



August - September 2012

Nearly 900 Registered for 2012 LCWR Assembly

This year's LCWR assembly is drawing nearly 900 members and associates to St. Louis for the four-day event. All exhibit spaces have long been sold out and an unprecedented number of reporters are expected to attend.



There are a few additions and changes to the original plans for the assembly. They are as follows:



▶ Joining Mary Jo Nelson, OLVN as a second facilitator for the assembly will be former LCWR member **Katherine (Kit) Gray** of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, California. Kit is currently on sabbatical after completing two terms as general superior of her congregation.

▶ On Friday, August 10 at 7:45 AM the assembly will provide participants an opportunity to reflect on the challenge of injustice and to effect change with a program entitled, "**Human Trafficking: Stolen People, Stolen Hope.**" The hour-long session will provide education on the issue of human trafficking and those working to abolish the scourge and heal the wounds. Panelists Kimberly Ritter of Nix Associates; Katie Rhoads, MSW of Healing Action Network; and Kathleen Coll, SSJ, convener of the Human Trafficking Group of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) will share personal stories of their work in human trafficking and call the assembly to action.

Assembly Participant Checklist

As preparation for the assembly, LCWR members and associates are encouraged to do the following:

- ✓ Read the materials to be sent soon pertaining to the doctrinal assessment of LCWR.
- ✓ Read the Summer 2012 issue of LCWR's *Occasional Papers* entitled "Mystery Unfolding"
- ✓ Read the LCWR 2011-2012 annual report available online at lcwr.org/sites/default/files/publications/files/lcwr_annual_report_2012.pdf
- ✓ Read the information on the candidates for LCWR president and secretary on the private side of the website (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. Only the text of the presidential address will be available online.

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

Pius Fagan, OP and Mary Jo Heman, OP will open the exploration of human trafficking with prayer.

- ▶ Due to the illness of a family member in Australia, Monica Brown needed to cancel the concert that was scheduled for the evening of Wednesday, August 8.
- ▶ The event on the assembly schedule for Friday, August 10 at 2:00 PM has been changed to an executive session.

From the LCWR Presidency

Authority, Power, and Wisdom

by Mary Hughes, OP — LCWR Past President

Many people report having recurring dreams. I have a biblical theme or two that recurs in my prayer, consciousness, and wonderings. It may recede for a bit, but somehow, that theme finds its way to the forefront of my heart, and I pray with it again and again. The authority of Jesus is a theme that continually rises up in me. Recent LCWR activities have invited me to deeper but as yet unfinished reflection. However unfinished, I offer it to you.



There are so many ways in which authority and power can be conferred and exercised. For instance, parents, by virtue of their role as primary teachers of their children, hold authority over their offspring for a legally specified amount of time. The expectation is that they will use their authority wisely and lovingly to support the gradual maturing of each child into that of a confident and productive adult. Beautiful examples of such authority and power, well used, abound. However, there are stunning examples of where there have been abuses. Children come to wear those scars forever.

As part of our democratic process, we elect public officials and give them authority regarding specific domains of governance. Many use the authority of their office to work on behalf of the common good and their generosity and common sense fill us with gratitude. Yet, there are other public officials who have succumbed to temptations of money, greed, or privilege and these have led to abuses of their power. When their sins are uncovered, there is the shame of public exposure and, in some instances, time necessarily served in jail. The common good suffers.

In still another example, there is that of our own leadership. When each of us was elected or appointed to leadership in our congregations or monasteries, we were vested in authority by those who placed trust in us. This trust exists whether we were elected by our members or by another canonically approved process. We each exercise our authority as best we can. We are not perfect,

but to the best of my knowledge, our congregations can trust in our goodness. They also know that there will be a time when they can transfer this trust to another at the end of our terms. It is an adult model.

So often in stories about Jesus, those around him, particularly those looking to discredit him, asked where his authority came from. "Tell us, they said what authority have you for acting like this? Or who is it that gave you this authority?" (Luke 20:2) Jesus used his

authority in a variety of ways. He used it in teaching so as to bring others into the loving friendship of the Father and the Spirit. Jesus used his authority to liberate people from fears, from sin, and from ties that bind them. While Jesus never earned an advanced degree, his words have lasting eloquence. His wisdom penetrates our hearts. His knowledge can only have come from the hours he spent in prayer and dialogue with his father. He never abused power. There were times when he simply stood in silence. He did not seem to waste much time with those who did not want to understand. He spent endless hours with those whose hearts were open to seeing, to learning, to change, and to loving. This was how the community was formed.

