

# Update

A Publication of the  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious

August/September 2011



**Mystery Unfolding:  
Religious Life for the World**  
LCWR Assembly  
August 9 - 12  
Garden Grove, California



**Screening of the  
Women & Spirit Documentary**  
Monday, August 8  
7:00 PM  
Grand Ballroom of the Assembly Hotel

All LCWR members, associates, and assembly exhibitors are welcome to attend

## Preparation Checklist for the LCWR Assembly

- Read the Summer 2010 issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers* entitled "Leadership and Creative Tension"
- Read the LCWR 2010-2011 annual report available online at [www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/report10-11.pdf](http://www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/report10-11.pdf)
- Pray with the regional reflections on the "Behold, I am Doing Something New" process available at <http://www.lcwr.org/what%27snew/new.htm>
- Give thought to what you might like to share at the "What's On Your Mind?" open microphone sessions. The purpose of these sessions is to
  - Exchange ideas important for the life and direction of LCWR
  - Surface ideas for future consideration by LCWR
  - Express concerns that impact LCWR
- Read the information on the candidates for LCWR president and secretary on the LCWR Members Information section of the website ([www.lcwr.org](http://www.lcwr.org)).
- Consider ordering CDs or DVDs of the assembly presentations for your further reflection and inform your institute's members about the possibility of ordering them as well. The texts of the presentations will not be available online.

All are reminded to verify that they have registered for the assembly and made hotel reservations.

*From the LCWR Presidency*

## The LCWR Presidency: An Unparalleled Life Experience

by Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA — LCWR Past President

In a couple of weeks many of us will be traveling to California for the LCWR 2011 Assembly. We look forward to being together, to the refreshment and inspiration offered by our keynote speakers, and all the efforts to continue our movement into the future. For me, this will be my last assembly serving in the presidency. In my whole being is heartfelt gratitude for the grace and relationships that have been gifted me by all of you during the past three years.



larger Christian community. We all will be changed by this. In sifting out righteousness, we acknowledge that LCWR needs to seek reconciliation for any way in which we have contributed to the polarization within the church. The processes of prayer and discernment are essential in order to engage what is culturally- and ecclesially-bound while remaining true to the meaning of fidelity within the call to Gospel life. Let us welcome the challenges of moving more fully into wholeness and holiness and pray for grace as we move forward.

As a conference we have traversed a journey of challenges and questions about the future which truly have taken us outside of a regular mode of “business as usual.” At times I’ve been asked what we have learned in the experiences of the past years’ Vatican inquiries. I continue to ponder this.

I learned that there is tremendous spiritual power in the solidarity that has developed among us and all women religious around the world. I learned about and derived much strength from the sisterhood at this time. I became a little more humble while sometimes I was surprised at my own ability to courageously speak on a level of equal discipleship with church leadership. I learned that I could take action with what some call “prophetic nerve” and be at peace even in the midst of public derision by some critics.

As a conference and as individual communities, we were called to a more in-depth study of church documents that renews our commitment to theological reflection and the lived experience of legitimate diversity, the primacy of conscience, and of being called and sent in mission.

Looking to the greater good through reconciling love is a critical life-giving summons in our present and future. We became more aware of the need for reconciliation because of the brokenness within our church. I believe it will be made both possible and desirable through the common goals to be one in Christ and to serve the

I also learned that a river of anger can run deep, but that a river of ecclesial and creative fidelity among us is even deeper than any rage that attempts to bubble forth. Staying in God’s presence has a way of deflating our importance and opening the doors to greater transformation of spirit.

The presidency has been an unparalleled life experience for me. Feeling grateful has the unusual power of hold-

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*May we remember the infinite possibilities that are born of faith, use the gifts we have received and pass on the love that has been given us by so many friends.*

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ing out the promise of a special kind of freedom now, along with an honest look at my relationship with God, with creation, and with others. It is a profound moment of grace that has the power to reveal an untouched dimension of life. How honored I am for this gratitude which brings peace and the knowledge that I am where I am meant to be!

Let us not forget the tremendous support of all those who believe in our commitments, have heard our laments and have spoken on our behalf. May we remember the infinite possibilities that are born of faith, use the gifts we have received and pass on the love that has been given us by so many friends. *Pax et bonum!*

## Cokie Roberts Narrates LCWR *Women & Spirit* Documentary

Cokie Roberts completed the narration of the *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America* documentary, bringing the project close to finish in time for its premiere immediately prior to the opening of the 2011 LCWR assembly. Ms. Roberts, an NPR senior news analyst and ABC news political commentator, taped the narration on July 14 at the ABC studios in Washington, DC as a gift to LCWR and US women religious.



