

August - September 2006

LCWR Issues Public Statement on the Violence in Lebanon, Israel, and Gaza

LCWR issued a statement on July 23 calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire by the Israeli army and the Hezbollah organization currently engaged in violent combat in Lebanon, Israel, and Gaza.

The statement condemns both Hezbollah's violent actions as well as the disproportionate and violent response of Israel. It also acknowledges the role of the United States in the Middle East conflicts. "As citizens of the United States," the statement reads, "we acknowledge with profound regret that our nation's pre-emptive attack on Iraq, and the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan by US-led forces, carried out with little understanding of the region's history or its culture, have greatly inflamed hostilities throughout the Middle East and contributed significantly to the present crisis."

LCWR called on President Bush and his administration to stop its obstructionist postures and delaying tactics at the United Nations and within the international community and asks the US congress to act decisively and immediately to demand that the United States join with the international community to end the violence now.

LCWR asked all US women religious to exercise their rights and duties as citizens and urge US leaders to

act as responsible members of the world community. A message sent to all LCWR members encouraged religious to consider sending letters on this issue to public officials, in particular to President Bush and

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his administration, UN ambassador John Bolton, and local congresspersons and senators. The message also encourages religious to consider organizing or participating in interfaith prayer services for peace.

The LCWR national office also distributed a press release on the statement to media outlets across the country.

Deadline for Submitting Ideas for Catholic Sisters in America Exhibit: August 15



See page 5 for more details.

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From the LCWR Presidency
'Brave and Startling Truth'

by Beatrice Eichten, OSF — LCWR President

I am in the midst of a family re-union – my 14 brothers and sisters and their families converging from around the United States to spend four days together at my parents' farm. The sleeping and eating accommodations are quite amazing, as is the plan for golfing, swimming, touring, celebrating birthdays (Dad will be 89), a Twins ball game....all happening in the midst of some very hot days (something we are not used to in Minnesota).



We can only do this if we keep our minds and hearts open to the goodness embedded in ourselves and in each moment of our day. It is goodness that calls forth love and gives us energy and hope. It is possibility and vision that engages our passion and gives light to our eyes and a lilt to our voices — most days that is! If all we see are obstacles and problems....well, besides it not being much fun, it robs us of a loving approach to our life and our ministry, and it denies others the witness of

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women trusting in God's loving Spirit alive and active among us.

As I reflect on that interface, I realize that this is the common day-to-day reality we each face – living in or-

Maya Angelou wrote a poem for the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations, titled "Brave and Startling Truth"

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dinary time while the larger events swirl around us. As I have prayed with our *Changing the Face of the Mountain* reflections, I am aware that many of us are speaking to that reality. Even as we see mountains, obstacles, and challenges, we are engaged in listening and responding to the movement of the Spirit in our hearts and in the needs and hopes of our communities.

where she speaks of love coming "to liberate us into life."

... if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.
We are weaned from our timidity.
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

May we live this brave and startling truth!

LCWR Executive Committee Meets in New Jersey



The LCWR executive committee met from July 17-20 at Stella Maris Retreat Center in Elberon, New Jersey. Among the agenda items was the finalization of plans for the Atlanta assembly. Margaret O'Brien, OSU, the assembly facilitator, joined the committee for this part of the meeting. This year's assembly will offer the participants important input on religious life and leadership issues, and promises to be a fitting close to LCWR's jubilee year.