As our conference moves forward into the future, challenges to our personal and collective "authority" are likely to linger. Now, more than ever, we need to pray to have the kind of authority possessed by Jesus. The contemplative process will continue to connect us deeply with God and with one another. We will work to see that all authority is used to liberate and bring gospel freedom to those whose hearts are hungry and open. There may be times we stand in silence. While it can be tempting to lash back in anger or hurt, we will pray without ceasing for the wisdom to use our power and authority as they are intended, rather than in a retaliatory fashion. We will, like Jesus, gently and firmly speak the truth. "Who is it that gave you this authority?" Our lives will continue to reveal our source.

LCWR Hires New Associate Director for Business and Finance

LCWR has hired **Grace Hartzog, SC** of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill as the new associate director for business and finance.



Grace recently completed 10 years of service as the provincial vice president and first councilor of the Sisters of Charity in Greensburg. During her term of leadership she supervised advancement and public relations as well as vocation and formation ministry. She also served as a member of the Seton Hill University Board of Trustees, the Community HomeHealth Care Board, Elizabeth Seton Center Board of Trustees and the Elizabeth Seton Montessori School Board.

Grace was vocation director for her congregation and principal at Carlow University Campus and Queen of Angels Regional Catholic Schools. She was an associate professor at Seton Hill University in the psychology and education departments and she directed the Child Development Center. She also served on the university administrative team when she was the dean of student services at Seton Hill University and previously was an adjunct faculty member at the Pennsylvania State University.

Grace will be present at the LCWR assembly where she will work with the current associate director Pat Cormack, SCSC. Pat will complete her service to LCWR on August 16 as she assumes the responsibilities of provincial of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross in Merrill, Wisconsin. LCWR expresses its profound gratitude to Pat for her six years of service to the conference, and for her willingness to serve for the last two months in leadership for her congregation while also staying on at LCWR until the completion of the assembly and LCWR national board meeting.

Three LCWR Committees Hold Planning Meeting in July

Members of the LCWR executive committee of the national board, the Contemporary Religious Life Committee, the Strategic Operational Planning Committee, and the national office staff met from July 6-8 in Washington, DC. The meeting was facilitated by Maureen Gallagher of The Reid Group.

The meeting had been planned to explore how LCWR might best serve its members and US religious life as the conference goes into the future, acknowledging the rapidly changing demographics of religious life and the realities of the world and church today.

The group also dedicated significant time to preparing materials for the assembly's use as the body discerns a response to the doctrinal assessment of LCWR by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

During the meeting, the participants engaged in the LCWR "Behold, I am Doing Something New" contemplative process. The group chose the following insights to share with the conference as a whole as a result of the process:

- Our adversity has created a solidarity which has led us to a deeper interiority that is helping us recognize a much larger reality of transformation.
- We have grown in wisdom, age, and grace; we have ripened and matured into something that is now being reshaped and called to be for the greater whole.

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Joint LCWR committees meet in Washington, DC

Three LCWR Committees Hold Planning Meeting in July

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- Keenly aware of the reality we face and what it may cost us, we freely choose to ride the breath of the Spirit.
- This is not about us. This is about the urgency on the part of the people of God that the deepest values of Vatican II imbue the life of the Church. We are called to act with courageous, creative fidelity in responding to this urgent need.

The Strategic Operational Planning Committee also held a meeting from July 5-6, prior to the joint committee gathering.



- LCWR joined other members of the faith community in calling upon members of Congress to find faithful alternatives to budget sequestration.
- LCWR co-signed a letter to Congress urging support for HR 3658, the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2012.
- LCWR co-signed a letter to US Senators thanking them for increasing appropriations for poverty-focused international development, humanitarian assistance, and global health programs.
- The Interfaith Immigration Coalition of which LCWR is a member, wrote to members of Congress praising the Obama administration's actions on behalf of DREAMERS and urging Congress to pass the Dream Act.

National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management Honors LCWR for Women & Spirit Exhibit

The National Leadership Roundtable honored LCWR with its 2012 Best Practices Award for *Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America*. The recognition was given to honor LCWR's "outstanding commitment to excellence and visionary leadership" and noted how the exhibit was "a powerful example of how to evangelize in the modern world."

The exhibit director, Helen Maher Garvey, BVM received the award on June 27 at a banquet held on the campus of Georgetown University.



Geoff Boisi, chair of The National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management); Annmarie Sanders, IHM, LCWR associate director for communications; Helen Maher Garvey, BVM, director of Women & Spirit; and Kerry A. Robinson executive director, The Leadership Roundtable.

Members of the US House and Senate Honor Women Religious

Members of the US House and Senate have offered their support and public thanks to women religious for their work on behalf of the life and dignity of those most in need.