Cokie Roberts narrates the *Women & Spirit* documentary at the ABC studios in Washington, DC

All LCWR members, associates, and assembly exhibitors are welcome to attend the documentary screening at the LCWR assembly venue on **Monday, August 8 at 7:00 PM**.

The 56-minute documentary will be on a DVD that may be ordered for a discounted price during the assembly. Also on the DVD is a film study guide and a digital catalog that contains images of all the artifacts and panels that comprise the *Women & Spirit* traveling exhibit. Some of the videos within the exhibit will be included as well.

The DVD may be ordered at the assembly for \$20.00 per copy. Orders will be mailed later in August. LCWR members as well as the public will also be able to purchase the DVD by using the order form that may be downloaded from the LCWR website ([www.lcwr.org](http://www.lcwr.org)) or the *Women & Spirit* website ([www.womenandspirit.org](http://www.womenandspirit.org)).

LCWR members are asked to promote the DVD within their own institutes, as well as to churches, schools, bishops, vocation offices, women's groups, libraries, and other groups or locations. All proceeds from the sale of the DVD will help support the mission of LCWR.

## LCWR and Women Religious in the News

Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic?

Try tobacco, pirates and lumberjacks

by John Nagy

*Notre Dame Magazine*

Summer 2011

[magazine.nd.edu/news/22265/](http://magazine.nd.edu/news/22265/)

Vatican's point man for religious life: 'We've started to listen again'

by John L. Allen Jr.

*National Catholic Reporter*

July 5, 2011

[ncronline.org/print/25484](http://ncronline.org/print/25484)

A deeply grounded image of what nuns are all about

by Steve Lopez

*Los Angeles Times*

June 26, 2011

[www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-0626-lopez-nofly-ingnun-20110626,0,4603623.column](http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-0626-lopez-nofly-ingnun-20110626,0,4603623.column)



*InterAmerican Committee at the LCWR/CMSM offices: (standing) Paul Lininger, OFM Conv; Alain Rodrigue, CMM; Mary Hughes, OP; Gabriel Naranjo, CM; Thomas Cassidy, SCJ; Maureen Foltz, CCV; (seated) Jane Burke, SSND; Paulo Petry, FSC and Mary Finlayson, RSCJ*

## InterAmerican Committee Meeting Bridges Countries and Cultures

This year's InterAmerican Committee met from June 26-30 at the LCWR and CMSM offices in Silver Spring, Maryland. The committee, which is made up of the presidents and executive directors of the Confederation of Latin American Religious, the Canadian Religious Conference, LCWR, and CMSM, rotates its meetings among Canada, the United States, and Latin America.

The meeting opened with an update from each conference on its activities since the last meeting in March 2010 in Quebec.

Much attention was given to the continued recovery efforts in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake. While each conference reported on its participation in the recovery work, CLAR gave an extensive report since it had held its annual assembly in Haiti this year. (LCWR president elect Pat Farrell, OSF represented the conference at that assembly.) Special attention was given to the needs of the religious in Haiti and their ministries.

The committee spent one afternoon touring historic sites in Washington, DC and another afternoon visiting places of interest in Baltimore, Maryland.

The final time of discussion focused on religious life in the Americas for the future.

Attending this year's meeting were: Mary Hughes, OP, LCWR president; Jane Burke, SSND, LCWR executive director; Thomas Cassidy, SCJ, CMSM president; Paul Lininger, OFM Conv, CMSM executive director; Gabriel Naranjo, CM; CLAR president; Paulo Petry, FSC, CLAR secretary general; and Mary Finlayson, RSCJ, CRC president; and Alaine Rodrigue, CMM, CRC vice president.

LCWR member Maureen Foltz, CCV served as a translator.

## Catholic Charities USA to Award Centennial Medal to LCWR

Catholic Charities USA will honor LCWR at a luncheon held during the 2011 LCWR assembly with a presentation of its Centennial Medal.

The Centennial Medal recognizes the valuable contributions of individuals and organizations to the reduction of poverty in the United States. Through their work and life, recipients of the medal have shown an extraordinary commitment to the vision and mission of Catholic Charities USA.