Some of the other topics that the executive committee addressed are:

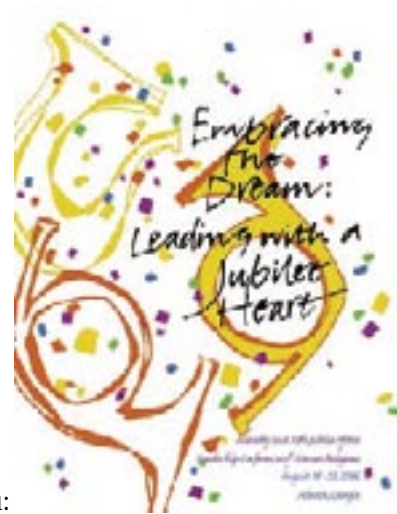
- CARA Inventory follow-up
- 2007 LCWR assembly
- the 2006 visit to the Vatican offices
- collaboration with other organizations
- LCWR financial reports
- the LCWR history exhibit



In attendance at the executive committee meeting were: (left to right): Christine Vladimiroff, OSB; Jeanne Bessette, OSF; Margaret Mayce, OP; and Mary Dacey, SSJ.



Checklist for 2006 LCWR Assembly Participants



Did you:

- Send in your registration to the LCWR national office?
- Make a hotel reservation?
- Register for the pre-assembly interfaith prayer for peace at the Ebenezer Baptist Church? (Buses leave the hotel on Friday, August 18 at 9:00 AM for this event.)

Not pictured are: Bea Eichten, OSF; Maureen Shaughnessy, SC; Maryann Summa, OP; and Carole Shinnick, SSND

LCWR Represented at March on Poverty in Washington, DC

LCWR executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND joined several hundred community and faith leaders and religious activists from around the country at a march in Washington, DC on June 27 to fight against poverty.

The event celebrated the unveiling of the Covenant for a New America, a faith-based strategy for overcoming poverty. Twenty-three national religious groups, including LCWR, endorsed the covenant, which aims to bring people from all religious and political backgrounds together so they can hold one another accountable for ending poverty.

A Catholic News Service article notes that LCWR endorsed the covenant because it is consistent with LCWR's positions on poverty.

Speaking at the march, Carole noted, "Since 1727, when the first Catholic sisters arrived in this country, we consistently stood with the marginalized and the poor, especially women and children, and this document that we are endorsing is consistent with that position."

The march and a related conference were hosted by Sojourners and Call to Renewal, a national network of churches, faith-based organizations, and individuals working to overcome poverty in America.

Catholics Launch Initiative to Promote the Common Good

In a July 19 press release, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good officially launched its efforts to promote an authentic Christian social vision in the national dialogue on religion and public life.

While participating organizations, including LCWR, have been meeting and planning for two years, the group is now officially and publicly announced. (Note the small change in title, the insertion of "in" before Alliance.) The press release with a description of the group can be found on the alliance's web site: www.thecatholicalliance.org.

Leading from Within Retreat



January 14 – 19, 2007
Franciscan Center
Tampa, Florida

An experience of input, quiet, contemplative space, a variety of ritual experiences, and opportunity for group and individual spiritual direction.

Facilitators:

María Elena Martínez, OSF
Margaret O'Brien, OSU

Open to the first 25 national members who register and send a deposit

Think Tank 2007- Uprising of Hope: Transformation for an Emerging Future

A flyer describing the Think Tank to be held February 26 – March 1, 2007 in Santa Cruz, California has been sent to LCWR members and justice and peace coordinators.

Registrations are due to the LCWR office by December 1, 2006. Note that the flyer is not on the LCWR web site because the program is open to LCWR members and justice and peace coordinators only.



Justice for Immigrants Campaign Offers New Resources

During the June 28 meeting of the Campaign's Core National Members, in addition to updates from members and a legislative update, three new resources were announced. The web site, www.justiceforimmigrants.org will add, under "What's New," timely articles and monthly updates as well as a communication link providing adaptable letters. Members also previewed a new DVD titled "Strangers No Longer," available soon through the web site. This DVD picks up where "Dying to Live" left off, and describes the vital presence of immigrants in US church life today.

Finally, a new Legalization Project is available from CLINIC (Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.) which is a valuable resource for those working directly with immigrants. See www.ClinicLegal.org.