On June 18, Representative Rosa DeLauro [D-CT3] introduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives honoring Catholic sisters for their contributions to the people of the United States. Recalling the many contribution women religious have made to the founding and development of the United States, the resolution offers deep appreciation and “recognizes and commends our nation’s Catholic sisters, whose inspiring legacy of service continues to enrich our nation; honors the contributions of Catholic sisters to this country; and stands in solidarity with Catholic sisters’ mission to work toward a more just society for all of God’s people.” The resolution, which had garnered 174 co-sponsors by June 28, is currently under consideration by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Senator Barbara Mikulski [D-MD] recently introduced a similar resolution honoring the lives and the work of women religious. The measure quickly gained the support of Senators on both sides of the aisle. Thirteen of the 17 women currently serving in the US Senate have co-sponsored the resolution which has been referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary for consideration.

The Senate resolution reads in part: “Whereas Catholic Sisters who have answered the call of the Second Vatican Council to seek ‘justice in the world’ continue the vital mission of teaching our children in schools, healing the sick in hospitals, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, administering major institutions, encouraging corporate responsibility, and advocating for public policies that honor human dignity.”

The progression of H.Res. 689 and S.Res 515 may be followed at www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/

[hres689/text](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/sres515/text)) and www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/sres515/text.

In addition, 75 members of the House recently filmed a YouTube video thanking women religious for their work on behalf of those who are often marginalized and forgotten. Often heard comments included: “Thank you, sisters, for doing justice and showing mercy.” “What a tremendous asset you are to the entire world.” “Thank you for everything that you are doing and giving meaning to the teachings of the Catholic Church.” “Keep speaking up for those that don’t have a voice.” “Thank you, sisters!” “God bless you.” “Mil gracias!” The video can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AU760KDUcc.

Supreme Court Strikes Down Arizona Anti-Immigrant Law, Upholds the Affordable Care Act

LCWR and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) issued a joint statement lauding the Supreme Court’s 5-3 ruling that much of the Arizona anti-immigrant law, SB 1070, was unconstitutional.

On June 25 the Court’s decision struck down provisions of the state law which would have made it a crime for an illegal immigrant to work or to seek work in Arizona; authorized state and local officers to arrest people without a warrant if the officers have probable cause to believe a person is an undocumented immigrant; and made it a state crime to violate federal immigration laws.

Just three days later in another landmark case the Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act in a 5-4 decision. In the majority decision the court ruled that while Congress cannot impose a penalty for not buying insurance under the commerce clause, the individual mandate could be upheld under Congress’ power to impose a tax on those who fail to obtain health insurance.

While the court also upheld the law’s authority to expand Medicaid, it limited the ability of the federal government to punish states which might not choose to participate in the expanded program. LCWR was party to the “Catholic Sisters Amici Curiae Brief” supporting the Medicaid expansion.

Join LCWR and SHARE El Salvador for Their 2012 Pilgrimage

LCWR is joining the SHARE Foundation in co-sponsoring the November 29 to December 6, 2012 delegation to El Salvador commemorating the 32nd anniversary



LCWR member Patricia Crowley, OSB at the 2010 LCWR-SHARE pilgrimage

of the martyrdom of church women Ita Ford, MM; Maura Clarke, MM; Dorothy Kazel, OSU; and Jean Donovan. This year's pilgrimage will honor women religious who have dedicated their lives to peace and justice in El Salvador and the world.

For more than three decades, women religious and lay women have accompanied the people of El Salvador. They responded to the cry for help during and after the war, traveling to El Salvador and working side by side with communities at highest risk. Religious congregations gave sanctuary to Salvadoran refugees in the United States, fought for fair immigration policies, and pressured the US government to cease military aid in order to end the war. Women religious provided material aid for the reconstruction of El Salvador in the aftermath of the war and countless natural disasters. It has been a labor of love infused with the spirit of the sister martyrs — a spirit of love, justice, and compassion, and an unwavering willingness to speak truth to power. "They have been our great light in the darkness," said Jose Artiga, executive director of SHARE El Salvador.

During the week-long visit, participants will retrace the route of the martyrs, visit local communities, participate in a forum on women's issues, and hold a special event honoring women religious who continue the work for peace and justice across the world.

Proceeds from the event will be used to launch four scholarships in honor of Ita, Maura, Dorothy, and Jean for young women leaders in El Salvador to attend college.

For more information about the delegation or to make a contribution to the scholarship fund visit SHARE's website (www.share-elsalvador.org), email them at info@share-elsalvador.org, or call 510-848-8487.

Upcoming LCWR Dates

LCWR Assembly
St. Louis, Missouri
August 7 — 11, 2012

LCWR Leading from Within Retreat
Holy Spirit Retreat Center
Encino, California
January 20 — 25, 2013

LCWR Think Tank Symposium
Redemptorists' Renewal Center
Tucson, AZ
February 11-14, 2013

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

LCWR Assembly
Houston, Texas
August 11-15, 2015

LCWR Mourns the Death of a Member

LCWR joins its prayer with the Sisters of the Holy Cross as they mourn the death of Philomena Quiah, CSC, a member of their leadership team who died on July 20 after a prolonged illness.



