) is joined by Mary Pellegrino, CSJ, congregation leader of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Baden, and Violet Grennan, MFIC, RFC executive director, at the award ceremony at the RFC congress

Mind the Gap! Workshop Materials Available

Lots of people are talking about “the 99%” but not everyone understands what that means. **NET-WORK** staff members have started doing Mind the Gap! workshops, and have found that they are very popular because they give people new insights into the wealth gap – what it is, how it happened, and why all should care about it.

Now, others can engage their communities by facilitating a Mind the Gap! workshop. Everything one needs — including the workshop description with facilitator notes, and a PowerPoint presentation – to conduct a 90-minute workshop for groups can be found here: www.networklobby.org/nep/mind-gap-workshop



LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

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

January 15 - 20, 2012
Redemptorist Renewal Center
Tucson, Arizona

Just a few spaces are left

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.

Directors:

Regina Bechtle, SC and María Elena Martínez, OSF

Registration forms can be downloaded from www.lcwr.org/lcwrprogramsresources/LFWretreat12.pdf



Leadership Teams Encouraged to Reflect on Emerging Insights

The LCWR regional meetings included a contemplative process designed to bring forth insights on the new questions and realities that are emerging for women religious.

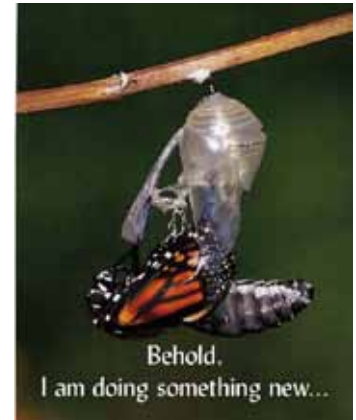
The insights submitted to the national office thus far are posted on the LCWR website --

www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/new.htm. The LCWR Contemporary Religious Life Committee encourages LCWR members to pray with these insights and to reflect on them together as leadership teams. The following questions may assist the reflection and conversation:

If our religious institute were to respond to this new reality, I envision ...

The process is designed to foster a national conversation around the critical issues in the world and church today which impact religious life and which call for a response from women religious.

A copy of the contemplative process used at the regional meetings is also on the website at www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/process.pdf. Members have been adapting the process for use with their own religious institutes.



Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace Calls for Reform of International Economic System

The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace released a document October 24, 2011 which takes a critical look at the current international economic crisis and calls for gradual reform of the international financial and monetary systems. The analysis is grounded in Catholic Social Teaching and draws on papal teaching from John XXIII to Benedict XVI.

Entitled *Toward Reforming the International Financial and Monetary Systems in the Context of Global Public Authority* the text examines the multiple causes of the current economic and financial crisis including: economic liberalism; the triumph of utilitarianism and individualism over the common good; and selfishness and collective greed. Their critique clearly identifies the moral nature of the current crisis and its devastating effects on God's people. "The costs are extremely onerous for millions in the developed countries, but also and above all for the billions in the developing ones."

The authors suggest that what is needed is a spirit of solidarity focused on the good of the community and they maintain that to function correctly the economy must be rooted in people-centered ethics. "Recognizing the primacy of being over having and of ethics over the economy, the world's peoples ought to adopt an ethic of solidarity as the animating core of their action."

In the spirit of John XXII's *Pacem in Terris* and Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate*, the council identifies the need to create some sort of world political authority to address the increasingly global agenda for the common good. They advise that the development of such an authority must be gradual and will require reciprocal trust, collaboration, autonomy, and participation. And they remind readers that such authority must always be at the service of the member countries and embrace the principle of subsidiarity; its focus on the common good while fully recognizing and respecting the differences of its members.

... today humanity needs to be committed to the transition from a situation of archaic struggles between national entities, to a new model of a more cohesive, polyarchic international society that

respects every people's identity within the multi-faceted riches of a single humanity. Such a passage, which is already timidly under way, would ensure the citizens of all countries – regardless of their size or power – peace and security, development, and free, stable and transparent markets.

The Pontifical Council is to be commended for taking on a difficult topic in this time of global crisis. Their suggestions will anger some and embolden others, but none can deny that the global financial and economic crisis must be engaged by people of faith and moral courage.

A provisional English translation of the document is available at: www.zenit.org/article-33718?l=english

Conference on Immigration Planned for January

The Migration and Refugee Services of [US Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) and [Catholic Legal Immigration Network](#) are sponsoring Immigration—A 50-State Issue: A Focus on State and Local Immigration Initiatives, January 11-13, 2012 in Salt Lake City. The conference will look at state and local immigration issues across the country and discuss methods for opposing enforcement initiatives and supporting comprehensive immigration reform. Additional information is available at justiceforimmigrants.org.