## 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

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 forms will be sent online at a later time. Participation will be limited to the first 25 members to submit their form and check.

## Upcoming LCWR Dates

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

**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



## Upcoming Showings

### Mount St. Mary's College

Los Angeles, California - June 19 - August 14, 2011

### 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

## NRRO Offers Planning and Implementation Workshops

NRRO is now accepting applications for its planning and implementation workshops for 2012 and 2013. An informational brochure, workshop dates and application forms may be found at [www.usccb.org/nrro/planning.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/nrro/planning.shtml).

Fifty-five religious institutes have participated in this program since its initiation in January 2009. Of these, 37 institutes are members of LCWR. Anyone who is interested in applying and would like to talk to one of the institutes that already have entered the process can find their names on the online brochure.



*Update* is an official publication of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious published monthly and distributed to members nationally.

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## Housing Options in South Bend

The Sisters of the Holy Cross are pleased to offer hospitality to women religious who will be visiting the *Women & Spirit* exhibit while it is on display in South Bend, Indiana. A limited number of rooms is available at the congregation's motherhouse at Saint Mary's, Notre Dame, Indiana. A kitchen is available for the use of guests. Guests are most welcome to join the sisters for meals in the convent dining room. The congregation will not charge a fee for hospitality. Donations are gratefully accepted. The following contact information may be used to determine availability and make reservations.

Contact: Joyce Sobieralski  
E-mail: [joyces@cscsisters.org](mailto:joyces@cscsisters.org)  
Telephone: 574-284-5635

## JFI Campaign Promotes DREAM Sabbath and Opposes E-Verify

At national and local levels, participants in the Justice for Immigrants Campaign work with partners to expand opposition to a mandated E-verify program which is an enforcement-only measure and has grave implications for immigrant families. During the July 13 JFI meeting, Tyler Moran from the National Immigration Law Center walked members through the implications of a bill to be introduced soon by Lamar Smith (R-TX) but not expected to reach the House floor before the August recess. JFI core members visited legislative offices of Catholic legislators on June 22 and will make another round of visits. Calls and visits to District offices are strongly encouraged. Information about E-verify and how to respond is available at [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org). Postcards for duplication are available on the website.

At a July 12 press conference in which Cardinal McCarrick participated, JFI announced the DREAM Sabbath weekend at the end of September, culminating three weeks of activities which will urge protection of students from detention and deportation, as well as passage of state DREAM Acts. Resources will soon be available on the JFI website.

## Campaigns Focus on Impacts of Federal Budget

Given the potential devastating impacts on the most vulnerable people in our country, LCWR joins with other organizations to call on the President and members of Congress to protect those who will be hurt the most if draconian measures are taken to cut funding for programs that provide a safety net for Medicare and other sorely needed social programs.

- **NETWORK's "Mind the Gap"** campaign focuses on the growing disparity, or gap, between the "haves" and "have-nots" in our society. Signatures on the Mind-the-Gap petition will be delivered to the White House in late July. To sign the petition and receive timely updates about the campaign, go to [www.networklobby.org/campaign/mind-the-gap](http://www.networklobby.org/campaign/mind-the-gap).
- **HOWO Activities:** LCWR participates in meetings and activities of Heads of Washington Offices (HOWO), i.e., representatives of justice offices of interfaith groups. Some activities include: daily prayer vigils from July 11-29 outside the United

Methodist Building across from the Capitol; a press conference on July 14 of six representatives from Christian, Jewish, and Muslim organizations, including Mary Hughes, OP, LCWR president; a letter from faith leaders to the President and leaders of both parties in both Senate and House, requesting a meeting.

- LCWR also endorsed the **Circle of Protection** campaign in which the USCCB took a lead.

## 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](http://www.lcwr.org/members/index.html).

## The Religious Formation Conference Presents Congress 2011

*Prophetic Religious Life: If Not Now ... When?*



Keynote Speakers:

**Barbara E. Reid, OP & Anthony Gittins, CSSp**  
Chicago Theological Union

**November 17-20, 2011**  
Kansas City Marriott Downtown  
**Kansas City, Missouri**

For information on pre-congress workshops,  
congress seminars and registration,

visit [www.relforcon.org](http://www.relforcon.org)  
or call the RFC office at 301-588-4938  
E-mail: [pnash@relforcon.org](mailto:pnash@relforcon.org)