LCWR Representatives Attend Canadian Religious Conference Assembly

LCWR president Bea Eichten, OSF and LCWR executive director Carole Shinnick, SSND represented the conference at the 2006 general assembly of the Canadian Religious Conference in Cornwall, Ontario, from June 8-12. The leaders of the Canadian congregations of women and men religious renewed their commitment to speak with a common voice in the church and in the world on issues of justice, peace, and integrity of creation, and also pledged to work for the eradication of all forms of violence, in particular the trafficking in women and children.

Bea Eichten, OSF; CRC executive director Margaret Toner, SC; Carole Shinnick, SSND; Bishop Gilles Cazabon, OMI, president of the Assembly of Bishops of Quebec and CRC president Alain Ambault, CSV



Information on Congregation Artifacts Due by August 15

All LCWR members have received a letter and form from the LCWR History Committee requesting assistance in identifying possible artifacts for inclusion in the exhibit "Pioneers, Poets & Prophets: Catholic Sisters in America."

The exhibit is being designed to represent the contributions of Catholic sisters to the history and culture of the United States, and is meant to be illustrative rather than exhaustive. Because of the limitations of space, it will be impossible to feature every congregation, but every congregation will be listed in some way. The committee hopes that members will help them develop a rich pool of resources from which to illustrate this history by submitting information on its holdings.

The form asking for descriptions and images of congregation artifacts is due at the LCWR national office by August 15.



SHARE Plans 25th Anniversary Events

Many members of LCWR congregations have participated in delegations to El Salvador organized by SHARE, including the December 2005 delegation, in which 70 LCWR members and justice and peace coordinators participated.

The first of four regional celebrations of SHARE's 25th anniversary will be held in Washington, DC, September 30 – October 2, 2006, during which SHARE will honor Dr. Beatrice de Carrillo, human rights ombudswoman of El Salvador, for her courageous support for human rights in the country. Dr. de Carrillo addressed the members of the December 2005 LCWR delegation to El Salvador. Additional celebrations will be held in Milwaukee, San Francisco, and San Salvador. For information see www.share-elsalvador.org.

On the same web site there is information about a delegation planned for November 30 – December 6, 2006. This is an opportunity for those who were unable to participate in last year's delegation.

LRCR 2007 Legal Seminar Flowing Waters: Channeling Energy Through Turbulent Waters

**Adams Mark Hotel
St. Louis, Missouri
March 8-11, 2007**

In addition to the legal seminar workshops, two pre-seminar workshops are planned:

Canon Law 101 – an introductory workshop on civil and canon law of religious

Canon Law 301 – covers more advanced legal topics affecting religious life

A rate of \$100 per night has been arranged with the Adams Mark hotel. Check the LRCR website (www.lrcr.org) or call 301-589-8143 for updates as planning continues

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly
Atlanta, Georgia
August 18 — 22, 2006

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat
*Franciscan Center
Tampa, Florida*
January 14 — 19, 2007

LCWR Think Tank
*Villa Maria del Mar
Santa Cruz, California*
February 26 — March 1, 2007

LCWR New Leader Workshop
*The Retreat Center at St. John's
Plymouth, Michigan*
March 15 — 18, 2007

LCWR Assembly
Kansas City, Missouri
August 1 — 5, 2007

LCWR-CMSM Joint Assembly
Denver, Colorado
August 1 — 4, 2008

LCWR Assembly
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 11 — 15, 2009



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From the LCWR Executive Director
Making a New Path by Walking

Self-organizing systems have the capacity to create for themselves the aspects of organization that we thought leaders had to provide... Rather than thinking of organization as an imposed structure, plan, design or role, it is clear that in life, organizations arise from the interactions and needs of individuals who have decided to come together.



Carole Shinnick, SSND

Margaret J. Wheatley, *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time* (Berrett-Kohler Publishers, Inc., San Francisco: 2005)

You've probably heard the story about the brand-new college campus where landscapers and planners laid out lovely curving cement walkways connecting the college buildings over grassy lawns. However, after a year of student use, other paths appeared - made through the grass by the students who very quickly learned that, in fact, there was a better way to get from here to there. At this point a new decision arose: should the administrators put up multiple signs saying "Please stay off the grass"? Or should they choose the more costly option of paving new paths and turning the old ones over to grass again? What would you do?