Upcoming Showings

Center for History

South Bend, Indiana -- September 2 - December 31, 2011

The California Museum of History, Women & the Arts

Sacramento, California — January 24 - June 3, 2012

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat

Redemptorist Renewal Center

Tucson, Arizona

January 15 — 20, 2012

Systemic Change Think Tank

Bethany Center

Lutz, Florida

March 5 — 8, 2012

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake

Mundelein, Illinois

March 15 — 18, 2012

LCWR Assembly

St. Louis, Missouri

August 7 — 11, 2012

LCWR New Leader Workshop

Conference Center - University of St. Mary of the Lake

Mundelein, Illinois

March 21 — 24, 2013

LCWR Assembly

Orlando, Florida

August 13 — 17, 2013

LCWR Assembly

Nashville, Tennessee

August 12 — 16, 2014

Ecumenical Action Days: Is This the Fast I Seek?

The 10th annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days' conference is scheduled for March 23-26, 2012 in Washington, DC. The conference will explore economy, livelihood, and our national priorities through the lens of Isaiah 58. Join other Christians seeking a global economy and a national budget that break the yokes of injustice, poverty, hunger, and unemployment throughout the world — heeding Isaiah's call to become "repairers of the breach and restorers of streets to live in." Information and registration materials are available at www.AdvocacyDays.org.



The National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) was recently awarded a \$281,000 grant by the GHR Foundation, a philanthropic organization based in Minnetonka, Minnesota. The funds will be used to implement two major objectives of the NRVC's National Vocation Plan. This is the largest single grant the NRVC has ever received. A previous grant from the GHR Foundation helped fund the NRVC's Moving Forward in Hope vocation symposium in September 2010. The two projects that this new GHR grant will fund are intended to enhance and strengthen religious life in the United States and prepare religious communities to welcome new members.

PROJECT #1

The NRVC will develop a conversational tool to enable religious institutes to engage in a deeper exchange about the findings of the landmark 2009 NRVC/CARA Study on Recent Vocations and their implications for apostolic life with respect to community, visibility, communal prayer, and celebration of Eucharist.

This tool, which will include a DVD of newer religious reflecting on the findings of the NRVC/CARA vocations study, will be packaged and made available to religious institutes for their use.



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Editor: Annmarie Sanders, IHM
 8808 Cameron Street — Silver Spring, MD 20910
 Phone: 301-588-4955 Fax: 301-587-4575
 E-mail: asanders@lcwr.org Website: www.lcwr.org

In addition, NRVC will sponsor a training program at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, Texas from June 4-6, 2012. The purpose of this three-day pilot program is to provide participating religious with a deeper understanding of the vocations study and training in how to facilitate discussions in their congregations around the four areas of apostolic life outlined above. Lynn Levo, CSJ, will serve as the workshop facilitator. Selection for participation in this training program will be based on an application process that will begin in November. Final selection will be made by the end of January 2012. Those selected participants will only be responsible for their travel to and from San Antonio. All other expenses will be covered by the grant. More information about this program will be forthcoming in the coming weeks.

PROJECT #2

NRVC will convene three gatherings for women religious in the eastern, middle, and western regions of the United States, similar to the Moving Forward in Hope symposium of 2010. The purpose of these unprecedented gatherings will be for women religious to study the research regarding recent vocations and discuss and reflect on the combined implications of this information for religious sisters as they work together to increase their membership both individually and collaboratively. The reflections of the participants, along with any directions and recommendations made from these gatherings, will be synthesized into a final document that will be presented to church and religious leadership. The intention is to host the first gathering in the fall of 2012 with the final two gatherings taking place in 2013. These gatherings will focus on women religious so that the particular, unique, and urgent issues of religious vocations for women can be specifically addressed in depth.

Selection for participation will be based on an application process. Those selected participants will only be responsible for their travel to and from their workshop site. All other expenses will be covered by the grant. More details about these regional gatherings will come in the new year.

Over the years vocation ministers have expressed the need for more resources and programs that would help prepare their religious institutes for the reception of new candidates. As highlighted in the NRVC/CARA Study on Recent Vocations to Religious Life, successful vocation ministry calls for a corporate ownership on behalf of all members for promoting and supporting

new membership within their religious congregations. "I am confident that these projects will assist NRVC in its mission of providing indispensable programs and professional training to vocation ministers and presenting religious life as a viable and joyful option in the Catholic Church," said Paul Bednarcyck, CSC, NRVC executive director.

Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, you must submit a change of leadership form so that the LCWR membership may be properly transferred to the new leaders. This will ensure that there will be no gap in communications from the national office. Please use the change of leadership form found in the LCWR Members Information section (password-protected) of the website at www.lcwr.org/members/index.html.