In an article published in the Summer 2010 issue of *Occasional Papers*, Philomena wrote, "To make a difference in my ministry, I need to be wise, prudent, and at times bold enough to risk. I need to know how to die and when to rise. I am able to build the world anew with my wonderful womanly qualities, gifts, talents, very presence, lifestyle, faith, and inner strength. Trusting in Christ, I want to be a catalyst who brings peace and harmony between poor and rich, and who works for gender equality, the empowerment of women, and the protection of human values and dignity. Let us be women religious who are willing to "be" and "do" for the love of God. Finally, I say in Gandhi's words, "My life is my message."

Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) 7TH Triennial Conference Meeting the Challenges of the Present: Shaping Our Future Now

September 6 – 9, 2012

Doubletree Hotel -- New Orleans, Louisiana

To register go to www.archivistsacwr.org or contact Jan Harvey at the ACWR National Office at acwr@juno.com or 513-347-4080

Is Your Leadership Term About to End?

If your leadership term is ending this month, you must submit a change of leadership form found in the LCWR Members Information section (password-protected) of the website at lcwr.org/members/lcwr-membership-information.

RCRI Holds Annual Conference

The Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) will be holding its 2012 national conference from October 16-19, 2012 at the Caribe Royale in Orlando, Florida, with presenters and exhibitors on finance, civil law, and canon law. In addition, pre-convention workshops are available on Canon Law/Civil Law 101 (hosted by Simone Campbell, SSS and Christine Rody, SC), as well as Planning for the Future: Tools for Working with a Community (hosted by Carole Shinnick, SSND and Dan Ward, OSB). Information on how to register can be obtained at www.trcri.org or by contacting shidalgo@trcri.org.



Consider Purchasing a Women & Spirit DVD



This excellent educational resource produced by LCWR chronicles the contributions made by Catholic sisters to the growth of the nation from 1727 to today.

The DVD, as well as *Women & Spirit* note cards and bookmarks, will be on sale at the LCWR assembly.



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Orientation to Formation

November 9-11, 2012
 Holy Trinity Spiritual Center
 Baltimore, MD

Transformation of Religious Life: An Action-Oriented Initiative

2013 Workshops

February 15-17, San Antonio, Texas
 March 8-10, Baltimore, Maryland
 April 5-7, Renton, Washington
 April 26-28, West Hartford, Connecticut
 May 3-5, St. Louis, Missouri

More information can be found at www.relforcon.org
 or by calling the RFC national office at 301-588-4938.

Position Opening:

Project Director of a Leadership Development Program

The Leadership Collaborative, a volunteer association of representatives from various constituencies -- including LCWR, seeks to prepare younger vowed members, co-members, and associates of religious congregations to assume leadership in the church and society; as well as the Collaborative Leadership Development Program, a multi-congregational, multi-national, leadership training program for religious congregation vowed members, associates, or co-members who are under the age of 60 on January 1, 2013, seek a project director. A full description of this part-time position can be found at: www.sistersofmercy.org/images/stories/PressResources/2012/project_directorjobdescripedited6_2012.pdf

Questions may be directed to Deborah Troillet, RSM at dtroillet@sistersofmercy.org or 301-587-0423.

NRRO Distributes \$23 Million in Assistance

In June 2012, the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) distributed \$23 million in direct care assistance. This money was allocated to 453 religious institutes, including 341 institutes of women religious. The remainder of the \$27.3 million collected in December 2011 will be available for distribution in the form of planning and implementation assistance or management and continuing education assistance. Additional information about these programs is available through NRRO.

Position Opening:

Director of the Institute of Religious Formation

Catholic Theological Union (CTU) in Chicago is seeking candidates for the full-time position of director of the Institute of Religious Formation (IRF).

The IRF is a premier and long-running nine-month holistic program that provides preparation for women and men for the ministry of formation or spiritual direction in dioceses and religious congregations. The program is part of the theological and formation programs of CTU (www.ctu.edu). The director attends to the overall design and direction of the program; interacts with the participants; provides some input in the course of the curriculum; and works with CTU's office of marketing and communications to help promote the program. Candidates should have experience in adult formation, administrative and organizational skills, and be able to work collaboratively with a broad range of people. A graduate degree in theology or a related field is preferred. Send letter of application and resume to: Barbara Reid, OP, vice president and academic dean; Catholic Theological Union, 5401 S. Cornell Ave., Chicago IL 60615; or breid@ctu.edu.