In her newest book, *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time*, Margaret Wheatley suggests that at the outset, the exceptional leader would probably not put down any paths to determine where the students "should" walk, but would wait to see where the innate wisdom of the group led them. Wheatley would likely say, "Live with the unfinished campus for a year or so, and the students will show you where the paths need to be."

In all her writings Wheatley debunks the mechanical model of living things - of human organizations and of individuals as machines that must be run or controlled or fixed like clocks. Instead, she offers the organic, self-organizing model drawn from chaos theory and the new science. In suggesting that people and organizations are not clocks, she also redefines leadership. No longer, in Wheatley's view, are leaders the ones who need to govern the groups from what she calls the "command and control" approach. Rather, the leader is the catalyst who creates the space in which the group - without lots of imposed directives - explores and

experiments with new ways of being together, of unexpected ways of naming and carrying forward its common purpose.

Like you, I am aware of the enormous amount of time, energy, and resources currently being poured into the refoundation of religious congregations - especially through enormous efforts at reconfiguration. Congregations with similar charisms - provinces and regional communities of the same communities - many are

embarking on the courageous path of becoming new entities for the sake of the mission.

The process of reconfiguration is exciting and scary, hopeful and overwhelming, attractive and painful. The loss of the familiar and safe can feel like jumping out of a plane without a parachute. In our hunger for security, the temptation of leaders and members alike might be to quickly put into place policies, procedures, and practices that look and feel like those of our old worlds. But to cement the walkways prematurely could imperil the

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entire venture. Rather than creating truly new entities, we might end up simply making larger versions of the old ones. We could blow our chances of discovering together unforeseen ways we are called to tell our ancient, sacred story in this age. Wheatley describes transformative leaders who have tossed out the "command and control" model this way:

Leaders who live in the new story help us to understand ourselves differently by the way they lead. They trust our humanness; they welcome the surprises we bring to them; they are curious about our differences; they delight in our inventiveness; they nurture us; they connect. They trust that we can create wisely and well; that we seek the best interests of our organizations and our community; that we want to bring more good into the world.

Take off your shoes and walk on the grass!

NATRI Celebrates 25 Years of Treasured Connections

NATRI (The National Association for Treasurers of Religious Institutes) invites all leaders to its national conference October 11-14, 2006 in Anaheim, California.

Keynote addresses for NATRI's silver anniversary year will be delivered by Nancy Schreck, OSF, who will speak on "Partners in a Mission of Hope," and Sandra Schneiders, IHM, who will address "Religious Poverty: A Prophetic Challenge to First World Economics."

Other workshop and seminar presenters will share their expertise on wise stewardship, ethics, disaster planning and recovery, Medicare and government programs, justice in the workplace, trends in retirement needs, operating principles, vehicle safety, fraud, investment, community, stress, and transitions. Woven throughout the conference is the interconnection between financial and legal issues.

In addition to formal learning, the conference provides an opportunity to network with others, to celebrate in prayer, and to have some fun. Conference attendees do not need to be members of NATRI. For conference information and a registration form, see: www.natri.org/Programs/NationalConference.

From the Center for the Study of Religious Life

CSRL Exhibit at the LCWR Assembly

CSRL looks forward to welcoming LCWR Assembly participants at its exhibit (Booth #78) at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. Information on publications, programs and membership will be available.

New York Interdisciplinary Forum

There is still room to attend the center's September 24-27, 2006 Interdisciplinary Forum, "The Individual and the Common Good" at Bishop Molloy Retreat House, Jamaica, NY.

Participants will have the opportunity to discuss issues with scholars and other leaders relating to the following case studies:

- Aging religious in small local communities;
- Congregational members with adult children;
- More diverse newer members.

The registration form can be printed from <http://www.religious-life.org/pdfs/New%20York%20RegistrationForm061406.pdf>